

JESUS & THE PRETENDER

———— MATTHEW 26

MAIN TAKEAWAY

Judas was a pretender, but Jesus is the perfect example. Don't let someone else's inconsistency keep you from following the only one who is consistent, Jesus Christ.

INTRODUCTION

As your group time begins, use this section to introduce the topic of discussion.

Why might someone pretend? Share an example from your personal experience.

**Why is Judas Iscariot perhaps the most paradoxical and wicked man in the Bible?
What have you learned from his bad example?**

UNDERSTANDING

Unpack the biblical text to discover what the Scripture says or means about a particular topic.

HAVE A VOLUNTEER READ MATTHEW 26:14-25

Judas was complicit in his decision to betray Jesus. What motivated Judas (John 12:5-6; 13:2)? What results from such desires (1 Timothy 6:10)?

Judas was a pretender, actor, and performer. What is hypocrisy, and why is it so harmful? How can someone avoid hypocrisy?

Even though Jesus knew what Judas was up to, He demonstrated love to the very end. How did Jesus offer Judas one last chance to repent? What does this show you about the love of Christ?

HAVE A VOLUNTEER READ MATTHEW 26:36-50

Based on Jesus' response to spiritual attack, what should we do in times of uncertainty? How have you done this?

How did Jesus display His divine power? In what way did He go to the cross as a victor, not as a victim?

***Judas willingly ignored all of Jesus' warnings.* How does this reveal the way that sin is a powerful intoxicant? Describe the power of sin.**

What made Judas' actions so abhorrent and hypocritical? How did Jesus respond?

HAVE A VOLUNTEER READ MATTHEW 27:1-5

Judas was remorseful, not repentant. What is the difference between these two responses (2 Corinthians 7:10)? What do personal conviction and guilt prove? Why won't a true child of God continue to live in a pattern of sin (1 John 3:9-10)?

Judas and Peter both failed Jesus. What was the difference in their response? What does this imply about how you should go to Jesus with your failure?

APPLICATION

Help your group identify how the truths from the Scripture passage apply directly to their lives.

***Satan wanted Jesus to be tortured, humiliated, murdered, and stopped. The Father wanted Jesus to be sacrificed, atoning, and risen.* How does this reveal the way God can use evil for His redemptive purposes? How does this give perspective and hope?**

Pastor Greg said, "Don't let someone else's inconsistency keep you from following the only one who is consistent, Jesus Christ." How have you personally responded to hypocrisy? How do you remain focused on following Jesus even when others don't?

Jesus reached out with love to the very end (John 13:1). How does the love of Christ compel you to respond with faith and repentance?

PRAYER

Give thanks for Jesus' love and perfect example. Pray for renewed perspective about the reality of hypocrisy as you follow Jesus. Pray for those who may be pretending. Rejoice in Christ's death and resurrection for you!