

# STONE HARBOR

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Dear Readers,

What follows is one man's weekly attempt to know the truth of God's Word and bring it to His people for their good and ultimately for His glory. Please regard these only as notes belonging to a busy pastor uploaded as they stand (for better or for worse, complete or incomplete, almost always with grammatical errors, and always with room for refinement in content, structure, presentation...) to support the ongoing study of God's Word. I firmly believe that the community of faith which is the body of Christ can and should bring their gifts to bear for the good of the rest of the body and that any one teacher can be taught by the others with an understanding of the truth. Therefore, should you have insight that would sharpen any of the thinking expressed here, know that I would be pleased to receive it. Clearly, the input that is most welcome and most helpful is that which is more concise than verbose, Biblically grounded and expressed with the goal of displacing misunderstanding and apprehending the truth of God's Word. Your thoughts of that nature are most welcome, certainly appreciated and will be thoughtfully considered. You are invited to send those insights to me at [johnny@stoneharborchurch.org](mailto:johnny@stoneharborchurch.org).  
In pursuit of truth and growing a shepherds heart,  
Johnny

## ***Transformation Card***

*This page provides an overview of the message and resources for individual and group study.*

Date: November 8, 2009  
 Series: Who Jesus Is & Why He Matters  
 Section: Jesus on Mission in Jerusalem  
 Topic: The Passion  
 Message Title: How Jesus Approached His Costly Calling  
 Short Title: How Jesus Approached His Calling  
 Text: Mark 14: 32-42  
 Key Words: Gethsemane, prayer, keep watch, Abba, not what I will, but what You will

### ***Message Outline***

#### **How Jesus Approached His Costly Calling**

- I. He **SECURED** at time of **PRAYER**
- II. He **INCLUDED** His **DISCIPLES**
- III. He **PRAYED**

### ***Related Scripture***

1. Mat 26:36-46
2. Luke 22:39-46
3. John 18:1, 12:27; 14:31

### ***Questions for Thought and Discussion***

1. Name some other things Jesus might have chosen to do after Passover supper?
2. What say you about Him choosing to spend time in prayer?
3. What role did Jesus assign to His disciples, and what could they boast about when they retold this story?
4. What does it say about Jesus that He included such men as these in such an important time?
5. What stands out about Jesus' prayer time this night?
6. What of Jesus' prayer time is exemplary to you?
7. If Christ is being formed in us, how should we approach God's costly calling on our lives?

### ***Memory and Meditation Verse***

“Abba! Father!  
 All things are possible for You;  
 remove this cup from Me;  
 yet not what I will, but what You will.”  
*Jesus from Mark 14:36 NASB*

## **Exegetical Idea**

Jesus approached His imminent betrayal by turning to His Father in prayer – genuinely seeking to be excused from the suffering which lay ahead but ultimately yielding His will to the Father’s – all this with out receiving the participation He had asked for from His disciples.

## **Homiletical Idea**

Jesus approached the anguish of imminent betrayal in the line of His calling by including His disciples and tasking them to keep watch while He Himself prayed to the Father the exemplary prayer of genuine request and ultimate submission; and in contrast to His disciples failure, Jesus succeeds in proceeding forward with God’s plan of redemption leaving us our example to follow.

## **How Jesus Approached His Costly Calling**

- I. He **SECURED** at time of **PRAYER**
- II. He **INCLUDED** His **DISCIPLES**
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## **Goal of Message**

That we would imprint Jesus’ approach to the trials He faced upon our minds and make it ours as we face the difficulties of our lives lived in obedience to God’s calling.

## **Community Life**

1. Dina
2. Operation Christmas Child
3. Community Groups during TG week
4. November 15, Ladies brunch @ Laguna Seca Golf Ranch, 11:45 a.m., \$15 per person
5. Directory

# How Jesus Approached His Costly Calling

## *Introduction*

God's word is riches upon riches, you can not get to the end of it. Each passage overflows with goodness for us and then there remains the parallel accounts each with their bounty.

Jesus washes His disciples feet leaving us an example to follow.

[Read 32-42]

## I. He Secured a Time of Prayer

### A. Mark 14:32

### B. Purposefully

He purposefully secured this time. It was not haphazard. It was intentional. There were other things He could have done with that time. Some facing death in our culture would want one last smoke, or a drink, or more nobly, to express their love to their family members and friends. Jesus purposefully chose to pray to His Father in Heaven.

### C. Implications about Jesus

His telling his disciples 2000 years ago that He was going to pray (32) followed by His actual use of His most precious remaining time to do just that informs me that Jesus considered prayer **necessary and appropriate** and that it was an **essential part of who He was** – especially who He was under stress -- as He approached giving His very life to be the person God had called Him to be – our Redeemer.

#### 1. Who is Jesus? He is a man of Prayer on Mission

He is a man (the true expression of humanity) who turns to God in prayer when faced with the difficulties of His God given mission.

##### a) About the Moment

This is a defining moment, point of decision, a point of no return. He had known such sacrifice was coming, but now it was upon Him and the nearness of the pain and death and most profoundly the separation from God that He would have to undergo during God's judgment of sin upon the cross... all weighed heavy.

#### 2. Prayer on Mission Was His Pattern<sup>i</sup>

##### a) Mark 1:35

After healing many and casting out demons and before He extended His preaching to another town nearby Mark 1:35 records, "In the early morning, while it was still dark, Jesus got up, left the house, and went away to a secluded place, and was praying there."

##### b) Mark 6:46

After a particularly challenging ministry time following the teaching of the multitudes and the feeding of the 5,000, Mark 6:46 records that, "After bidding them [His disciples] farewell, He left for the mountain to pray."

### D. Implications for Us

As we face difficulties in the line of God's calling on our lives, we too as those being transformed unto Christ-likeness (or as Paul sees it: those having Christ formed in us (Gal 4:19)) should likewise find ourselves securing such Christ-like times of prayer.

1. **Are You So Inclined?**
2. **If Not, Become So**

## **II. He Included His Disciples**

Jesus included His disciples in the work that only He could do. Now why would He do that? This speaks once again to the importance Jesus placed on community. People are not those with whom we put up with until we can be by ourselves, as we introverts are prone to think in the flesh. Rather the people of God are those whom Jesus choose to be with even in this time of great stress.

### ***A. He Included the Eleven at One Level of Involvement***

Verse 32 indicates that Jesus traveled in community with His disciples and charged them as a group to, “**Sit here until I have prayed.**” JMP: This sounds to me that He wished them to hold vigil. At the very least He wanted them to know that He chose to use this time to pray.

### ***B. He Included the Three at a Higher Level of Involvement***

#### **1. Mark 14:33-34**

- a) **Jesus Discloses to them the distress of His soul**
- b) **Jesus Charges them to Remain Here and Keep Watch**

#### **2. Possible Reason for Special Inclusion: Sentiment -- They Were Closest to Him**

I am about to go through something that is very difficult and I choose to let you know how it is effecting Me and further I want you to be a part of it by remaining here and keeping watch. What a privilege to be privy to Jesus’ heart and charged by Him with a task. It is a great gift to place your heart in another’s trust, and to include someone in your work especially when you are doing it for their sake as Jesus certainly was here.

#### **3. More Probable Reason: They Needed Further Instruction<sup>ii</sup>**

##### **a) The Disciples’ Deficiency in Their Understanding**

If we could think of their misunderstanding as a sickness, we could diagnose the disciples’ disease; it is one still common amongst humans today. Unless treated this disease would harm them and make them ineffective in their part of God’s plan of redemption. It is the disease of self-confidence... or perhaps better, **overconfidence in the flesh**. It is thinking more highly of yourself than you ought (Rom 12:3). The three Jesus takes with Him and works most closely with on this important night are three who have already manifested this disease...

*(1) Peter’s Overconfidence – Mark 14:29, 31*

*(2) James and John’s Overconfidence – Mark 10:38-40*

## b) Jesus Treatment

### (1) *He Demonstrated they Had the Problem*

#### (a) Review Jesus Charge (34)

- “...remain here and keep watch”

#### (b) The Story in Regards to the Disciples Failure (35-42)

- He went just a little beyond them, probably still in earshot for the capturing of His words indicate to me they had heard Him praying. We'll look at His prayer in just a bit. But first let's focus on the disciples.
- Instead of keeping watch as Jesus had commissioned them to do, they fell asleep. Jesus came and found them sleeping (37) “Simon, are you asleep?”

### (2) *He Allowed them to Diagnose Themselves*

- Simon would have been forced to admit: Yes, in spite of the fact that You charged us to keep watch, I fell asleep.
- “Could you not keep watch for one hour?”
- Simon: No, Lord. I guess my actions prove I could not.

### (3) *He Repeats the Same “Treatment”*

- So Jesus charges them again this time with even greater clarity and overlap with His own activity: “Keep watching and praying...”
- Jesus adds the reason why such vigilance and prayer is needful: “...that you may not come into temptation; the spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak.”
- Jesus was not coming to them to receive their comfort and support during His most difficult time. He was coming to them on this spiritually darkest of nights **for their protection**. Note He did not charge them to pray for Him, but for **themselves**, that **they** “may not come into temptation”.
- We think of Jesus as the one in most peril here, but Jesus is more concerned for His disciples and their temptation that could lead to their failure.  
The remedy He impresses upon them for combating the temptation from the tempter: spiritual watchfulness and prayer. <sup>iii</sup>
- V. 39 – Jesus went away and prayed some more

### (4) *Next Consult*

- V 40 – Then returned and found them sleeping again “for their eyes were heavy”

- The text records they didn't know what to answer Him. Their actions proved their weakness.

### *(5) Jesus Repeats His Treatment a Third Time*

- He must have gone away to pray again for v. 41 records He came to them a third time,  
"Are you still sleeping and resting? It is enough; the hour has come; behold, the Son of Man is being betrayed into the hands of sinners."

### *(6) Conclusion of Story and Summary of "Treatment"*

- Jesus' disciples failed at doing what He had charged them to do! They failed three times in one night! Evidently they could not do even the small part Jesus asked them to do.
- And here is the remarkable part: He continued to include His disciples in His successful life and mission in spite of their demonstrated failure in theirs!

<sup>42</sup> "Get up, let us be going; behold, the one who betrays Me is at hand!"

### **c) The Lessons Learned**

Three strikes and you are out in baseball; but this is not baseball; and I'm not even so sure the "team" picture is the best way to think of our relationship with Jesus. To describe the relationship between Jesus and His disciples the Scriptures use the pictures of: bride, body, friends, family... Family, let's go with that picture for a moment. Jesus treated His disciples like family – the failures of family members don't change the reality that they are still family.

No, Jesus did not kick His failing disciples off the team for underperforming; He simply demonstrated for them, in no uncertain terms, that **they were over-confident about their own ability to perform**. Jesus would not use them in the mission that lay ahead **because of their merits**, but **in spite of their failures**.

This painful lesson would work **humility** into them and this lesson in humility was not complete. Further painful lessons of this same nature lay just ahead. It would appear that **humility**, especially as it shows itself in ones **dependence on God** and not self, is required of Jesus' disciples. They had to learn this lesson!

TRANS. – So, Jesus included His disciples even in these times that weighed so heavily on Him personally. His inclusion was not token or meaningless. Rather, He used the time to bring them along in their understanding of: His unique role and ability, and their privileged inclusion with Him even though in and of themselves they didn't have anything they could bring to the table. He was preparing them so that they could be used by God in His plan of redemption. Humility and dependence on Jesus would be necessary as would spiritual watchfulness and prayer to combat tempter's temptation to lull them into complacency.

But humility is not the only thing we can glean here, in fact the even more prominent lesson that comes out of this passage is how Jesus approached this particularly difficult event God the Father allowed Him to face as He participated in God's plan of redemption. How did He do it?

### **III. He Prayed**

#### ***A. That He Prayed***

I know I have just said this but I'm repeating myself so that you can get this. When Jesus faced this particularly stressful time when continuing on the mission of redemption God had called Him to would prove imminently costly... He prayed!

#### ***B. General Observations***

##### **1. Place of Prayer**

###### **a) Garden = Quiet**

Let this call to mind another garden the Bible speaks of, the Garden of Eden.

###### **b) With His Disciples Close By**

w/in ear-shot

###### **c) Alone with God**

##### **2. Time of Prayer**

###### **a) Late at night = dark**

##### **3. Timing of Prayer**

###### **a) Critical passion filled moment of dedication to God**

###### **b) Late after a long day before another stressful day**

#### ***C. Who He Prayed To***

##### **1. "Abba! Father!"**

Wonderful people, here we have a picture of Jesus the consummate man, in a garden praying with His Father at a time when temptation was a danger. Sound familiar? Think of Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden being tempted by Satan who cunningly enticed them to disobey God and do what He had told them not to do. You remember the story. They put what sounded good to them above what God had already told them. They rebelled against God. They did not cry out to God, though He certainly was their Creator/Father. Jesus, the Son of God calls out to His Father.

## ***D. How He Prayed***

### **1. Long & Hard**

Using as much as time in God's plan of redemption allowed – He prayed right up until the time of His betrayal.

a) **Extendedly**

b) **Repeatedly**

c) **Persistently**

### **2. Considering Prayer As the Main Event**

Prayer was not incidental, not supplemental, not quick, not opening, not closing, but main. Prayer was what He was all about at this time.

### **3. Honestly & Humanly**

- He did not stuff His humanity – "...remove this cup..." Hurtado p. 242 see this as a human request.
- I can fall into the trap of thinking Jesus was somehow above human emotions. But this is not the case. He was a man of great feeling and I believe He valued greatly His life with His disciples. In Jesus' life on earth we see the ultimate man sharing time in perfect love towards His friends. Now in the garden, this face-to-face, life-sharing, walking-down-the-road-with, time was about to end. At this time, Jesus prayed from His human heart to His divine Father:

36b: "All things are possible for You; remove this cup from Me;

### **4. Submitting His Human Will to the Father's Divine Will**

36c: "yet not what I will, but what You will."

This is an expression of faith. Humanly speaking with natural understanding of what lay ahead, Jesus prayed to be excused from the betrayal and suffering just ahead. But in the same breath He, by faith submitted His will to the Father's. He trusted the Father and put His desire (even for His own life) in a subordinate position to God's plan of redemption. Redemption was more important than life!

This is a very big thought. According to God's accounting there is something bigger than earthly life – even the earthly life **of His own Son**. How could God's will not be that His one and only son, His "beloved Son" – how could it be that God's will could be anything but that the betrayal be stopped and His Son live?

Jesus knew that there was something greater than this life we live. So He laid His life down according to God's calling so that superior good would be secured! That good of course is the redemption of God's creation.

Many times in redemptive history we have seen God's will as distinct and superior to man's understanding of what is best. Judas' imminent betrayal is another example of the bad used for the good by our even greater God. It is the Joseph story from [Genesis 50:20](#) "As for you,

you meant evil against me, but God meant it for good in order to bring about this present result, to preserve many people alive.” It is the teaching of Paul [Romans 8:28](#) “And we know that God causes all things to work together for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to His purpose.” It is James 1:2-4 “Consider it all joy, my brethren, when you encounter various trials, 3 knowing that the testing of your faith produces endurance. 4 And let endurance have its perfect result, so that you may be perfect and complete, lacking in nothing.”

God uses the bad of men who stand accountable before Him, for the good of those who are redeemed by Him. Jesus trusted God would do this here and submitted His will to the Father’s.

In this perfect submission even unto death we see Jesus being the Son of God Adam was not. When Adam faced his critical moment of decision in the Garden of Eden -- his will or God’s? -- he chose his, not God’s. He was not the obedient devoted son who lived in communion and exercised dominion. Rather we know the story from the point of that fall: estrangement from God, pain, toil, death... all of creation fallen from God’s intention; but also promise of recovery (Gen 3:15). One day the effects of Adam’s sin would be overturned by Eve’s seed’s conquest over evil. And here in the Garden of Gethsemane the Second Adam, Jesus, **submitted His will to His Father’s** and so dealt the preliminary blow against the seed of the serpent.

O, we stand on such holy ground at this moment in redemptive history. The weakness and impotence and of the disciples is here in the garden contrasted to the strength and power and perfect submission of Jesus to His Father. Jesus stood alone poised to do what no other person could do – give His life as a ransom for many, strike the death blow to the seed of the serpent, accomplish the work of redemption.

### ***Conclusion***

Let’s see if we can summarize what Jesus did [and how that impacts us](#).

Jesus’ fully devoted, completely submissive, active/awake, repeated prayer directly in line with God’s will to redeem all of creation back to Himself in contrast with the disciples failure to do the much less demanding work of keeping watch and praying until He returned spotlights the greatness of Jesus and the weakness of His disciples.

I am faced with the reality once again that Jesus stood alone and without effective support even from His disciples. Only Jesus could drink the cup that God had poured for Him. Yes, He graciously included His disciples but their contribution seems token. They are not there as a support for Him but to continue to learn from Him.

There is a healthy truth for us to grasp in all this. Jesus does not need us to fill some deficiency in His abilities, but He chooses to include us in His circle of friends with whom He pursues God’s great plan of redemption. That might seem deflating if you want to think of yourself as having something to bring to the table, something that Jesus needs. But I think we do better to enjoy the love honor and dignity He extends to us just because He so chooses. This is the concept of grace.

Enjoy the fact that He loves you and dispel the myth that He does so because you are so lovable. You are lovable to Him, but that speaks more of God's ability to overlook your fallen-nature faults (tarnish) and see the underlying design (potential) He has placed in you as His image bearers.

Redeemed and fully transformed with Christ fully formed in you, you are quite something. Yet, while you are redeemed; you are only being transformed. That work of sanctification is ongoing and will continue until our last earthly breath. Until that time we are the objects of God's transformational activities and we do well NOT to think of ourselves more highly than we should, BUT RATHER to celebrate and enjoy the sweet and perfect love of our Heavenly Father who, by the very work Jesus is preparing Himself to do, has adopted us as His own.

As the redeemed of the Lord, and with His Spirit empowering you, and according to the nature of Christ being formed in you, **live out that Christ-likeness as God's call on your life brings you to your defining moments**. When you, beloved of the Lord, face moments of decision where God is calling you to sacrifice what is dear in line with His calling on your life, then remember this event in the life of your Lord and how He approached it.

- **He intentionally secured time of prayer,**
- **He included His faith community** disclosing His most tender heart to His intimate friends and bringing them along that they might be prepared by seeing Him in His anguish,
- Then with genuine humanity and acceptable petition to be excused from the high personal cost that lay ahead, **He submitted His will to the Father's and made Himself available for the advancement of God's plan of redemption.**

**The Holy Spirit is transforming us into the likeness of Jesus. In the events of the Garden of Gethsemane Jesus has not only been the Son of God that Adam was not, but He as also left us an example to follow. May we first recognize the supremely important contribution of Jesus at this moment in redemptive history and then may we be the people God has intended us to be. May we follow the examples Jesus intended us to follow especially as we approach the challenges God sovereignly allows us to face as we do our small role in His huge plan of redemption.**

*Let's pray!*

## *Endnotes*

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<sup>i</sup> Lane p. 515

<sup>ii</sup> Lane p. 515

<sup>iii</sup> This calls to mind Jesus' prior instruction...Mark 13:11 "When they arrest you and hand you over, do not worry beforehand about what you are to say, but say whatever is given you in that hour; for it is not you who speak, but it is the Holy Spirit."

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