

partly already There are many words which we use in every day speech, whose meaning may already be detected by their sound. Words which express wicked conduct, or something evil, carry with them a wicked, or at least an uncomfortable sound. Think for example of the word, thief, perjurer, adulterer, and murderer. However there are few words which carry with them such repulsive sound, and convey such disgusting thoughts as the word -traitor.

A traitor is one who betrays the confidence or the trust which is placed in him. There are today also all kinds of traitors. Traitors to individual friends, traitors to the family circle, traitors to the state and gov't, traitors to G and his church. In studying the history of our country, we learned to know a man who was a traitor to his country, Benedict Arnold. And his name already reminds us of evil, cowardly acts. However, the prince of traitors, if we may imagine such, is the one who is mentioned in our T and whom we wish to consider this evening - Judas Iscariot. The Evangelists give us very brief, yet interesting descriptions of him. Let us then direct our attention to this subject in our first Lenten service of biographies,

JUDAS, THE APOSTLE TURNED TRAITOR.

1. The development of the treachery in his soul.
2. The act of betrayal itself.
3. The reward of Judas' treachery.

Very little is known of the early life of Judas. We know that he was the only Ap from Judea, and that his father's name was Simon. Jesus himself chose Judas to be his Ap., in spite of the fact that he knew what the final outcome would be. And yet, this very fact that J chose Judas as his follower, gives us evidence that he also had his good qualities. X saw the possibilities to make a strong and noble character out of him. O what wonderful opportunity is here offered to Judas. He is placed under the continual influence of X and the other disciples. Yes, and throughout his entire ministry X directed special appeals, and special warnings against the sin which had begun to rule his heart. Surely the conscience of Judas must have accused him when X uttered statements such as: "A man's life consisteth not in the abundance of things he possesseth". or, "Take heed and beware of covetousness." These were the last appeals of love to a heart where the ~~thought of worldliness had become supreme.~~ No doubt at the time of his call Judas was minded to follow X faithfully. But he did not watch and pray.

So when thinking of Judas, we should not forget that it is said of him that he was also of the number of the twelve. My fr, there is a serious lesson in this fact for us all. We should not gain the impression that X merely a formal or outward relationship to X or his church is sufficient to salv. merely because our name appears in the church register, or merely because we are actively engaged in some church work does not guarantee salv to us. Judas too was a disc of X, belonged to the group outwardly, yet his heart was far from X. And so with us too, unless we have a living relationship to this living X, we cannot expect to be saved.

Our T tells us that Satan had entered into Judas. The sin of covetousness had begun to rule his heart. Already when Mary anointed the Sav at Bethany, we find that it was Judas who began to object. He was desirous to have that money which she had spent for the costly ointment. And gradually this sin became more and more firmly rooted in his heart, so that finally Judas was completely under the rule of the prince of darkness. His covetousness led to hypocrisy, it led him into bad company, and it finally ended with betrayal.

O how often had J warned Judas against the sins which had possessed his heart. Even shortly before the dreadful betrayal took place, X said to his disc: "One of you shall betray me". Judas, like struck with a thunderbolt, immediately asks guiltily, "Is it I"? And X answers him, thus again warning him, "Thou hast said". So the entire story of the life of Judas should serve as a serious warning for us all. It should teach us to beware of the beginnings of sin. How often do we not commit a sin, seemingly very insignificant at first, and what is the result? One sin follows another, gradually we are being dominated by sin, and finally

we too have reached the stage where the W of G and all its warnings have no effect upon us whatsoever. O keep away from those small beginnings. When temptations present themselves, turn away from them, lest Satan ensnare you and you falleth," into the pit of sin and the snare of Satan.

II.

After J had warned Judas against the dreadful crime which he was planning Judas left the hall where the disc were eating their passover. He immediately set out for the abode of the enemies of X, with this thought uppermost in his mind BETRAYAL. And was Judas welcome among the chief priests? Most assuredly he was. Our T tells us that they were glad for the opportunity and support which Judas was offering them, and promised to pay him the large sum of 30 pieces of silver for the act. After the agreement is reached between the chief priests and the traitor, they, with a number of soldiers and enemies of X set out to seize the Son of G.

During this time J and the faithful eleven had left the hall and wandered into the Garden of Gethsemane. We are all well aware of the dreadful siege which our Sav passed thru in the Garden. How fervently he prayed to his heavenly Father that the cup of his suffering might be removed. O the anxiety of his soul. We are told that he sweat drops of blood, and that the angel of G had to come and strengthen him. And while J was here praying the, at one time, disciple was scheming against his Master, secretly planning to place X into the hands of the enemy.

Now after the victory was won in the soul of J, he arose, took his discs with him and went forth to meet Judas with his gathering of high priests and followers. X knew all the time what was going on among his conspirators, he knew what he was going to meet with this very night, but yet, he calmly went out to meet his enemies, having been strengthened by an angel of G. X and his El had hardly left the Garden of Gethsemane when they met the multitudes. Who were they, what was their purpose? Whom were they seeking at this hour of the night? Who should be prowling about with swords and staves and burning torches? X and his faithful discs continue their journey directly toward this mob. Lo, there is Judas at the head of the mob. He is anxiously ~~examining~~ looking about to see J. in order that he might betray him into the hands of the enemy.

But how were the enemies of X to recognize X, how should they know him from ~~the rest of~~ the disc? Notice how shrewdly everything had been planned. Judas had told them that the one whom he would kiss—that is He. And presently, Judas steps up to X and greets him with the words, Hail, Master, and kissed him. The dreadful, cowardly act had been performed. Judas had betrayed his Master. And consider the ~~manners~~ manner in which he had done so. He betrayed his L with a kiss. At that time ~~the~~ kiss was the customary expression of kindness and friendship. Friends would always greet each other with a kiss. And now Judas uses this token of dearest friendship to carry out his dreadful plan of treachery, betrayal. There were perhaps several reasons why Judas chose this way of betrayal. In the first place, X should not suspicion anything evil, but I believe the greatest reason was this, in order that his conscience might be perfectly quieted, that the last bit of protest might be overcome, he greeted his Master with the usual sign of friendship and reverence. Thus he would lead himself to believe that his crime was not so bad after all.

Judas betrayed X with a kiss. And what happened? The anxious enemies at once laid hold on him to capture him. But X ~~met~~ once more showed forth a ray of his divine power. When he spoke to them, Whom seek ye? They answered, J of Naz. And X answered them I am He. Having spoken these words, the multitudes fell back to the ground, utterly helpless. X might have escaped, but no, willingly he was going to bear the load which G had placed upon him for us. And when the discs want to defend their Master by force, he commands them to put away their sword, for if he should be in need of assistance, he could call for legions of angels to aid him. We see then that willingly he gives himself into the hands of his enemies. And the multitudes begin to lead him away as a captive, forsaken by all his disc. X is captive as the result of Judas' betrayal.

We are all ready to condemn and judge Judas for his act. But stop. In

we may also learn from Peter's faults.

3.

Judas is reflected your very nature. The scariets sin was a human rather than a mere personal sin. O fr, in considering your past life, who can say honestly, I am so much better than this Judas. Have you always stood up in defence of your religious convictions when the danger presented itself, th at the name of your L might suffer shame from the mouth of a scoffer? Or have you always kept your xtianity quiet and to yourself? Are you one of those, who when asked to do something for X, have only criticism to offer about this or that, yet yourself fail to take hold and help. What else is that than a treacherous betrayal of your L? Let us all, before condemning Judas or any one, for that matter, search our heart diligently to see whether we are perhaps not just as bad as he. Tho our betrayal may not be as evident as his, yet to deny X in word or deed is betrayal. And, "Let him that standeth, watch and pray that he may not fall also."
What was reward of Judas' treachery?

III.

J was finally condemned to die on the cross. Judas had heard and seen what had happend to Him whom he had betrayed. Suddenly he was overcome by grief. He now felt sorry for the evil which had befallen the L as the result of his act. However, it was not true contrition of the heart. He was not sorry over the sin which he had committed but merely sorry over the result of his sin. And what does Judas do? He at once returns to the chief priests and brot back his ill-gotten gain. When he had appeared before these men the first time, he had seen only the glitter of th coins. It had blinded his mind and conscience. Now the same money was burning in his hands, the very gingle of it put him in mind of the dreadful ~~xxx~~ result of his cowardly act, He casts the 30 pieces away and yet finds no peace of soul and conscience. And fr, in that not the effect which we experience with sin. Yes, tho our sins be forgiven, the marks and result of sin remains nevertheless. Sin is as a nail driven into a post. You may remove the nail, and still ~~have~~ the hole which it made.

Judas cast the 30 pieces of silver away and said, "I have betrayed innocent blood." O what wonderful testimony. Remember that Judas had been with J for 3 yrs, that he had seen him in private and public, had heard all his admonitions, knew him better than any one, and he exclaims, He is innocent. Surely there could be no stronger testimony for our Sav than this, INNOCENT BLOOD. But Judas finds no sympathy from his fellow conspirors. They answer him "what is that to us? See thou to that." ~~Fr~~ that is the sinners usual experience. The world tempts us to sin. As soon, however, as our conscience accuse us and we call out in despair, I have sinned, the entire world about us rejoices and calls out, what is that to us? If Judas had at this time, returned to his Sav, whom he knew would help, if he like Peter, would have wept bitter tears of remorse over his sins, he too would have experienced the unending love of X, but overcome by despair, he goes away and hangs himself. His sins, which had such small beginnings, had destroyed his faith in X, and he takes the life whcin he had received from G. And when he had hanged himself, he burst asunder in the midst, and all his bowels gushed out. What dreadful end. ~~And why? Because~~ he would not repent of his sin. His sin did not condemn him, his impenitence was the cause of his et damn. He would not repent. Fr, let us learn our lesson from this ex of Judas. You cannot think too blackly of your sin, but you may think too exclusively of them that they too wil drive you to despair as was the case with Judas. But learn also the other greater lesson, There is no sin which the LJ will not forgive you if you will but come to him and ask him for forgiveness. O cast yourself then into the outstretched arms of your ever loving Sav, who has bought you with the price of his own blood, so that your sins may be forever forgiven. Cast all your cares upon him, for he careth for you.

AMEN.