

They Could Not Cure Him

by Linville Dunaway, Corinth Christian church

Matthew 17:15-16, "Lord, have mercy on my son: for he is lunatick, and sore vexed: for oftentimes he falleth into the fire, and oft into the water. And I brought him to thy disciples, and they could not cure him." Jesus was on the mountain with Peter, James, and John, when the man brought his son, seeking Jesus. The other disciples were there and they tried to cure him and to cast out the unclean spirit, but were unable to do it. They tried to do as they had done before and were surprised that this time it didn't work. In **Matthew 10** Jesus had given them power to cast out unclean spirits and to heal the sick as he sent them out to preach the gospel. They cast out evil spirits, healed the sick, and returned rejoicing that they were able to do these things. However, on this occasion they were surprised and shocked to find that they could not help this possessed young man.

What made the difference? The power of God is the same every day, so the trouble was not

there. The problem was in the apostles themselves. It seems that the apostles got a little self-satisfied and thought that they had it figured out. Did they have the thought that as long as they used the name of Jesus everything would be easy for them? We should never get the idea that we are so good, strong, and close to God that we don't need to keep trying to grow closer to him.

The Lord let them know when he came back to them that there were some things that they could do and some they could not, at least without prayer and fasting. Then there are some things that they, man, cannot do at all. Reading the gospels we see that the disciples had a hard time understanding some of the things that Jesus told them. Looking at it from our view today we sometimes think that they should have understood more. But do we understand everything as well as we sometimes think we do?

I think sometimes of the elderly minister who talked to me when I was a young minister. With an air of confidence he said, "When you've been preaching as long as I have, you'll be able to look from the pulpit and tell who is saved and

who is not." Do you think that he actually could? I didn't then, and I still don't think that he, or any other man, can look and tell who is saved, or not. The Lord knoweth them that are his as we are told in **2 Timothy 2:19**, but we don't know. Still there are those who persist in acting like they are the Lord's people and if you don't agree with them about something, then you must not be saved.

The Lord can heal when man cannot. God cannot only restore life, but can restore hope, heal a broken heart, or a broken home. Man can't forgive a man's sins and make him right with God, only the Lord can do that. We can forgive someone for some wrong done to us, but that doesn't make them acceptable to God unless they have been forgiven by him.

While there are things that we can't do, we need to do the things that we can do. We can pray for each other, encourage one another, and help as we go through life. When someone is lost and needs salvation, direct them to the Lord. No preacher, priest, rabbi, or any other man can save anyone - only Jesus can.

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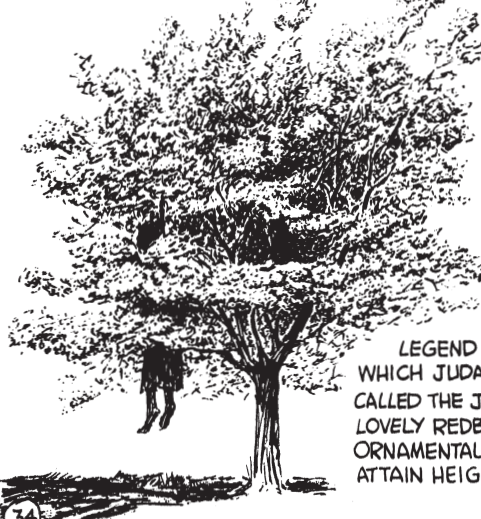
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JUDAS ISCARIOT, THE BETRAYER OF JESUS, WAS THE ONLY MAN AMONG THE ORIGINAL TWELVE DISCIPLES WHO DID NOT HAIL FROM GALILEE. THAT HE WAS STRONGLY DISLIKED FROM THE OUTSET BY THE OTHERS IS APPARENT FROM THE VERY WORDS OF JOHN (JOHN 12:6). JUDAS WAS THE TREASURER OF THE GROUP—"HOLDING THE BAG" WAS THE EXPRESSION THEY USED—DENOTING THAT HE RECEIVED ALL GIFTS AND MONEY CONTRIBUTIONS FROM THE PUBLIC, PAID FOR ANYTHING THE GROUP MIGHT NEED (FOOD, CLOTHES, ETC.), AND DISPENSED MONEY TO THE POOR, ALL IN JESUS' NAME. BUT JOHN SPOKE FOR ALL OF THEM WHEN HE SAID JUDAS WAS A THIEF WHO DIDN'T CARE FOR THE POOR AT ALL, BUT CARRIED THE BAG OUT OF HIS LOVE FOR THE MONEY THAT WAS IN IT AND THE SENSE OF POWER AND IMPORTANCE IT GAVE HIM!



WHY HE BETRAYED JESUS HAS ALWAYS BEEN A CONJECTURE OPEN TO LENGTHY DISCUSSION. SOME HAVE SAID IT WAS PURELY HIS GREED FOR THE THIRTY PIECES OF SILVER, OTHERS MAINTAIN IT WAS OUT OF ANGER AT THE REBUKE HE RECEIVED FROM JESUS... (JOHN 12:1-8). ANOTHER THEORY IS THAT JUDAS, ALWAYS ANXIOUS AS TREASURER TO GET MORE MONEY, SAW AN EASY CHANCE TO ENLARGE THE TREASURY WITH NO REAL DANGER TO JESUS—FOR, HE REASONED THAT THE SON OF GOD COULD COMMAND LEGIONS OF ANGELS TO RESCUE HIM WHENEVER HE WISHED! BE THAT AS IT MAY, ONCE THE DEED WAS DONE AND THE COLD LIGHT OF REASON REVEALED TO JUDAS THE ENORMITY OF HIS CRIME, HE REPENTED IN A FRENZY OF DISPAIR, HURLED THE BLOOD MONEY BACK AT THE PRIESTS AND RUSHED OUT AND HANGED HIMSELF!



LEGEND SAYS THAT THE TREE ON WHICH JUDAS HANGED HIMSELF (SINCE CALLED THE JUDAS TREE) WAS THE LOVELY REDBUD TREE, A FLOWERING ORNAMENTAL SHRUB WHICH CAN ATTAIN HEIGHTS OF FORTY FEET!

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