



Mark 14:32-72

An OCF Bible Study

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Gethsemane was a garden on the lower slopes of the Mount of Olives. **What was Jesus' main purpose in going there (v. 32)?** To turn Himself in. Our Lord knew that His time had now come when he must be delivered into the hands of His enemies. He wasn't hiding or evading the authorities. He was in control of all events leading up to and including His death.

Why was Jesus overwhelmed with sorrow (v. 34)? Jesus knew He was going to bear God's wrath for the sins of the world. He was anticipating His upcoming separation from His Father.

What is the cup symbolic of (v. 36)? In the Old Testament, the cup was a powerful picture of the wrath and judgment of God.

In this moment of distress, how did Jesus address His Father (v. 36)? As "Abba," a child's familiar name for "daddy." **What does that say about their relationship?** Jesus didn't feel distant from God the Father. He felt so close to the Father that He used the familiar name—in spite of what was about to happen. Theirs was an emotional relationship.

{What was Jesus asking the Father? "Are you sure about this? If there is any other possible way to save humanity other than the agony which awaits Me at the cross? Please let it be."

What is the key statement in His prayer? *Yet not what I will, but what you will.* A statement demonstrating trust and a spirit of submission to The Father's will.

Application: When we pray *not what I will, but what you will*, we are right where God wants us! Our attitude should be: "in the end, when all is said and done, if there's a difference between my desires and Your will, above all, I want Your will, Lord." The Christian life is all about surrender—the surrender of our will to His.

Jesus found them sleeping. How long had He been gone (v. 37)? One hour. **When He addressed all three disciples, what did He command them to do?** Watch and pray. Be alert. **Why?** So they don't fall into temptation.

What kind of temptation lay ahead that He would be referring to? To deny Christ. To flee and desert Jesus. Temptation is a primary tool of Satan. They are going to be going into battle against the master tempter. They need to get ready, to prepare. The battle is often *won* or *lost* before the crisis comes. The groundwork needs to be laid before getting to battle stage.

What are some practical examples of how we might "watch and pray"?

Mark recorded that Jesus made three separate trips into the depths of the garden to pray, repeating the same words each time (v. 39-42). What is the message for us? Persistence/repetitive prayer is okay. Jesus' perseverance in prayer demonstrated the extent of His dependence on the Father.¹

This passage is a remarkable revelation of the humanity of Jesus—a hallmark of the Gospel of Mark. We see emotions ranging from sorrow to agony to irritation.

Why was such a large group of men that included Roman soldiers and temple guards sent to arrest Jesus (v. 43)? Jesus had previously escaped through the crowds (Luke 4:30, John 8:59; 10:39). They wanted to make sure it didn't happen again.

Why was it necessary for Judas to kiss Jesus (v. 45)? Apparently, Jesus was average in appearance, with no distinguishing features: *He had no beauty or majesty to attract us to him, nothing in His appearance that we should desire him (Isaiah 53:2).* It was necessary that Judas specifically identify Him for the sake of those arresting Jesus, and he chose to identify Jesus by greeting Him with a kiss. Otherwise the Roman soldiers and temple guards wouldn't have recognized Jesus.

The Gethsemane scenario was a way to avoid creating a riot at the arrest of Jesus because of the isolated location and the time of day. Plus the only people there were three disciples.

When they arrested Jesus what did the disciples do (v. 50)? The disciples scattered and ran for their own safety just as Jesus had prophesied (v. 27).

Why did the Sanhedrin (the Jewish Supreme Court of the day) have such a hard time convicting Jesus (v. 53-65)? The liars couldn't get their act together. They were building a false case but couldn't fit the pieces of the false puzzle together. The so-called witnesses kept disagreeing with one another. It's harder to agree on a consistent lie when trying to avoid the truth.

Why did Jesus keep silent (also before Pilate) and not defend himself (v. 61)? Jesus could have mounted a magnificent defense here, calling forth all the people He taught, the people He healed, the dead He had risen, the blind who see—even the demons themselves testified to His deity. His silence had been prophesied in Isaiah 53:7, *He was oppressed and afflicted yet he did not open His mouth; he was led like a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before its shearers is silent, so he did not open His mouth.*

In a real sense, it isn't Jesus who is on trial at all. It's really the religious leaders—and they're on trial before God. They seemingly win, but have actually lost. In the same way, we all are on trial before God and will be held accountable for what we do with Jesus Christ.

How did the Sanhedrin react to Jesus comments (v. 63)? They reacted with a self-righteous, melodramatic horror (the high priest tore his clothes) and subsequent abuse and brutality (some began to spit on Jesus and beat Him). The Sanhedrin then sentenced Jesus to death.

This event happened in the courtyard of the high priest while the hearing continued on the floor above it (v. 66-72). What does Peter's presence say about him? It was a testimony to His love and devotion for Jesus. Only one other disciple was there.

Peter's three-fold denial—what does that say about him? His denial was not a faith issue; it was a courage issue. He was afraid. His love and devotion for Jesus stood the test of faith but failed the test of fear.

Peter, despite his bold proclamation that he will never be made to stumble, he would fail in what he thought were his strong areas—courage and boldness. Peter did not know how weak he was. When it came to crunch time, his courage and boldness, failed him. **Why?** He was operating in his own strength against a formidable enemy.

Have you ever been in Peter's shoes and made promises to Jesus that you have not kept? When that is the case, there is an appropriate time to weep bitterly—but then a time to come back to Jesus, who will always receive you back. As the end of this story unfolds, it will provide assurance that if anyone did fail Jesus under the duress of persecution, there was always a way open for repentance, forgiveness and restoration.

Have you ever denied Christ? What are some ways we can deny Christ?

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¹ Dr. Thomas L. Constable, *Notes on Mark, 2014 Edition* (published by Sonic Light, www.soniclight.com), pp. 187