

Consider Judas.

Judas met the Master the first year of His Public Life and immediately attached himself to His service. He seems to have been able to manage things, to have been a good administrator. He was the business man of the little group. But he let the business of making money and acquiring power close his eyes to his spiritual mission. He was always with the Master, saw the wonderful works He did every day, the multiplication of the loaves and fishes, the healing of the sick, the raising of the dead; he had even seen devils acknowledge the divine power of the name of Christ.

But....

His greed for money crowded his vision little by little, and his avarice for the things of the world gradually blinded him entirely to every spiritual beauty. The life he had entered upon with such enthusiasm soon began to weary him. It was rather a life of privation and sacrifice, this companionship with the Master. He began with the clear vision of faith and ended in blank infidelity. His very nearness to Grace Itself, the example of fidelity on the part of his companions, rankled in his warping soul. He closed his heart to every entreaty, even the divine entreaty of his Master, who still called him Friend. Intrigue followed quickly, blasphemy was added to treachery, despair succeeded to treason, and self-death and infamy closed the sad chapter of his life.

Why?....

How is it that one who began so well ended in ruin? No one all at once and immediately becomes thoroughly bad. He begins by venturing a little, taking a chance, wandering at short distances from the truth and from the straight line of honest action. Little by little he becomes accustomed to thus relaxing from the law, and then the habit becomes easy. Once that step is reached, things go from bad to worse, until finally the catastrophe happens.

Consider Peter.

He was the chosen one of the twelve. He had sinned enormously in denying the Master even by oath. He presumed beyond his strength, contrary to the very express admonition of the Master. His fall was due rather to human weakness than to malice. He realized quickly the horror of his sin, ran away from the occasion of it, and poured out his soul in the bitterness of his tears. He was overcome with remorse, but it was the sorrow of a son who has offended his Father, a sorrow which hopes, confides, loves. As soon as he realized the enormity of his offense, he summoned all the forces of his soul and determined to repair, as best he could, the evil he had done.

Then What?

He sought his Master, determined never to be guilty again. The proof of his pardon, the sign of utmost confidence, was the title of Headship of the Church which Christ gave him. Only God forgives and forgets. Why, in the presence of these two examples, should one ever forget that it is despair alone which can close out the mercy and pardon of God.

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There will be a Requiem Mass tomorrow morning at 6:30 for the repose of the soul of Father Walsh's mother. Spiritual bouquets should be completed today noon.