

Discussion Guide: Four Hallmarks of Betrayal

They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and to the fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer. Acts 2:42 (NIV)

October 27, 2002: "Four Hallmarks of Betrayal" by Jim Livengood - Elder CPC . Using the life of Judas Iscariot, Jim contrasted what happens when we choose comfort, cash and career over Christ. Such a life often leads to disappointment, disillusionment, despair and self destructive behavior. By contrast, a life with Christ at the center can lead to personal peace and our being a light unto the world.

According to the Dictionary ¹, betrayal is an action that betrays someone or something. If you betray someone who thinks you have their support and love, you *are disloyal to them*. If you betray someone's trust, confidence, etc. or you betray your principles, you *fail to act* in the good and morally correct way that was expected of you.

Jim Livengood described the four hallmarks of betrayal as...

1. Betrayal is an inside-out matter. Judas appeared on the outside to have it all together...as CFO for the disciples, highly trusted, looked good to others and his actions were unquestioned. Although Judas followed Christ with the other disciples, his heart was not in the work of the Lord. Judas chose cash over Christ as he stole from the treasury ², and comfort over Christ as he feared for his life/lifestyle and betrayed Jesus...for 30 silver coins." ³
2. Betrayal has to be done in the face of God's love. Jesus unconditionally loved his disciples ⁴...in spite of their weaknesses and his foreknowledge of what actions they would take. Yet Judas did not repent and turn from his ways, but laid himself wide open for Satan's bidding ⁵.
3. Betrayal must occur in spite of His last minute grace. God shows his grace towards us by providing us with opportunities to mend our ways and turn back to him ⁶...but the choice is up to us.
4. Betrayal is usually a very stubborn thing. Those involved in it are usually willfully driven toward their personal agenda and goals, which can ultimately lead to their own self destruction ⁷.

Discussion Questions: In what ways do we betray Jesus? In what ways can we demonstrate our loyalty to Him?

Encouragement: Let us encourage one another to walk worthy of our high calling and make appropriate changes that the Holy Spirit leads each of us to make.

¹ Collins Cobuild English Language Dictionary

² John 12:6

³ Luke 12:22-34 and Matthew 13:22 and 40-42, 16: 24-28 leading to 26:14-16.

⁴ John 13:1

⁵ John 6:64, 13:2 and 13:27

⁶ 1 Corinthians 10:13

⁷ Matthew 27: 3-5.