

Passion Week *Devotionals*

Spy Wednesday

by John & Molly
Sparrow

Read | Matthew 26:3-16

When I left my construction job to start my own business, I really wanted to do it the right way. I was excited about the prospect and felt like I was moving up in the world. Construction is a small world, and your reputation follows you, so I didn't want to leave on bad terms or create problems for anyone within my company. I gave a full two-weeks notice, finished my work well, tried in earnest to train my replacement to fill my role, and even told them that if they ever got shorthanded, I'd still be willing to help out. To my face, everything seemed fine. Conversations were normal, and there didn't seem to be any tension. I walked away feeling like I had handled it the best way I knew how.

But when I started trying to build my business, things got hard. I was bidding and receiving jobs from customers like crazy, but subcontractors who normally would have jumped at the work suddenly "couldn't" do it. It happened a few times until eventually the concrete subcontractor broke the news to me: the boss from my old company had been paying subcontractors to turn down my jobs. That one stung—not just because of the work I lost, but because I had tried so hard to leave with integrity. I had tried to do everything right, and yet someone was working against me behind the scenes. I didn't "do" anything to deserve that. I had done it all right, I had played by the rules.

It was an extra betrayal as I had worked for this man for 4+ years. I learned almost everything I knew about construction from him. I'd been to his kids' birthday parties. I thought we were friends and that he was proud of me for being able to start my own construction business in an area that was very different from his.

At the time, it felt like the worst thing that could happen. How was I going to feed my family? How was I going to pay the mortgage? How was I going to establish a business when I had this big fish in a fairly small pond trying to block, not even my success, but just my basic desire to make a livelihood.

Spy Wednesday | Page 2

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Looking back now, I can see that moment was really the beginning of something bigger, even though we didn't realize it at the time. We weren't walking closely with God then, and we certainly weren't seeking Him in those decisions. But the frustration and confusion started conversations between us about whether we were really supposed to stay where we were. Those conversations eventually led us to make a move we never would have imagined at the start of it all—leaving Idaho and moving to Kansas. What we couldn't see then was that God was already working through those circumstances, using that move to begin drawing us toward a real relationship with Him.

When I read Matthew 26:3—16, I'm reminded that even in Jesus' life there were people quietly working against Him. Judas' decision to betray Jesus must have felt like the ultimate devastation to the other disciples. From their perspective, it probably looked like everything was falling apart. The man they had followed, trusted, and believed in was about to be handed over by one of their own. In a way, they were right—it was the end of the world. But what they couldn't see in that moment was that none of it surprised God, and none of it was an accident. Judas' betrayal was part of a plan that would lead to the cross, the defeat of death, and the salvation offered to the whole world—to you and to me.

That passage reminds me that sometimes the things that hurt the most in the moment are the very things God uses to move us where He wants us. At the time, finding out someone was working against me felt discouraging and unfair. But looking back now, I'm actually grateful for it. That betrayal set a chain of events in motion that eventually led our family somewhere we never expected, and even more importantly, it was part of the path that led us toward a real relationship with God. What once felt like someone trying to hold us back became the very thing that pushed us forward into something far greater than we could have imagined. Just like the disciples couldn't see the redemption coming through the cross, I couldn't see then how God would use that moment—but now I can see that He was working through it all along.

Spy Wednesday | Page 3

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Reflection:

- *Is there a situation in your life where someone's actions felt hurtful or unfair, but looking back you can see how it may have redirected your path?*
- *What is your reaction when things feel like they are falling apart? Identify your gut reaction and brainstorm ways to change it to align to a more Godly reaction.*
- *The disciples thought Judas' betrayal meant everything was lost. Is there something in your life right now that feels like the end of the story?*

Prayer:

- *Write down the things in your life that feel painful, unfair, or confusing. Take time to pray over them, asking God for His will to be done. Ask Him—and thank Him—for taking these parts of your story and using them to build something far better than you could ever imagine. Invite Him to give you the faith to trust Him even when you can't see, or don't want to see, the whole picture.*
- *Thank Him that you are able to come to Him from a place of victory. Through Jesus, the battle has already been won and death has already been defeated for you.*
- *When you're finished praying, crumble, burn, or tear up the things you wrote down as a reminder that you are placing them in God's hands.*