

Message #54**Mark 14:32-42**

On page 593 of our hymnal is a song called “Where He Leads Me.” We have three verses to the song in our book. Verse 2 in our hymnal says, “I’ll go with Him through the judgment.” In many hymnals verse 2 says, “I’ll go with Him through the garden” and then verse 3 says, “I’ll go with Him through the judgment.”

Truth is neither is actually true. We would not have gone with Jesus through the garden and we would not have gone with Jesus through the judgment. If His closest disciples would not go with Him, you can be sure we would not either. It is one thing to sing something in a hymnbook; it is another to actually do something in real life.

When you hear some believer confidently say they will follow Christ no matter where it takes them or no matter what the cost, it gives me pause. When you hear people confidently singing “I have decided to follow Jesus...no turning back, no turning back,” you cannot help but wonder whether this is some naïve dream of one who really hasn’t thought it through. The truth is following Christ is not that easy. It can be very lonely and very tough.

Jesus was nearing the cross and all eleven of His disciples promised they would go with Him to His death. They would have sung those hymns like we do. But quite frankly, their spirituality wasn’t as solid as they thought and what happens next really proves that.

THE ASSIGNMENT OF JESUS CHRIST TO FULFILL THE WILL OF GOD AND DIE IN ORDER TO SAVE SINNERS WAS VERY LONELY AND THE STRENGTH HE GAINED TO FULFILL GOD’S WILL CAME THROUGH PRAYER TO HIS FATHER AND NOT THROUGH FELLOWSHIP WITH HIS DISCIPLES.

After sharing the meal together and after the disciples promised they would go with Jesus to His death and die with Him, **verse 32** says they came to a place named Gethsemane. So Jesus and the eleven left Jerusalem and crossed the Kidron Valley (John 18:1) to the western slope of the Mount of Olives to the place named “Gethsemane.” The name Gethsemane means “olive press.” John described this as being a “garden” (John 18:1). Apparently Judas knew of this place because they had gone there many times. Judas knew he would find Jesus there (John 18:2).

Now when Jesus got into this garden, He told His disciples to sit there while He went to pray. According to **verse 33**, He took Peter and James and John with Him. These are three of His best and most trusted Apostles. These three had been with Him when He raised Jairus’ daughter (Mark 5:37) and when He had been transfigured (Mark 9:2). So these three were very special to Him.

Actually in regard to events pertaining to Christ's death the number three is a critical number:

- 1) Jesus takes three disciples. **14:33**
- 2) Jesus prays three times. **14:35, 39, 41**
- 3) Jesus finds His disciples sleeping three times. **14:37, 40, 41**
- 4) Peter denies Christ three times. 14:68, 70, 71
- 5) Pilate asks the crowd three questions about Christ three times. 15:9, 12, 14
- 6) Christ's Crucifixion is broken down into three time intervals:
 - A. Third Hour 15:25
 - B. Sixth Hour 15:38
 - C. Ninth Hour 15:34
- 7) Christ would rise from the dead on the third day. I Cor.15:4

This use of the number three cannot be a mere coincidence and we believe is critical because number 3 is the number of the Trinity. Everything was done here with all three members of the Godhead.

It is clear that as Jesus was walking, with these three Apostles that He was experiencing as one commentator said, "acute emotional distress." Nowhere else is this distress described in such vivid terms.

Verse 33 says that He was "very distressed and troubled." That word "distressed" means that Jesus was experiencing great terror (G. Abbott-Smith, *Greek Lexicon*, p. 202). The word "troubled" speaks of deep emotional anxiety and trouble (*Ibid.*, p. 9).

This was a very low emotional moment and He said, in **verse 34**, that His soul was deeply grieved to the point of death. The word "grieved" is a different word which means His soul was totally engulfed and surrounded by sadness and grief (*Ibid.*, p. 356). Emotionally speaking He was the lowest of the low.

The reason for this overwhelming emotional distraught feeling was because He was nearing His death. Now had it only been nearing death like the rest of us, it wouldn't have been so bad. He could have said, I am about to get out of here and go back to Heaven. But His death was not that at all. **He was about to take on Himself the full brunt of our sin and the full brunt of God's wrath. This would mean there would be a moment when He would be separated from His Father.** This was something that had never happened to Him before and would not ever again.

This is exactly why we serve real wine at communion in remembering the death of Christ. This was not a nice, sweet, Welch's grape juice experience. This was a very bittersweet moment. His death was not pleasant. It caused Him great grief. It was a very dark moment that would offer light at the end of the tunnel.

Now He said to His disciples "remain here and watch" (**verse 34**). In other words, you men stay here and you stay awake and alert (*Ibid.*, p. 96). **Now they needed to stay awake and alert in prayer and they needed to stay alert for the betrayal who would come with his soldiers to take Christ.**

By the way, had they actually done this and obeyed Him and had they actually stayed there and prayed, they probably would have had the courage to not run away from Christ. But they did not have the power because they didn't do it.

Now Jesus needed to pray. He needed to get alone with God, His Father, and pray. Why not take the three with Him? Well because this was His work and it was work only He could do. This burden was His to bear and He would have to go it alone.

There are some things in life you will have to face alone. No one else can walk with you through some of your valleys. In those moments we need to pray because we need God. He is the One who can take us safely through dark valleys.

Jesus gets alone with His Father and He has three prayer meetings:

JESUS' GETHSEMANE PRAYER MEETING #1 – Mark 14:35-38

Jesus left the disciples and went a little way from them and He fell to the ground to pray. Luke says he was about a stone's throw away (Luke 22:41).

Jesus got alone with God and “fell to the ground” (v. 35). This is reverence. Keep in mind that Jesus is experiencing overwhelming emotional surges and He knew He needed to fall down before God and pray. **This was the only thing that could sustain Him in His dark emotional lows.**

Jesus began by saying, “if it were possible, the hour might pass Him by.” The hour to which He is referring is the hour of His betrayal that would lead to His crucifixion. What Jesus is saying is if there is any other way to save sinners, if there is any other plan we can devise, let this hour go away.

But having expressed this wish, Jesus said, “Abba Father” (v. 36). Now frankly, I do not think this actually means “Daddy.” This is a term that means that God the Father of all is “my actual caring Father.” Jesus is personalizing God by calling Him Abba. The Great and Glorious God was Jesus' own Father. He is not saying “daddy”; He is honoring Him as His Father. He knows He is God's Son and God the Father is His father. There was a very intimate connection between the two Persons.

Now Mark is the only one who uses this word and the Apostle Paul would use it two times:

- 1) Romans 8:15 - the Spirit of God that adopts us into God's family so He is our Father.
- 2) Galatians 4:6 - the Spirit of God that enables us to realize the reality God is our Father.

It is staggering to think that we have a relationship with God that enables us to actually have an intimate relationship with God that enables us to know God is our Father.

Christ was alone with God and He prayed to God and His prayer request communicates three things to and about God the Father:

Prayer Communication Point #1 - All things are possible for God. **14:36a**

Here is proper prayer theology. All things are possible for God. We need to think this way when we pray because that is the way Jesus thought when He prayed. This is the perspective of God's sovereignty that is necessary to move God.

What is happening here is that God the Son is recognizing the sovereignty and supremacy of God the Father over all things. God the Son's own perspective of God the Father is that "all things are possible for you."

Prayer Communication Point #2 - Remove this cup from Me. **14:36b**

Jesus is facing His own death and death is an intimidating proposition for any of us. His death was in a category all its own.

Do not miss this. **If there would have been any other way to redeem sinners, that death cup would have been removed.** But there is no other way. No Father would ask His Son to go through what Jesus was about to go through if He could prevent it. **But here is the truth unless Jesus Christ goes to that cross to take away our sins, we cannot be saved.**

This must have been a very difficult thing for God the Father to hear coming from His perfect Son. Don't you dare arrogantly think you can earn your salvation by your works or religion. Take a good look at this. Why did Jesus Christ have to die? Why did He have to suffer when He did not want to suffer? Why didn't God the Father get Him out of this? Because this is the only way God can save sinners. There is only one way for you to be saved and it is through the finished work of Jesus Christ.

This cup, that He would have to experience, included taking upon Himself our sin and God's wrath. This cup included all law violations that have ever been committed. This cup meant He who knew no sin would become sin for us so that we could be made righteous in Him.

If you reject Jesus Christ, you deserve to go to hell and burn forever because He did all of this for you and me.

By the way, the answer to this request is "no." There are religious heretics who point you to Bible verses and say pray it, name it and claim it. Well Jesus knew every Bible verse and His Father always listened to Him and the answer to this request was not "yes," but "no."

Prayer Communication Point #3 - Answer Me what you want, not what I want. **14:36c**

Jesus knew there was no other way to save sinners. He knew that the only way for sinners to have a relationship with God, He would have to suffer and die.

So He said God, not my will be done here, but thy will be done here. This is a total and complete submission to the will of God.

After Jesus had prayed this, He got up and went back to His three disciples and He found them sleeping (**v. 37**). These were the guys who promised never to fail Him or let Him down. Their failure was already underway.

Now Jesus woke them up and specifically addressed Peter. Now remember Peter is relaying this to Mark. Peter was the one who had made all those emotional promises and claimed that he would always be loyal to Jesus. So Jesus woke him up and said, “Could you not keep watch for one hour?” The “you” is singular, aimed straight at Peter.

Notice He calls Peter “Simon,” which is a subtle rebuke because that was his pre-conversion name (1:16, 29, 36; 3:16). He was not acting like a solid rock (Petros), but like his old self. So this is actually a rebuke of Peter the very night of Jesus’ betrayal. Peter had no problem telling this to Mark even when it doesn’t make him look to be a real great spiritual giant.

Great people of God see themselves honestly and they don’t see themselves as being anything great. The greatness is found in the Lord.

Actually the implication is that he and the disciples could you not even watch and pray for one hour? I wonder how many of God’s people will have ever spent one hour in prayer? We are not talking here about cumulative time, but one solid hour.

Now in **verse 38** Jesus says you need to keep watching and praying because this is the key to not succumbing to temptation. **You have a weak flesh that will fail you every single time and the key to a strength in your spirit that will not fail is prayer.**

This is something that all believers need to know today. Prayer is a critical key to victory. It is a key to not succumbing to temptation. Staying alert in the Word and alert in prayer is the key to victory.

JESUS’ GETHSEMANE PRAYER MEETING #2 – Mark 14:39-40

Jesus walked away from His disciples again and went to pray. The prayer to God was the same and the results with His disciples were the same. When He came back to them, He found them sleeping. He had rebuked them for sleeping the first time but that did not change them or faze them.

These guys did not offer Jesus Christ any support whatsoever. He was totally and completely on His own. It was just Him and God.

When He woke them up they did not know what to say. What could they say? They were failures. They were tired and ashamed. They had lost the Apostolic Bravado. They felt their sleep was more important than their prayers.

JESUS' GETHSEMANE PRAYER MEETING #3 – Mark 14:41-42

Once again Jesus went to pray and He again was talking with God the Father about the same matter. It is very right to pray about the same thing multiple times. Jesus did. Take your burdens to the Lord and leave them there and then go back again and leave them there again and again. Jesus did that.

This time when Jesus went back to His disciples, He had five specific messages for them:

Message #1 - Are you still sleeping and resting. 14:41a

The answer is yes Lord, we are still sleeping. We are not any more active now than we were the first time you rebuked us. Nothing has changed.

Message #2 - It is enough. 14:41b

Jesus is saying two things here:

- 1) I have prayed about this long enough and
- 2) You have had enough rest and sleep.

It is time to get going.

Message #3 - The hour has arrived for Me to be betrayed into the hands of sinners. 14:41c

Jesus is saying we have now reached the moment of time to begin the process of Me dying on the cross for your sins. The first thing that will happen is I will be betrayed. It is time for that now.

Message #4 - Get up and let's get going. 14:42a

These disciples had no clue as to what Jesus meant. But for Him it means it is time for Me to go to the cross.

Message #5 - The one who betrays Me is at hand. 14:42b

Judas was obviously sneaking up on Christ with the thugs who would arrest Jesus. Jesus is God; you cannot sneak up on Him. He said, "the one who betrays me is at hand."

Now you think very seriously about this text. Why did God the Father and God the Son willingly let this happen? Only one answer. This is God's only way of salvation. Jesus Christ is the only door and the only way to be saved. There is no other name under heaven that can save you.

If you reject Jesus Christ and rely on you or your works or your goodness or your church or your denomination or your baptism or your catechism or your charity, it would be better for you if you had not been born. Believe on Jesus Christ today and He will save you.