

Why Are You Sleeping?
Mark 14:32-42

Good morning, Happy New Year.

I hope you enjoyed time with loved ones for the Christmas holiday, and I hope you took time to truly be thankful to the Lord for how good He is to all of us.

King Solomon asked in ***Proverbs 6:9*** ***How long will you slumber, O sluggard? When will you rise from your sleep?***

I read some funny quotes about sleep I want to share with you.

Someone has said, *“Some people talk in their sleep. But lecturers talk while others sleep.”*

Anthony Burgess said, *“Laugh and the world laughs with you. Snore and you will sleep alone.”*

Leo Burke said, *“People who say they sleep like a baby usually don’t have one.”*

Please open your Bibles to ***Mark 14***, as we continue in our line-by-line study of ***Mark***. Last time we were in ***Mark***, we learned how at the Passover dinner, Jesus instituted the Lord’s Supper.

Passover and communion are **intimately** linked together, because it was during the celebration of the Passover Feast that Jesus offered His disciples the bread and the fruit of the vine.

Although the Israelites never understood this truth, God the Trinity was pictured with the *matzoh* during the Passover.

Jesus clearly showed that communion was a picture of His body about to be offered on the cross and His blood soon to be shed, for the remission of sins.

This observance is a time to remember all that Christ did for us individually and corporately by dying on the cross.

The Passover meal was followed by the singing of the last half of the Hallel Psalms found within *Psalms 115-118*.

Jesus Christ was singing worship songs to the Father with His Disciples on His way to the Garden before His brutal beatings and crucifixion! Then Jesus predicted Peter's denial.

Jesus had already told His Disciples one of them would betray Him and then He told them that all of them would fall away!

Some people believe Peter's denial began after Jesus' arrest, but his denial was a **slow fade** into sin which began when he questioned the words of Jesus.

This morning we are going to see Jesus preparing for the upcoming crucifixion by praying to the Father and asking His closest followers to pray for Him as well.

I. A walk in the garden.

Read *Mark 14:32-34*

Here we have a timeline from the passage, *vs. 32 "Then"*.

Jesus had just announced to His followers that they would all be made to stumble because of Him that night.

But Peter said not so Lord, and after Jesus reiterated the warning again, Peter said he was willing to die before betraying Him.

Then the other Disciples said the same thing.

Last time we were in *Mark*, I said, “*Peter’s double self-confidence ultimately led him to a triple denial of Christ.*”

I believe Peter was sincere, even though he failed. In the Garden narrative from *John 18*, we read about Malchus, the soldier who came to arrest Jesus and Peter cut off his ear.

The moral of that story is we should never trust a sword in the hands of a fisherman.

It is ironic the last miracle of Jesus prior to taking the cross was to fix the mess of one of His followers and to show grace to someone who had come to falsely arrest Him.

So, supper was over, and Jesus and His disciples made their way to the Mount of Olives and went for a walk in the Garden.

Jesus went to a secluded place to pray, and He instructed the Disciples to go sit and pray as they waited for Him, as well.

Jesus took just His inner circle of followers with Him to pray, Peter, James, and John.

On three separate occasions, Jesus invited just these three men to join Him and all three occasions dealt with death.

- When Jesus healed Jairus' (Jeye-russ) daughter.
- When Jesus was glorified on the Mount of Transfiguration.
- And here the night of His arrest in the Garden of Gethsemane Jesus takes these men further to pray for Him.

*If it was **important** for Jesus to spend time with the Father as He prayed for strength and guidance, what does that teach us?*

It's hard to imagine that someone who had the power to make the Heavens and the Earth would seek someone else's help.

And yet, Jesus, the Creator of the Heavens and the Earth, in His human form said in *John 5:30, I can of Myself do nothing.*

The relationship between Father and Son is one of absolute dependence and it is also an example of perfect harmony and unity between God the Father and God the Son.

That is why Jesus would be able to say with absolute certainty, *"I and the Father are one" John 10:30.*

Dependence seems to be a sign of weakness to people but dependence on the Lord is the ultimate sign of **strength**.

Jesus was 100% man and 100% God at the same time. He totally died to His own desires and completely depended on His Father.

Jesus shows us the importance of **prayer** and reliance upon God.

Notice, the second part of *vs. 33, He said to them, "My soul is exceedingly sorrowful, even to death. Stay here and watch."*

Peter, James, and John had been with Jesus for three years and they had never seen anything like this before.

Jesus began to be troubled and deeply distressed.

Many believe Jesus' suffering began with the beatings He endured after His arrest but, truly His suffering began in the Garden of Gethsemane.

Gethsemane was a garden outside the city, across the Kidron brook and was located on the Mount of Olives.

Olive trees were native to Jerusalem as they were very important to the Jewish people.

The name Gethsemane means **Olive Press** and it was a very remote, walled, garden.

Allow me to describe how an Olive Farmer would produce Olive Oil during the time, which is also a picture of Christ.

The olive farmer would grab a branch of olives, beat it with a stick, then pick up the olives and after removing the pits, and then he would gently place them into a basin.

A large millstone would roll over the olives in the basin and crush them. The oil would then flow into a container and the crushed pulp would go into a basket.

Oil also represents the Holy Spirit in the Bible and Oil was used to anoint kings and Priests and remember; Jesus is our High Priestly King.

As a side note, Jesus also ascended into heaven from the Mount of Olives and when He physically returns, it will be on the Mount of Olives that every eye shall see Him.

It is also interesting to recognize the contrast between the Garden of Eden and the Garden of Gethsemane.

Adam is the first man in scripture and Jesus is known as the second Adam.

In the first Garden, Adam the first man, fell by yielding to temptation.

In the second Garden, Jesus, the second Adam, **conquered** temptation by yielding to the will of God the Father.

During this narrative in *Mark*, Jesus was being crushed or pressed like an olive in the Garden.

Hebrews 5:8 though He was a Son, yet He learned obedience by the things which He suffered. NKJV

We also see Jesus was in agony, in *Luke 22:44 And being in agony, He prayed more earnestly. Then His sweat became like great drops of blood falling down to the ground. NKJV*

It is interesting, Luke who wrote *Luke 22* was a physician.

In 1874, William Stroud, a London Physician, wrote a book entitled, “*The Physical cause of the Death of Christ.*”

He wrote that bloody sweat could occur under extreme emotional exertion, especially in severe cases of anxiety.

In 1986, an article in the Journal of the American Medical Association, a biblical scholar along with specialist from the Mayo clinic wrote an article about this phenomenon.

The American Medical Association said hemorrhaging in the sweat ducts happens during acute emotional distress.

The skin becomes fragile, and the capillaries dilate and burst, causing blood to ooze from the skin.

There is not only biblical evidence, but also medical evidence to the fact that Jesus struggled during this prayer time in the Garden; knowing what was about to happen to Him.

Jesus was going to take the burden for all sin, for all eternity.

II. If possible, take the cup from Me.

Read *Mark 14:35-36*

Jesus' grief and sorrow were caused by Him taking upon Himself, our grief, sin, and sorrow. Jesus' human side was struggling because He knew the hour had come.

Jesus said in *John 12:27 "Now My soul is troubled, and what shall I say? 'Father, save Me from this hour'? But for this purpose I came to this hour. NKJV*

In both the New and Old Testaments, we read of God's wrath which must be poured out on sin.

Romans 6:23 says the penalty for sin is death.

God's wrath against sin had to be paid for, so the image of drinking the cup in the Garden of Gethsemane shows us Jesus would take the penalty for the sin of the world upon Himself.

Jesus drank the cup of God's wrath on the cross, as He took the burden for all sin, for all eternity.

Isaiah 53:6 All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned, every one, to his own way; and the LORD has laid on Him the iniquity of us all. NKJV

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

Matthew 27:46 And about the ninth hour Jesus cried out with a loud voice, saying, "Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani?" that is, "My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me?" NKJV

For the very first time in all eternity from eons past, Jesus and the Father would have **broken** fellowship and would become separated, because the Father cannot look upon sin.

Jesus said, ***"My soul is exceedingly sorrowful, even to death."***

The thought, in just a matter of hours Jesus was going to become sin for us on the cross and endure His Father's wrath instead of His Father's love, made Jesus so sorrowful, it was like death.

Even though Jesus was sorrowful to the point of death, He said to the Father, ***"Nevertheless, not my will, but yours, be done."***

When we are fully **surrendered** to the Lord, our response to trials and tribulations in our life will be, “*Nevertheless, not my will, but yours, be done*”, as well.

It was right then that Jesus committed to dying on the cross.

We know that the Lord is not out to harm us so, we tell the Lord how we are feeling and still say, “*Nevertheless, not my will, but yours, be done.*”

III. Sleeping instead of praying.

Read *Mark 14:37-42*

When Jesus left His closest friends behind, He went on to pray.

- He asked them to watch with Him.
- These men were with Him from the beginning of His earthly ministry.
- These men were privy to His miracles, even when He was transfigured.

Yet at each break He took from prayer, He finds them sleeping.

As Jesus longed for friendship and fellowship from the Disciples to help relieve the **burden**, He received no relief from His followers.

Over 1000 years before, the Psalmist said: *Psalm 69:20*
Reproach has broken my heart, And I am full of heaviness; I looked for someone to take pity, but there was none; And for comforters, but I found none.

Psalm 69:21 They also gave me gall for my food, and for my thirst they gave me vinegar to drink. NKJV

Here was our Savior, alone in His distress and sorrow. Jesus found the Garden of Gethsemane to be a place of great suffering.

Dr. David Jeremiah, Pastor of Shadow Mountain Community Church, did a sermon on Disruptive Technology.

He mentioned Clayton Christensen, a professor at Harvard, who is known for his work in the theory of Disruptive Technology.

Disruptive Technology is an unexpected product that disrupts an existing market and helps create a new category of customers.

Examples of Disruptive Technology include desktop publishing, CDs, DVDs, personal computers, telephones, and automobiles.

Disruptive Technologies are usually resisted at first but, then are accepted, because of their benefits within the market.

*“God allows Disruptive moments in our lives that we almost always question or **resist** because they are painful, unanticipated, misunderstood, and often not optional.”*

(David Jeremiah)

Yet in hindsight, the *Disruptive moments in our lives* always result for the good and blessings of God’s children.

Of course, the best example of a life being disrupted, in the Old Testament, is Job and in the NT, the best example is Paul.

2 Corinthians 12:7 a thorn in the flesh was given to me, a messenger of Satan to buffet me, lest I be exalted above measure.

2 Corinthians 12:8 Concerning this thing I pleaded with the Lord three times that it might depart from me.

2 Corinthians 12:9 And He said to me, "My grace is sufficient for you, for My strength is made perfect in weakness." NKJV

If God allows a disruptive moment in your life, ***walk by faith and not by sight***, realizing God has a purpose for the pain!

The question I struggle with is how did the Disciples sleep, during such an important time in history.

Luke 22:45 When He rose up from prayer, and had come to His disciples, He found them sleeping from sorrow.

Luke 22:46 Then He said to them, "Why do you sleep? Rise and pray, lest you enter into temptation." NKJV

The Disciples' flesh was weak, and they were also consumed with sadness and overwhelmed by their sorrow.

The extreme emotion caused the Disciples to sleep even though they should have been praying for their Savior.

Remember, Jesus is fully man and full God at the same time.

Here we see Jesus was overwhelmed even unto death but, He never fails us or allowed emotions to dictate His behavior.

Today, Jesus never sleeps nor slumbers and He is always interceding to the Father on our behalf.

Hebrews 4:15 For we do not have a High Priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses, but was in all points tempted as we are, yet without sin.

Hebrews 4:16 Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need. NKJV

Jesus did not receive the answer He initially requested, (*let this cup pass from me*) but, instead the Father gave Him **strength** as the answer to be able to endure.

Luke 22:41 And He was withdrawn from them about a stone's throw, and He knelt down and prayed,

Luke 22:42 saying, "Father, if it is Your will, take this cup away from Me; nevertheless not My will, but Yours, be done."

Luke 22:43 Then an angel appeared to Him from heaven, strengthening Him. NKJV

What excuses do we use that cause us not to pray? Do we allow our emotions to drive us to despair and forget that we have an advocate to whom we can go to in prayer?

Once Jesus received strength from the Father, He was ready to **face** the hour at hand and so He went out to meet His betrayers.

IV. Practical Application.

Jesus entered the Garden suffering but that is where He received the strength and resolve, to fulfill the Father's will.

For Jesus, the place of suffering became a place of strength through Prayer.

- His prayer was fervent and persistent.
- His prayer was where He submitted to the Father's will.
- His prayer was where He was strengthened.
- His prayer was where He was enabled to face the future.

There are times that we have distress, loneliness, and sorrow. But those times can become times of comfort and strength.

We should spend time, during trials and suffering, seeking God in prayer and accept His will, not ours. Think about Jesus' posture during prayer. *Matthew 26:39 "He fell on His face"*.

Think about Jesus' attitude during prayer, *Matthew 26:39 "O My Father, if it is possible, let this cup pass from Me."*

When God allows Disruptive moments in our lives; the key for us is the same that Jesus found there in the garden.

Philippians 4:6 Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God;

Philippians 4:7 and the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus. NKJV

May we learn to stop neglecting the special gift of prayer, especially since we have Jesus who is interceding for us, continually at the right hand of the Father.

Remember earlier when we were talking about the Olive Press and how Olive Oil represents the Holy Spirit?

The word picture is Jesus being crushed in the press and is in great agony over what is about to happen to Him. Jesus willingly took the crushing because it was necessary for us to receive oil.

Jesus was crushed as an Olive, and the Oil represents the **Holy Spirit** which He freely gives. Jesus promised His followers the Holy Spirit as He told them He was going back to heaven.

As Jesus was reassuring His followers He said, ***John 16:5 "But now I go away to Him who sent Me, and none of you asks Me, 'Where are You going?'***

John 16:6 But because I have said these things to you, sorrow has filled your heart.

John 16:7 Nevertheless I tell you the truth. It is to your advantage that I go away; for if I do not go away, the Helper will not come to you; but if I depart, I will send Him to you.

The only way we are saved, and the only reason we receive the Holy Spirit, is because Jesus willingly accepted the Olive Press.

His body was crushed for my sin, and we need to remember that God has a plan, and He is working out His plan.

The Garden of Gethsemane was a place of victory for Jesus and now is a place of victory for every true believer in Him as well.

His ways are not our ways. Most of us try to find logical reasons for everything event that happens in our lives.

But we need to remember that God has a plan, and He is working His plan out. Again, His ways are not our ways.

The Garden of Gethsemane represented several things within the life of Jesus, and we can overcome our trials just as Jesus did by having a complete dependence on the Lord.

May we not sleep, when we should be watching and praying.

Maybe you have been going through a Garden experience with suffering, loneliness, or sorrow. You need strength and comfort.

Maybe your prayer life has been lacking and you need to get back on track. Maybe your faith is lacking, and you need prayer to trust God in the storm.

Maybe you have walked away from the Lord, and you need prayer to help find your way back. Or maybe you are here this morning and you have never trusted Christ for Salvation.

Unlike Jesus, Paul says because we are in Christ, ***2 Corinthians 4:8 We are hard-pressed on every side, yet not crushed; we are perplexed, but not in despair;***

2 Corinthians 4:9 persecuted, but not forsaken; struck down, but not destroyed NKJV