



The Garden of Temptation and Testing (Part 1)

Key idea:

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.

Key text:

Mark 14:27-42

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

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

37 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? 38 Watch and pray so that you will not fall into temptation. The spirit is willing, but the body is weak.” 39 Once more he went away and prayed the same thing. 40 When he came back, he again found them sleeping, because their eyes were heavy. They did not know what to say to him.

41 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. 42 Rise! Let us go! Here comes my betrayer!”

Key points:

1. Jesus faced intense anguish in Gethsemane, not due to fear of physical pain or death, but because He was about to bear the full wrath of God against sin.
2. The "cup" Jesus refers to is the cup of God's wrath against sin, not just physical suffering or death.
3. Contrary to our culture's thoughts, Scripture is clear that God is full of righteous wrath against sin, and sin must be punished.
4. Jesus' prayer "Not my will, but yours be done" is the ultimate example of submission to God's will.
5. Christ's sacrifice on the cross fully satisfied God's wrath, leaving no condemnation for those who are in Christ.

Discussion Questions:

1. Why do you think Jesus experienced such deep anguish in Gethsemane, while figures like Socrates faced death calmly?
2. The teaching mentions that we often minimize or deny God's holiness. How have you seen this tendency in modern culture or in your own life?
3. How does understanding the depth of Jesus' struggle in Gethsemane impact your view of sin and its consequences?
4. Reflect on Jesus' prayer, "Not my will, but yours be done." How challenging is it for you to pray this sincerely in your own life?
5. Bret emphasizes that there is no condemnation for those in Christ. How does this truth affect your daily life and relationship with God?
6. How does the concept of Jesus drinking the "cup of wrath" so we can receive the "cup of blessing" deepen your appreciation for the gospel?

Practical Applications:

1. **Daily Gratitude:** Spend a few minutes each morning this week meditating on what Christ has done for you. Let this fuel your worship and gratitude.
2. **Prayer Challenge:** When facing decisions or challenges this week, consciously pray, "Not my will, but yours be done," reflecting on what that truly means.
3. **Sin Awareness:** Pay attention to moments when you're tempted to downplay the seriousness of sin. Use these as prompts to remember the cost Christ paid.

4. Gospel Sharing: Practice explaining to someone (perhaps role-play with a group member) how Jesus bore God's wrath so we don't have to, using the cup analogy.
5. Scripture Meditation: Spend time reading and reflecting on the Gethsemane account in Mark 14:27-42, considering Jesus' emotions and choices.
6. Worship Response: Choose a hymn or worship song that reflects on Christ's sacrifice (e.g., "In Christ Alone") and make it part of your personal worship time this week.