



There Is A Better Way!

"And he cast down the pieces of silver in the temple, and departed, and went and hanged himself" (Matthew 27:5).

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"When the morning was come, all the chief priests and elders of the people took counsel against Jesus to put him to death: 2 And when they had bound him, they led him away, and delivered him to Pontius Pilate the governor. 3 Then Judas, which had betrayed him, when he saw that he was condemned, repented himself, and brought again the thirty pieces of silver to the chief priests and elders, 4 Saying, I have sinned in that I have betrayed the innocent blood. And they said, What is that to us? see thou to that. 5 And he cast down the pieces of silver in the temple, and departed, and went and hanged himself. 6 And the chief priests took the silver pieces, and said, It is not lawful for to put them into the treasury, because it is the price of blood. 7 And they took counsel, and bought with them the potter's field, to bury strangers in. 8 Wherefore that field was called, The field of blood, unto this day. 9 Then was fulfilled that which was spoken by Jeremy the prophet, saying, And they took the thirty pieces of silver, the price of him that was valued, whom they of the children of Israel did value; 10 And gave them for the potter's field, as the Lord appointed me" (Matthew 27:1-10).

Life offers everyone a variety of options to choose from. The choices we make have the potential to develop or destroy lives and ultimately determine our destiny. Like all of Jesus' disciples, Judas had plenty of opportunities, encouragement, support and admonition to make good choices but he became a champion of wrong decisions that ultimately led to his eternal doom. This lesson provides us ample lessons to do better. Let's first consider the character traits that led to his downfall, so we can avoid them:

- 1) Judas was fiercely independent. He had a mind of his own that was divorced from the plan of God;
- 2) He professed to know God but denied Him in his work (Titus 1:16);
- 3) He practiced a form of godliness devoid of God's power (2 Timothy 3:5);
- 4) He thought that his ideas, visions, beliefs and convictions were better than those of all others. God asked "How long shall thy vain thoughts lodge within thee?" (Jeremiah 4:14);

"I have sinned in that I have betrayed the innocent blood" (Matthew 27:4).

- 5) Being persistently stubborn and self-willed, he repeatedly ignored the warnings and admonitions of Jesus. "He, that being often reproved hardeneth his neck, shall suddenly be destroyed, and that without remedy" (Proverbs 29:1);
- 6) He believed in his ability to scheme and get away with it;
- 7) He thought he could outwit / mock God. "The eye that mocketh at his father, and despiseth to obey his mother, the ravens of the valley shall pick it out, and the young eagles shall eat it" (Proverbs 30:17);
- 8) He had personal ambitions that conflicted with the plan and purpose of God. He was obsessed with the love of money till it became the root of evil into his life (1 Timothy 6:10);
- 9) He pursued a project that was neither assigned nor approved by God, misjudged the situation and sailed off with a "false wind" hoping that it would blow his project into a safe shore;
- 10) He became unfaithful to the divine call for his life, while trying to spiritualise everything (John 12:4,5). "People of faith try to spiritualise every issue. In the name of faith they downplay their instincts and ignore their senses";
- 11) He demonstrated unwillingness to repent, even when it became obvious he was in the wrong. He would rather commit suicide than repent! Some people would rather die than change! God admonishes **There is a better way than suicide!**
- 12) Ultimately, he died as a fool! Peter repented after denying Christ, but Judas chose to hang himself. "Repent, and turn yourselves from all your transgressions; so iniquity shall not be your ruin" (Ezekiel 18:30). **There is always a better way, and it requires humility to take it!**