

Daily Bible Study

“One Man’s Horror...Gethsemane”

Mark 14:32-42

January 6 –12, 2013

THE LORD’S DAY & MONDAY –This week after a long time away we return to our study in Mark **chapter 14** closing out this record of our Lord’s life and ministry. Our text for this week will be **Mark 14:32-42**. Barclay says of these verses, “This is a passage we almost fear to read, for it seems to intrude into the private agony of Jesus.” It without doubt looks into the mind and heart of our Lord where we not only see agony but are completely humbled and awed as we hear Jesus utter words many of us have said. The difference is that He says them as only a perfectly obedient man could as He tells His Father and our Father, “...nevertheless, not what I will, but what You will.” As stated by F. L. Knowles, in *Grief and Joy*: “Joy is a partnership, Grief weeps alone, Many guests had Cana, Gethsemane but One.” Many of us have prayed these words and this attitude and understanding is necessary for one to even be a Christian; but Jesus lived these words with genuine and perfect obedience and submission. We really can’t fully understand this degree of humility and surrender because we are sinners and Jesus is not. He never rebelled against The Father; and we have and still often do. Only Jesus Christ has gone through the real Gethsemane. People talk of “bearing their cross” or “experiencing their Gethsemane” or “going through their trial”; but this type of pain, agony, and struggle has really only been experienced truly by one Man; The Man Christ Jesus. Mark tells the story: **Mark 14:32-42**: “Then they came to a place which was named Gethsemane; and He said to His disciples, “Sit here while I pray.” And He took Peter, James, and John with Him, and He began to be troubled and deeply distressed. Then He said to them, “My soul is exceedingly sorrowful, even to death. Stay here and watch.” He went a little farther, and fell on the ground, and prayed that if it were possible, the hour might pass from Him. And He said, “Abba, Father, all things are possible for You. Take this cup away from Me; nevertheless, not what I will, but what You will.” Then He came and found them sleeping, and said to Peter, “Simon, are you sleeping? Could you not watch one hour? Watch and pray, lest you enter into temptation. The spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak.” Again He went away and prayed, and spoke the same words. And when He returned, He found them asleep again, for their eyes were heavy; and they did not know what to answer Him. Then He came the third time and said to them, “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. Rise, let us be going. See, My betrayer is at hand.”

Suggestion for Prayer: Father, show me The Lord Jesus as I study this piece of Scripture.

TUESDAY – **Mark 14:32-34**: “Then they came to a place which was named Gethsemane; and He said to His disciples, “Sit here while I pray.” And He took Peter, James, and John with Him, and He began to be troubled and deeply distressed. Then He said to them, “My soul is exceedingly sorrowful, even to death. Stay here and watch.” We are introduced to the scene of this incredible story as we read *they came to a place which was named Gethsemane*. Gethsemane, a word of Aramaic origin literally means “an oil press”. It is here in a place that was known for and named for its olive trees and the pressing of their oil that Jesus’ bitter agony of soul and spiritual pressing would begin to take place. This was apparently a place frequented by Jesus; a place to pray and be alone with The Father. Judas knew to seek Him here as we will see. Even here in a “place of strength” all hell and sinful temptation to escape for His own comfort would crush down upon the soul of this perfect and holy man. Jesus instruction to His men is simple, “*Sit here while I pray*”. We see here the very human nature of Jesus Christ as He brings these men along with Him into this very terrifying time in His ministry. Frankly speaking, Jesus, as man, needed these men. This is incredible and yet this is the truth found in Scripture such as **Hebrews 4:15**. Only a man who could know loneliness would be able to sympathize with us. He then moves deeper into the garden and brings with Him the three men whom always make up the inner circle of Jesus closest companions. This man desires to be near His friends for support and camaraderie. **Psalm 42:7** now becomes a reality to Jesus as the waves of horror and distress begin to cascade down upon Him. The Greek words used here to describe the degree of pain and horrors in the soul of Jesus are incredible beyond description. They speak of intense terror, anguish, distress, despair, sadness and sorrow. Literally, “sorrow so much as to cause one’s death”. This is Your Savior Beloved! And as much as He needed His disciples in this moment, they needed Him more and we do as well.

Suggestion for Prayer: Father, help me humbly approach this very familiar story with a new sense of wonder, love, and admiration for Jesus. It is this man in the garden facing temptation & terror that You are well pleased with. Thank You that by Your grace, He is my Savior who did indeed face & conquer temptation, sin, fear, & death for me who is unable to without Him.

WEDNESDAY – **Mark 14:35-36**: “He went a little farther, and fell on the ground, and prayed that if it were possible, the hour might pass from Him. And He said, “Abba, Father, all things are possible for You. Take this cup away from Me; nevertheless, not what I will, but what You will.” Today we are going to stop and do a little study on a doctrine seen in our text. Tomorrow we will return to studying the text in its context. These marvelous and awesome two verses summarize many incredibly important and deep truths. Among them is the truth that was defended and articulated by the church in the year 451 at The Council of Chalcedon. This council was one of the most important ecumenical councils of all time. It was called to point out and fight against many heresies but one in particular is seen as error very clearly from our current text. The Council of Chalcedon decried a heresy known as the Monophysite Heresy.

This heresy said that Jesus did not have two natures (physite) but only one (mono). This heresy and those embracing it taught that Jesus did not have a human and divine nature but rather a deified human nature or a humanized divine nature. This denial of either the real and total Diety and or humanity of Jesus is very serious and damning if believed. Jesus was and has to be both really human and really Divine or He can't save anyone from eternal sin and death. Chalcedon declared that Jesus was in fact, "*vere homo, vere Deus*", "truly man and truly God". Suffice to say the mystery of the incarnation of Christ is a deep truth. Scripture teaches as exemplified by our current text, and Chalcedon declared that Jesus' two natures are perfectly united in such a way that they are not confused or mixed, divided or separated. Scripture never mixes them together like the Monophysites did in their blended "deified human and humanized spirit" view of Christ. We will comment in more detail concerning this important yet difficult truth and why it's important this Lord's Day but let me summarize here by saying: God did not stop being God (eternal, infinite, omniscient, omnipotent, omnipresent) when He took on human nature in Jesus and at the same time Jesus' human nature retained its human attributes and was fully human (finite, limited in power, knowledge, and being contained to one place at a time). We see in our text the two natures of Jesus distinguished not divided. The God—man died but God did not. Even as a corpse in the tomb, Jesus remained united to the Divine nature.

Suggestion for Prayer: Father, Son and Holy Spirit, as I think about You and the profound depth of Your wisdom I am brought to my knees in silence and awe. Help me to meditate and praise You for Your Glory, greatness, and goodness O Lord. Thank You Jesus for being truly human and experiencing my pain & temptation and for being God in flesh able to live holy without sin. Praise You for paying the price for my sin and satisfying the demand for holiness.

THURSDAY – Mark 14:35-36: "*He went a little farther, and fell on the ground, and prayed that if it were possible, the hour might pass from Him. And He said, "Abba, Father, all things are possible for You. Take this cup away from Me; nevertheless, not what I will, but what You will."*" In looking at these verses in their context we are crushed if we would in fact meditate here and understand what is being said. In the midst of this horrible terror, Jesus yet again passes the test of living in obedience to The Father and carries out perfectly a sinless life in the place of His people. We learn of the character of Jesus as Mark records, *He went a little farther*. Never was Jesus the man looking for the easy way out, the shortcut to satisfaction; always the hard road, the humble road, the God glorifying and exalting road. He falls under the weight of this burden on His soul. As a human man He does not want to face loneliness, abandonment, suffering, pain, and death and He provides a lesson for us all in that in those moments of trial and temptation He pours out His soul to The Father. These are the cries of a son to his father; "*Abba...*" an Aramaic word, in the emphatic state, meaning 'father'. The word passed into Hebrew, and occurs frequently where it is used by a child to its father and also as a style of address to rabbis. The term conveyed both a sense of warm intimacy and also filial

respect; but in Jewish circles it has never been a form of address to the Almighty. It is this family term Jesus uses as He anguishes on the ground in prayer asking The Father if there may be another way. Could He apart from this horror of experiencing eternal hell and sins death blow save His people from their sins? Jesus understands The Father can do whatever He desires (*all things are possible for You*) yet we now see in His prayer, the completely sinless nature of His prayer as "*take this cup...*" is immediately followed by "*nevertheless, not what I will, but what You will.*" Jesus words and obedient humble submission we find echoed throughout Sacred Scripture. Read them and magnify The Eternal Son of God, and Son of Man (**Psalm 40:6-8, Isaiah 50:5, John 5:30, 6:38, Hebrews 10:5-7**).

Suggestion for Prayer: Father, help me to praise Jesus as I should and give me power Holy Spirit to trust in Christ work of obedience for me and also to strive to desire to obey as He did.

FRIDAY & SATURDAY – Mark 14:37-42: "*Then He came and found them sleeping, and said to Peter, "Simon, are you sleeping? Could you not watch one hour? Watch and pray, lest you enter into temptation. The spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak."* Again He went away and prayed, and spoke the same words. And when He returned, He found them asleep again, for their eyes were heavy; and they did not know what to answer Him. Then He came the third time and said to them, "*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. Rise, let us be going. See, My betrayer is at hand.*" Against the backdrop of Jesus perfect obedience and faithfulness is the failure, weakness, and faithlessness of His followers. You and I are so often like these men who were *sleeping* and *could not watch one hour*. Simon Peter is called upon to answer the question as a representative of all the disciples; it was Peter who spoke so glowingly and forcefully of remaining true to Jesus till death. Now he can't even stay awake as The Lord suffers anguish. How very much like us. Jesus gives a key to us on how to defeat temptation and sin as He points us to *Watch and pray*. Be on guard, be alert, and look to and rely on God's power because your power (*flesh*) is not enough. Like we so often do, they *did not know what to answer Him* as they lay there looking stupid with drool on their mouths. Beloved, as Jesus brings this lesson to a close, He not only carries His own burden but in fact, He carried these sleeping men's burden and they did not even know it. This is the Lord Jesus Christ, the Man of Sorrows, the Protector and Savior of the weak and sinful. As the text closes, we receive the impression that for Jesus this Gethsemane battle is over and the victory has been won. He has a God given peace; Luke reminding us He has been strengthened by an angel (**Luke 22:43**) as He prayed. As we move on, know these men had failed Jesus but **never** will His love fail them.

Suggestion for Prayer: Father God, help me to truly love Jesus more in light of this wonderful passage. Thank You Holy Trinity for Your Love for me a sinner and Your power to save me. In a real way dear God, teach me to grow in faith and repentance and to live for Jesus always.