

Loving Darkness Rather than Light

John 13.21-30

Deeply troubled, Jesus announces that one of His disciples is going to betray Him. Thus is set in motion the events which will end with Jesus' crucifixion. But even in this dark time, during which the ultimate evil in all history will occur, the opening words of John's Gospel give hope.

Anatomy of a Sin

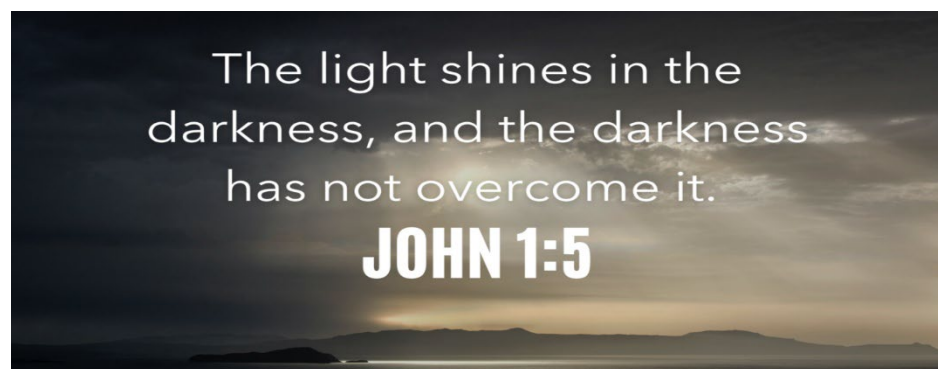
- We don't know what Judas' motives were
- Satan plants the idea of evil in our hearts (13.2)
- Faced with a conscious choice, Judas *chose* sin (13.27a)

How Sin Works

- Satan's approach hasn't changed since the Fall (Gen. 3.1-7)
- Lust, sin, death: Perverting God's plan (Js. 1.13-15; 1 Jn. 2.16)
- "To one who knows the right thing to do..." (Js. 4.17)

It was night, but the Light shines in darkness

- The power of darkness: Satan, Judas, Jesus, and night (Lk. 22.53)
- Preferring darkness to light, because deeds are evil (John 3.19)
- The darkness cannot overcome the Light! (John 1.5)



1. "Away In A Manger" is a favorite Christmas song for many. A line from it says this: "Little Lord Jesus, no crying He makes." Did baby Jesus never cry? Some people think of Jesus as being so Divine that He was immune to human feelings of discontent or anxiety, but this is not borne out by Scripture. In John 1.21, John writes that Jesus "became troubled in spirit." Let's do a little word study: The Greek word translated "deeply troubled" is *ταράσσω* (*tarassō*). It is used six times in John (5.7; 11.33; 12.27; 13.21; 14.1, 27). What kind of feelings does this word describe? What do the three times where Jesus is deeply troubled have in common? Why (and on what basis) does Jesus exhort us to *not* be troubled?
2. Compare and contrast the description of Satan's activity in the heart of Judas in John 13.2 and 13.27. What do you think it means that the devil had "put into the heart of Judas" to betray Jesus? What does it mean when it says that after Jesus gave Judas the morsel, "Satan entered into him"? Can you think of ways that Satan has used this 'two-step approach' in your life?
3. Are some sins worse than others? In Numbers 15.22-31, how does God differentiate between sins committed by Israel? Can you think of sins that are 'unintentional'? How does Satan promote sin (see James 1.13-15)? How did he do this with Eve in the Garden of Eden (Gen. 3.1-7)? Three 'classes' of sins are listed in 1 John 2.16; can you see all three of these in Satan's tempting of Eve?
4. John contrasts "light" and "darkness" in John 1-12 (read 1.5; 3.19; 8.12; 12.35, 46). References to "night" also seem to communicate a spiritual significance (3.1; 9.4; 11.10). If Jesus and His message is symbolized by "light" and "day", what are the spiritual properties of 'darkness' and 'night'? In John 13.30, we read that when Judas went out to betray Jesus, "it was night." Is this significant? Read Jesus' words to the Jewish religious leaders who conspired with Judas to have Him arrested (Luke 22.53). Does darkness have a power? Did Satan use 'the power of darkness' to promote the arrest of Jesus? Does he use it to promote evil today?