

## Scripture Reading:

**Luke 22: “39 Coming out, [Jesus] went to the Mount of Olives, as He was accustomed, and His disciples also followed Him. 40 When He came to the place, He said to them, "Pray that you may not enter into temptation." 41 And He was withdrawn from them about a stone's throw, and He knelt down and prayed, 42 saying, "Father, if it is Your will, take this cup away from Me; nevertheless not My will, but Yours, be done." 43 Then an angel appeared to Him from heaven, strengthening Him. 44 And being in agony, He prayed more earnestly. Then His sweat became like great drops of blood falling down to the ground. 45 When He rose up from prayer, and had come to His disciples, He found them sleeping from sorrow. 46 Then He said to them, "Why do you sleep? Rise and pray, lest you enter into temptation." 47 And while He was still speaking, behold, a multitude; and he who was called Judas, one of the twelve, went before them and drew near to Jesus to kiss Him. 48 But Jesus said to him, "Judas, are you betraying the Son of Man with a kiss?" 49 When those around Him saw what was going to happen, they said to Him, "Lord, shall we strike with the sword?" 50 And one of them struck the servant of the high priest and cut off his right ear. 51 But Jesus answered and said, "Permit even this." And He touched his ear and healed him. 52 Then Jesus said to the chief priests, captains of the temple, and the elders who had come to Him, "Have you come out, as against a robber, with swords and clubs? 53 When I was with you daily in the temple, you did not try to seize Me. But this is your hour, and the power of darkness."”**

# ***"Jesus Ponders the Cup"***

- **There are some important lessons that we need to learn from our short passage from Luke this morning. At the same time we want to be sure that we more fully understand what was happening here in the garden and what caused the agony that we see in mind & body of Jesus!**

**Jesus has come to Jerusalem at His appointed time to be the sacrifice for sin and the four Gospel writers now come together to give us the final days of our Lord's earthly ministry where we will see Him suffer, be crucified, die and be buried and then celebrate the victory of His resurrection. I have included the parallel accounts from the four writers in the order of worship this morning, something I will do often in these final chapters: Our focus will continue to be on the text of Luke, but I trust these parallels will give you a tool for further study and they will also help us to address some the modern attacks on the Bible where people say there are obvious contradictions!**

**As you take the time to compare these accounts of the garden you will see Matthew and Mark giving the most detail and both accounts are very similar. John focuses on the power of Jesus, even in the garden! We find Luke focusing on the suffering of Jesus.**

**As I mentioned last week, his orderly account carefully intertwines the suffering that Jesus must face as the great sacrifice for sin with the failures, both individually and collectively of His disciples.**

**This morning we can learn important lessons from our Lord on how to handle adversity AND we must begin to see how the disciples are going to move from weakness & failure to power & victory!**

- **So in our text we see that Jesus comes to the Garden as was His custom: Thus Judas could deliver Him over to the Council who had paid him!**

**Jesus was preparing to be the sacrificial lamb, but He knew it would come at a GREAT cost and this is clearly the focus for Luke as he gives his account of what happened in the garden that night.**

**Jesus withdraws from His disciples and goes to His Father in prayer: “Father, if it is Your will, take this cup away from Me; nevertheless not My will, but Yours, be done.”**

**Jesus reminds us by His example about how we are to face the trials and tribulations of this life: Jesus knew the words of the Psalmist: “Call upon Me in the day of trouble; I will deliver you, and you shall glorify Me.” *Psalm 50:15* Our Lord’s brother James reminds the Saints, “Is anyone among you suffering? Let him pray.”**

**The Bible gives us many examples of Saints turning to prayer:**

- **Jacob calls on God when he is afraid of meeting Esau**
- **Job prays when he faces the agony of losing his children**
- **King Hezekiah turns to prayer when Jerusalem is surrounded by vast armies**

**And now we see Jesus in prayer here in the garden as He prepares to face the wrath of His Father because of our sins!**

- **Jesus not only gives us the example of praying, but shows us how we should pray.**

**The prayer of Jesus is honest but submissive... Some question how Jesus could have asked for the cup to pass when this was the very purpose for which he had come.**

- **Actually it is here where we see one of the most powerful evidences of the two natures of Jesus: The Word made flesh!**

**Almost all of the major heresies that have troubled the Church down through the ages have begun by not accepting what the Scriptures tell us about Jesus:**

- **The Bible clearly teaches that Jesus is fully God AND fully man**

**Those who doubt that God could become a man, need to study what Luke presents here in the Garden: At this point Jesus, as God, knows all that is about to happen: He is about to take the cup of God’s wrath. The Psalmist refers to the cup of salvation, but for us to be saved, the wrath of God must be propitiated!**

**You will find many references to the ‘cup of wrath’ in the Bible where God is pouring out His judgments on the enemies of His people, and sometimes on His rebellious people... In Ezekiel we read of the “cup of horror and desolation” or in Revelation when God prepared to destroy the city of Jerusalem He will ‘give her the cup of the wine of the fierceness of His wrath.’**

- **Again, Jesus as the Son of God knows about the wrath that is due to pay the penalty for sin:**

**Not just the sins of a nation here or there, or even the city of Jerusalem, but for ALL the sins of His people...**

- **Every single one down through every single moment of history!**
- **Such was an awful cup of wrath and such was what Jesus was about to face: He was to become sin for us**

**This is truly the power of the Gospel, as Paul tells the Corinthians:**

**“For He made Him who knew no sin to be sin for us, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.” *II Corinthians 5:21***

- **With this knowledge, we see the human side of Jesus in agony, both in body and spirit.**

**In prayer, Jesus cries out to the Father asking ‘IF it were possible’ that this cup might pass**

- **Certainly an honest prayer!**

**BUT Jesus quickly adds, ‘but not my will but yours be done.’ Here we see the great example for us:**

- **An honest prayer that is made with a submissive spirit!**

**We must also note something that we do NOT see here, something the liberals who do NOT believe the Bible try to teach about Jesus:**

- **Jesus is not merely showing us a good example of self-sacrifice**
- **Jesus is NOT a great teacher who is trying to give us a good example of how to live... or die!**

**The ONLY way what happens here in the garden could be an example for us would be for someone to say OK I will go to hell and face the eternal fires to pay for my sins...**

- **and even there it is for all eternity because you can never propitiate the wrath of God EVEN for your own sins!**

**No, Jesus is the Son of God, the 2<sup>nd</sup> person of the Trinity come in the flesh to save His people and we see here in the garden that He chooses to do so of His own free will, confirming that there are not many paths to God, but only one where He takes and drinks the cup of wrath.**

- **Here is where we see rubber meet the road when the Bible declares that God is Love!**

**Love is not a squishy ‘can’t we all just get along’ and certainly NOT a refusal to judge, as we sadly saw this week with some ‘so-called’ Christians who responded to the homosexual activist that set out to destroy the Christian contestant in the Miss USA contest.**

- **This activist asked her if homosexual marriage should be legalized and then condemned her for bringing her religion into the contest!**

**Here is a woman who was willing to stand up for the truth even when it cost her a crown, though we could certainly fault her lack of modesty... BUT these so-called ‘Christian’ artists posted comments supportive of the sodomite telling people Jesus said ‘we are to love people and not to ‘judge.’**

**Well, if they are not willing to tell this judge that he must turn from his sin of sodomy because that would be judging him, then they are willing to let him face the fires of hell...**

- **That is certainly NOT the loving thing to do!**

**Thankfully Jesus was not afraid to face sin for what it is... SIN**

**Jesus knew the penalty that was due because of sin and He was willing to truly LOVE His people to the point of taking full wrath upon Himself!**

- **That realization was the agony that He faced here in the Garden and it was impacting Him both Spiritually and physically.**

**The mental agony from the thought of what he was about to go through had Him crying to His Father for any other options, but never faltering in His love for His people. As we often see with people who face great anguish or grief it also had its physical affect on the man Jesus:**

- **Luke the doctor is the one who tells us His sweat had become mingled with His blood so it appeared as “great drops of blood falling to the ground.”**

**Jesus had come to Jerusalem at His appointed time and here we see the Father send an angel to strengthen Jesus as He faces His appointed task.**

**The writer of the Hebrews tells us that Angels are ministering spirits sent forth for those who will inherit salvation and here we see one used by God to minister to His own Son.**

- **We have here another reminder that we cannot save ourselves, but that God will make sure those who inherit this great salvation are ministered to along the way!**

**We see this in the Garden not only with this angel sent to minister to Jesus, but in Jesus Himself...**

- **Jesus in the midst of this great emotional and physical agony returns not once BUT twice to minister to His disciples**

**Jesus wakes them and reminds them of His admonition to “Rise and pray, lest you enter into temptation.” Even at a time where Jesus needed an angel to come and minister to Him, He continued to instruct His Sheep, warning them about the weakness of their own flesh.**

- **The disciples were no help to Jesus in His time of greatest need, not even able to pray for one hour, but in the midst of His great agony Jesus loves them as His sheep!**

**Luke now brings forth the failure of the disciples collectively as he focuses on the suffering of Jesus here in the Garden...**

- **The betrayer Judas comes with many soldiers and Jesus says, “are you betraying me with a kiss?”**

**It is helpful here to see all that happens from the four accounts to rightly understand the response from the disciples that Luke recounts.**

- **Judas comes & kisses the Savior**
- **Jesus addresses Judas**
- **Jesus address those who have come**
- **They fall to the ground and Jesus address them again**

**It is at this point that the disciples without looking to their Lord for guidance spring into action... “49 When those around Him saw what was going to happen, they said to Him, ‘Lord, shall we strike with the sword?’**

**We talked last week about how students often learn all the wrong lessons...**

- **Such is certainly that case here about the instructions that Jesus had given regarding having swords.**

**Jesus was preparing them for service in His Kingdom, not teaching them to disrupt the plan of God that was being carried out this very night. One of the disciples, John tells us it was Peter, lunges forward and strikes the servant of the High Priest, Malchus. Dr. Luke informs us that it was his right ear that is cut off by Peter’s sword... A pretty serious injury!**

**Jesus responds with word and deed:**

- **He says to His disciples, “permit even this” and Jesus puts His healing touch upon Malchus to restore His right ear.**

**I am sure at this point the disciples were quite confused and Matthew and Mark tell us that they ‘forsook Him and fled’ as the Prophets had foretold.**

Jesus now turns to the chief priests, the captains of the temple and the elders to confront them with their hypocrisy and hardened hearts:

- They had fallen to the ground when Jesus declared “I AM HE’
- They have just watched Jesus heal the servant’s ear, confirming His power as God’s Messiah
- And yet they are going to arrest Him and put Him on trial!

Jesus states the obvious when He points out that they have come with swords and clubs to arrest a peaceful man who actually had been right under their noses at the Temple.

- With all of this they carry through with their wicked plans showing the hardness of man’s heart absent the grace of God.

Jesus then says, “But this is your hour, and the power of darkness”

- ALL is working out according to God’s great plan of salvation, even the wicked plans of these men...

The Father could have allowed the cup to pass from His Son and simply cast the entire human race into hell... But He did not.

Jesus could have called down legions of Angels to protect Him from these wicked men, again leaving all of mankind to face the agony of hell... But He did not.

- Now, these wicked men will have their hour:

**They will mock our Lord, they will beat Jesus and finally kill the Lord of Glory, mocking Him to the very end.** What their blind eyes could not see was the great plan that the Father the Son and Spirit had made in eternity past... \_Their plan for the Son to have a bride: A redeemed people whose sins would be forgiven and who would serve Him gloriously forever!

**BUT**, some might rightly ask, were His disciples any better? They deserted Jesus and fled in fear?

Jesus reminded them earlier in the evening that they were those who had continued with Him in His trials. Has that come to an end?

- No, we have seen them fail all along the way, but they have continued because they have been given the gift of faith.

Yes, here we see them failing again and next week we will see Peter face his darkest hour.

- BUT remember Jesus told Peter that He had prayed for him, and we know from John’s Gospel that Jesus prayed for all of them and for us!

What we see from the followers of Jesus here in the garden is not pretty

- They slept when they should have prayed
- They fought when they should have submitted
- They fled when they should have stood with their Lord

**AND YET** is it to these very disciples that Jesus said that very night, “I bestow upon you a Kingdom.”

While that might rightly bring a reaction of “huh?” it is also something that should be greatly encouraging to all of us as we remember our failures.

- How often have we slept when we should have been wrestling in prayer?
- How often have we jumped into a battle when we should have been patient and waited on the Lord?
- How often have we fled or changed the subject when the opportunity presented itself to tell someone about Jesus and what He has done?

**This account should be encouraging for us because these disciples are not left in their defeats:**

- Jesus pondered the cup of God's wrath here in the garden and it caused Him agony in both His mind and body
- But, Jesus took that cup and drank ALL the wrath it contained, saving His people from their sins so they could serve Him in His Kingdom

**After Jesus ascends to the right hand of God in power He sends His Spirit to the Church and we see these failed disciples advancing the Kingdom...**

- This is what we will study in the Book of Acts.

-- We will see these same men faithfully praying and waiting for the coming of the Spirit and the advance of the Kingdom.

-- We will see these same men submitting to the will of Jesus, even when it meant great persecution & death for some of them

-- We will see these same men witness for Jesus in the Temple, in Judea, in Samaria and to the ends of the earth!

So, as those who often sin, we can have our own little pity parties, focusing on all the ways we have failed Jesus, convinced that we are not worthy to serve in His Kingdom.

- Or, we can look to the example of these disciples, who despite ALL their failures, turned to Jesus for forgiveness of those sins & the power to serve in His Kingdom!

**In a few weeks we will see Jesus teach His disciples about all that has taken place in these final days from the Old Testament:**

**What was foretold in Psalm 85 by the sons of Korah would have been very comforting to these disciples and it certainly should be for us as well:**

“Jehovah, You have been favorable to Your land; You have brought back the captivity of Jacob.

2 You have forgiven the iniquity of Your people; You have covered all their sin. Selah

3 You have taken away all Your wrath; You have turned from the fierceness of Your anger.

4 Restore us, O God of our salvation, And cause Your anger toward us to cease.

5 Will You be angry with us forever? Will You prolong Your anger to all generations?

6 Will You not revive us again, That Your people may rejoice in You? 7 Show us Your mercy, Jehovah, And grant us Your salvation.

8 I will hear what God, Jehovah will speak, For He will speak peace To His people and to His saints; But let them not turn back to folly.

9 Surely His salvation is near to those who fear Him, That glory may dwell in our land.

10 Mercy and truth have met together; Righteousness and peace have kissed. 11 Truth shall spring out of the earth, And righteousness shall look down from heaven.

12 Yes, Jehovah will give what is good; And our land will yield its increase. 13 Righteousness will go before Him, And shall make His footsteps our pathway.”