

# If a Kiss Could Kill (Part 2): A Word to the Betrayed

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## Introduction

### The Text

<sup>47</sup> While he was still speaking, there came a crowd, and the man called Judas, one of the twelve, was leading them. He drew near to Jesus to kiss him, <sup>48</sup> but Jesus said to him, “Judas, would you betray the Son of Man with a kiss?” <sup>49</sup> And when those who were around him saw what would follow, they said, “Lord, shall we strike with the sword?” <sup>50</sup> And one of them struck the servant of the high priest and cut off his right ear. <sup>51</sup> But Jesus said, “No more of this!” And he touched his ear and healed him. <sup>52</sup> Then Jesus said to the chief priests and officers of the temple and elders, who had come out against him, “Have you come out as against a robber, with swords and clubs? <sup>53</sup> When I was with you day after day in the temple, you did not lay hands on me. But this is your hour, and the power of darkness.” (Luke 22:47–53)

### The Sting of Betrayal

- A. Who hasn't felt the sting of betrayal. Don't mistake the phrasing there. That's not a question so much as it is a statement. What I mean is: We all have—in one way or another, to one degree or another, some worse than others . . . but we all have.
1. It's the dad who left you and your mama to fend for yourselves when you were just 7 years old. Never came back.
  2. It's the so-called friend back in Jr. High who threw you into the bus to get that boy or to get in with the “cool” crowd.
  3. It's the husband who hid his adultery for years before it ever came out. He was sleeping in your bed like a snake in the sheets. If you hadn't accidentally come upon that email, he'd still be lying to your face.
  4. It's the business partner who cheated you out of your own place in the company. You were good friends you though. But then money got in the middle.
  5. It's the kid you raised, day after day, sacrificing your time, your money, your dreams to help them grow and succeed. And then they turn 18 and they're gone. They don't want anything to do with you. They badmouth you to all their friends. They act like you didn't give them life and sustain them all these years. They blame you for their mistakes and don't call, don't come home, don't care.
  6. It's the person in your church small group that you finally opened up to. You shared those vulnerable places of your heart with them and they turned around and used it as fodder for gossip. You come into Sunday Service and everyone's whispering.
    - a. Who hasn't felt the sting of betrayal—not question mark . . . but period.
- B. But now here comes the question: When you feel that sting, when you experience that betrayal, what do you do? We all have different ways of responding don't we?

1. Some of us are going to hunt that betrayer down and make them pay for what they did—make them hurt like they've hurt us. I won't rest until I get vengeance. I'm going to pull the knife out from my back and use it now on you.
2. Others of us pull away from the person, never want to see them again. We deadbolt the door. We brick and mortar around our hearts—they aren't ever getting back in.
  - a. Flight. Fight. And there's all manner of variations in between.
3. And then—in a different category all on His own—there's Jesus.

C. This is now our second week in this text.

1. The title of last week's message was [If a Kiss Could Kill \(Part 1\): A Word to Betrayers](#). And I talked about how you and I are not all that far from Judas here. We all participate in this betrayal here and need His grace. And we'll circle back on this at the end today.
2. But this morning now what I have for us is not a word to betrayers so much as a word to the betrayed. In other words, all of us who feel hurt and heavy and maybe even bitter because of how we've been treated, there's a lot we can learn from Jesus here. He doesn't lash out. He doesn't pull away. He loves. And He calls us to do the same.
  - a. So I've got just two things we're going to look at this morning: (1) That He Loves His Betrayers; and (2) How He Loves His Betrayers.

## (1) That He Loves His Betrayers

### 5 Sightings

A. Under this first point I simply want to make sure we see what's happening here and how crazy it really is. Some of this will draw on what we looked at last week, so I'll go a bit quicker here, but I've got five sightings, as it were, five ways we see Him loving those that are betraying and hurting Him.

#### Sighting #1: Instead of Pulling Away, He Lets Them Draw Near

- A. We've all been there, right? You feel hurt for one reason or another—betrayed, stepped on, abused. Might be big, might be small. But you're worked up about it.
1. Let's say it was someone at work or something. You couldn't believe she would say that. You're steaming. And then over the weekend you're getting some groceries, and wouldn't you know it, there she is. The aisle over. Makes you shudder. What do you do?
    - a. You hide, right? I'm not going to walk up and say hi? Are you kidding? I don't want to see her right now. After what she did to me. I've got to cool off.
- B. But here Jesus is. He already knows what Judas is up to. He knows why this crowd is following behind him with swords and clubs and torches and lanterns.

1. And here's the crazy thing. He doesn't slip away into the shadows. He doesn't pull away from Judas. He lets him draw near. He loves him.

### Sighting #2: Instead of Slapping the Face, He Turns His Cheek for a Kiss

- A. You say, Ah, okay, I know why He's letting this serpent come close. He's just biding His time until He can reach right out and smack the snot out of him, right?
  1. That's what I'd do. If I knew one of my closest friends had turned something treacherous on me. He posted something ridiculous about me on Facebook, but I wasn't supposed to see it. He thought he blocked me or whatever. I might act like I don't know. "Oh sure bro, come on over, yeah, I'd love to see you." But when he arrived, dude we'd hit the mat. I'd be on him before he knew what hit him.
- B. But that's not what Jesus does here, is it? No! He lets Judas draw near not so He could reach out and slap him, but so Judas could get close enough to kiss Him. "He drew near to Jesus to kiss him" (v. 47b).
  1. It's enough to make your blood boil. How would you ever restrain yourself in those moments? How do you look in the eyes of a man like this and not just catch fire with fury? (More on that in a moment.)

### Sighting #3: Instead of Calling Them Names, He Calls Them His Friends

- A. And how do you talk about people who betray you? Think about it?
  1. What do you call them—behind their back, maybe even to their face? Aren't you trying to tear them down? Don't you try to let them know where they now stand with you. Maybe you were close at one point, but no longer man. You're out!
- B. But this isn't how Jesus does it. He loves even those who have so grievously betrayed Him.
  1. So I said last time, Luke doesn't record it for us here, but Matthew in his account of this scene does. There we see that Jesus doesn't say: "Scum, how could you?!" No. He doesn't call Judas names. Instead He still calls him friend: "Friend, do what you came to do" (Matt. 26:50).
    - a. "Oh I know what you've come to do. But I also know, as far as I'm concerned, you are still my friend. My heart is still soft to you, brother. I still love you."

### Sighting #4: Instead of Touching to Hurt, He Touches to Heal

- A. We go where these disciples go, don't we? You caught that in vv. 49-50: "49 And when those who were around him saw what would follow, they said, 'Lord, shall we strike with the sword?' 50 And one of them struck the servant of the high priest and cut off his right ear."

1. It's the idea of self-defense, taking matters into your own hands, exacting vengeance, that sort of thing.
    - a. And here's what's so interesting: These guys do initially ask Jesus for His opinion it would seem, right? *"Lord, shall we strike with the sword?"*
      - i. But here's the problem. They don't wait around for the answer. They assume they know. They go with that first impulse, with their gut.
- B. And isn't that like us?
1. We may pray for a moment about people that have hurt us, ask God for help, ask Jesus what we should do, but we always kind of imagine He's on our side in this and they'd agree—yup we should go after them, yup we should give them what they've got coming, or whatever.
    - a. We can make a good religious show on the surface, but we run off ahead to get what we want: vengeance, make them pay, give them an earful. And we leave Jesus to clean up the mess we've made.
- C. And that's just what He does here, v. 51: *"But Jesus said, 'No more of this!' And he touched his ear and healed him."*
1. There is perhaps no sweeter picture in all the gospels than this. I mean slow this scene down. Freeze the frame and really take it in. Here we are taken into the very heart of our Savior.
    - a. Before Him is a man who has been ordered to seize Him and drag Him away.
    - b. And yet when one of Jesus' boys hurts this man, His heart wells up not with secret satisfaction, but overwhelming compassion. He does not commend His disciples and crack a smile in this man's direction. No! He rebukes His disciples and sheds a tear. Instead of touching to hurt this man, He touches to heal.

### Sighting #5: Instead of Taking Their Lives, He Lays Down His Own

- A. For us it's self-preservation at all costs. If they're trying to smear my reputation, well I better smear theirs even more. If they're trying to stab me in the back, well I'll take them down them from the front. Whatever I've got to do.
- B. But that's not the way of Jesus. You know, on the surface of this narrative, we might be prone to look and think: "Oh poor Jesus, look evil got the upper hand. He's been betrayed, backstabbed, swindled, and now He's really in trouble."
  1. But that's not what's happening at all. No one is taking His life from Him. He's laying it down in love.

- C. I've brought this out previously, but the word for "betray" here—v. 48: "Judas, would you betray the Son of Man with a kiss?"—it's the Greek word *paradidōmi*. It means "to deliver over."
1. And, yes, on one level that is what Judas is doing here. He's delivering over the Son of Man to death.
  2. But on another level, we see that it is not ultimately Judas who's responsible for this. But Jesus Himself. Paul uses that same word elsewhere to make this point crystal clear:
    - a. Gal. 2:20: "I have been crucified with Christ. It is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me. And the life I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave [Gk. *paradidōmi*] himself for me."
    - b. Eph. 2:2: "[W]alk in love, as Christ loved us and gave [Gk. *paradidōmi*] himself up for us, a fragrant offering and sacrifice to God."
      - i. Judas isn't the one delivering Jesus up here. Jesus is delivering up Himself—in love for the very people who've come looking to kill Him.

How?!

- A. And so now the burning question we have to answer here is: How?! How did He have the emotional and spiritual resources and wherewithal here to love His betrayers like this? Where does this sort of thing come from? What enables it?
1. If I'm called to "walk in love" as He has loved me (Eph. 2:2) . . . how in the world do I do it?

## (2) How He Loves His Betrayers

### 3 Steps

- A. Some of us no doubt have been hurt badly. Maybe even this last week, you've got someone on your mind. You feel betrayed.
1. The stuff gets us dizzy and off-balance, doesn't it? We kind of lose our minds a bit. We lose track of what's up or down, left or right. Our emotions sabotage us, blind us perhaps to what we should be doing next.
- B. But this text offers help. And I want you to see it. I'll put forward three steps.
1. The first two we'll see with Jesus here and talk about what that means for us.
  2. The last one is uniquely ours to take. I think you'll see what I mean when we get there.

### Step #1: Wrestle in Prayer

- A. I imagine we are prone to see Jesus here in this text—calm, composed, gracious and loving—and think: "That's just not me. Of course He can do it. He's God. He's something else. I'm just a fallen sinner. I'm not going to be able to follow Him in this." And we kind of silently excuse ourselves from the matter.

1. But when we do this we forget from where we've just come in Luke's gospel and all that it's taken for Jesus to get to this point.
  - a. By this I'm simply recalling what we called the agony in Gethsemane—where Jesus is not calm and composed, He's crying and on His face in the dirt, so stressed out of His mind He's sweating blood.
  
- B. In other words: We cannot divorce the peace we see in [Luke 22:47-53](#). from the battleground we saw in [Luke 22:39-46](#). That wrestling with His Father in prayer there was the hinge upon which all of this turned.
  1. That's where He got a hold of His anger and His fear and His pain and brought it into submission to God. That is where He received fresh help and resolve to face the hard road ahead.
    - a. Yes Jesus is fully God, that is true, but as we've said, He is also fully man. And as a man, He had to wrestle in prayer with His Father about these things. You remember it: ["Father, if you are willing, remove this cup from me. Nevertheless, not my will, but yours, be done"](#) ([Luke 22:42](#)). At least three times He prays on this. "I don't like this. I don't want to do it. Remove this cup!"
  
- C. And, of course, the cup as we saw was first and foremost about the wrath of God against sin that He would have to drink down on our behalf.
  1. But surely, as He considered what was coming, it also hurt our Savior's heart to think about the fact that He would be betrayed and rejected by men, even by some of His closest of friends.
    - a. David writes of the pain of this sort of thing in [Ps. 55:12-14](#): [" <sup>12</sup> \[I\]t is not an enemy who taunts me— then I could bear it; it is not an adversary who deals insolently with me— then I could hide from him. <sup>13</sup> But it is you, a man, my equal, my companion, my familiar friend. <sup>14</sup> We used to take sweet counsel together; within God's house we walked in the throng."](#)
      - i. The fact that we had once been so close makes this hurt so much more. And Jesus knows, Judas is coming. So what does He do? He wrestles in prayer.
  
- D. And when He's done, pleading and bleeding, when the Father has sufficiently heard and supplied fresh strength, only then does He come out with a sense of peace and composure about it all.
  1. As John records His words to Peter after the whole ear-cutting incident: ["Put your sword into its sheath; shall I not drink the cup that the Father has given me?"](#) ([John 18:11](#)).
    - a. He's at peace here, but only because He's just been through war.
  
- E. You see, we're prone to take our hurt and our anger and go straightaway at the other person.

1. We immediately make war a horizontal thing. “You hurt me, I’m going to pick a fight with you.”
  2. But we miss it. Jesus engages in warfare—spiritually, vertically, we could say—first, before anything else. He comes and talks to God about the pain, about the hurt, about how He doesn’t want the cup. He wrestles with God in prayer about it.
    - a. And you and I need to do the same. God invites us to do the same. He can help us in that place. Take your ferocity, take your anger, take the intensity of your emotion, the burden of your pain, the bitterness and the gall, and go to God with it. Cry, yell, beg. He can handle it. He’ll meet you there.
- F. You know some of us may be familiar with that story about David and Saul where, you remember, Saul is jealous of David and wants to kill him, and David’s hiding in a cave and Saul doesn’t know he’s there, he comes into relieve himself. It’s dark. And David could’ve killed him, some say he should’ve killed him—“You can end this right now!”—but he doesn’t. Instead he sneaks up in the dark and takes a little cut of cloth from Saul’s robe, so Saul knows, He could’ve taken me down, but he didn’t. I’ve been shown mercy even by my enemy.
1. So when Saul realizes all this we’re told in [1 Sam. 24:16ff.](#) that he “<sup>16</sup> . . . lifted up his voice and wept.<sup>17</sup> He said to David, ‘You are more righteous than I, for you have repaid me good, whereas I have repaid you evil. . . .<sup>19</sup> [I]f a man finds his enemy, will he let him go away safe? So may the LORD reward you with good for what you have done to me this day’” (vv. 16b-17, 19).
    - a. Nobody acts like this towards his enemies. I try to kill you. You try to kill me. That’s how this world works. This throws a wrench in the gears. Where does that come from?
- G. And you know what? David tells us. Not here explicitly. But in one of the psalms that was thought to be written while he was in this cave. You see David tells us his secret, how we get this kind of love even for those who have betrayed us.
1. [Ps. 142.](#) Let me just read this to you, including the superscript at the front (which, by the way, these are included in every known Hebrew & Greek manuscript of the Psalms that we have): “<sup>0</sup> A Maskil of David, when he was in the cave. A Prayer. <sup>1</sup> With my voice I cry out to the LORD; with my voice I plead for mercy to the LORD. <sup>2</sup> I pour out my complaint before him; I tell my trouble before him. <sup>3</sup> When my spirit faints within me, you know my way! In the path where I walk they have hidden a trap for me. <sup>4</sup> Look to the right and see: there is none who takes notice of me; no refuge remains to me; no one cares for my soul. <sup>5</sup> I cry to you, O LORD; I say, “You are my refuge, my portion in the land of the living.” <sup>6</sup> Attend to my cry, for I am brought very low! Deliver me from my persecutors, for they are too strong for me! <sup>7</sup> Bring me out of prison, that I may give thanks to your name! The righteous will surround me, for you will deal bountifully with me.”
    - a. Did you hear that? What’s he doing here? He’s wrestling with God in prayer. That’s what this is. Is he scared? Does he feel upset by how he’s been treated? Is he tempted to take matters into his own hands? Yes, of course. But before he makes

war on Saul, he brings all that stuff to prayer and makes war there. Wrestles, struggles. I love that line there in v. 2: “I pour out my complaint before him; I tell my trouble before him.”

- H. This is David in the cave. This is Jesus in Gethsemane. This is the first step to loving your betrayer and showing kindness even to those that hurt you. Wrestle in prayer.

## Step #2: Rest in the Plan

- A. As we wrestle with God in prayer, we come to find rest in His plan. We’re brought to remember His word and His promises and we’re enabled to surrender to His will because we can see more clearly that, though it may hurt quite in the moment, He’s got good for us in the end.
- B. We see this with Jesus in what He says there at the very end of our text, vv. 52b-53: “<sup>52b</sup> Have you come out as against a robber, with swords and clubs? <sup>53</sup> When I was with you day after day in the temple, you did not lay hands on me. But this is your hour, and the power of darkness.”
  - 1. It’s that last phrase that I want to fasten in on here. Here’s where we see Jesus has a sort of eternal perspective on all that’s taking place here. In other words: He sees the plan. “But this is your hour, and the power of darkness.” What does that mean?
    - a. Well “the power of darkness,” it’s clear from other texts like Eph. 6:12; Col. 1:13 refers to the powers of Satan in particular.
    - b. And the reference to this “hour” recalls all the places where Jesus had already spoken of an hour to come. All along the way it always refers to the hour of His death, the hour of the cross (cf. John 12:23, 27; 13:1; 17:1).
      - i. As He says to His slumbering disciples in Mark’s account of all this: “Are you still sleeping and taking your rest? It is enough; the hour has come. The Son of Man is betrayed into the hands of sinners” (Mark 14:41).
- C. And I say this is particularly relevant to our discussion here, because it is a reference to a certain time which implies a certain timeline, and more than that it implies a certain plan. In other words, it’s as if Jesus is saying: “Okay evil and darkness, according to My Father’s plan, this is your hour. You’re right on schedule.”
  - 1. And through prayer He’s come to be okay with it. He has fresh strength to face it. He has renewed perspective on it. He can rest in it. He knows it’s good.
- D. Now when I say perspective, here’s what I mean, and I want you to hear this for your own life as well. I love this.
  - 1. When we come to see things in light of God’s plan, we realize that the power of darkness may get an hour, but the goodness of God will get an eternity. Did you catch that?



- a. As David says in [Ps. 30:5](#): “Weeping may tarry for the night, but joy comes with the morning.” Hang on. God’s not done. Evil, sorrow, pain, betrayal, it doesn’t get the last word here. They don’t get to pen the closing chapter of this story. God does and it’s going to be a good one!
  
- E. This is how Jesus can turn with compassion and kindness even for His betrayers and enemies. He doesn’t have to worry about defending Himself, getting a word in, demanding justice and all this. His Father will do that.
  - 1. Let evil have its hour on Friday. Sunday is coming and the sun that rises on that day will never set! God will vindicate Jesus and take the horror of the cross and make it the glorious means of our salvation.
    - a. Again, the power of darkness may get an hour, but the goodness of God will get an eternity!
  
- F. We saw this piece too back with David in [Ps. 142](#) where he closes it out with a note of confidence: [Bring me out of prison, that I may give thanks to your name! The righteous will surround me, for you will deal bountifully with me \(v. 7\).](#)
  - 1. You will! That’s who you are. You won’t leave me in this prison. You’ll vindicate me. You’ll make good from all this. That’s why I can love even those who are out to kill me.
  
- G. This is what enabled Joseph to forgive and love on his brothers though they had betrayed him and left him for dead. You remember that story. They come back to him groveling, afraid he’s just going to kill them for what they’ve done. And he says: “<sup>19</sup>Do not fear, for am I in the place of God?<sup>20</sup> As for you, you meant evil against me, but God meant it for good, to bring it about that many people should be kept alive, as they are today.<sup>21</sup> So do not fear; I will provide for you and your little ones.’ Thus he comforted them and spoke kindly to them” ([Gen. 50:19–21](#)).
  - 1. He could see God had a plan and that was turning the hard stuff for good and that He would make all the wrong right. So Joseph could sheath his sword and love even his enemies, confident in this, resting in this.
  
- H. And you know what, you can too. Don’t short-circuit the good plan of God by taking matters into your own hands. I need justice now. I need to get vengeance now. No!
  - 1. Wrestle with Him in prayer on that. Rest in His plan. And go love on and bless your betrayers.

### Step #3: Remember Your Place

- A. Remember I said, the first two we learn from Jesus. This last one is ours alone. Here’s what I mean by this . . .
- B. When we are hurt, when we are betrayed, we like to put ourselves in the place of Jesus here, we are innocent, we would never do such a thing to another person. They are a special kind of evil. How could they do this to us, I couldn’t even imagine it.

1. We separate ourselves from them and esteem ourselves as better. And this leads to our self-righteousness, our vindictiveness, our justifying of treating them poorly.
- C. But we must remember, as we discussed last week, in this scene in our text, we are not standing in the place of the innocent Jesus. No! We are standing in the place of Judas.
1. We are the betrayer, the sinner. We've used Him like a genie for His stuff and gone other places when He didn't deliver. We've traded the glory of God for that of this world. That's where we are. That's our place. And yet . . . .
    - a. Instead of pulling away from us, Jesus lets us draw near.
    - b. Instead of slapping us in the face, He turns His cheek for a kiss.
    - c. Instead of calling us names, He calls us His friends.
    - d. Instead of touching to hurt us, He touches to heal.
    - e. Instead of taking our lives (as He well should of), He lays down His life in love for us . . . to save us, forgive us, bring us back in.
- D. And the whole point of remembering our place here is to say if Jesus would come and love and bless you and show you such grace, how in the world can you then turn and withhold it from another?
1. That's the thread that runs through the whole Bible, from the OT to the NT.
    - a. So, for example, in [Deut. 10:19](#), God says to Israel you have to "love the sojourner . . ." in your midst. Why?! "[F]or you were sojourners in the land of Egypt" . . . and I loved you. My love, my grace doesn't stop with My people it moves through them to the world.
    - b. Or, to give you a NT text, [Eph. 4:32](#): "Be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another. . ." Why?! For ". . . God in Christ forgave you."
- E. Jesus died so that we might be reconciled to God, sure. But also so that we might reconciled to others.
1. When we treat others like beyond pale of forgiveness we undermine our own experience of grace and we expose the fact that we haven't yet really been transformed by it.
    - a. We still think god loves us because we were not all that unlovable, not all that bad. That's why we imagine ourselves justified even before God when we withhold forgiveness from others. Our sin wasn't as bad as theirs. It makes sense God would forgive me. It makes sense that I wouldn't forgive them.
      - i. At the end of the day our unforgiveness says less about our betrayers and more about ourselves. That's what we must see. We don't yet get grace.
- F. When we truly receive grace, we are therein prepared to give it . . . to all!
1. Because whatever they've done to us, and it can be bad, it isn't the least of what I've done to my Savior. And He loves Me still. (10,000 talents vs. 100 denarii)

- G. So listen, don't justify your bitterness. Bitterness is a boomerang. The mortal blow you mean for your betrayer circles back and lands on you.
1. If you need proof of this just look at Judas. He's readying the gallows for our Savior here in Gethsemane but by the end of the gospel it's his own neck that's in the noose.
- H. Bitterness, unforgiveness, hardness of heart, it only hurts you. Don't go this route. Don't cut yourself off from the current flow of God's grace. Let it move through. However hard it is. However much it hurts. There's healing here.
1. Wrestle with your Father in prayer.
  2. Rest in His sovereign and good plan.
  3. Remember your place as an undeserving recipient of free grace.
    - a. And show that grace and kindness to others. It will revive your bones. And it may just revive your relationships and witness as well.