

During the evening of the Passover celebration, Jesus changed the course of conversation with a simple statement.

*“I tell you the truth, one of you will betray me.” They (the disciples) were very sad and began to say to him one after the other, “Surely not I, Lord?”*

Matthew 26:21-22

Let us seek God’s inspiration as we allow this conversation to explore our hearts.

**1. Listen to The Statement** *and while they were eating, he said, “I tell you the truth, one of you will betray me.”* v. 21

In Jesus’ world, to eat with someone and then betray them was treachery.

Jesus knew Judas had bargained to give him up for 30 pieces of silver. He knew the rest of the disciples would desert him for less.

For what would you trade your relationship with God?

When Jesus began ministry, he faced Satan’s temptations: (*Matthew 4:1-10*). Each trade proposal offered Jesus an easy way to achieve, but every one of them would sacrifice who he is.

**2. Listen to Your Heart** *They were very sad...v. 22*

The disciples let their feelings participate in the conversation as they listened to Jesus and looked within themselves. Luke indicates they discussed the possibility of betrayal among themselves (22:23). Earlier in the evening, Jesus had interrupted their pursuit of the best seats in the kingdom of God. And he had washed their feet. It is hard to come face to face with one’s own sinfulness. Each knew the feelings the story of the Pharisee and tax collector raised in their hearts.

Later, Paul addressed our struggle with pride, *if you think you are standing, be careful that you don’t fall! (1 Corinthians 10:12)*.

**3. Listen to Your Words** *and began to say to him one after the other, “Surely not I, Lord?”* v. 22

One of our first reactions to finger-pointing and accusation is “Not Me!”

What was going through the minds of the disciples? If Jesus said, *“one of you is going to betray me”* this morning, what would go through your mind?

Jesus said, *“the one who has dipped his hand into the bowl with me will betray me.”* (v. 23) The problem was that they had all dipped their hands in his bowl.

Spiritually, we often face God’s conviction...by pointing to others who are worse. How does my life look in his light?

**4. Listen to Respond** *Then Judas, the one who would betray him, said, “Surely not I, Rabbi?” Jesus answered, “Yes, it is you.”* v. 25

Often, we form our opinions on Judas because we know the rest of the story. The disciples knew him as a friend and member of their team. Judas concealed his betrayal plans from the disciples but not from Jesus.

We too may hide our secrets and sins from each other but not from Jesus

Faced with the convicting words of Jesus, we have two choices:

- 1) Like Judas we can choose to carry out our evil desires.
- 2) We can confess our sins, turn from our wickedness and follow Jesus.

How will you respond to Jesus?

Historically, the church has often used confessional prayers to awaken God’s people to our neediness and to move us to follow Jesus. Consider the following prayer. Circle any part of the prayer that speaks of something you want the Holy Spirit to address.

O God, we will not try to hide from you the wrong we have done or the good we have neglected. You know our rebellious ways. You have observed our pretensions. The first fruits of our labor grace the altars of our own desires instead of honoring you. We compare ourselves to others and focus on their failures but ignore our errors. We seek to build our lives around what we want to control rather than by your larger purposes. We engage in immorality in the name of freedom and become enslaved by selfish ambitions. We want your promises without commands, your gifts without responsibilities. Forgive us our sin and selfishness. Pardon us in your mercy and grace, as we have forgiven others. Create in us new hearts, hearts willing to love you in word and deed. And let the attitude of Christ Jesus light our countenance because we pray and seek to live in his name.

