

Day 3

Jesus Loves the Betrayer & Denier

Today's Focus: *Search me, God, and know my heart; test me and know my anxious thoughts. See if there is any offensive way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting. (Psalm 139:23-24 NIV)*

Judas took control of his life rather than trusting his Lord. He walked with Jesus through his entire ministry, being a first-hand witness to the numerous miracles Jesus performed. In other words, Judas knew better than to do anything but trust Jesus with his desires and his life. Oh how history seems to repeat itself. We aren't all that different than Bible times as we'd like to think. Sure, our wardrobe has changed but our hearts are prone to wander all the same.

There was a time in life I had been trying to play tug-o-war with God over control of my life. Here's the real deal with that though, God is in control regardless of how I felt about it so he was no active participant in this game. I was deep in this game all on my own but I didn't see that clearly. Sin does that, blinds us from seeing what Jesus makes so perfectly clear. I could have just dropped the rope and ran to him, but I didn't because that tight grip and the blisters starting to form made me feel tough. What I didn't know was those blisters that made me feel tough were infected with pride and oozing with arrogance, that I was nearly dying and had no idea. You see, the Enemy thought had me for good and was laughing at me all along. The reality is, Jesus was about to perform one of the grandest miracles my eyes have ever seen- the saving of my soul.

What about you? Below, is a diagram for you to complete. The purpose of this is to spend time with the Lord, asking him to reveal areas of your life you've been unwilling, like I once was, to surrender to Him. You may have a few that come to mind right away but don't just stop there. We tend to be fickle creatures and not hang on for the full healing as if to trade in our five course meal for the "fast food" version of healing. Full healing is what we are after in this exercise and it may take some searching, prodding, and

probing (ouch) to reveal our hearts in the most true form, vulnerable. **Judas missed this type of healing but you don't have to.**

Truth for Your Soul: *Truly I tell you, if you have faith as small as a mustard seed, you can say to this mountain, 'Move from here to there,' and it will move. Nothing will be impossible for you.* (Matthew 17: 20 NIV)

Directions for Tug-o-War Diagram (on the last page for today): **On the far left side** above the line, draw a stick figure. This stick figure will represent you. **On the far right side** above the line, draw a cross to represent God. **The line represents the rope.** **Below the cross**, I want you to jot down all the ways God's been faithful to you in the past. This is your history with Him, your personal proof of His faithfulness. If there is any scripture that comes to mind, record it here. **Below the stick figure**, jot down when God began to draw you into relationship with Him. Add any details surrounding life events that might be valuable. Above the rope, I want you to list all the areas of your life you've been fighting for control (family, comfort, fear, success, job, school, etc). Please do not shy away from being specific here. Finally, **below the rope**, confess and repent of each area of life that makes you crave control rather than trusting Jesus as if you are playing tug- o- war. Like David, the in book of Psalm, call and cry out to God as you pour out your heart's desires, confessing your hurts, and trusting he will bring full healing. Pouring out your hurts and pain **for the sake of soul healing** will never be a wasted effort.

Truth for Your Soul: *"In repentance and rest is your salvation..."* (Isaiah 30:15 NIV)

This is a necessary stop on our journey. Rest up through repentance with your Savior. Tomorrow we embark a little lighter as we leave some baggage at this stop.

