

# “THE GREAT PRETENDER”

John 13:18-30

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## INTRODUCTION

How can God allow bad people to hurt good people? Why do the wicked prosper? Why do godly people suffer?

These questions have troubled people since the beginning of human civilization. Such questions can be asked and answered in one special relationship as shown in our current passage—the relationship of Jesus Christ to Judas Iscariot.

Judas was one of Jesus disciples; he had every advantage and opportunity that one could ask for. Yet, he turned on Jesus and betrayed Him into the hands of sinful men so that Jesus was brutally treated and crucified.

“The hour and power of darkness” was evident in all of this. It looked as though wickedness was winning and that righteousness was losing.

That is the trouble with our analysis of situations here in this life—it “looked as though” that was the case, but it was not! *The Lord was in total control of His circumstances; Judas was not, neither was Satan.*

Judas was “The Great Pretender”; he gave every appearance of being a true disciple of the Lord. None of the other disciples suspected him as a traitor. Evidently none of the people to whom the disciples ministered suspected him either. Even the Lord Jesus had not warned his disciples and prepared them for what was about to happen, they would have been caught totally off guard.

Jesus had already told them that He knows His sheep; Judas was not one of them. After warning His disciples, Jesus proceeded to dismiss Judas in order that he would speedily accomplish his nefarious deed. Judas succeeded only in fulfilling the Father’s will, and the will of the Lord Himself. It was the most important part of His mission to lay down His life for His sheep.

**You must know that God is in complete control—what happens is by His design.**

**SO IT IS IN YOUR LIFE ALSO!**

### I. JESUS KNOWS HIS DISCIPLES (18-20).

A. Judas is not blessed by doing what he knows of God’s will (18).

1. He betrays all kindnesses.
2. He fulfills Scripture. (Jesus’ choice of Judas fulfills God’s plan.)

B. The other disciples are blessed (19).

1. They see that Jesus is not “blindsided” by Judas’ betrayal.
2. They see that Jesus has all under His control.
3. They see that He is God (the “I AM”)

- C. The Mission Continues (20).
  - 1. The Father sent the Son.
  - 2. The Son sent the apostles.
  - 3. Believers receive the apostles, the Son, and the Father.

## II. JESUS WARNS HIS DISCIPLES (21-26)

### A. The Statement (21)

### B. The Confusion (22)

### C. The Question (23-26)

- 1. The person addressed—the “beloved disciple”—John (23)
- 2. The person directing the question—Peter (as usual!) (24)
- 3. The method of asking the question (25)
- 4. The method of answering the question (26)

## III. JESUS DISMISSES THE BETRAYER (27-30)

### A. Jesus is in total control (27)

- 1. Satan enters Judas.
- 2. Jesus commands Judas—act more quickly; it is time!

### B. The Disciples are totally unaware (28-29)

- 1. They heard Jesus’ words but did not understand them.
- 2. They interpreted the words differently.
  - a. Judas needed to carry out a treasurer responsibility for the feast
  - b. Judas needed to give charity to the poor.

### C. Judas is totally Lost (30).

- 1. He went out.
- 2. It was night.

## CONCLUSION

The worst deed ever done was a fulfillment of God’s plan.

The worst betrayer who ever lived fulfilled God’s plan.

The greatest pretender who ever faked discipleship was a tool in the Lord’s hands in order to accomplish His will.

Do you ever get concerned that the enemy seems to be winning?  
Are you ever concerned that the deceivers are winning the battle?  
Are you upset that God’s people seem confused and bewildered?  
Does God’s program seem to be falling apart?

Learn a lesson from our Lord in this passage. **He knows what He is doing, and He is winning!  
He will accomplish His will.**

He gives us His commission and we must go forth as His representatives (v. 20).

The betrayer has not stopped nor changed the Master’s program!