



Great and Holy Wednesday. God Is Not a Tool to Help You Reach Your Goals

Holy Wednesday is a unique day. Today we bethink ourselves of the sinful woman who washed the Saviour's feet with her tears and anointed them with precious myrrh at the house of Simon the Leper, thereby preparing Christ for burial. Here as well, in pretence of caring about the poor, Judas reveals his covetousness and he sets out to betray Christ for thirty pieces of silver the same evening.

One can't help but think, how could such a brazen betrayal happen? I found the answer when I carefully checked the meaning of this text in the ancient Greek. Apparently, Judas did not carry the money box, but carried away what was inside, acting as something akin a treasurer for Jesus. In other words, as St. John writes, he was a thief. And it was important for him to be around Christ just to satisfy his lust for money. If Christ had become king, he, Judas, would have become the king's treasurer, the most influential person in Israel after the Messiah. In his dreams, he already saw himself no longer in charge of apostles' money box, but of the treasury of the richest state in the history of mankind.



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Blinded by his lust for riches – and the devil was not far behind him either – Judas betrayed Christ. At the same time, the thought that He, that Christ, could really be killed never even entered his mind. So, when he saw that the plan he had worked out to the last detail – to force Christ to reveal himself as the Messiah –



had fallen through and Christ was led to be crucified, he threw the money back to the high priests in despair and went to hang himself. The devil rejoiced. For it was his, and not Judas's plan of getting rid of that strange and dangerous Jesus.

Judas's whole problem was that he was trying to impose upon Christ his personal understanding, his personal plan for life. Blinded by passion, he could not recognize the ugliness of his nascent betrayal. He could not feel that it was not what he wanted, that someone else subtly and cunningly pushed him to betray Christ. For this reason, he not only honestly believed that he was doing the right thing, he believed that he was doing the only right thing, that he was acting by far better than all the other stupid and lazy disciples. Had he stopped, thought, calmed down, and come to his senses, it is possible that he would not have been branded with that terrible stigma of betrayal.

And so, every time we hear the priest say before communion, "nor will I give Thee a kiss as did Judas," we ought to remember that God is not a tool to help us reach our goals. He Himself is our main goal. He Himself is the way, and the truth, and the life itself.

Translated from the [Russian](#) by Maria Nekipelov