

HONEST PRAYERS

Praying Through Pressing Issues

Matthew 26:36-46

A Place Called Gethsemane

Matthew 26:36 “Then cometh Jesus with them unto a place called Gethsemane...”

- In Matthew 26 Jesus has revealed that to His disciples that He would soon be *crucified*, one of His disciples would *betray* Him, His blood would be *shed* for the forgiveness of sins, and that all His disciples would *scatter*
- As Jesus is approaching His crucifixion, He comes to a place called *Gethsemane*
- Gethsemane means *olive press*
- To produce olive oil, the olives are crushed and broken to extract the olive oil
- Jesus *came to* the Gethsemane to pray
- It was in the Garden of Gethsemane that Jesus felt the crushing pressure of what was about to happen to Him
- Jesus *came* to the place called Gethsemane; He didn't avoid it or run from it
- Jesus has known about Gethsemane before the foundation of the world
Revelation 13:8 (KJV) 8 And all that dwell upon the earth shall worship him, whose names are not written in the book of life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world.
- Jesus had to come to Gethsemane to show us how to effectively pray through our “Gethsemanes”, our pressing issues
- We too from time to time will have a “Gethsemane moment’, a time where issues are pressing in on us
- Those *pressing issues* can literally squeeze the life out of us
- Jesus shows us that every believer needs a place where they can be alone with God in times of great trials
- If Jesus had *to go to Gethsemane*, we will, too

Jesus Had Partners in Prayer

36 “...and saith unto the disciples, Sit ye here, while I go and pray yonder. [37] And he took with him Peter and the two sons of Zebedee, and began to be sorrowful and very heavy. [38] Then saith he unto them, My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death: tarry ye here, and watch with me.”

- Jesus has come to the Garden of Gethsemane to pray
- Jesus did not come to Gethsemane *alone*
- Jesus had 8 of His disciples remain at the entrance to the Garden of Gethsemane, while Peter, James and John went with Him
- Crucifixion on the Cross meant more that Jesus' life ending, it meant *separation* from God
- Jesus became *exceedingly sorrowful and very heavy*
- This was a level of stress, strain and pressure no one had ever experienced or would ever experience
- Jesus was literally *carrying* the weight of the world on His shoulders

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- Jesus wanted His inner circle of disciples to know what was going on and to be with Him and pray for Him
- Jesus said watch *with* Me, Jesus was expecting them to be alert and praying
- Jesus needed to be *alone* with God in prayer, but He *also* needed His friends close by who were praying for Him
- Jesus is saying our pressing moments should not be handled alone

Jesus Turned to God in Prayer

[39] And he went a little farther, and fell on his face, and prayed, saying, O my Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me: nevertheless not as I will, but as thou wilt.

- Even though Jesus had friends who were with Him and praying for Him, Jesus also prayed Himself
- Jesus got away from His friends and fell on his face and prayed
- In the weight of the moment, Jesus fell on His face and cried out to God, *O my Father*
- Those few words reveal Jesus' childlike faith, love, and dependence on God
- Jesus asked God to remove the "cup" from Him
- What is the cup?
 - The cup was God's judgement
 - The cup was the wrath of God for sin
- Jesus was not trying to avoid the betrayal, beatings, humiliation, and dying for the sins of the world
- Jesus was not trying to avoid, nor was Jesus afraid of dying
- Jesus' *human nature* was asking God is there any *other way* we can accomplish your plan without Me being separated from You?
- The *humanity* of Jesus was asking if there was another way to accomplish God's plan
- We also see in Jesus' prayer, His *divine nature*, "***nevertheless not as I will, but as thou wilt.***"
- Jesus' prayer shows us that we have two natures in us; a *fleshly nature*, and a *divine nature* **2 Peter 1:4 (KJV) 4 "Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises: that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature, ..."**
- Jesus' human will says, "*let this cup pass from Me*"
- Jesus' divine will says, "*nevertheless not as I will, but as thou wilt.*"
- Jesus' prayer also shows we are to pray for the *will of God* to be done in our lives
- Our prayers should be what *God wants*, not what we want
- In pressing times, we often only pray our will and not God's will
- We must learn to surrender to God's divine will in prayer, like Jesus did

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Watch and Pray

[40] And he cometh unto the disciples, and findeth them asleep, and saith unto Peter, What, could ye not watch with me one hour? [41] Watch and pray, that ye enter not into temptation: the spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak.

- Jesus got up from praying only to find his closest friends who were supposed to be watching and praying for Him; fast asleep
- Jesus had to wrestle in prayer *without* the support of His friends
- Jesus warned the disciples of the weakness of the flesh
- Pressing issues can wear us out physically, emotionally, mentally, and spiritually
- All that was going on caused the disciples to lose their concentration in prayer, alertness, and their spiritual focus
- Jesus was saying this was not the time to be “resting”
- But unfortunately, in pressing times we often make mistakes when it comes to prayer
- The disciples’ spirits were not alive and alert enough to overcome the flesh
- It is *watchfulness and prayer* that help us overcome the weakness of the flesh and help us resist in the hour of temptation
- When we watch and pray, it shows our dependence and trust in God

Persevere in Prayer

[42] He went away again the second time, and prayed, saying, O my Father, if this cup may not pass away from me, except I drink it, thy will be done. [43] And he came and found them asleep again: for their eyes were heavy. [44] And he left them, and went away again, and prayed the third time, saying the same words.

- Jesus prayed a second time for God to remove the cup
- Jesus said if the cup can’t pass from Me, except I drink it, they will be done
- Jesus has accepted and is willing to bear the cup (the Cross)
- His human nature *submitted* to His divine nature
- Jesus returned again to find His disciples asleep because their eyes were “heavy”
- Jesus prayed a *third time*, saying the same words
- Jesus prayed three times to show us that Jesus answers persevering prayers ***Matthew 7:7 (KJV) 7 Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you:***
- We must fight the three enemies of persevering prayer:
 1. Physical fatigue and tiredness
 2. Spiritual blindness, not trusting and believing the word of God
 3. Carnal security: presuming upon and taking God for granted

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- But Jesus prayed with power, passion, and perseverance **Luke 22:44 (KJV)**
⁴⁴ And being in an agony he prayed more earnestly: and his sweat was as it were great drops of blood falling down to the ground.
- God answers persevering prayers **Matthew 7:7 (KJV)** **7 Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you:**

Jesus Received His Release

[45] Then cometh he to his disciples, and saith unto them, Sleep on now, and take your rest: behold, the hour is at hand, and the Son of man is betrayed into the hands of sinners. [46] Rise, let us be going: behold, he is at hand that doth betray me.

- Jesus returned from praying and the disciples were *still* asleep
- Despite the disciple being asleep; Jesus now has *great peace and courage*
- Look at Jesus' words:
- He told the disciples "*Sleep on now and take your rest*"
 - In this pressing moment Jesus is no longer in need of His friends to watch and pray with Him
- He said to His disciples, "*Behold the hour is at hand, and the Son of man is betrayed into the hands of sinners*"
- God has given Him great relief for His soul
- Jesus has been strengthened and has the courage to face the suffering needed to gain our salvation
- Please notice this key point; God *did not* give Jesus what He asked for; God *did not* remove the cup
- But God *did* answer His prayer
- God *enabled* Jesus to bear the cup
- The lesson is clear; God sometimes answers with "NO"
- But His answer strengthens us to handle our pressing issues