



Judas and Peter

Message Notes, August 28, 2016

John 13:18-38

Today's was a short but profound message that examined the similarities of Peter's and Judas' failings the night Jesus was arrested. Judas betrays Jesus and Peter denies he even knows Him. We are used to thinking of the treachery of Judas' actions, but these two wayward disciples were more alike than we typically think.

Read through the passage and note:

- The tender human heart of Jesus as he engages with both Judas and Peter. He knows the failings that lie before them and how they will wound his own heart, but he speaks to them with love and tenderness, even subtly inviting them, especially Judas, to turn from the path of darkness.
- The battle that is going on in Judas as he wrestles with the kind words of Jesus that confront the alluring whispers of Satan, who is enticing him to challenge Jesus' direction and force His hand to bring a political revolt in Israel ("Satan entered him" vs 27). This battle culminates in Judas' decision to leave the upper room – "he went out. And it was night." John is intentional in recounting this detail – Judas went out into the night, into the dark – not just physical darkness but spiritual darkness.
- How Peter is so distraught about Jesus' announcement that He is soon to leave them that he totally misses Jesus' "new (fresh) command that they should love one another as he has loved them. By this all men will know they are his disciples." (vv. 33-35, 36).

How are Peter and Judas alike, even at this point in their journey with Jesus?

- Both have shared intimate life with their Lord.
- Both are zealous for Jesus. Judas has become disillusioned with Jesus' past for he has thought and hoped that Jesus has come to free Israel *politically*. But Peter has also expected that Jesus has come to establish an *earthly* kingdom, one in which he might be Jesus' "right-hand" man.
- Both have been warned by Jesus of their pending waywardness.
- Both fail miserably! In heart, Peter's vehement denial that he even knows "that man" is not far removed from Judas' quiet betrayal.

They are both deeply sorry for their failures. See Matthew 27:3-5 (Judas) and Matthew 26:74-75 (Peter). Their one difference? They end up in very different places: Judas in despair and death, Peter in restoration and leadership

What was the difference for Peter? Certainly repentance, forgiveness and grace. But how did these emerge? Restoration sprouted from the soil of community.

In his failure and despair, Judas was isolated. In his aloneness, the darkness swallowed him. But Peter, though deeply ashamed and sorrowful, stayed connected with his brother disciples. He never leaves: He is there with them when the women announce Jesus' resurrection. He is in the Upper Room when Jesus suddenly appears. He is fishing with his brother disciples when Jesus shows up on the shore. Peter stays engaged in community, and in this safe supportive place - grace, healing, and restoration come.



The church, the community of faith, is a primary *means of grace*. It is the place where, even when we fail, we can experience truth, love, and restoration. Yes, when the church falls short, it can be so hurtful and damaging (*"Father, have mercy on us"*). But when we are faithful to our call, we are His powerful source of restoration and transformation. Amen!