

How Spirit-Filled Believers Can Overcome the Bitter Sting of Betrayal

Betrayal is one of the most difficult human experiences to endure and overcome. Many don't realize it, but a real betrayal often has a traumatic impact on the soul of the individual who has been betrayed. Some of the symptoms of betrayal are identical to other life traumas, such as losing a loved one, divorce or a major life crisis. Often victims of betrayal will experience shock, restlessness, depression or raised blood pressure. One reason betrayal hurts so bad is because it comes from someone we held in confidence or with whom we were close in relationship.

Our Lord Jesus experienced a very trying and personal betrayal from Judas. Often, we think of Judas as "the bad guy," but we must remember that God divinely selected him to be one of the 12 disciples. Also, he traveled for possibly three years with Jesus, learning from Him and being used to share the message of the gospel. Jesus held Judas in esteem and considered him a close confidant within His inner circle. Jesus tells us betrayals will happen, but we are not to fear. Jesus reveals this to us in Scripture. John 13:16 (NIV) says: "Very truly I tell you, no servant is greater than his master, nor is a messenger greater than the one who sent him." If betrayals happened to Jesus at some point in life, we may experience the same.

Our Lord gives us some divine insights into how to handle the betrayals that take place. One would think that since Jesus knew in advance not only that he would be betrayed but who would betray him (see John 13:17-18), He would have mistreated Judas. Instead, Jesus dealt kindly with Judas and treated him no differently than the other disciples. Additionally, Jesus

extended mercy and forgiveness toward his enemies, including Judas, when He was suffering upon the cross. Our Lord uttered these powerful words in Luke 23:34 (MEV), "Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they do."

However difficult it is to forgive those who have offended us through betrayal, it is possible through the grace of God to forgive and overcome its bitter sting. First, we must be honest with God that we feel hurt and betrayed. Second, we must ask God for inner healing of our bruised soul. The Lord promised in Luke 4:18 "to heal the broken-hearted." In addition, we must begin to pray for the person who betrayed us. Through this mercy act of faith, God will give us a genuine love for the offending party and cleanse us through the power of forgiveness.

For more on the vital subject of surviving betrayal, listen to this episode of *This Is Freedom with Demontae Edmonds* on the Charisma Podcast Network now. {eo}

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