



Love God



Love One Another



Do Mission Together

Home Group study: week beginning 3rd April 2022

THEME: THE GOOD, THE BAD AND THE UGLY - JUDAS

PASSAGE: John 12:1-36

LAUNCH

Think of a time when someone close to you had strongly held views on something very big and very different from yours and you had a fall out. (*Something like care for the elderly, sex before marriage, marriage itself, religion, Brexit. Don't let people get intense about it. The idea is to show that people who agree on most things can have strong disagreement about some very important things.*)

DISCOVERY

Read John 12:1-36.

v4 - The Bible says in another place that other disciples were upset about the expensive perfume, but in Matt 26:14 Judas seems to have gone straight from there to the chief priests to offer to betray Jesus. Why was he so upset about it? John says that he was a thief, but there is much more to it than that.

In Sunday's talk it was said that Judas was the only one of the 12 disciples from the south of the country, around Jerusalem, where the Romans were particularly oppressive, whereas 60 miles north, in Galilee, where the rest of the disciples came from, it wasn't so bad.

So Judas was probably particularly keen for the Messiah to come and free them from occupation, and thought Jesus would do that, and was becoming more disillusioned as time went on when he saw that Jesus seemed really keen to avoid that! - e.g.:

- John 6:15 - after feeding the 5000 the people tried to make him king, but he went into the mountains by himself.
- John 6:19 - after walking on the water to the amazement of the disciples he seemed to actively put people off following him by what he taught, until, in v66, 'many of his disciples turned back and no longer followed him.'

v23, 28-34 - Jesus predicts his crucifixion, God speaks in a thundering voice, and the people are confused, thinking the Messiah stays for ever. Not surprising Judas's mind is in turmoil too.

DISCUSSION

Ask people to imagine the scene in the last supper in John 13 where Jesus washes the disciples' feet. Imagine what Jesus might be feeling as he washes Judas's feet and looks into his eyes, already knowing he'll betray him.

And Judas, later that night, in John 18:1-6, leading the band of soldiers and officials from the chief priests up the hill to where Jesus was. Imagine what he's feeling as he leads them up

the hill, approaches Jesus and kisses him to identify him (Matt 26:49), and then when Jesus say 'I AM' and the soldiers fall backwards onto the ground as he says it.

Quickly summarise Judas's remorse, rejection by the chief priests and subsequent suicide. Ask the question: 'could Judas have been forgiven and restored?' The Bible suggest not - e.g. John 17:12 & Mark 14:21. Discuss.

What about us: imagine being in a country where faith in Jesus could lead to death, and being found out and faced with being shot if you don't deny him. What would we do? Could we be restored if we deny him? As Peter did and was? Discuss.

Pray for:

- us - for strong faith, wisdom, strength, love, perseverance, patience, grace - everything really, relating to the above.
- the church in Ukraine likewise (*NB - there is talk in the papers about plans by the Russian church to subsume all churches in Russia, Ukraine and Belarus into one national, nationalist non-Bible believing church, with Putin's blessing.*)
- Ukraine generally, and Russia.
- And for our church too.

