



## Lesson 9 STEP 1

April 30, 2006

Lesson 9 Focus:  
**God's forgiveness  
refreshes us.**

Lesson 9 Bible  
Basis:

**Hosea 14:1-7**

## Betrayal Burns

For 2,000 years Judas Iscariot has been reviled for betraying Jesus. Now a newly translated ancient document seeks to tell his side of the story.

The "Gospel of Judas" tells a far different tale from the four Gospels in the New Testament. It portrays Judas as a favored disciple who was given special knowledge by Jesus—and who turned Him in at Jesus' request.

The text, one of several ancient documents found in the Egyptian desert in 1970, was made public in an English translation by the National Geographic Society. National Geographic has put together a one-hour TV spectacular on the Gospel of Judas, which aired recently amid much media hype.

The newly translated document's text begins: "The secret account of the revelation that Jesus spoke in conversation with Judas Iscariot." In a key passage Jesus tells Judas, "You will sacrifice the man that clothes me." This indicates that Judas would help liberate the spiritual self by helping Jesus get rid of his physical flesh, according to the scholars.

<http://www.cnn.com/2006/TECH/science/04/06/gospel.judas.ap/index.html>

The Gospel of Judas is a Gnostic gospel. It frames the betrayal of Jesus by Judas as obedience to the instructions of Jesus, rather than a betrayal. The positive framing follows from the Gnostic notion that the human form is confining, and that Judas was to put into motion events that would release the Spirit of Christ from its physical constraints. [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gospel\\_of\\_Judas](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gospel_of_Judas)

Christian leaders and the Church rejected this "new gospel" and the heresy it supports—Gnosticism—as fiction as early as A.D. 180.

Judas Iscariot—Was he a betrayer or a hero?

If you go back to the Bible and read the account of Judas's betrayal of Jesus, you will get a much different picture from what is portrayed in the document promoted by National Geographic.



- ▶ **Have you ever been betrayed by a friend?**
- ▶ **If so, how did it make you feel?**
- ▶ **What happened to your relationship with the person who betrayed you?**
- ▶ **Now look at the other point of view: Have you betrayed someone close to you?**
- ▶ **Who have you betrayed?**
- ▶ **How did you feel after you betrayed this person?**
- ▶ **How did this person respond to your betrayal?**

Betrayal hurts and destroys relationships. The Book of Hosea is about betrayal. The betrayal Hosea experiences in his marriage is symbolic of man's betrayal toward God. Let's look at the Book of Hosea and see what God says can come after such betrayals.

[Continue on to Steps 2 and 3 in your Bible-in-Life *Middle School Teacher's Guide*; Step 4 appears below.]





## Applying God's Word

### Lesson 9 STEP 4

April 30, 2006

Lesson 9 Focus:  
**God's forgiveness  
refreshes us.**

Lesson 9 Bible  
Basis:  
**Hosea 14:1-7**

"God defend me from my friends; from my enemies I can defend myself."  
Ancient Proverb

Judas may be the most famous betrayer of all, but he is only one of many down through time. Think through history. It is filled with betrayals. Caesar and Brutus, Benedict Arnold and George Washington, Sir Lancelot and King Arthur. Or through the Bible: David and Absalom, Paul and Demas, Samson and Delilah. All these betrayals came from someone close to the betrayed.

Judas was a betrayer. How did he betray Jesus? With a kiss.

► **Betrayals can cut like a knife. They can be deeply painful. Why?**

Perhaps it is because our confidence is violated. Betrayal breaks trust—it feeds bitterness.

Michael Card has a song in which he sings:  
"Only a friend can betray a friend: A stranger has nothing to gain.  
And only a friend comes close enough to ever cause so much pain."

► **Why do you think that only someone who is close to us can betray us?**

Recall the incidents of betrayal in your life—when you were betrayed and when you betrayed a friend.

► **Is there a way to make things right? If so, what steps can you take?**

► **Are you willing to take those steps today to heal your relationships?**

Bring the pain of betrayal to God. He is able to refresh us even after someone close to us has let us down. Only God can heal our hearts completely so that we may trust again after a betrayal. And remember: God will never betray us. We humans will always fail each other in one way or another. Sometimes it is betrayal; sometimes it is merely human failing. We can choose to allow the Lord to heal our hearts so that we will experience the power of forgiveness that refreshes us—body, mind, and spirit.

Acts 3:19  
"Repent, then, and turn to God, . . . that times of refreshing may come from the Lord."

