

7th Grade New Testament (Gospels)

Lesson Plan: The Last Supper (pt. 3) - Betrayal

Learning Goals: Students should appraise the extent of betrayal Jesus endured through a deeper understanding of Jewish practices of hospitality. Students will then be encouraged to identify with both Jesus and Judas as “betrayed” and “betrayed.”

Question: Have you ever felt betrayed? Describe what that was like.

Prayer

Discuss Question on Board

Matthew 26:17-35

One of the key features of the Last Supper is the fact that Jesus shared this meal with the very disciple who was going to betray him. Today, we are going to look at what that might mean for us and those people that have betrayed us.

The importance of sharing a meal (hospitality)

- To share a meal with someone was intensely personal. Jews would only share meals with other Jews because it was to share in God’s blessing.
- Custom that if you shared a table with someone, you were obligated to protect one another from harm (especially from anyone else present at the table)
- Even though Judas had already made up his mind to betray Jesus (see Matthew 26:14-16), he is invited to share this sacred meal with Jesus.
- There is an allusion here to Psalm 41:9 and Psalm 23:5

Judas’ Betrayal

- Judas is made the villain in Matthew’s telling - the faithless one, the conniver, the greedy one
- It brings up a lot of questions for us: How could someone so close to Jesus do this? How could he so totally miss the point?
- It seems to shock the disciples as well - they are concerned that it could be one of them. Betrayal sneaks up on us and comes when we least expect it, from whom we least expect it.
- Betrayal almost always takes place in the context of the most intimate of relationships.
Examples: Marriage vows are broken. Children deny the honor due to their parents. Parents fail their children. Siblings go for years without speaking to one another. Longtime friendships break apart at the seams because of a misunderstanding.

Judas’ Story is Our Story

- “All have sinned and fallen short of the glory of God” (Romans 3:23).
- We are all guilty of betraying Jesus. It was our sin that lead Jesus to the cross. He died for us as well as Judas. We are no better than Judas.
- There is no sin that we are incapable of committing, given the right circumstances.

Jesus’ Forgiveness (example for us)

- In the Lord’s supper, Jesus is offering us a “new covenant” - a covenant of forgiveness that will come through his death and resurrection.
- The fact that Jesus still shares the table with his betrayer is a hopeful sign for us all. There is a chance for redemption.

- Jesus can identify with us. Jesus is also there for us when we are going through times of betrayal - he knows what it is like and will give us strength to move forward and forgive.

Judas' Fate (Mt. 27:3-10)

- Judas tries to return the money because he realizes that he has betrayed innocent blood, but they will not take it.
 - Judas throws the money down and goes and hangs himself.
 - The chief priests use the money to buy a field in which to bury strangers.
 - Was Judas saved? Did he go to heaven or hell? We don't know. It is speculation. God alone is the judge that gets to decide that - not us.
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Lesson Summary/Review:

Students should review and highlight the following vocabulary terms and concepts from this lesson in their notes:

- Judas Iscariot
- Peter
- What is the connection between Judas' betrayal and the Jewish practice of hospitality?
- What happened to Judas?