

May our heart be for Christ

Pascha Meditation by Deacon Adel Azer Bestavros (1924-2005)

Judas was a man of carnal desires who loved money... Even though he was preaching the Gospel and was accompanying the Lord Jesus during His earthly service, and even though he listened to Jesus' words, saw His ways, and experienced His tenderness, unfortunately, Judas' heart was not for Christ, but for money... His heart leaped joyfully whenever he thought about profits... Money was at the core of his being... The purse was the dearest and closest thing to him.

Satan knew this... He knew Judas' lust for money... And, he knew exactly how much money it would take to buy Judas... Yes, Satan knew how to seduce Judas and how to use him... What a disturbing thought: Judas' role as a disciple – who knew the comings and goings of Christ – made him the perfect agent to deliver Christ to His enemies...

A rational, heartless understanding of what is holy makes one susceptible to deceit and stubbornness... A true understanding of the Bible will always lead us to the feet of Christ, but a mere intellectual reading of the Bible as a book, without the heartfelt love for Christ, will make us instruments in the hands of the devil. That was the case with Judas with his heart of stone and love of money... His knowledge of Christ was devoid of love for Christ... So, the devil knew that thirty pieces of silver is all he needed to secure Judas' service – the heinous act of betraying his master...

Let's reflect on this disciple... Under an outer shell of pretense was a heart full of material lust, a heart with enough room for thirty pieces of silver, but no room for Christ! What a state to be in?! What a picture... What a warning to us all!

To all who practice heartless religiosity, reflect a bit on Judas! Recall his ways, reflect on his character, and remember how it all ended for him... He spoke about Christ, but he did not know Christ and he did not believe in Christ... And, as the son of perdition, he hanged himself, completing his demise...

Beware of heartless knowledge, of artificial piety, and of dogmatic religiosity... Beware of it all!

My beloved, pray and work so that your heart may be for Christ...