

Who was Thaddeus?

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Preacher: Rev Roddy J Campbell

[0 : 0 0] the Lord's blessing. Let us turn to the Gospel of Matthew and chapter 10. The Gospel according to Matthew and chapter 10, and we'll read at verse 2. The names of the twelve apostles are these. First, Simon, who is called Peter, and Andrew, his brother. James, the son of Sepide, and John, his brother. Philip and Batholomew. Thomas and Matthew, the tax collector. James, the son of Alphaeus, and Therdeus, Simon the Seloth, and Judas Iscariot, who betrayed him.

The list that we have in Matthew of the sending forth of the disciples is very interesting. In the Gospel of Mark, we are told that the disciples were sent out by Jesus in pairs, that he sent them forth two and two. So we ask ourselves, who travelled with whom? Well, Mark states that the disciples were sent out in pairs. It is Matthew who names the pairs as they were probably sent out. And among the pairs that he mentions here in verse 3, we have James, the son of Alphaeus, and we have Thaddeus. Among the most obscure of the twelve disciples, there are three. There is James, the son of Alphaeus. We know very little about him, except that he is named as one of the disciples. There is Thaddeus. Again, we know very little about him. And there is Simon, the Seloth. All we know about him is that he belonged to that political party that was known as the Seloth. He was what we would call today a terrorist. If he was alive today, he would be on the wanted list of terrorists. However, this evening we are going to focus in on Thaddeus. Every one of the disciples has a great lesson for us. And this evening we would like to focus in and see what we can learn from this disciple, this man called Thaddeus. Now we know that in your margin of your Bible, it will say that some manuscripts give him another name. And if you have your AV Bibles, you'll find that name there, Labeus, called Thaddeus. Well, regarding this man, Thaddeus, he is designated by more names on the list of disciples than any of the other twelve disciples that we find in that list. He is designated here in our version as Thaddeus. He is designated in the AV in Matthew by Labeus and Thaddeus.

[4 : 1 3] And in Luke and Acts, he is called Judas, the son of James. Or if you have an AV Bible, it is the brother of James. But just for a moment, let us look at these names. The name Labeus and Thaddeus are names that are added to his proper name by those who knew him well. They are names that give us an insight into his character and personality. The name Thaddeus means a breast child.

And the name Labeus means heart child. It could mean that Judas, which is his proper name, that Judas had a tender, childlike heart. When we look at the list of disciples, we see the variety of personalities and backgrounds that make up the band of disciples. the followers of the Lord. There were fishermen. There was a tax collector. There was a cellar. And now we find among them a man with a childlike heart, a childlike personality and character. But despite their different personalities and backgrounds, they were united together as followers of the Lord Jesus Christ. Well, as we noted, his proper name was Judas. In Luke and Acts, he is said to be Judas, the son of James. Or if we have the AV, it is the brother of James. And the reason for that, when one translation has been called the brother and another the son of, is that it is the son of James. That's literally what is written in the original. Judas of James. Some attach to that the brother of James. Others attach to that the son of James. But who was this Judas? Can we really identify him? There were two persons with the name Judas who were disciples of Jesus. And as we read there in the Gospel of John, Judas, the son of James, is designated Judas, not Iscariot, to distinguish him from the Judas who betrayed the Lord.

[7 : 1 3] It is interesting that in the Gospel of Luke chapter 6, where the calling of the disciples is recorded, that both are paired together. And Judas, the son of James, and Judas Iscariot, which also was the traitor.

Yet what a contrast there was between them. There was Judas of a tender, childlike heart, and Judas, the traitor, who was full of greed. But who is this Judas? There is in the Bible a man named Judas, who was the brother of James, and who wrote the book of Jude. But he was a half-brother of Jesus, and was not one of the twelve disciples. For we are told in John chapter 7, that even his brothers did not believe on Jesus until after the resurrection, it was after the resurrection of Jesus that his brothers came to faith. So it is not possible that this Judas was the half-brother of Jesus and of James.

In fact, it is not possible to identify this Judas upon whom we are focusing this evening, who was among the disciples of Christ, except that he was Judas of James, possibly a brother or a son of a man called James.

We don't know his background or the circumstances in which he met with Jesus. We are not told when, where, where, or how he met with Jesus, but we know that somewhere, at some time, that he did meet with Jesus, and that he was converted. And that is what is important. That there was a personal contact with Jesus, which changed the direction of Jesus Christ. Whatever his past may have been, what is important is where we find him now, and what he is now, and how he is spiritually standing now.

And for me and you tonight, that is what is important. The most important thing for me and you tonight are, where are we standing now, spiritually speaking, in relation to the Lord Jesus Christ.

[10:02] Whatever our past may have been, what is important is how do we stand now in our relationship with God. Some people attach a great importance as to the place and time of their conversion or their meeting with Jesus.

But where scripture is saying emphasis is here with Judas is not where, or when, or how, but the emphasis is that Judas had an encounter with Jesus, that he was now a follower of Jesus, and that he was now living close to Jesus.

That he was converted, and that he was now in fellowship and following Jesus. And what is important for me and you for our salvation is that we have a personal encounter with Jesus, that we stay close to Jesus, and that we follow Jesus.

However, of the three most obscure of the disciples that we have mentioned, James, the son of Alphaeus, and Simon, the cellar, Judas has one comment that he made, and it's been recorded for us.

And that is why we read in John chapter 14. Because there is his comment recorded for us. It took place in the upper room the night before the crucifixion, as Jesus was preparing them for his departure, and it is centered around the comments that Jesus made.

[11:52] In the upper room during the discourse that Jesus has with his disciples, he is interrupted three times, as we read there in John 14.

First by Thomas, then by Philip, and then by Judas, not Iscariot. Jesus, rather, never rebuked his followers whenever they interrupted, because he knew that their hearts, he knew their hearts, and he knew that they were eager and anxious to learn.

Jesus here was encouraging them and promised that he would send the Holy Spirit, the helper, to them, and that the Holy Spirit would make real his presence among them.

Jesus had said to them in his discourse around the table, yet a little while, and the world will see me no more, but you will see me because I live, you also will live.

Whoever has my commandments and keeps them, he it is who loves me, and he who loves me will be loved by my Father, and I will love him and manifest myself to him.

[13:13] Then we are told by John that Judas, not Iscariot, said to him, Lord, how is it that you will manifest yourself to us and not to the world?

And that's the only comment that is recorded for us in the Gospels that this man uttered. Lord, how is it that you will manifest yourself to us and not to the world?

Judas could not understand how Christ would manifest himself or make himself known to his disciples and not to the world.

Now we must remember that Judas, along with the other disciples, were thinking of an earthly kingdom where Jesus would manifest his glory, that he would set up his kingdom and reign from Jerusalem, where he would manifest his glory to the world.

And he could not understand how he was going to manifest himself only to his disciples and not to the world. One commentator writes and says, If Judas had known what the world is and what human heart is by nature, instead of being puzzled at the Lord's withdrawal from the world, he

would have wondered how Jesus could reveal himself to any man.

[14:43] Although Judas lacked understanding regarding the kingdom that Jesus was setting up, nevertheless, I think his sentiments are often found among believers.

For those of us who are believers tonight, don't we very often stand amazed whenever we think of this world where there are multitudes upon multitudes who are still blind and spiritually ignorant, who have never come to behold Jesus as the saviour of sinners, yet he has manifested himself to you.

Does it not leave you so often amazed how many in the world to whom Jesus is unknown, to whom they are still blind and spiritually ignorant, and yet Jesus has manifested himself to you?

Do you ever think of those who sat under the same teaching as you have, who had the same privileges as you had, who heard the same gospel as you heard, who had the same opportunities as you had, yet the Lord opened your heart, and you asked yourself the question, why me, Lord? What have I ever done to deserve such grace and such mercy for the Lord to enter my life? And that is how we find Judas here with these sentiments.

[16:37] Judas stood amazed that Jesus had manifested himself to him and a band of disciples and was still hidden from the world. I think from Judas' line of questioning, we can detect a desire on behalf of Judas that Jesus would manifest himself to the world.

And I am sure that there is no child of God that hasn't got that desire, that Jesus would manifest himself to the world.

However, Jesus is going to teach Judas, and he's teaching Judas and others that the kingdom of God is invisible.

It is one that is marked by love, one that is marked by obedience, and one that is marked by devotion, one that is marked by confidence in the word of God, what the word of God is, and what the word of God says.

Listen again to what he says. Whoever has my commandments and keeps them, he it is who loves me, and he who loves me will be loved by my Father, and I will love him and manifest myself to him.

[18:15] Those who have the word of God and keep it, and those who have the word of God, keep it and do it and love it.

Jesus says, I will reveal myself to that person. He will reveal himself to those whose love is shown by submission to his word.

To such Jesus manifests himself. But to those who ever does not love me, does not keep my words. In other words, those who do not believe or trust or commit themselves to Jesus or show any devotion to him but continue in their disobedience, these are left in darkness and spiritual blindness.

That is exactly what Jesus had taught to Nicodemus at the beginning of his public ministry, is it not? When he said, Truly, truly, I say unto thee, except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.

The spirituality that belonged to the kingdom of God was so difficult for the disciples to grasp at this time. They all had an earthly and worldly view of the kingdom of God.

[19:45] Judas, along with others, were looking for a Messiah that would establish an earthly kingdom and get rid of the Romans. And Jesus replied to Judas and he says to him, If anyone loves me, he will keep my word.

And my father will love him and we will come to him and make our home with him. Jesus was teaching Judas and the others that his kingdom was a spiritual kingdom that was set up in people's hearts.

Not an earthly kingdom. Not a physical kingdom. But a spiritual kingdom that was set up in people's hearts.

He was teaching them that he manifests himself in the hearts of people. Jesus reveals himself in and through people's hearts.

Scripture says that when a person becomes a believer that the spirit of God dwells in that person. Now if any man have not the spirit of Christ, he is none of his.

[21:05] Therefore you can see the life of Christ manifested in a person's life whenever they come to love the Savior and they seek to obey him.

They are obedient to his word. They love his word. They want to keep his word.

They want to do his word. Because Jesus manifests himself through the word. He manifests himself in a cultivating love and devotion, surrender and commitment in people's hearts.

That is what happens when the spirit of God comes to indwell in a person. that spirit cultivates love and devotion, surrender and commitment.

And Jesus will not manifest himself to those who are in the paths of disobedience. If anyone loves me, he will keep my word. That is the ultimate test.

[22 : 14] If any man or anyone loves me, he will keep my word. Do we love him?

And if we love him, do we love his word? And if we love him, are we keeping his word?

Maybe tonight you are torturing yourself because you are so much aware of your own weakness and failure in keeping his word. but I ask you tonight, is there deep down in your heart an intense yearning desire to please God, to do his will and to walk in full harmony to his word?

That yearning may be stronger at times than at other times, but what I am asking you is, is it there? a yearning desire to please God, to do his will and to walk in harmony with his word.

You see, the Lord lays great emphasis upon the desire of the heart because it is on the heart that God looks.

[23 : 39] The psalmist in Psalm 38 could say, I am feeble and crushed. I groan because of the tumult of my heart. O Lord, all my longing is before you.

My sighing is not hidden from you. Man looks on the outward, but God looks on the heart.

Maybe we lack the boldness to say that we have kept his word, but the Lord knows the longings that there is there within our hearts, the desire, the intense, the deep desire that is there within our hearts.

Simon Peter, he acted in a way that contradicted any love to his Lord by denying him three times. And yet, when the Lord asked him the third time on the shore of the Sea of Galilee, do you love me? What was Peter's reply? Lord, you know everything.

[24 : 45] You know that I love you. Whatever outwardly, inwardly, there is that deep, intense desire in my heart to love you.

It is comforting for us to know that when at times we feel so cold and so out of true spirituality spirituality that the Lord can investigate our heart and see the desire that is there to please and to honour him.

So, I ask you tonight, do you have that desire in your heart to please the Lord and to walk in obedience to his word and in harmony with his word?

Regarding Judas, apart from the recording of that one comment, only his name remains with us. While his life and labour are immersed in obscurity, nevertheless, he is named among the twelve disciples who later became apostles.

We don't know the circumstances in which he met with Jesus. We are not told when, where, or how he met with Jesus. But we know that somewhere, at some time, that he did meet with Jesus and that he was converted and that is what's important.

[26 : 19] We don't know anything about his background, but he stayed close to Jesus and when Jesus chose twelve men from among his followers and formed them into a select band of disciples, he was later to become apostles, he was among them.

And he was sent out preaching like all the others and came back with the same stories of success like the other disciples. He was among the disciples who forsook the Lord at the time of his death, but he was with the rest of the disciples when Jesus appeared to them after his resurrection.

He was with the disciples at Bethany when the Lord ascended to heaven and commissioned them and said to them, go ye therefore and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost, teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you.

And lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world. He was among those disciples who hold a special place within the history of redemption and of the church.

church. It was to men like Judas that the gospel was first entrusted and he like the rest that was chosen by Christ became the foundation stones of the church with Christ himself being the chief cornerstone.

[27 : 45] We are not told that Judas was a great philosopher or that Judas was a famous teacher or that Judas was a great orator but that he was just an ordinary man whose labour and influence in the gospel would be under the power of the Holy Spirit.

This is consistent with the way the Lord works. Paul, writing in Corinthians, says, where is the one who is wise? Where is the scribe? Where is the debater of the sage?

Has not God made foolish the wisdom of the world? For since in the wisdom of God the world did not know God through wisdom it pleased God through the folly of what we preach to save those who believe.

Ordinary men, labouring and serving Christ, but under the power of the Holy Spirit, their message been blessed to sinners.

Paul goes on to say, God chose what is wise to wise to shame the strong. God chose what is low and despised in the world, even things that are not, to bring to nothing things that are, so that no human being might boast in the presence of God.

[29 : 26] Judas, like the rest of the disciples, apart from Judas Iscariot, were men who were not seeking their own glory. The passion that drove them to say it was that the name of Jesus might be glorified.

tradition says that Judas, a few years after Pentecost, took the gospel to a royal city in Mesopotamia, into the region that we now know as Turkey.

Although we know very little about him, it shows how God uses ordinary people in remarkable ways. what is important was that there was a personal contact with Jesus which changed the direction of his life and that he became a follower of Jesus Christ.

Whatever his past may have been, what is important is where he is now, what he is now, and how he is spiritually standing now. And what is important for you tonight is not your past, but where do you stand now?

Where do you stand at this very moment in your relationship with Jesus Christ, in your relationship with God? That is what is important. Not your past, not your background, but where you stand now in relationship with God, in relationship to Jesus Christ.

[31 : 02] Whatever your past may have been, what is important is where are you now, and what are you now, and what is your spiritual standing now before God.

For me and you tonight, that is what is important. Where we are standing now in relation to the Lord Jesus Christ.

Whatever our past may have been, what is important is how do we stand now in our relationship with God? And as I have already said, you know, when we look at the list that makes up the apostles, there's so much to teach us.

How this band was brought together by Jesus to be his followers. When we think of Matthew, the tax collector, the one who was working for the Roman governor, collecting taxes from the Jews, a hated man, and then Simon the seller, who belonged to that political party of the sellers.

You know, when you think of Matthew sitting there along with Simon, there were enemies at one time. Simon would have put the dagger right deep into the heart of Matthew at one time.

[32 : 26] And yet here we find them followers of the Lord Jesus Christ. Oh, the transformation that the grace of God can do in bringing people from different backgrounds together.

And we find here Thaddeus, that childlike person, here along with Matthew and along with Simon. We find fishermen, all the group, the differences Jesus, that there was, and get brought together by the grace of God.

And what the grace of God has done in their lives, the grace of God can do in your life as well. Open your heart to the Lord.

Commit yourself to him. Trust in him. Remember, and if you bring nothing else away tonight, whether you have closed your ears to everything that has been said to this time, maybe looking at your watch, maybe looking at your clock, and maybe saying, well, when is this all over?

[33 : 49] When is it all over? When can I get away from all this? Or maybe you're here and you're saying, oh, the same thing again and again and again.

Well, my friend, I bring you the same message, and I bring it to you again because it is so urgent. The gospel is urgent. The gospel is not tomorrow, the gospel is now.

Now is the appointed time. Now is the day of salvation. And it is so important because your relationship with God will deter your eternal destiny.

If you are not reconciled to God when death comes, and death can come at any time, if you're not reconciled to God then, then it is hell.

That's the start truth. We can't polish it. It is hell. So the urgency of being in a reconciled relationship with God, and how can I be in a reconciled relationship with God?

[35 : 02] Only one way, commit yourself to Christ. Become a follower of Jesus Christ. Stop trying to make yourself good.

Stop trying to make yourself perfect. Stop trying to polish your life. Come as you are, a hell deserving sinner. Come to the feet of Jesus Christ.

Commit yourself to him. Trust in him. Become a follower of Jesus Christ. It's necessary to end on how much theology you know.

Christ himself will teach you the theology you know. What is important is that you come to Christ. What is important now as we part one from another, what is important is how do you stand in your relationship with God?

[36 : 04] How do you stand in your relationship with Jesus Christ? And you can continue and leave this place and forget about it before you reach home or forget about it tomorrow or forget about it on Tuesday.

But one thing I assure you, you cannot stand at the judgment seat of Christ and say I was never told, I never heard.

Because you have been told and you have heard. The importance and urgency of this matter of being sure that you are in a reconciled relationship with God, that you make your peace with God, that you come to know the peace of God in your own heart, that you will be brought into a reconciled relationship with God through the Lord Jesus Christ.

There is no other way, no other way. I am the way, the truth, and the life. It is Jesus only.

And my dear friend, remember, your eternal destiny depends upon your relationship with God. And may that be for you and me, a reconciled relationship through Jesus Christ.

[37 : 37] let us pray. to Hash■r'm a guest. Let us pray for you.