



CAPITOL COMMISSION

Were Christ's Prayers Always Answered?

MAY 25-27, 2011

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Matthew 26:36-46 *"Then Jesus came with them to a place called Gethsemane, and said to His disciples, 'Sit here while I go over there and pray.' 37) And He took with Him Peter and the two sons of Zebedee, and began to be grieved and distressed. 38) Then He said to them, 'My soul is deeply grieved, to the point of death: remain here and watch with Me.' 39) And He went a little beyond them, and fell on His face and prayed, saying, 'My Father, if it is possible, let this cup pass from Me; yet not as I will, but as Thou wilt.' 40) And He came to the disciples and found them sleeping, and said to Peter, 'So, you men could not keep watch with Me for one hour? 41) Keep watching and praying, that you may not enter into temptation; the spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak.' 42) He went away again a second time and prayed, saying, 'My Father, if this cannot pass away unless I drink it, Thy will be done.' 43) And again He came and found them sleeping, for their eyes were heavy. 44) And He left them again, and went away and prayed a third time, saying the same thing once more. 45) Then He came to the disciples and said to them, 'Are you still sleeping and taking your rest? Behold, the hour is at hand and the Son of Man is being betrayed into the hands of sinners. 46) Arise, let us be going; behold, the one who betrays Me is at hand!"* (NASB)

"HE WHO MADE ATONEMENT FOR THE SINS OF MANKIND, SUBMITTED HIMSELF IN A GARDEN OF SUFFERING, TO THE WILL OF GOD, FROM WHICH MAN HAD REVOLTED IN A GARDEN OF PLEASURE."

MATTHEW HENRY

Does Jesus only take His disciples in leadership to pray with them? Why is Jesus' soul deeply grieved unto death? What is the cup Jesus refers to in His prayer? Is there a difference between Jesus' first prayer and His second? Why are the disciples sleeping? What is the significance of watching one hour? Are the disciples commanded to pray for Him or themselves? What had the disciples so vehemently promised to do for Jesus that they were already neglecting? Why does Jesus pray three times? What do we learn about prayer here?

FOCUS ON FUTURE SATELLITE BIBLE STUDIES:

- JUNE 1-3: MATTHEW 26:47-56 *THE TRAITOR'S KISS*
- JUNE 15-17: MATTHEW 26:57-68 *THE UNLAWFUL, UNJUST TRIAL OF JESUS*

It was probably near midnight on Wednesday, April 5, 30 AD.¹ Over three years of ministry by Jesus Christ had been completed. His last public sermon had been preached. His last miracle had been performed. The last Passover had been celebrated and inaugurated into the Lord's Supper. But most importantly, Jesus would offer Himself as the last and ultimate Passover Lamb, "*the Lamb of God*" as the only sacrifice sufficient to atone for the sins of the world. On His final walk through Jerusalem that evening Jesus had spoken the glorious words of John 15-17 to His disciples before He left the city, crossed the Brook Kidron and entered into the estate Garden of Gethsemane. Peter and all the rest with him had boasted just prior that evening, "*Even if I have to die with You, I will not deny You!*" (Mt. 26:35). With Jesus' prayers, we see into the Holy of Holies of Scripture.

"IF CHRIST COULD PLEAD AS BOLDLY AS HE DID, WE SHOULD FEEL FREE ALSO TO UNLOAD ALL OUR DEEPEST DESIRES BEFORE GOD. YET WE DARE NOT BLAME OURSELVES OR OTHERS IF WE DO NOT RECEIVE WHAT WE ASK FOR WHEN WE HAVE ASKED WITH THE RIGHT MOTIVES (JAS. 4:3)."

CRAIG BLOMBERG

I. HIS INTENSE SORROW MT. 26:36-38

Jesus went to His favorite olive grove, large enough for an olive press for which it was named Gethsemane. Little did His disciples know that His soul was pressed with the weight of the sin of mankind. Eight of the

¹ James Montgomery Boice, *The Gospel of Matthew: The King and His Kingdom*, Vol. 1, (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 2001), 222.

BIBLE STUDY LOCATION INFORMATION

WEDNESDAY @ 7:00AM -BIBLE STUDY - FREDERICKSBURG - DENNY'S ON RT. 1, 11:30AM - WOODBRIDGE - BOB EVANS AT NOBLEWOOD PLAZA
 THURSDAY @ 7:00AM -BIBLE STUDY - RT. 10, IRONBRIDGE SPORTS PK, NOON - WYTESTONE PLAZA - 8TH & MAIN - 2ND FLOOR CONFERENCE ROOM
 FRIDAY @ 7:00 AM -BIBLE STUDY - IN THE TIDEWATER AREA (CALL 804-683-2285 FOR SPECIFICS)

Virginia

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disciples He left with the words, “*Sit here while I go over there and pray.*” The leaders who were closest to Him, He took deeper into the orchard and “*began to be grieved and distressed.*” He longed for His inner circle to understand and said, “*My soul is deeply grieved, to the point of death: remain here and watch with Me.*” Weighed upon His soul was not only the betrayal of Judas and the desertion of the eleven, but even the three-fold outright denial of Peter, their leader. But if Peter’s cursing was not enough, He would soon be lynched by the leaders of His own country, the nation of Israel; yet He was their Messiah! He the Creator of what is right and just would subject Himself the greatest injustice of all history! The one who was praised for eternity past by all the Host of Heaven would be cursed, beaten and crucified by a host of wicked men! Yet more grievous was the vast aloneness He was about to face as He would be utterly forsaken by His Father. But the greatest torment of all was the dark tide of the abhorrent iniquity of men damned up from all ages, past and future, suddenly to burst upon His perfectly pure and detesting soul, accompanied by all the eternal fiery wrath against such sin by God the righteous avenger! The Creator of all life was about to “*taste death for everyone*” (Hebrews 2:9).

“JESUS WAS ‘DEEPLY GRIEVED TO THE POINT OF DEATH’ BECAUSE OF HIS HAVING TO BECOME SIN. THAT WAS THE UNBEARABLY EXCRUCIATING PROSPECT THAT MADE HIM SWEAT GREAT DROPS OF BLOOD. HOLINESS IS TOTALLY REPULSED BY SIN.”
JOHN MACARTHUR

II. HIS INCREDIBLE SUPPLICATION MT. 26:39-44

With this inconceivably heavy weight upon His soul, Jesus goes another “*stone’s throw*” and humbles Himself in the most intense posture of prayer, He “*fell on His face.*” Jesus had often addressed God as His “*Father*” in prayer, but only on this occasion does He call Him, “*My Father,*” supplicating with extreme intimacy. The

repulsive horror weighed upon His soul brings forth His most urgent request, “*If it is possible, let this cup pass from Me.*” Mark 14:36 adds even greater intimacy and supplication, “*Abba Father, all things are possible for You. Take this cup away from Me.*” There was nothing more abhorrent to the Son of God than the cup immediately before Him. That cup is called, “*The cup of His fury,*” and “*The cup of trembling, the dregs of the cup of My fury*” (Isaiah 51:17, 22). Then He prayed, “*yet not as I will, but as Thou wilt.*” He committed to the will of His Father and our substitution! While He committed everything for them, the disciples were not willing to do anything for Him, not even to stay awake one hour! Jesus tells them how to have power over temptation, “*Watch and pray.*” So, He firmly submits in prayer, “*My Father, since this is not able to pass except I drink it, may your will be!*”

“THE SECOND PRAYER IS NOT SIMPLY A REPEAT OF THE FIRST. IT SUGGESTS THAT JESUS NOW KNOWS THE ANSWER TO THE REQUEST OF V. 39, AND HAS ACCEPTED THAT NO ALTERNATIVE IS POSSIBLE.”

R. T. FRANCE

III. HIS IMPECCABLE STRENGTH MT. 26:45-46

While “*being in agony, He prayed more earnestly. Then His sweat became like great drops of blood falling down to the ground*” (Lk. 22:44). In the face of unequalled anguish and absolute terror, Jesus accepted the cup in perfect agreement with His Father. He is strengthened by an angel and the infinite suffering has been embraced. He returns to the disciples who, by sleeping, will “*fall away*” in temptation due to neglect of prayer. Jesus doubly startles them with “*Behold!*” and a double command in the fullness of His victorious commitment, “*Arise, let us be going; behold, the one who betrays Me is at hand!*” From this point on Jesus only does His Father’s will. He walks toward his captors, accepts their arrest, offers no defense in His trials and His execution. The impossible is by submissive prayer!

Questions to Ponder:

- 1) Are you boldly honest with your Father as Jesus was in prayer?
- 2) Is there any other possible way that one’s sins can be forgiven except through the substitutionary death of Christ?
- 3) What is your commitment to Christ who was so committed to you in His suffering the wrath of man and God for you?