

John 12:6

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

This he said, not that he cared for the poor; but because he was a thief, and had the bag, and bare what was put therein.

Analysis

John provides editorial commentary: Judas spoke 'not that he cared for the poor, but because he was a thief.' This exposes the heart behind the words. Judas held the money bag and stole from it regularly. The Greek 'ebastazen' (bare) can mean 'pilfer' or 'steal.' John, writing decades later, reveals what wasn't evident then. This demonstrates that religious language and position don't prove genuine faith. Judas' theft while serving as treasurer shows the height of hypocrisy. His close proximity to Christ while remaining unregenerate warns against presumption.

Historical Context

The common purse was typical for traveling rabbi groups. The treasurer role required trust, making Judas' theft especially reprehensible. His sustained theft proved premeditated sin, not momentary weakness.

Related Passages

Romans 1:17 — The righteous shall live by faith

Hebrews 11:1 — Definition of faith

Study Questions

1. What does Judas' sustained theft while serving in ministry teach about religious hypocrisy?
2. How can we guard against using spiritual language to mask carnal motives?
3. In what ways does this warning challenge those in religious positions?

Interlinear Text

εἶπεν δὲ τοῦτο οὐχ ὅτι περὶ τῶν πτωχῶν ἔμελεν
he said G1161 This not because for G3588 the poor he cared
G2036 G5124 G3756 G3754 G4012 G4434 G3199

αὐτῷ ἀλλ' ὅτι κλέπτης ἦν καὶ τὸ γλωσσόκομον
G846 but because a thief he was and G3588 the bag
G235 G3754 G2812 G2258 G2532 G1101

εἶχεν καὶ τὰ βαλλόμενα ἐβάσταζεν
had and G3588 what was put therein bare
G2192 G2532 G906 G941

Additional Cross-References

John 13:29 (Parallel theme): For some of them thought, because Judas had the bag, that Jesus had said unto him, Buy those things that we have need of against the feast; or, that he should give something to the poor.

James 2:6 (Parallel theme): But ye have despised the poor. Do not rich men oppress you, and draw you before the judgment seats?