

Did Jesus encourage Judas in his actions? John 13:27
If Jesus knew Judas would betray him, then why did he chose him?

! Jesus also knew he was a thief. He even knew, when he washed Judas' feet, that he had plotted with the priests to hand Jesus over. Knowing what we are like, why did Jesus choose us?

How could Jesus demonstrate is love to someone He knew would betray him?

? **Why did he not expose him?**
Why did he not protect himself for Judas plans?
Why did he not help Judas to overcome, the way he did Peter? Luke 22:32

Hopefully, answers to these question will become clear in the course of these studies. The third question gives us a place to start from. Jesus did not protect himself because His very mission was to die on the cross.

♥ *The Son of Man will go just as it is written about him. But woe to that man who betrays the Son of Man! It would be better for him if he had not been born."* Matthew 26:24

While I was with them, I protected them and kept them safe by that name you gave me. None has been lost except the one doomed to destruction so that Scripture would be fulfilled. John 17:12

May their (his) place be deserted; let there be no one to dwell in their tents. Psalms 69:25

May his days be few; may another take his place of leadership. Psalms 109:8 cf Acts 1:20

The role Judas played was predicted in Scripture. It had to happen. We will see why later.
? **How could Judas have stayed so long with Jesus and yet stay so uninfluenced by his teaching?**

Is this still a problem for us?
What should we do about it?

The difference between what we teach in church and how we behave is sometimes painful.

? **Can you think of any examples?**
On a personal level, how do we solve this problem?

Walking around with Jesus is not the same as following him. The heart is deceptive above all things and through a host of reasons people fall. Is Judas so very different from some of the famous names of our time who have sinned and fallen? The danger is there for all of us. We must guard our hearts. Judas failure was a failure of faith.

Studying these scriptures you are left to realise it could so easily have been Peter, or you and I.

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Judas and Jesus

Of all the studies we have done, this one poses more questions than it answers.

? **What do you know about Judas?**
How is his character used today?

! Judas has become a watchword for evil, the ultimate traitor, shunned and eternally cursed. Villain or tragic disciple? Or did he play a necessary but diabolical role in the arrest of Jesus? The character of Judas and the part that he played are by no means that simple.

✓ **Read Luke 6:13-16**
How is Judas described in this passage?
Do you think the word became is significant?

***** When Jesus sent out the 12 to preach the Gospel, Judas was among them. He healed the sick and raised the dead along with the rest of them. The Gospels remind us, along with most of the references to Judas, that He was the one who betrayed the Lord. But this of course was unknown to the disciples. On the outside, he looked like everyone else.

The name Judas is the Greek version of Judah it means praise. It was very common, two disciples were called Judas and so was one of Jesus brothers, Matthew 13:55.

/ There are two possible meaning for Iscariot. Is (esh) means man. Scariot could be from the Greek word for knife. Iscariot then would mean man of the knife. This would be a nickname and would associate Judas with the Zealots who were trying to over through the Romans. A group of them called the Sakori, a group who used short swords hidden under their robes to kill Romans and Roman sympathisers during the crowded festival times in Jerusalem. Although this group is not identified by this name until a few decades later it is very likely that Barrabas was such an individual.

? **If this were true how do you think Judas and Levi (Matthew) the tax collector got on?**

There is a strong reason to think that Judas was not a zealot. Any ideas what it is?

The Romans considered the Zealots and even more so the Sakori terrorists. Identifying yourself publicly as terrorist would get you arrested and crucified quite quickly.



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2 There is a more likely meaning. Iscariot probably means man from Kerioth. Kerioth was a village in southern Judea (Keriot means village in Hebrew). If this is so he was the only one of Jesus disciples who was not from Galilee. An outsider from the start.

Most of the priests lived in villages of Judea, and Kerioth was a priestly village, some people have suggested that Judas was a priest. This case is strengthened by Matthew 27:5, which records that Judas threw the money into the temple. The word used here (naos=sanctuary, holy place) implies an area of the temple that only the priests had access to.

? **What was Judas specific job in the band of disciples? John 13:29**
Where did the money come from?
What does this tell us about Jesus use of finances?

✓ **Read John 12:3-7**
What was Judas doing with the money?
What does this passage tell us about Judas?
What does it tell us about his attitude towards Jesus?

Knowing Judas was a traitor, we tend to read into this more than is due. Had it been Peter that betrayed the Lord, what would we make of his numerous indiscretions? Again we must remember that John did not know Judas was a thief at the time, it came out later.

Even if the disciples did not realise that Judas was stealing the money, surely Jesus did.
Why did Jesus do nothing about it?

✓ **Read Mark 14:4-11**
According to Marks account, Judas was not alone in his criticism of Mary, or the rebuke it received from Jesus. According to Matthew, it was a general attitude among the disciples. Matthew 26:8-9

? **It is recorded immediately after this incident that Judas went to the high priest. The question is why?**

? **Did Judas feel disenfranchised by Jesus?**
Did he finally realise that he and Jesus were after different goals?
Did he take Jesus comments about death as a green light?
What other reason could Judas have had?

When searching for reasons why Judas did what he did, greed, bitterness and disillusionment are all there, but none of these are sufficient motives.

At the last supper when Jesus declares "one of you will betray me" no one suspected Judas.

! Even when he left the table they thought he was going to give money to the poor or buy something. John alone was privy to this information. (Reading the account, Peter stands out as the likely character, John 13:38). In fact, even Peter seems to think it is Peter! John 13:24.

✓ **Read John 13:22-27**
Receiving the bread in this way was an honour, it was also a mark of friendship.
Why did no one guess it was Judas?

The only conclusion is, that Judas was just like the rest of them.

Even my close friend, whom I trusted, he who shared my bread, has lifted up his heel against me. Psalms 41:9 & John 13:18

? **How does Jesus describe Judas?**

Even in the Garden of Gethsemane Jesus again calls Judas his friend.
Jesus replied, "Friend, do what you came for. Matthew 26:50

This is not philos the usual word for friend but, hetairios which means comrade, companion or partner.

? **What did Jesus say would have to happen? Matthew 26:24**
If it were better that he had not been born, why was he?

(in the Greek it is unclear whether the 'he', is Judas of Jesus). But of course, without God's forgiveness, this statement is true of all of us.

? **Knowing that Judas is going to betray him how could Jesus call him friend?**
What does this show?

Being betrayed is part of the human experience. All of us will experience betrayal, intended or accidental, it at some time in our lives.

? **How does it feel?**
Could you do what Jesus did?

What would have happened if Judas had not betrayed Christ?

Questions like this are hypothetical. It had to happen. Jesus had to die and he had to be betrayed.

Then Judas, the one who would betray him, said, "Surely not I, Rabbi?" Jesus answered, "Yes, it is you." Matthew 26:25

? **Why did Judas ask?**
We conclude that Judas alone heard the reply.

When faced with the possibility of betrayal, the disciples asked the question "is it I?". When we read the serious warnings of the NT, we should ask the same question.

Jesus did know who would betray him.

Yet there are some of you who do not believe." For Jesus had known from the beginning which of them did not believe and who would betray him. John 6:64

Notice that while the betrayer is singular, those who do not believe are plural.

Then Jesus replied, "Have I not chosen you, the Twelve? Yet one of you is a devil!" (He meant Judas, the son of Simon Iscariot, who, though one of the Twelve, was later to betray him.) John 6:70-71