

PURE PASSION

WEEK 7

AN ATHLETE STUDY

BAD BET

The 2007 NBA betting scandal brought to light that an NBA referee, Tim Donaghy, bet on games he officiated. Not only did he call the game to cover the spread, but he would invite others to join in the payoff if they paid him first. NBA commissioner, David Stern, said that “no amount of effort, time, or personnel is being spared to assist this investigation, to bring to justice an individual who has betrayed the most sacred trust in professional sports.”

A betrayal of trust in “professional sports” is bad enough, but during the Upper Room Discourse, Jesus identified his betrayer saying, “*What you are going to do, do quickly*” (John 13:27). We rage at a ref fixing games for money, but the High King of Heaven’s sacred trust was betrayed by one of his own.

This Week, the party is over, Jesus and the disciples left the Upper Room to head to the garden of Gethsemane where Jesus prayed, sweating drops of blood. It’s there his betrayer, Judas, returned with soldiers and officials to arrest Jesus.

MATTHEW

MARK

LUKE

JOHN

26:47–50

18:1–6

MATT 26:47–50, JOHN 18:1–6

⁴⁷ While he was still speaking, Judas came, one of the twelve, and with him a great crowd with swords and clubs, from the chief priests and the elders of the people. ⁴⁸ Now the betrayer had given them a sign, saying, “The one I will kiss is the man; seize him.” ⁴⁹ And he came up to Jesus at once and said, “Greetings, Rabbi!” And he kissed him. ⁵⁰ Jesus said to him, “Friend, do what you came to do.” Then they came up and laid hands on Jesus and seized him.

¹ When Jesus had spoken these words, he went out with his disciples across the brook Kidron, where there was a garden, which he and his disciples entered.

² Now Judas, who betrayed him, also knew the place, for Jesus often met there with his disciples. ³ So Judas, having procured a band of soldiers and some officers from the chief priests and the Pharisees, went there with lanterns and torches and weapons. ⁴ Then Jesus, knowing all that would happen to him, came forward and said to them, “Whom do you seek?”

⁵ They answered him, “Jesus of Nazareth.” Jesus said to them, “I am he.” Judas, who betrayed him, was standing with them. ⁶ When Jesus said to them, “I am he,” they drew back and fell to the ground.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Even in the moment of betrayal, Jesus called Judas, “friend.” That’s good news for you and me because, “*What a friend we have in Jesus, East to west my sins are gone. I see grace on every horizon, And forever and ever His heart is my home.*”

Christians aren’t immune to relational hurt; in fact, we expect it. However, in Christ, we have hope. Scan the QR code to worship in the joy of the Lord even in heartache.



DISCUSSION

Compare and contrast the effects of physical and relational hurt.

ICEBREAKER

1. How did Judas identify Jesus to those arresting him? (48-49)

2. How did Jesus respond...
-to Judas? (50)

-to the guards? (4-6)

3. How did Jesus’ captors respond to his self-identification? (6)

OBSERVATION

4. What can we learn from Matthew and John’s frequent references to Judas as “betrayer”?

INTERPRETATION

5. What kind of heartache might you expect as you follow Christ’s kingdom expanding work?

6. What does it look like to trust him through it?

APPLICATION

Relational hurt can come because of our own sin or because of the sin of others. If you need help or encouragement, don’t wait. Talk to your coach today.

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STUDY NOTES NO “I” IN TEAM

Imagine playing in the championship. You're there. Your team made it. Now imagine that during the final seconds of the game a player on your team, someone you've trained with, worked with, bled and cried with, all of a sudden starts helping the other team. He passes to the other team, steals the ball from his own teammates, and shoots on the other team's goal. He has on the same uniform as you, except he has betrayed your team!

We've been working up to this moment in our study for the last several weeks—Judas' betrayal of Jesus. For 30 pieces of silver, Judas sold out his Lord, forever shaping the history of the world. For three years he walked, talked, and learned along with the other disciples. Only Jesus knew the deception that rested in the heart of their compatriot.

GODLY PASSION ENDURES BETRAYAL

The Gospel of John records that after Judas left the Passover meal, he put his scheme into action. **Jesus went out with his disciples** to the garden of Gethsemane. John makes Judas' actions clear saying, **“Judas, who betrayed him, also knew the place.** The garden, located **across the Kidron Valley**, is where **Jesus often met there with his disciples** (Luke 21:37). With the authority of the **chief priests and Pharisees, Judas procured a band of [Roman] soldiers and some officers** to back up the arrest and overpower any resistance.

Jesus alerted his drowsy disciples as a speckled trail of flickering **lanterns and torches** filed across the causeway connecting the Temple Mount to the Mount of Olives. Matthew's camera angle captures both their weapons and tactics. They came armed **with swords and clubs**. Because they only came for Jesus, Judas would quietly identify him to the temple guards who may not recognize him, especially in the meager moonlight. Matthew also minced no words regarding Judas, calling him **“the betrayer,”** having **given** these guards **a sign, saying, “The one I will kiss is the man; seize him.”** A kiss between men in that culture still conveys a strong male bond, making this betrayal sign particularly sinister.

Seemingly without hesitation, Judas **came up to Jesus at once and said, “Greetings, Rabbi!”** **And he kissed him.** Jesus knew exactly what Judas was doing, so it's how Jesus greeted his betrayer that captures our attention. Instead of

simply greeting Judas by name, Jesus called him **“Friend.”** What a picture of grace, that even in betrayal, Jesus still communicated his love for Judas.

John tells us that **Jesus, knowing all that would happen to him, came forward and said to them, “Whom do you seek?” They answered him, “Jesus of Nazareth.”** Jesus transparently responded saying **“I am he.”** Jesus surrendered himself, but not from a position of weakness. Watch what happens next.

When the Great **“I AM,”** Deity Incarnate, spoke these words, the temple guards **drew back and fell to the ground.** The Greek word (*pipto*) doesn't mean “trip” or “stumble.” John clearly conveys “thrust down in defeat by another” (Luke. 21:24) or “bowed in worship of a divine being” (Matthew. 2:11 or Revelation 5:14). God spoke creation into being, and that same power fractionally displayed, put these men on their backsides when Jesus identified himself. It should be very clear, Jesus isn't captured in defeat. They only took him captive because he allowed it to happen. He could have slaughtered *them* and they knew it.

GOD REMAINS SINCERE WHEN OTHERS PRETEND

Nobody likes a faker. Nothing cuts deeper than a betrayal by someone you trust. Clearly the gospel writers never forgot Judas' actions since they constantly refer to him as “the betrayer.”

Although Judas' betrayal was against the One through whom **“all things were made”** (John 1), all of us know the feeling of betrayal to one degree or another. We've all be let down or hurt by people in our lives. In fact, the closer a person is, the more trust you place in them, the deeper they can hurt you—and because all people are sinful, they will.

If you want close relationships, the question isn't *if* they'll hurt you deeply, it's *when*. Additionally, if you're going to love people with the love of Jesus, praying and sharing with them the hope you have, that often leads to heartache as well. So what's the solution? Should you isolate and avoid the pain? No! Instead, we need to count the cost and lean into it. We need to follow Christ's kingdom expanding example that cost him his life.

One word of caution is warranted. Do not suffer abuse unnecessarily. Ministry has a price, but that's not the same thing as allowing an abuser to continue physical, mental, or spiritual harm. This is one area where the need for biblical community is critical. Abusers only have power as long as people stay silent so speak up if you or someone you know is being abused.