



REFLECTIONS

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[Judas] approached Jesus to kiss him, but Jesus asked him, "Judas, are you betraying the Son of Man with a kiss?"

Luke 22:47-48

Betrayals

The students were handpicked, a select group for a select purpose. With hindsight, almost everyone would have wanted to be among the chosen. To have such a teacher, to hear such a message, to walk alongside a master and witness the work of his hands would have been a privilege beyond imagination.

For the teacher, the students he chose would begin his legacy. He chose them to carry on after him so his teachings would reach lives far beyond his classroom. He loved his students and cherished his time with them. He taught them things they would never have understood, and he showed them things they would have never seen. He took them places they would never have gone, and he had them do things they would never have known could be done. He loved them and prayed fervently for them. But a time would come when one of them would turn his back on it all and walk away in betrayal.

Without painfully remembering the times we have felt betrayed it is difficult to imagine how Jesus might have felt when Judas walked away from the final supper with his disciples to join the crowd that wanted him dead. When we have been betrayed, we feel more than disappointment. Angry, resentful, and vengeful might be more descriptive words when trust has been broken, commitment has been dishonored, or love goes unreturned. And those feelings can linger on.

Resentment can carry from day to day. Desire for vengeance invades the mind, behavior is influenced, and relationships remain broken. The pain from betrayals is hard to forget. But Jesus did.

Judas betrayed Jesus with a kiss. It triggered a series of events that ended with Jesus suffering death on the cross; but Jesus only expressed disappointment. "*Judas, are you betraying the Son of Man with a kiss?*" He said nothing more about it. Jesus didn't cast blame on Judas for the anguish caused. He didn't dwell on what might have been, or portray himself as a victim wronged. He moved on to die for the forgiveness of our sins. And through forgiveness, our sins have been forgotten.

The Bible is not explicit, but one might reason that it was forgiveness that allowed Jesus to forget Judas' betrayal too.

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