



WORKTALK WEEKLY

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Welcome to the new format WORKTALKweekly

Special announcement

Geoff Shattock's new book *Jesus and the Racing Rat* is available now please visit [here](#) to order your copy.

Learning from the Shadows 5 - Critical Mass

Call it a tipping point, crossing a Rubicon or reaching critical mass there seems to come a point in the matters of people, when events take on a life of their own. You find yourself connected to forces outside of, and bigger than, you.

If the point is part of a process of success and achievement the experience is exhilarating. A big deal will go through, an appointment will be made, a product will sell or a breakthrough has been achieved.

If the point is part of a process of failure and disappointment then the experience is terrifying. A business will collapse, a bankruptcy will result, a job will be lost or a disaster cannot be averted. Rather than riding a wave it feels like being sucked into a vortex.

It is not easy to spot the exact moment when Judas passed a point of no return. Maybe there were many but Jesus' best friend uses two powerful phrases to describe what seemed to be the pivotal moment. "Satan entered Judas" was his first phrase.

John connects this entrance with a small act of receiving bread which was the coded sign Jesus gave to John that Judas was the traitor. So in the setting of a meal with his fellow team-mates, Judas becomes connected with a power bigger than himself.

It's hard to look around a boardroom table, a circle of chairs, or over the top of a desk and consider that anything invisible and sinister is happening. The concept of an evil presence entering an individual seems alien, distant and ancient. Yet here in the ordinary events of life an overlap exists with the dramas containing bigger characters and supra-plots which, although unseen, interact with our day-to-day stories.

Still, events today taking place in boardrooms, circles of chairs and over the desktops shape destinies, determine futures and influence millions.

Decisions which appear to be the most mundane can destroy the lives of others half a world and half a century away. Policies implemented, plans laid and practices played out can serve the kingdom of light or of darkness. Sometimes the door is opened and Satan enters in.

John's second phrase is as chilling as it is evocative. It is both a statement of fact and a verbal shiver. Four words, "and it was night". Somehow the events are moving all concerned towards the foreboding night. It was a darkness out of which Judas would never emerge. The darkness appears to be winning - it takes you back to the beginning of John's record when he describes the light coming into the darkness.

The truth of the matter, however, is that neither Judas nor Satan nor John nor the night are the central characters. This is not Judas' story it is the story of Jesus. All the dark maneuvering cannot mask what is going to be unmasked - namely that one person and one

person alone will not let the darkness win.

Jesus remains the dividing line, the hope and the measure against which everything is judged. Judas was not lost just by betrayal, but because he betrayed his only hope of being found. It was not night because the darkness was winning but because the light had not overcome it yet.

The darkness is real, Satan is real, the battle and the betrayal are real. The drama is played out in the ordinary events of life and work day by day. The challenge, as the darkness gets darker, the enemy more bold, the battle hotter and the betrayals more bitter is to hold on for all you are worth to the One on His way to the cross. This road is the hardest, darkest and loneliest of all. It leads, however, to an empty tomb - then, as John himself was to discover, it all begins to make sense.

Work well
Geoff Shattock

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BIBLE SECTION

John 13:21-30

21After he had said this, Jesus was troubled in spirit and testified, "I tell you the truth, one of you is going to betray me." 22His disciples stared at one another, at a loss to know which of them he meant. 23One of them, the disciple whom Jesus loved, was reclining next to him. 24Simon Peter motioned to this disciple and said, "Ask him which one he means." 25Leaning back against Jesus, he asked him, "Lord, who is it?" 26Jesus answered, "It is the one to whom I will give this piece of bread when I have dipped it in the dish." Then, dipping the piece of bread, he gave it to Judas Iscariot, son of Simon. 27As soon as Judas took the bread, Satan entered into him. "What you are about to do, do quickly," Jesus told him, 28but no one at the meal understood why Jesus said this to him. 29Since Judas had charge of the money, some thought Jesus was telling him to buy what was needed for the Feast, or to give something to the poor. 30As soon as Judas had taken the bread, he went out. And it was night.

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