

DEVOTIONAL

Hollywood Prayer Network

BETRAYAL

Betrayal is one of the worst things we can do to another person. What do we do when we feel betrayed by a friend or a family member? Jesus is the expert at understanding betrayal. This week, take a look into Jesus' response to His betrayal and learn to become good at knowing how to handle this hurtful but human issue.

DAY 1

WOE TO THE BETRAYER

"YOU CAN'T BETRAY YOURSELF TOO OFTEN,
OR YOU BECOME SOMEBODY ELSE."

- ED HARRIS

New International Version

Luke 22:22

The Son of Man will go as it has been decreed, but woe to that man who betrays him.

Luke 22:48

Jesus asked him, "Judas, are you betraying the Son of Man with a kiss?"

DAY 1

PRAY: Dear Lord, I ask that You help me never to betray You. Please give me the strength to do what You ask of me, regardless of how hard or scary or sacrificial it may be. I want You to be proud of me and I want to stand firm as a faithful follower of Yours. I don't want to act like I'm obeying You, then turn on You instead. Lord, help me to learn from Judas and never to be like him. Thank You for giving me what I need each day to be faithful to You always. I pray in Jesus' name. Amen!

REFLECT: We always think that it will never be us! We'll never be the one to let God down. We'll never be the one to turn on Him, deny Him, disappoint Him, or run from Him. But we are all only one-step away from disaster at every moment. That's what keeps us needing the Holy Spirit, because we can't stay pure, honest or faithful without His help. When have you betrayed God out of fear, disappointment, anger, or frustration? Like Judas, did you try to trick Him by doing it with a kiss? We all have the potential to be Judas.

DAY 1

ACT: Focus in on one time that you may have turned against God—in words or actions—and ask forgiveness. Don't be ashamed, for we all do it at some point. It may be obvious or subtle, but either way, if you can recognize it then you have less of a chance of ever doing it again. God forgives us but we learn and grow by coming to Him with our sins and even our shortcomings. After asking forgiveness, ask the Lord to have His Holy Spirit nudge you the next time you're tempted. He'll answer that prayer and you are then on the road to becoming more Christ-like.

DAY 2

DON'T TURN AWAY, STAY FAITHFUL!

"WHAT WAS THERE TO BE GAINED BY FIGHTING THE MOST EVIL WIZARD WHO HAS EVER EXISTED?" SAID BLACK, WITH A TERRIBLE FURY IN HIS FACE. "ONLY INNOCENT LIVES, PETER!" "YOU DON'T UNDERSTAND!" WHINED PETTIGREW. "HE WOULD HAVE KILLED ME, SIRIUS!" "THEN YOU SHOULD HAVE DIED!" ROARED BLACK. "DIED RATHER THAN BETRAY YOUR FRIENDS, AS WE WOULD HAVE DONE FOR YOU!"

-J.K. ROWLING, *HARRY POTTER AND THE PRISONER OF AZKABAN*

Matthew 24:10

New International Version

At that time many will turn away from the faith and will betray and hate each other.

DAY 2

PRAY: Dear Heavenly Father, will You keep me growing in my faith so that I never turn away from You? For I know that turning away from You will lead me to betray and hate other Christians. If I can stay faithful to You, then I will stay faithful to other people and not betray or hate them. I want that! But, I need You to help me. Thank You. Amen.

REFLECT: One of the biggest struggles for Christians is other Christians! We all have stories of being lied to, cheated and betrayed by other believers. Are you a victim of that as well? Have you ever done that to someone else? It's often the result of turning away from God. If you've been hurt or betrayed by another believer, can you forgive them and pray for them and their walk with the Lord? Even Hollywood has a reputation of betrayal being a part of the culture. And the stories of betrayal that they tell have a powerful influence on our culture. Australian singer Nick Cave says, "Film seems to be a medium designed for betrayal and violence." God knows that many will turn away from the faith and will betray and hate each other. Can you be different and actively choose to stop that from happening?

DAY 2

ACT: Take five minutes to pray for the Christians in Hollywood who struggle with betrayal and hate from other believers. As on any mission field, it's the believers who often turn on other believers. Would you pray for these people to seek Jesus more passionately and treat the other believers with love, honesty and respect? People hurt other people because they are broken, and Christians are no different! And it's worse when we're not walking closely with the Lord. So your prayers to heal the believers in Hollywood could change our culture.

DAY 3

PASSIVE BETRAYAL

"I'VE BEEN ON THE FLOOR AND I'VE BEEN
HEARTBROKEN. I DIDN'T KNOW HOW I WAS
GOING TO STAND UP. BUT I JUST GAVE IT
TIME."

-SANDRA BULLOCK

Matthew 26:45

New International Version

Then he returned to the disciples and
said to them, "Are you still sleeping and
resting? Look, the hour is near, and the
Son of Man is betrayed into the hands of
sinners."

DAY 3

PRAY: Jesus, have I ever betrayed You without knowing it? Have I fallen asleep when I should have been praying, obeying, serving, or giving? I want to be walking with You and not betraying You out of laziness, weariness, or complacency. Help me to always be there for You. I don't want to betray You with my passivity and put You or me into the hands of sinners. I need Your help to stay awake, sharp and aware of obeying You and serving others so as not to betray You Lord. I pray this in Jesus's name. Amen.

REFLECT: Turning from God is not always an active, conscious choice. It is sometimes a passive, subtle or even unconscious choice. When have you let God down, even to the point of betrayal, just by not seeking Him, listening to Him or actively obeying Him? Have you sensed Him telling you something, but you haven't done it because you don't want to, or you're too tired? How can you be more pro-active with your faithfulness to your Lord? How can you stay awake when He needs you?

DAY 3

ACT: Remember a time when someone popped into your mind and you thought to call them, but you didn't. Or maybe a time when you wanted to check in on a friend or a co-worker, but you were just too busy, or too tired? Why don't you call that person now? Or stop by and let them know they are on your mind? And choose in the future to listen to the nudges of the Holy Spirit or to God's still small voice. For if you fall asleep or get tempted to rest when you know you should be responding to the Lord, you will be betraying God. Be aware, be sharp, and actively seek God's face and voice. Then, step out to minister to your friend, family, or co-worker right now!

DAY 4

GOSSIP IS BETRAYAL

"TO ME, THE THING THAT IS WORSE THAN
DEATH IS BETRAYAL. YOU SEE, I COULD
CONCEIVE DEATH, BUT I COULD NOT
CONCEIVE BETRAYAL."

-MALCOLM X

New International Version

Proverbs 11:13

A gossip betrays a confidence, but a
trustworthy man keeps a secret.

Proverbs 20:19

A gossip betrays a confidence; so avoid
a man who talks too much.

DAY 4

PRAY: Dear God, I don't want to be a gossip for that is betraying the person I'm talking about. Help me to hold my tongue. The consequences are bigger than I had realized and so I need You to help me not talk against anyone else, even if it's to have someone pray. I need to bring my thoughts about other people to You and not talk about them to others, for I don't want to betray friendships or any personal relationships. But I can't do it without You. Thank You God, for holding me accountable for my words. I trust, because of Your guidance, I will be a person of integrity and trustworthiness. Amen!

REFLECT: When have you talked about a person behind their back and betrayed a confidence? Or when have you turned a frustration about another person into a prayer request, so that you could talk about your hurt? Gossiping is so easy and yet we don't realize it's a betrayal of a relationship. How can you stop saying anything negative or gossipy about others so that you will be a trustworthy friend, brother, sister, employee and a Christ-like believer?

DAY 4

ACT: Identify the last time you talked about another person without them knowing it. Were you betraying a confidence? If so, identify what you did and choose not to do it again. Don't justify or rationalize your behavior if you talk about other people in privacy. If we ever say something that we don't want the person we're talking about to hear, then it's gossip and a betrayal. Choose right now to repent for any betrayals in your past and commit to seek God, and hold your tongue from this moment on.

DAY 5

DO NOT BETRAY THE REFUGEE

"I COULD NEVER HURT HIM ENOUGH TO
MAKE HIS BETRAYAL STOP HURTING. AND IT
HURTS, IN EVERY PART OF MY BODY."

- VERONICA ROTH, *INSURGENT*

Isaiah 16:3-4

New International Version

Give us counsel, render a decision. Make
your shadow like night at high noon. Hide
the fugitives, do not betray the refugees.
Let the Moabite fugitives stay with you; be
their shelter from the destroyer." The
oppressor will come to an end, and
destruction will cease; the aggressor will
vanish from the land.

DAY 5

PRAY: Father in Heaven, I call out to You to give me an understanding of refugees and my part in protecting them. I need You to show me how I can be their shelter from whatever is trying to threaten and/or destroy them. I need Your wisdom on the role that refugees play in my life. Do I pray for them? Do I actively help people who have been displaced? I don't want to betray them. I am crying out to You because I don't know what to do! Amen.

REFLECT: Christians in America are often sheltered from the injustices happening in other parts of the world. And yet, one of the great needs is to help refugees who have been betrayed by their governments. Christians and non-believers alike are thrown out of their countries and have nowhere to go. What do you think your place is dealing with the world's refugees? Are you called to take action? Can you pray? Have you thought about this as a betrayal? Jesus tells us that we are to help the orphans, widows, and refugees. How does this aspect of betrayal impact your life?

DAY 5

ACT: Can you start a discussion with people close to you about this new look on refugees? It's a timely hot topic in our nation, both in churches and in politics, and yet, has anyone ever thought of it as a betrayal? You may not know a refugee personally but you can bring up the conversation that as a Christian we need to pray for, protect and/or help refugees who have been betrayed by the very people who should be helping them. Even opening up the discussion can be a way for you to help with this problem in our world. Choose, now, who your first conversation will be with on this topic.

DAY 6

BETRAYED BY A FRIEND

"SOME PEOPLE ARE WILLING TO BETRAY
YEARS OF FRIENDSHIP JUST TO GET A LITTLE
BIT OF THE SPOTLIGHT."
-LAUREN CONRAD

Psalms 55:12-14

New International Version

If an enemy were insulting me, I could
endure it; if a foe were raising himself
against me, I could hide from him. But it is
you, a man like myself, my companion, my
close friend, with whom I once enjoyed
sweet fellowship as we walked with the
throng at the house of God.

DAY 6

PRAY: Oh Lord, heal my heart from the wounds of friends, family members, co-workers, and my neighbors who have betrayed me. Please forgive them for their betrayal and me for my anger. You have warned me that other people will betray me, just as many people betrayed You. Please give me the strength and the wisdom to not take it personally but to forgive those who have hurt me, pray for them, and then move on, with my eyes on You. Amen.

REFLECT: We're not surprised when our enemies try to hurt us, but the wounds of a friend or a brother are painful and even heartbreaking. God warns us in Matthew 10:21 that "brother will betray brother, a father will betray his child and children will rebel against their parents." Can you recognize betrayals as spiritual battle and not as personal attacks? This will help you not to be hurt or to hide from the betrayer, but to forgive them and yourself, when you are either the victim or the cause of division, betrayal and personal offense. And we've been warned that it's often to or from a companion or close friend, so don't be surprised, but choose to enjoy sweet fellowship at the house of God.

DAY 6

ACT: Identify one friend or family member who has betrayed, insulted, or hurt you. You see from this verse that it has happened to God's people from the beginning of time, so choose now to forgive that person. God shows us through David to expect others to hurt us because we are all human. Forgiving the one who has hurt you will allow the Holy Spirit to heal both of your hearts, and it will change you both so that neither one of you will do it again.

DAY 7

RESCUE ME FROM TREACHEROUS BETRAYAL

"HAVE COURAGE FOR THE GREAT SORROWS
OF LIFE AND PATIENCE FOR THE SMALL ONES;
AND WHEN YOU HAVE LABORIOUSLY
ACCOMPLISHED YOUR DAILY TASK, GO TO
SLEEP IN PEACE. GOD IS AWAKE."

-VICTOR HUGO, POET, NOVELIST, ARTIST &
STATESMAN

Isaiah 24:16

New International Version

From the ends of the earth we hear singing:
"Glory to the Righteous One." But I said, "I
waste away, I waste away! Woe to me!
The treacherous betray! With treachery the
treacherous betray!"

DAY 7

PRAY: Lord, protect me from treacherous betrayers. As others praise Your name, I am struggling to the point of death due to people around me hurting me, disappointing me, lying to me, and crushing me. I need You to lift me out from the pit. I need You to redeem me and give me hope. I need You to protect me from evil men. I need You every moment of every day. Thank You for hearing my cry. Amen.

REFLECT: The whole world is turning against you and you can't handle it anymore. Don't you feel this way sometimes? Isaiah 24 lays out all of the evil in the world that the Lord will punish and it's even entitled "The Devastation of the Earth." And one of the things it lists is betrayal. Think about all the forms of betrayal and notice that it's only the Lord who can protect you from becoming angry, bitter and revengeful. Man is sinful and betrayal is rampant, so how do you make the world a better place, in the midst of betrayal all around you?

DAY 7

ACT: If you've been hurt by betrayal, you can cry out to the Lord right now with a "Woe to me!" Our God understands your hurt and frustration, especially from treacherous betrayers. His own Son was betrayed, so you can be open and honest with Him and call out to Him to take away your pain. God wants to hear from you and He wants to help you through all of the unfairness and injustice in your life. He is there for you this moment and wants to take your burdens. End this week with the freedom of trusting God to heal the betrayals in your life.