The Betrayer Revealed

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[0:00] This is the First Mustang Pulpit Podcast, a podcast of the weekly preaching and teaching at First Mustang.! Thank you for joining us. If you would open your Bible with me to Mark chapter 14.

As we continue on in our study through the Gospel of Mark, and we are looking at these events getting so close to the crucifixion of Jesus.
If you've been with us, you're aware that in chapter 12, Mark records for us a series of conversations that Jesus has with different leaders.
You're aware that in chapter 13 is a pretty lengthy treatment of what we call eschatology, the study of the last days. And when you get to chapter 14, it's a reminder of what is happening.
As the text tells us in chapter 14, verse 1, that the leaders were seeking to arrest Jesus and to kill Him. We looked last week in verses 3 to 9, which was a quick break in the chronology, because verses 3 to 9 actually took place the Saturday before.
[1:26] The Passion Week of Christ, the week of His suffering as we know it. He rides in on the triumphal entry on Sunday.

We have the events that we've covered in detail on Monday and Tuesday and Wednesday. And then in verses 3 to 9, Mark takes us back about five days earlier to Saturday to this event of worship.
And at first, it may seem a bit strange that he did that. Why is he telling the chronology of the final week of Jesus? And why would we all of a sudden push pause and go back in time five days?
But I think there is a good reason for it. What happened in verses 3 to 9, as we covered last Sunday, is Jesus there at Bethany, when the bottle of perfume is broken and poured out as an extravagant act of worship.
And we know that what happened on that day is that Judas was especially aggravated by that.
[2:46] Aggravated because his pretense was that she should have not poured out that expensive flask of perfume.

Instead, that should have been sold and the proceeds given to Jesus and the apostles. And the pretense was they could use that to minister to the poor.
But the Gospels tell us that wasn't his motive at all. The Gospel of John tells us that in reality, Judas was a thief.
He was in charge of the money. The other apostles not realizing he was taking money off the top.
And what Judas wanted to do was have her give that money to them because that was how Judas was able to line his own pockets.
Jesus calls him out for that. And undoubtedly, that event on Saturday has allowed Judas to cement in his mind what he's about to do.
[4:01] If he had any second thought of betraying Christ, what happened on Saturday pushed him over the edge.

And I think Mark inserts that story right there because the very next thing we read in verse 10 is about Judas Iscariot.
Verse 10 says, who was one of the twelve, he went to the chief priest in order to betray him to them.
And when they heard it, they were glad and promised to give him money.
And he sought an opportunity to betray him. If you wondered why is that story in verses 3 to 9 inserted, right there is the answer.
This was the event that made Judas say, I'm going all in. I'm done. We're going to take this week and next week, verses 10 to 21, and we're going to look at them with two headings.

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[5:09] One focuses on what Judas is doing. The other focuses on what Jesus is doing. These are all happening at the very same time.

This morning, we're going to look at verses 10 and 11 with this heading. A desire to betray and a plan to condemn. This speaks of the motive of Judas.
A desire to betray and a plan to condemn. Next week, in verses 12 to 21, while Judas is trying to betray Jesus, Jesus is going to take his apostles into the upper room for a time for the final Passover and the institution of the Last Supper.
And in that section, we're going to see from Jesus a desire to befriend and a plan to comfort. A desire to befriend and a plan to comfort.
But looking this morning in verses 10 and 11, we see Judas whose desire is to betray Jesus. That is spelled out very clearly for us in verses 10 and 11.
[6:27] Notice again the beginning of verse 10. Then Judas Iscariot, who was one of the twelve, Judas was one of the twelve.

As inside as you can get. For three and a half years, Judas traveled with Jesus. The miracles we read about, he saw.
The preaching that we read, he heard. The authority that we have seen described, he witnessed.
Judas had a front row seat to everything Jesus did. He was smart with finances.
Judas, a thief, although the apostles didn't realize it. Because of his acumen, they had him be in charge of the finances.
[7:38] He understood money. He was someone who had earned the trust of the other apostles.
Someone who was an eyewitness to everything Jesus did and said and accomplished.

And yet, he was a betrayer. I don't want to be overly dramatic.
I just want to be transparent with you that this reality is something that frightens me quite often. By God's grace, I've had the privilege to be in full-time pastoral ministry.
I'm in my 31st year. I started when I was 20. I'm 51. And so, after three decades of the privilege of doing this, I'm not real naive.
I've seen a lot in 31 years. I don't know everything by any means, but I've seen a lot of everything.
And yet, there's still that part of me that just struggles with the reality that there are people who come to church every single Sunday that are right here on the inside, but aren't truly converted.
[9:09] That's not a new thing because that was true of Judas. And yet, I realize that if that was true of Judas and the apostles, and my three decades of experience tell me that happens all the time, I mean, just reality is, that just almost certainly means there are people in our church who are here every single week, and on the inside, maybe that sing in the choir, maybe that greet at a door, maybe that teach a Sunday school class, maybe that serve and lead any number of ways for any of us.

The question is, do we really belong to Christ?
And we're tempted to say, of course I'm a Christian. I go to church. Judas would have gone to church. Of course I'm a Christian. I use my gifts to serve in the church, as would Judas.
Of course I'm a Christian. Everybody thinks that I am. Everybody thought that Judas was. It's a frightening reality that there are people who are convinced, either in their own heart, or at least have convinced others around them that they are really in the faith, but in reality, their hearts betray the Lord.
And so I just want to ask you this morning, not to introduce doubt into your heart, but to ask you to seriously, and with full honesty, ask yourself, do you love Jesus?
[11:07] And please understand, my friends, it's possible to appreciate the church, but not love Jesus.

It's possible to enjoy the gifts of belonging to the church, but not love Jesus. It's possible to want peace and joy in your life, but not love Jesus.
It's possible to read and think about heaven and desire an eternity without pain and suffering and death and sorrow, but not love Jesus. Judas knew the Bible.
Judas saw the miracles. Judas was physically near Christ, but he did not love Him.
We see this quite often in every church. No church is exempt from that.
[12:21] You've got people who love the church, appreciate the church, and then all of a sudden, you look and you say, they're just gone. What happened? They were here.

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They served. They were camp sponsors. They taught Sunday school. They opened their home for D now. They gave offerings. They were here. What happened?
And there's hundreds of different things that happened, but if you could kind of boil it down to one, what often happens is it was, in their mind, good for them for a season to be in the church because of what the church provided for their family.
And when they no longer needed that, because they did not love Jesus, they just appreciated the church, they're gone.
If you don't love Jesus, you still can care about your children and want them to be around good people, and so you bring your children to children's ministry and you bring your teenagers to youth ministry, and if you don't love Jesus, you still can appreciate that there are people here who will serve your kids and help your kids and keep them safe, and so you can have a measure of appreciation for what the church does.
[13:43] I mean, let's just think about it. This church does a lot for children. This church offers a lot for teenagers. And if you don't love Jesus, but you love your children, for a season, you may find it advantageous to be physically near the things of God, but if you don't love Christ, once your children are grown and gone and you no longer need that for them, they're gone.

That's just one example. There's all kinds of other examples of why that happens. But every time I see that, there's a part of me that's just astounded by that, and another part of me that thinks back to Mark 14 and says this has always happened.
People who use the things of Christ for temporary gain, and when they're finished getting what they wanted from it because they did not know or love Jesus, they're gone.
And so I want to ask you again this morning, not do you like the church, not do you appreciate the people, not are you thankful for the ministries here.
I assume the answer to those things are yes. I want to ask you a more important question. Do you love Jesus? Do you love Him?
[15:07] Do you believe in who He says He is? Are you sure that you belong to Him?

Do you believe in who He is? If you were to stop someone tomorrow that you see at school or in the office or on the ball team or in the gym or in the grocery store and you were to ask them, are you going to heaven when you die?
Maybe not everybody would say yes, but generally speaking here, most people would say, yes, I'm going to heaven when I die. And if you were to probe just a bit and ask them, do you mind if I ask you, where does your confidence for that come from?
You're going to get a wide variety of answers. And if I were to ask you this morning in this same sanctuary, do you know you're going to heaven when you die?
Can your response honestly be, here's where my confidence is. Jesus died for me and He saved me. And I know that because He has given me a heart that loves Him.
[16:29] If your confidence in heaven is in what you do or where you go or where you attend or who your friends are, your confidence is in nothing more than what Judas himself would have had.

Judas had good friends. Judas had safe friends. Judas knew all the stories. Jesus was teaching. Judas heard Him.
He was right there. But here's what Judas could not say. That he knew, he believed, and loved Christ, and it was proven by the change of his heart and his affections toward God.
Judas Iscariot, who was one of the twelve, went to the chief priest priest in order to betray Him to them. This is Wednesday of Passion Week.
It's a quiet day. We know a lot about Sunday. We know a lot about Monday. We know a whole lot about Tuesday. And of course Thursday. And in the events of the crucifixion, we know a lot about leading into Friday.
[17:42] But Wednesday is a quiet day. I suppose it's a day of rest in many ways for Jesus as He is preparing for the events about to take place.

The chief priests have assembled in the courtyard of Caiaphas to come up with their plan. Judas goes to them and says, you need a guy on the inside, I'm your guy.
See, the problem is they need to arrest Jesus. But remember, just a few days ago on Sunday, there were all kinds of people lying in the streets worshiping and praising Jesus.
They don't want to riot on their hands. They don't want to try to go arrest Him when there's all kinds of crowds around Him. That could be highly dangerous.

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What they need, and here's their problem. All these people have come into town for Passover. They don't want to arrest Him during the feast. We've already read that. So what they really need is somebody on the inside who can tip them off of where Jesus will be when no one else is around so they can take Him and arrest Him.
[18:59] And if they can do it at night, it's better than day. And if they can do it in solitude where there are no crowds, even better still.

But how are they going to know where He is? How are they going to know where He's going to be? How are they going to be able to find out in the midst of all of the chaos that's going on around town that week or in the week following, how are they going to know where He will be so they can do this?
That's their problem. They need somebody very close to Him who knows everything about Him including His schedule who would betray Him.
But who would do that if you didn't already know the story of Judas, it would be so improbable you wouldn't even believe it.
How could somebody walk with Jesus for three and a half years, witness and experience all that He has, and then betray Him? It just seems impossible.
[20:22] And then Judas shows up and knocks on the door. He says, I've got a proposal for you. You want to arrest and kill Him in private.

And I'm done with it. I've been a part of this experience for three and a half years. And it's not gone the way I thought it was going to.
Thought this was going to lead to some kind of notoriety. Thought this was going to lead to some kind of power. I thought this was going to make me rich.
And apart from what I've been able to skim from the top of the treasury, I don't have anything else to show for it. And to make matters worse, a few days ago, this man Jesus called me out for my sin and my greed in front of a dinner party.
I'm done with Him. I'll be your man. You give me a few pieces of silver, I'll tell you exactly where He is, where He's going to be. We'll get this thing done.
[21:36] Why would He do it? I think in many ways, I think Judas was, I think he was just disappointed with where following Jesus had led him.

I think Jesus, when He called the disciples to follow Him, and when He said things like, the Son of Man has nowhere to lay His head, and when He said things like, if they hate Me, they'll hate you, I think in Judas' mind, He just thought, that can't be true.
Surely, if I follow this man, it's going to take me places. Well, it did. Took Him to places of suffering, places of persecution, and that's not where He was willing to go.
Now, think about that in the local church. For decades, it's been good for people to be a part of a local church and their community.
I mean, even if they weren't Christians, it was just good for them. It was good for business if they were in church. It was good for their standing in the community. Even people who weren't believers pretended they were because it was just good.
[23:12] If you lived in our culture, lived in our community, it's just good for people to say they belong to a church. And for some people, they play along with the game for a while.

Maybe if I go to church, I'll find a spouse. Maybe if I go to church, it'll be good for my business. Maybe if I go to church, the Lord will bless me. Maybe if I go to church, the Lord will give me more money.
Maybe if I give some offerings, the Lord will bless me financially. All these kinds of motives that are less than worship. And then someone says, you know what?
I've been going to church for five years. I haven't gotten what I wanted still. I've been going to church for years. I even gave some money to church, and I still don't have the job I want and the car that I want.
And my buddies at the office who don't go to church seem to have life better than me. Why am I even wasting my time with this? And now, to make matters worse in our culture today, to call yourself a Christian publicly, now, not only does it not bring you advantages, it may actually cost you if you are clear that you are a follower of Christ.
[24:25] And so, all of a sudden, even in our own culture, people start to say, I'm not sure I want to play this game so much. It's getting kind of costly for people to associate me with Jesus.

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And people read the Bible, and they say, do you really believe that? And they think, I don't know that I want to be associated with all the Scripture says. I think that's where Judas was.
I think Judas thought this was going to be good for his career. I think Judas thought, if I'm following a man who raises the dead, who knows what this will do for me?
I think Judas thought, if I can put up with him for three and a half years, I'm going to be in a really good place. And now, Jesus has told them that he's about to die.
He's going to be crucified. So not only for Judas has this not led to the fame or wealth he desired, now he hears that the leader of the group, Jesus, is about to die, and Judas is smart enough to understand if they kill him, they may kill me too.
[25:53] And if I'm not willing to live a lie, I'm sure not willing to die for one. And he says, I'll do it. I'll turn him in.

I know where he goes. I'm on the inside. I wonder if it's possible somebody here this morning is on the inside for all the wrong reasons.
I wonder if it's possible that you thought that if you went to church regularly, that would automatically mean you get everything you wanted on this earth.
I wonder if anyone in this room is tempted to walk away from the things of God because you tried it for a little bit and if it doesn't get better really, really soon and if life doesn't get easier really, really soon, you're just going to go try something else.
You know, at the end of it all, you can probably boil Judas' motive down to this. Greed. Greed is when there's something you don't have that you've convinced yourself you rightly deserve.
[27:22] And greed kills ministry. And greed stifles churches. And greed can be so prevalent not only because all of our hearts still struggle with sin and all of us still are in the process of being sanctified, but greed also is really prevalent because plenty of people who fill churches are not converted.

Interestingly enough, the fact that there is a betrayer, even that isn't new. John chapter 6, this is a year before the events chronologically we're talking about.
Jesus said in verse 70 of John 6, did I not choose you the twelve and yet one of you is the devil? This is a shock to the apostles but not to Jesus.
Jesus. Verse 11, when they heard it, this is speaking of the chief priests, the leaders here, the ones who are trying to arrest Jesus. Verse 11, when they heard it, they were glad.
Now they have what they need. They were glad and they promised, look at this phrase, they promised to give him money.
[28:54] That's telling. that's what his heart wanted. That's what he thought he was going to get if he followed Jesus.

And when he did not get the treasure from Jesus he wanted, he looked somewhere else who offered him what his heart wanted.
I can't help but think of how many times that happens to religious people all the time. They want popularity, they want notoriety, they want friendship and if they can't find it in following the Lord they'll turn to the world and seek it.
verse 11 says, and he sought an opportunity to betray him.
Judas knew all along that his heart was not genuine. the other apostles did not. We know that by what we're going to cover next week.
[30:16] When Jesus reveals in the upper room that one of the twelve is going to betray him, it kicks off a chorus of people saying, surely it's not me, is it?

There was no one among the group that the others in the group suspected. And I've got to tell you that frightens me too. I think in some ways I would be a little comforted if when I read about Jesus telling the twelve that one of them was a betrayer, if eleven of them would have turned to Judas and said, it's got to be him.
Because at least it would have shown there's some signs you can pick up on. None of the other eleven suspected Judas. which tells me among a religious gathering there can be betrayers among us and none of us suspected.
Judas knew. I can't help but wonder if maybe in Judas' mind, maybe if he thought to himself, you know, I've heard Jesus talk about heaven, I've heard him talk about sin, I've heard him talk about hell, I've heard him preach about judgment, I wonder if maybe Judas thought in the back of his mind, you know, at some point I need to take this serious.

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Right now, I'm kind of secretly in it for me, I'm kind of secretly in it for my career, I'm hoping this is going to lead me somewhere, however, I can't sleep really good at night because I'm thinking of all the stuff Jesus says, I wonder if maybe a part of him thought someday, at some point, I'm going to take seriously the things he talks about.
[32:11] So many people live with the illusion that they can just put their sin aside any time when they want to and later in life start believing.

It's not the way that it works. Hard hearts get hardened. And hardened hearts get what their hearts desire.
So many people go through life thinking, even coming to church, that while I don't really believe this and I'm not really sold out to this and this is really more of a charade for me and really more of a calculated gamble for me than it is about worship and belief and faith and trust.
But someday, I really think I ought to get serious about the claims of the gospel. But please understand this, the more you ignore his command to repent, the more comfortable you are betraying him.
that's exactly what happened to Judas. I think it's entirely possible that people could be here this morning and no one in this room would suspect this about you.
[33:44] but in your heart you know I like being near but I'm not in.

But you may think at some point that probably needs to change. at some point I probably do need to stop talking about Jesus and actually cry out to him.
I probably need to stop just pretending I love him and I ought to really consider my own heart but what happens is we push it off and push it off and push it off thinking we can pick it up like a suitcase at any time we want to.
Here's the reality. the longer you push off the commands of Christ to repent believe and trust in him the less desire you'll ever have to pick that up.
And then one day you're going to find yourself even without the ability to do so. As one man put it Judas went from a man who would not repent to a man who could not repent.
[35:20] We're not through with Judas he's going to be very significant in a few weeks when we get to the arrest of Jesus but I want you to turn to the left a few pages to Matthew 27.

I'm going to jump ahead just a few hours in the chronology here because I want to show you how a life like his ends.
Matthew 27 verse 3 then when Judas his betrayer saw that Jesus was condemned he changed his mind and brought back the thirty pieces of silver to the chief priest and the elder saying I have sinned by betraying innocent blood and they said what is that to us see to it yourself and throwing down the pieces of silver into the temple he departed and he went and hanged himself he had been face to face for three and a half years with the way the truth and the life he had traveled day after day after day with the very one who himself said
I am the resurrection and the life but he didn't love him his heart was filled with things of the world happy to walk with Jesus so long as he had hope of something of this world that he wanted and when it became clear to him the road of following Jesus was not going to take him where he wanted to be he betrayed him and then when he realized that the things of the world of betraying Christ has left him in total despair he went and he hanged himself this is where betrayal ends not necessarily by taking your own life but necessarily in being in a place of so much hopelessness that there's just nothing left!
You see these people in our day they become quite popular we talk about they're deconstructing their faith heard that term preachers singers authors who had convinced everyone they were the real thing and they were happy to preach the sermon and write the book and record the album it brought them fame it brought them notoriety and at some point they realized that doesn't satisfy and they had hardened their hearts so much against the Lord that before they would not repent now they cannot repent and so they go chase the things of the world and they walk away from the Lord and it leaves them in utter despair why?
[39:15] because once you walk away from the fountain of living water there's nothing that would ever satisfy your thirst never but rather than leaving this morning shaking your head saying what was going on with Judas I want to direct you to a much more personal application and that is what is going on with you do you love him do you belong to him not asking you if you enjoy the church or the ministries or the relationships you have here those things are good gifts but you can love those things and not know Christ do you love

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Jesus and if for any reason in your heart the answer is anything less than I know with certainty I belong to Christ because he saved me he changed me from the inside out and he has given me a love for him that I would not otherwise have if your hope is in anything less than knowing what Christ has done in your life I want to remind you of some good news this morning and the good news is that while we were yet sinners Christ died for us that all who would believe in him and call upon his name shall be saved and that there need not be another moment that you wait or put it off or pretend but can I warn you from the bottom of my heart that if you put off the truth of trusting in Christ today

I don't know why you would have any confidence that any day in the future would be different this day this day if you believe the truth having heard the truth do not harden your heart let this be the day of salvation and if we can help you with that we long to do so if you have a question about how to know Christ or maybe even this day during the preaching you have asked in your heart in prayer asked the Lord to save you asked the Lord to change you and to give you a new heart if you would let us know that you can communicate with us through that connection card and just say I've trusted in Christ today help me you can just say I need to give my life to Jesus help me you can say I've recognized today that I've just been playing a game and I've trusted Christ as my savior today what's my next step just let us know how we can help you how we can serve you put that in the offering box if that's you today don't put any money in there

I would never want you to confuse generosity with conversion don't put a dime in the offering box if that's you today just put that card and say I'm trusting in Christ today now what or I've got questions about my spiritual life help me just put that in there and let us gently and biblically and graciously try to lead you to follow the Lord and to honor him Lord we thank you for your word and pray that today these piercing words would be for us life that it would serve to awaken us and to help us we ask it in Christ's name amen evening service at five o'clock tonight hope you'll be back for that if you have a question to try to help you find a sony still class go right out of here turn left to the guest information we've got volunteers who would love to help you love you church family you're dismissed you

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