



The Bad Boys of Easter: The Pretender

INTRODUCTION

There's something in us that wants to leverage God and his power for ourselves. We all try to get God in on our thing. We try to bargain with him through prayer, church attendance, giving, or short-term obedience. We promise to do what we think he wants us to do, if he will do what we want. In the Easter story, Judas was like that. He tried to get Jesus to do what he wanted, without regard for Jesus' ministry and mission. That may seem ridiculous, but there's a little Judas in all of us.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

What part of Sunday's message stood out to you? Was there anything you disagreed with or that encouraged you?

"When we surrender, God takes responsibility for the outcome of the journey."

What is something that was important to you in the past that no longer seems important? What change in your life caused a shift in your priorities?

What are some reasons people try to bargain with God? How does that bargaining effect their view of God?

Read: Matthew 26:6-16, John 12:4-7

Context: Judas had Old Testament Messiah expectations. Jesus fit, except: he was passive with the Romans. He antagonized Jewish rulers. He didn't have a war chest. The tipping point was extraordinary generosity. Like the other disciples, Judas had a picture of how this whole thing was going to play itself out. When he finally realized that Jesus was not going to cooperate, when he saw this three-year investment turning bad, he flipped. He went to the dark side.

- Alabaster bottles were sealed to prevent evaporation. The neck of the container was broken and the perfume expended all at once, worth a year's wages. Why is this significant?
- What was this woman saying about Jesus in this story by her action?
- When Jesus references his death, the focus of those there turned from the perfume to themselves. Why?
- Talk about a time when you became impatient with God. How did you respond to that impatience? How did God respond?
- Why is Matt 26:13 so significant? How has that been fulfilled? How does this validate the message Jesus gave us?
- Do you relate to the disciples reaction to the woman's behavior toward Jesus? Why or why not?
- In John 12:4-7, What was the intention behind Judas' questions?
- In Matthew 26:15:-16, Judas was so fed up with Jesus that he traded him in for the price of a slave. What are things that we want God to do and when he doesn't, we get angry?
- How were these religious leader unknowingly bringing about God's will?
- For what or whom are you tempted to trade in your relationship with Christ? What is one thing you can do this week to surrender that part of your life to God? How can this group hold you accountable?

MOVING FORWARD

At some point, all of us are tempted to trade our relationship with Christ for something or somebody. But like Judas, the moment you make that trade, the value of what you received begins to diminish. Eventually, you'll regret the outcome. You'll wish you could go back and undo that decision.

However, when we put aside our agenda and surrender to God, he takes responsibility for the outcome of the journey.

LIVE IT OUT

Memorize: Learn Matthew 26:11-12

Journaling: Take some time to journal about the eternal rewards of surrendering to God's will in our life.

Prayer: Pray for God to give you strength to surrender your will to His will.

Accountability: Ask someone in your group to follow up with you on that one thing you need to surrender to God so that God's will can be done in your life.