

March 1, 2020

Sermon

Notes

The Agony in the Garden

Matthew 26:36-46

OVERVIEW

After instituting the Lord's Supper, Jesus and the disciples went to an olive grove in the Kidron Valley. In Matthew's gospel, the grove is known as "Gethsemane", meaning "olive press". It was there where our Lord prayed in agony that the cup of the crucifixion would be removed from Him.

IN DEPTH

If you were to die tomorrow, how would you live today?

In 2007, a movie came out and the main plot was to follow 2 terminally ill men on a road trip to do crazy things on a wish list before they "kick the bucket".

But this isn't just an idea for a movie; this occurs in real life. A 102-year-old wanted to be thrown into a police car and taken down to the station. A 91-year-old wanted to crash his car and did into his faulty garage door. A 99-year-old wanted to be arrested and spend a night in jail.

So, what would you do? If you were to die in the next couple of days, what would you do? Go

skydiving, bungee jumping, ride a mechanical bull? Jesus knew His death would take place soon and He spent the night praying to the Father. This morning, I want to look at "The Agony in the Garden" from Matthew 26:36-46.

1. His Arrival (v. 36-38)

A. The Location- Jesus takes his disciples to a place called *Gethsemane*, which means "olive press". It was a garden at the foot of the Mount of Olives, believed to be an olive grove with its own olive press.

B. The Lookouts- To Gethsemane took Jesus his (now) 11 disciples. However, He commanded the 8 to sit, while He, Peter, James, and John went further in the garden.

C. The Prayerful Plan- Matthew 26:36 tells us Jesus went to the Garden to pray. As He and the other 3 ventured deeper into Gethsemane, Jesus began to be "sorrowful and very heavy". He commanded His 3 disciples to stay alert and watchful, while He was going to go a little ways and pray to His Father.

Do you have a garden?

2. His Purpose (v. 39-44)

Matthew 26:39 states that Jesus went a little farther, which was about a stone throw away, and fell on His face in prayer. He prayed “if it be possible”. He asked God if it was possible, to choose another way other than the cup (cross). He was seeking God’s intervention in this matter, but notice an important word:

Nevertheless

Jesus prayed and asked God for the cup to pass from Him, “*nevertheless*, not as I will, but as thou wilt.” Jesus not only asked God to allow the cup to pass, but He also submitted Himself to the will of the Father.

There are two wills we see in this example of Christ:

1. The Human Will- Our first reaction to knowing we were going to face the crucifixion in a few days would be like Jesus: “...Father, ... let this cup pass from me:”
2. The Divine Will- Our second reaction should be like Jesus’ reaction: “...nevertheless, not as I will, but as thou wilt.”

This is the same in our lives when we face temptations. We desire to get what we want (the Human Will), but we should learn from Jesus and submit to the Divine Will.

3. His Departure (v. 45-46)

God gave Jesus relief in facing what was before Him. You can see by the change of His tone that tells His disciples to sleep on.

Luke actually tells us that an angel came from heaven and strengthened Him (Luke 22:43).

It was after the disciples sleep, Jesus commands them to rise because the time of His betrayal had arrived.

Jesus commanded His disciples twice to “watch”. Yet, both times resulted in their slumber.

If the disciples didn’t remain loyal to Jesus’ command, how will we be able to?

1. Stay Alert

2. Communicate with God

Jesus said to “watch and pray”. Watch means we are to be alert to see temptation coming, and prayer allows us to be prepared when temptations come.

CONCLUSION

In the face of trial and temptation, are you 1) staying alert and 2) communicating with God? Prayer is often neglected. Maybe due to not audibly hearing God or possibly because we don’t know what to say. But, God has a plan for everything. For us to know His plan, we need to be talking to Him continually.

If there is a problem in your life, have you bowed your head in prayer and asked for the Lord’s help? Do you have a relationship with Him in the first place?



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