

Theme: Theme: In the garden of Gethsemane, Jesus was tempted to turn away from drinking the cup of wrath of God, but in His deep anguish He drew close to His Father and victoriously embraced His will.

## I. Intro - The Death of Socrates in Phaedo

- A. I recently read Plato's Dialogue with Phaedo
- B. It tells of Socrates' final night as he prepares to die
- C. It is the opposite of Jesus' last night!
  - 1. Socrates is in jail; Jesus just had a great meal and is in a garden
  - 2. Socrates' disciples are with him and are worried; Jesus' friends are falling asleep
  - 3. Socrates is totally calm and welcomes death; Jesus is in anguish.
- D. Why is Jesus in such anguish? What is happening?

## II. Jesus Goes To Gethsemane

- A. A startling conversation on the way to Gethsemane  
"You will all fall away," Jesus told them, "for it is written: 'I will strike the shepherd, and the sheep will be scattered.'<sup>28</sup> But after I have risen, I will go ahead of you into Galilee." Mark 14:27-28
  - 1. Jesus predicts the disciples will all stumble
    - a. 'Fall away' is σκανδαλίζω - to be offended, stumble
    - b. They are going to be offended and stumble over the cost of being associated with Jesus
    - c. This is the word Jesus used in the parable of the sower, seed, and soils - persecution causes people to be offended, stumble, and turn away (Mark 4:17)
    - d. Whatever is coming, Jesus will face it alone!

- 2. This is because Jesus, the Shepherd, will be struck, and the sheep will scatter.
  - a. Jesus is quoting Zechariah 13:7  
"Awake, O sword, against my shepherd, against the man who is close to me!" declares the LORD Almighty. "Strike the shepherd, and the sheep will be scattered, and I will turn my hand against the little ones. Zechariah 13:7
  - b. Jesus is not guessing what will happen - it is laid out in Scripture!
  - c. The shocking thing is that it is God Who strikes the Shepherd!
  - d. This is a clue to what is about to happen!
- B. But there is hope - Jesus will arise!  
But after I have risen, I will go ahead of you into Galilee. Mark 14:28
  - 1. Jesus knows He will be struck and die, but He knows He will rise from the dead!
  - 2. He will gather the scattered disciples again in Galilee - where they first became His disciples!
  - 3. A dark night is upon them, but there is hope!
  - 4. Part of every prediction of Jesus' death  
He then began to teach them that the Son of Man must suffer many things and be rejected by the elders, chief priests and teachers of the law, and that he must be killed and after three days rise again. Mark 8:31
    - a. Jesus always says that death will be followed by resurrection!
    - b. Same pattern in Mark 9:31; 10:33-34
  - 5. In the Gospel, life always follows death, and the crown follows the cross!

### III. The Garden of Temptation and Testing

#### A. Jesus goes to the Garden to pray alone

They went to a place called Gethsemane, and Jesus said to his disciples, "Sit here while I pray." Mark 14:32

1. Jesus is in His hour of temptation and testing
2. The disciples will be no help (especially in light of their false confidence - more on this next week).
3. Jesus leaves them to pray alone
4. Jesus had done the same thing at the beginning of His ministry

Very early in the morning, while it was still dark, Jesus got up, left the house and went off to a solitary place, where he prayed. Mark 1:35

5. When Jesus was faced with key moments in life and ministry, He spent significant time in prayer, communing with the Father and receiving strength from the Spirit.

#### B. Jesus' hour of deep agony

He took Peter, James and John along with him, and he began to be **deeply distressed** and **troubled**.<sup>34</sup> "My soul is **overwhelmed with sorrow to the point of death**," he said to them. "Stay here and keep watch." Mark 14:33-34

1. Jesus is deeply distressed and troubled!
2. Jesus says His soul is overwhelmed/downcast with so much sorrow that it is on the point of death!
3. An allusion to Psalm 42:5 (also 42:6, 11; 43:5)  
Why are you downcast, O my soul? Why so disturbed within me? Put your hope in God, for I will yet praise him, my Savior and my God. Psalm 42:5

#### 4. This is reinforced in Jesus' prayer

Going a little farther, he fell to the ground and prayed that if possible the hour might pass from him. Mark 14:35

- a. People normally prayed standing and lifting their hands to heaven, but Jesus falls flat on the ground!
- b. This is a position of utter desperation and agony!
- c. Jesus prays for the hour to pass from Him!
- d. This is no Stoic posture or prayer - it is an urgent prayer of anguish in the form of an Old Testament lament!

#### 5. Why is Jesus in so much anguish and distress?

- a. Socrates was calm and philosophical in his hour of death - why isn't Jesus? Is He afraid of death?
- b. Jesus has said He will be raised from the dead - so why the deep anguish? Is His faith faltering?

#### C. The cause of Jesus' anguish

"Abba, Father," he said, "everything is possible for you. Take this cup from me. Yet not what I will, but what you will." Mark 14:36

#### 1. Jesus cries out Abba, like a child

- a. No one before Jesus ever called God "Abba"
- b. Mark keeps Jesus' Aramaic word, the word a child uses to call out to their Father.
- c. Paul uses this to refer to us praying to the Father in Romans 8:15; Galatians 4:6

#### 2. He asks for the cup to be taken away so that He might not have to drink it.

3. This is not the cup of physical suffering or death but the cup of God's holy wrath against sin.

In the hand of the LORD is a cup full of foaming wine mixed with spices; he pours it out, and all the wicked of the earth drink it down to its very dregs. Psalm 75:8

Awake, awake! Rise up, O Jerusalem, you who have drunk from the hand of the LORD the cup of his wrath, you who have drained to its dregs the goblet that makes men stagger. Isaiah 51:17

- a. God's wrath against sin is commonly referred to as His cup of wrath.
  - b. See Job 21:20; Isaiah 51:17-22; Jeremiah 25:15-17; Revelation 14:9-10; 16:19 for other examples of this.
4. As the Lamb of God, Jesus will cleanse the people of their sin. This is the beginning of the passage in Zechariah 13 about the disciples being scattered.  
"On that day a fountain will be opened to the house of David and the inhabitants of Jerusalem, to cleanse them from sin and impurity... <sup>7</sup> "Awake, O sword, against my shepherd, against the man who is close to me!" declares the LORD Almighty. "Strike the shepherd, and the sheep will be scattered... Zechariah 13:1, 7
    - a. God will open a fountain for the cleansing of sin!
    - b. But to do this God Himself will strike the Shepherd, the Man Who is close to Him!
5. To pay for the sin of the people, Jesus, the Suffering Servant, must drink the cup of the wrath of God.
  6. This - not pain or death - is the horror that looms before Jesus, creating such sorrow and anguish. He Who has never known sin must bear the sin of the world. He Who has only known the Father's pleasure will have to know His wrath in our place.

7. The temptation and test is the same as in the wilderness but intensified due to the approaching fulfillment - will Jesus turn from the way of the cross, or will He submit to the will of the Father, even if it means suffering the full weight of the furious wrath of God against sin?
8. Jesus repeats this three times, but the central desire is the will of the Father!  
"Abba, Father," he said, "everything is possible for you. Take this cup from me. Yet not what I will, but what you will." Mark 14:36
9. Jesus rejects the temptation and passes the test! In spite of the anguish, distress, and sorrow at the prospect of bearing the righteous, furious, full wrath of God against sin, Jesus embraces the Father's will completely.

#### IV. Applying the Word

- A. Do I see the wrath of God against sin?
  1. RC Sproul story - "That is obscene!"
  2. We have minimized or denied the holiness of God, so we think he will just wink at and ignore sin.
  3. But Scripture is clear - God is holy and has righteous furious wrath at sin, for it is destructive and would turn all creation to chaos if not judged.
  4. To avoid the wrath of God against sin requires changing the very nature of God and surrendering creation to eternal chaos. God will never do this.
  5. Jesus' experience in Gethsemane and His death on the cross make no sense and lose all meaning if we remove or minimize God's holy wrath against sin.
  6. We must never alter the character of God!

B. Do I see that Jesus fully bore God's wrath for me?

1. The Good News is that God's wrath has been satisfied so that I never need to pay for my sin!
2. Jesus bore the full wrath of God against sin! The Shepherd was struck to save the sheep, the Servant suffered the wrath of God against sin, so that we and creation might be saved from the destructive power of sin.
3. Jesus temporarily experienced forsakenness so that I might eternally enjoy God's Presence; He experienced temporary abandonment so that I might experience eternal adoption; He bore the wrath of God so I might receive the blessing of God!
4. This is why there is NO condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus - for in my place He stood!
5. This should fill my heart with gratitude and worship for all Jesus has done for me!
6. It should also fill my heart with gratitude and worship to the Father that He so loved me that He was willing to give the Eternal Son of His love in my place!

C. The Table of Salvation

1. This Table reminds us of Jesus' sacrifice for us!
2. We come to remember and give thanks for the Broken Body and Shed Blood that has brought us salvation!
3. Come, remember, and give thanks!

The Garden of Temptation and Testing (Part 1)

Mark 14:27-42  
February 16, 2025  
Communion  
Hebrews 13:20-21

Teaching keywords: Jesus; temptation; testing and trial; prayer; spiritual warfare; atonement

May the God of peace, who through the blood of the eternal covenant brought back from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great Shepherd of the sheep, <sup>21</sup> equip you with everything good for doing his will, and may he work in us what is pleasing to him, through Jesus Christ, to whom be glory for ever and ever.  
Amen. Hebrews 13:20-21

“You will all fall away,” Jesus told them, “for it is written: ‘I will strike the shepherd, and the sheep will be scattered.’”<sup>28</sup> But after I have risen, I will go ahead of you into Galilee.”<sup>29</sup> Peter declared, “Even if all fall away, I will not.”<sup>30</sup> “I tell you the truth,” Jesus answered, “today — yes, tonight — before the rooster crows twice you yourself will disown me three times.”<sup>31</sup> But Peter insisted emphatically, “Even if I have to die with you, I will never disown you.” And all the others said the same.

<sup>32</sup> They went to a place called Gethsemane, and Jesus said to his disciples, “Sit here while I pray.”<sup>33</sup> He took Peter, James and John along with him, and he began to be deeply distressed and troubled.<sup>34</sup> “My soul is overwhelmed with sorrow to the point of death,” he said to them. “Stay here and keep watch.”<sup>35</sup> Going a little farther, he fell to the ground and prayed that if possible the hour might pass from him.<sup>36</sup> “Abba, Father,” he said, “everything is possible for you. Take this cup from me. Yet not what I will, but what you will.”

<sup>37</sup> Then he returned to his disciples and found them sleeping. “Simon,” he said to Peter, “are you asleep? Could you not keep watch for one hour?”<sup>38</sup> Watch and pray so that you will not fall into temptation. The spirit is willing, but the body is weak.”<sup>39</sup> Once more he went away and prayed the same thing.<sup>40</sup> When he came back, he again found them sleeping, because their eyes were heavy. They did not know what to say to him.

<sup>41</sup> Returning the third time, he said to them, “Are you still sleeping and resting? Enough! The hour has come. Look, the Son of Man is betrayed into the hands of sinners.<sup>42</sup> Rise! Let us go! Here comes my betrayer!” Mark 14:27-42