

GETHSEMANE BEFORE GOLGOTHA:
Crushed Then Crucified
Scripture: Isaiah 53:1-6; Mark 14:32-42

INTRO: It was in January as I was going back home, in the process of moving my office things from our house to the new church here, that the subject of this message came to me. As I thought about it, I thought, that is a Good Friday message so as soon as I could I looked at the schedule to see if I was scheduled to speak on that day, and I was. It was some time before I began to work on this message but now we are there.

I want you to come with me to Jerusalem briefly. A week before He entered Gethsemane, that day He was betrayed by Judas to the Jewish Sanhedrin, He had come from Jericho to Mary, Martha and Lazarus' home. Here, at His favorite place, He would spend the time when He was not in ministry in Jerusalem. Each evening after a strenuous day, He would come back to this home to rest, but Tuesday night, He did not come back. On this night He would eat the Passover with His disciples. Now for the whole chronology of what happened here, you could ask for the message, "It Wasn't Good And It Wasn't Friday."

But let me tell you what happened that night. After He had eaten the Passover with His disciples Judas went out and left, and the Scripture says, "It was night." It was a dark night, all right. Judas was going to go sell his soul for 30 pieces of silver. And so, after Jesus had washed the disciples feet after supper and after Judas had left, Jesus and His disciples went back towards Mary and Martha's.

But Jesus was exceedingly troubled and stopped on the way at the place called Gethsemane. You see, He has come out of Jerusalem, crossed the Kidron Valley and gone part way up the slope of the Mount of Olives, and there He stopped at the Garden of Gethsemane. I might mention that as they walked from Jerusalem to Gethsemane He spoke with the eleven disciples. What He spoke with them is recorded for us in John 14-16. You know how that discourse began, "Let not your hearts be troubled. You believe in God, believe also in Me. In My Father's house are many dwelling places..."

And so, on this night, when He was betrayed by Judas, He entered the place known as the Garden of Gethsemane. And I want to propose to you this morning that just as Jesus was

crushed before he was nailed to the cross, so in our lives, we must be crushed before we are willing to experience the cross. I have said that many people are willing to hang the cross from their neck on a chain, but they are not willing to put their neck on the cross.

I have outlined this message as, first, the Place. The place we will be looking at here is Gethsemane. This is where the crushing takes place. Then we will look at the Process. Here we will see what happens before we become willing to go to the cross to die. And last, we will look at the Product. When we have come to the place of crushing, and then have been successfully crushed, then we experience crucifixion. That is exactly what happened to Jesus.

I. THE PLACE

So, we begin with the place. Very often when we give definitions for Bible words they come from Greek words and they are made up of two words put together. But the word 'Gethsemene' comes from two Hebrew words. The first word is 'gat'. It means a vat, such as you would find in the Middle East for trampling grapes. Only this was not a vat into which grapes were put. It was a vat into which olives were placed in order to squeeze the oil out of the olives. You see, Gethsemene is on the Mount of 'Olives'. So the second part of the name Gethsemane is *shemen*. That is oil. So we have an oil vat.

There were several methods of getting the oil out of the olives, but however it took place, these olive berries had to be put under tremendous pressure and the oil was squeezed out of them. As you will know, olive oil is still used all over the world. It is a very precious commodity in Israel. When we were in Israel, not too long ago, we visited an olive vat. And our guide, an older man, shared how much olive oil they used each year and the many uses of olive oil.

Now I want to point out to you that in the account of Christ's death, He came to Gethsemane before He was taken to the cross. I want to propose to you that before we are willing to be nailed to the cross, before we are willing for self to die, we must come to Gethsemane. Here we, like the olive berry, will be

placed between two very hard elements, elements that will squeeze us until we are willing to go to the cross. So I want to show us the process.

II. THE PROCESS

A while ago my wife and I were discussing with our son some important aspects of friendship. You see, Jesus had friends, and then He had friends. He was not a respecter of persons, and yet some friends were closer than others. For example, when He came to Jerusalem He would stay at Mary and Martha and Lazarus' home. He had had twelve disciples. That is twelve special disciples. He had many more. Then of those twelve He had three yet more special disciples and these were Peter James and John. But of those three He had one that was most special, and that was the disciple of whom it is said, that he was the one 'whom Jesus loved'. So turn with me to the Gospel of mark (Read Mark 14:32-34).

You see, it was here at Gethsemane that Jesus' darkest hour came. It was here, close by that He had His closest friends. It was here that He prayed until blood seeped out of his pores. It was in this place of the squeeze, this place called Gat Shemen, that He became willing to God's will. It was here He drank the cup of sin. And when He became willing for God's will, and to have His own will crossed out, it was then that He was apprehended. He was tied up and treated like a criminal. Only after tremendous crushing do we become willing for the cross.

When the olive was squeezed enough, it produced oil, very rich oil. This oil was used for a number of purposes but the two most significant were that of anointing kings or priests and that of providing light. But in order for the olive to be useful for these purposes it had to be squeezed or beaten or trodden underfoot. I ask you, are you willing for that?

I think we can truly say none of us in life will go through such a squeezing or beating or trodding under foot as the Son of God experienced in the Garden of Gethsemane. Jesus arrived with His disciples at Gethsemane, 11 of them. Then he leaves another eight

of them a little farther back and instructs them to sit there while He goes to pray. Then He takes His closest three disciples; Peter, James and John and He goes into the Garden. These three He then leaves and He goes a little further and that is where He kneels to pray. There, in Gethsemane, a cup is given Him to drink, the likes of which no man has ever yet looked into. When Jesus sees what He is about to become responsible for He shrinks back in utter, amazed horror. Mark 14:33 says He was sore amazed *ekthambew*; astonished, amazed, stupefied. The response that would most automatically come from a revelation like this is, "No! Noo! NOOO! O my God, no!!!!" The description is that of mental astonishment at some sight so horrible, so repulsive that everything within screams "No!!!". It reveals the response of one who expected something very horrible and when it was revealed the horror goes far and beyond expectation, beyond comprehension.

I propose to you that God has put some of us in the squeeze and we said, "No!!" We said, "I do not have to put up with this kind of thing." And we dug in our heels. And as yet, we have not been to the cross on that thing. It awaits another squeezing.

Matthew 26:37, says He began to be sorrowful (*lupeisthai* = sorrow, sadness, grief). This is the chemical emotional response to terrifying information. This passage then says that he was "...very heavy..." The word here is *adeemonein* = the strongest of three Greek words for depression. That is why it is called *heavy*. It is to be weighted down by something we want nothing to do with. You see here is the olive oil press in human life. It is being squeezed under something very heavy.

Matthew 26:38 goes on to add that Jesus was exceeding sorrowful (*perilupos*). Then Jesus said that He was so crushed, so squashed, so weighed down, so squeezed in the emotions that He was nigh unto death. Turn with me for a moment to Isaiah 53. In this chapter is an incredible description of Jesus at this point in time in His life (read 1-6). Now note the word, 'bruised'. That is the word 'crushed'. That is what happens in Gethsemane. That is what happens before we become willing to die. That is what happens before we are

willing to give up self and let self be nailed to the cross. Do you still want to sing, "I love that old rugged cross?"

When a person is crushed and comes very low, he wants His closest friends to be near. Jesus had seen to that. Peter, James and John, the inner circle of friends, were there. Have you waited by the bedside of those who are about to die. Have you seen their fearful look when they think you are leaving the room? One hour of intense agony has passed and Jesus goes to see if His three disciples are still with Him. In Matthew 26:38 I hear Him whisper, "Don't leave me now. Stay here and watch with me. Please don't leave me here alone in this My darkest hour."

And then He went a little further to pray for the second time, about a stone's throw, John says. And there He fell on His face and prayed. And then He begged God if this hour might pass from Him. Then He said, "Abba Father." It's a little like saying, "Daddy, daddy." And here is what He said, "You can do everything, You could even take Me from this hour. Everything is possible for You. O please take this cup from Me."

And then the oil started to come. We find it in His words when He said, "Nevertheless not what I will, but what You want." O precious relief. The oil, the sought after product is starting to come. And He comes to His disciples again. It is late. They are oblivious to the magnitude of the hour. They are sleeping. And He turns to one disciple in particular, Peter. And He said, "Peter, Simon are you sleeping? Couldn't you watch with Me one hour. Watch and pray, lest you enter into temptation. The spirit truly is ready but the flesh is weak."

The oil has started to come but the process is not yet through. Mark 14:39 says He went back again and prayed the same words. The cup is still before Him. He has not yet taken the cup. The horror of our sinfulness has been revealed to Him and He has felt the crushing weight of sin. He has pled with His Father and again the oil starts to come. And then He says, "O my Father, if this cup may not pass away from Me except I drink it, thy will be done."

I want to tell you why many people do not repent. They have not felt the crushing weight of their sin. God puts them in some squeeze. They cry out to God and get some relief, and with that they are content to continue to live in sin.

Here is Jesus, with a cup already in His hand. But try as He may He cannot bring Himself to drink the cup. He has become willing to it in some sense, and yet He cannot reach out and do the dastardly deed. He returns to His disciples. Two hours have passed in the oil vat. The trampling has had its effects but there is still more to go. And when He comes to His disciples they are asleep again. This time they try to make excuse for themselves but they don't know how to answer Him (Mark 14:40).

It is here that Luke gives us some very helpful information (Luke 22:43). He says, "And there appeared an angel unto Him from heaven strengthening him." Oh I like that. That is a comfort. I can attest to receiving angelic help in a very dark hour, and also to the victory.

He giveth more grace when the burdens grow greater;
He sendeth more strength when the labors
increase.
To added affliction He addeth His mercy;
To multiplied trials, His multiplied peace.

When we have exhausted our store of endurance,
When our strength has failed ere the day is half
done,
When we reach the end of our horded resources,
Our Father's full giving is only begun.

His love has no limit; His grace has no measure;
His pow'r has no boundary known unto men.
For out of His infinite riches in Jesus,
He giveth and giveth and giveth again.

Yes, there came an angel and strengthened Him. This is the second time in the life of Christ that God sends an angel to comfort and encourage Him. I have had a few experiences in life when God has poured out either power or peace for the moment. In one of those

experiences I said, "Lord I could die for You with such peace!"

Luke then says, "And being in an agony he prayed more earnestly..." We have the oil press here. Here is pressure on pressure. And the verse says He prayed more earnestly. This verse then goes on to explain the intensity of Jesus prayer and the extent of His agony. It says, "...and His sweat was as it were great drops of blood falling down to the ground." Talk about the body coming under pressure so as to squeeze out the olive oil, here we have it in its extremity. Let me quote here from Dr. Harold Willmington who quotes from Dr. C. Truman Davis as recorded in the *New Wine Magazine* in the December 1972 issue: "Every attempt imaginable has been used by modern scholars to explain away this phrase, apparently under the mistaken impression that this just does not happen. A great deal of effort could be saved by consulting the medical literature. Though very rare, the phenomenon of Hematidrosis, or bloody sweat, is well documented. Under great emotional stress, tiny capillaries in the sweat glands can break, thus mixing blood with sweat. This process alone could have produced marked weakness and possible shock" (*Basic Stages In The Book Of Ages*, 64).

Now it is an amazing thing. It was not suffering that caused Jesus' sorrow. It was sin. Our sin. The battle with sin in the Son was won in the garden of Gethsemane. When once the moment had come where He reached out, took the cup and drank it the battle was over. You will not find sweat drops of blood again; not even when the big spikes were driven through the wrists and feet. You will not find Him flinch when they slap His face and beat Him. You will not find Him squirm at their mocking and relentless scorn. The battle is over. The oil is out! It is now that He is ready for the cross.

May I ask you this morning, have you been in the squeeze on some issue? Is it time to say, "Not my will but thine be done?" You see, when the squeezing is done, it is then that we come to the cross. We are willing to whatever it is God wants.

III. THE PRODUCT

So, we go to our last point, the product. When Adam sinned along with Eve in the Garden of Eden, there was born in man a nature; a nature most cruel and selfish. We call this nature the 'self life'. We call it the 'flesh'. We call it the 'sin nature'. This sin nature pervades and permeates every aspect of our being. One of our folk and I were discussing bitterness a while ago. Bitterness, an experience of the sin nature, is likened in the Bible to the gall of the physical body. The gall contains that yellowish, greenish colored material that absolutely contaminates everything it touches. When you are butchering an animal and you accidentally cut into the gall and that fluid touches any part of the meat, it is ruined. It must be cut out. The self life, the flesh is like that.

And when God saves us through repentance from sin and faith in the Lord Jesus, he sets about to bring the self life to the cross. But before we become willing to that, we must be crushed. There is a story in the OT that I believe pictures the self life. Turn with me to 1 Samuel 15 (read 1-3). The Amalekites had finally reached the point of no return. They had sinned away the day of grace. They are a picture of the self life. They deserved one thing; death. The self life deserves one thing; death. The only trademark fitting for the self life is the cross.

Now look at verses 7-9 (read). In application I think we could say that there are many things in the flesh we secretly prize, but God says do away with it. You see, the flesh has no good children and no good king. Paul says, "I know that in me, that is in my flesh, dwells no good thing." The sooner we realize that, the better off we are. But before we get rid of these fleshly things, we must be crushed. We must be put under immense pressure. And only when the pressure gets big enough do we become willing to part with those once treasured things. Why does the Scripture say all our righteousness is like filthy rags? Because the self can produce nothing good. One must destroy, man woman and child. Everything the flesh has produced needs to be destroyed. But most of all, the king, king self, must go. Let the self life live,

even though it is chained up like Agag, it will get you in the end.

Listen to LE Maxwell describe the flesh in his book, 'Crowded to Christ'. "The flesh has almost infinite forms. It may not always appear devilish, deceitful, and hateful; on the contrary, it may be cultured, educated, refined, and religious. In fact it may so play possum as to lead you to think that it is dead. It thrives in any soil, and under the shades of earthly sorrow as well as in the sunshine of prosperity. Whatever its behavior, however, it is still changeless flesh, 'unimprovable, incorrigible, incurable...There remains then no remedy but that which God has provided - condemnation, crucifixion, death with Christ' (Mantle). The only trademark becoming the flesh is the death mark of the Cross" (pg. 70).

I propose to you this morning that it is Gethsemane before Golgotha for a reason. The oil must be crushed out before we are willing to be crossed out. We sing of that old rugged cross. We love that old cross as long as it remains an *emblem* of suffering and shame. And as long as it is an emblem, we can hang it on a chain around our neck and we can sing about how we love it. But no sooner does our neck come at risk of being on the cross, and we quickly lose all that sentimental love for it. So the writer of the song, "The Old Rugged Cross", moves from the *emblem* to its significance in life when he says in the last line, "To the old rugged cross, I will ever be true; Its shame and reproach gladly bear..."

Tozer writes, "The man with a cross no longer controls his destiny; he lost control when he picked up his cross. That cross immediately became to him an all-absorbing interest, an overwhelming interference. No matter what he may desire to do, there is but one thing he can do; that is, move on toward the place of crucifixion."

Nothing is more repugnant to the self life than the cross after the crushing. I hear from time to time of some of our folk who say or have said, "This last week I had to go make something right again." There is the cross. Now you know what happens before the cross? It is the squeezing. Do you recognize it? It

is the crushing. And when the pressure finally is big enough, the oil begins to flow. Then comes the cross. But oh, after the cross, then comes the crown!

CONCL: I ask you this morning, are you in the squeeze on something? Do you fuss and fret and fight over it? Maybe on some issue you have been there many times, and yet you have not gone on to the cross. Is this the morning you want to say to God, "Thy will be done, not mine"? And if so, then will come the cross, that old rugged cross. Some time ago I read for you seven short sayings that give evidence to the crucified life. You see, these sayings indicate I have been to Gethsemane and Golgotha. The oil has been squeezed out in Gethsemane, and I have been crossed out on Calvary. Let me read them for you again.

1. When you are forgotten, or neglected, or purposely set at naught, and you don't sting and hurt with the insult or the oversight but your heart is content and restful in Christ, THAT IS AN EVIDENCE OF THE CRUCIFIED LIFE.
2. "When your good is evil spoken of, when your wishes are crossed, your advice disregarded, your opinions ridiculed, and you refuse to let anger rise in your heart or even defend yourself, but take it all in patient loving silence," THAT IS AN EVIDENCE OF THE CRUCIFIED LIFE.
3. "When you lovingly and politely bear any disorder, any irregularity, any unpunctuality, or any annoyance; when you can stand face to face with waste, folly, extravagance, spiritual insensibility...and endure it as JESUS endured it," THAT IS AN EVIDENCE OF THE CRUCIFIED LIFE.
4. "When you are content with any food, any offering, any raiment, any climate, any society, any solitude, and interruption by the will of GOD," THAT IS AN EVIDENCE OF THE CRUCIFIED LIFE.
5. "When you never care to refer to yourself in conversation, or to record your own good works, or itch after commendation, when you can truly love to be unknown," THAT IS AN EVIDENCE OF THE CRUCIFIED LIFE.
6. "When you can see your brother prosper and have his needs met, and can honestly rejoice with him in spirit and feel no envy nor question GOD, while your own needs are far

greater and in desperate circumstance," THAT IS AN EVIDENCE OF THE CRUCIFIED LIFE.

7. "When you can receive correction and reproof from one of less stature than yourself, and can humbly submit inwardly as well as outwardly, finding no rebellion or resentment rising up within your heart," THAT IS AN EVIDENCE OF THE CRUCIFIED LIFE.

I want to tell you something very important. Being crushed was not the end of the journey for Christ. Being crucified was not the end of the journey for Christ. The end of the journey came when He was crowned in heaven! You see, there is an order, crushed, crucified, then crowned!