

# Articles by J. Wilbur Chapman

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## The Wages of Sin

There is no incident that more forcefully illustrates sin's ruin than that connected with the painting of Leonardo DaVinci's great masterpiece, "The Last Supper". Long and in vain had the artist sought for a model for his Christ. "I must find a young man of pure life," he declared, "before I can get that look on the face I want". At length, his attention was called to a young man who sang in the choir of one of the old churches of Rome, Pietro Bandinelli by name. He was not only a young man of beautiful countenance, but his life was as beautiful as his face. The moment he looked upon this pure, sweet countenance the artist cried out for joy, "At last I have found the face I wanted!" So Pietro Bandinelli sat as the model for his picture of Christ.

Years passed on, and still the great painting, "The Last Supper," was not finished. The eleven faithful apostles had all been sketched on the canvas, and the artist was hunting for a model for his Judas. "I must find a man whose face has hardened and become distorted," he said; "a debased man, his features stamped with the ravages only wicked living and a wicked heart can show". Thus he wandered long in search of his Judas, until one day in the streets of Rome he came upon a wretched creature, a beggar in rags, with a face of such hard, villainous stamp that even the artist was repulsed. But he knew that at last he had found his Judas. So it came about that the beggar, with the repulsive countenance, sat as a model for Judas.

As he was dismissing him, DaVinci said, "I have not yet asked your name, but I will now." "Pietro Bandinelli,"

replied the man, looking at him unflinchingly. "I also sat for you as the model for your Christ!" Astonished, overwhelmed by this startling declaration, DaVinci would not at first believe it, but the proof was at hand, and he had finally to admit that Pietro Bandinelli, he whose fair, sweet face had been the inspiration for his great masterpiece, the face of Christ, had now become so disfigured by the sins of a lifetime that no trace was left of that marvelous beauty which before had been the admiration of men!

"Sin, when it is full-grown, brings forth death" (James 1:15).