

# THE KISS OF A PRETENDER

|| Group Discussion Guide ||

*Matthew 26:40-50*

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1

In each of the initial lists of the twelve disciples in the synoptic gospel accounts, the gospel writers include some information about Judas Iscariot—what is that information and why would they have wanted their readers to know this from the beginning? (Matthew 10:4, Mark 3:19, and Luke 6:16)

2

What does it mean to betray or to be a traitor? What would the opposite of betrayal be?

3

What role did Judas play among the disciples? (cf. John 12:6, 13: 29) What is ironic about his having this position of responsibility? Can we think of other examples of people attaining the very positions they are most likely to abuse?

4

When Jesus tells his disciples that one of them would betray him, no one immediately suspected Judas (John 13:22). What does this indicate about how well Judas had become at pretending? At leading a double life?

5

Is being a pretender a possibility in the life of Christian? How can we guard against leading a double life in our faith?

6

Jesus knew that he had a thief for a treasurer and a betrayer for a disciple. Why didn't he expose Judas or turn him out?

7

Do we question God when he allows the plans of the wicked to unfold? How does the story of Judas give us insight into how God works?

8

Jesus spent the moments before his betrayal in prayer and fellowship (Matt 26:40-45)—how would following these same practices help us be prepared for the betrayals and setbacks we don't see coming?

9

Judas marks out Jesus with a kiss—a common greeting that implied respect. How does this gesture amplify the pain of his betrayal? Consider how it aligns Jesus with the words of Psalm 55:12-14.

10

It's difficult to know what exactly motivated Judas' betrayal (monetary gain, disillusionment with ministry, political aims) but we are told that "Satan entered him" (Luke 22:3, John 13:27). As we study the book of Acts, anticipating the coming filling and empowerment of the Holy Spirit, how does this moment in Judas' life demonstrate the outcome of being filled and empowered by the spirit of Satan?

