



August 2, 2020

Luke 22:39-46

³⁹ Jesus went out as usual to the Mount of Olives, and his disciples followed him. ⁴⁰ On reaching the place, he said to them, "Pray that you will not fall into temptation." ⁴¹ He withdrew about a stone's throw beyond them, knelt down and prayed, ⁴² "Father, if you are willing, take this cup from me; yet not my will, but yours be done." ⁴³ An angel from heaven appeared to him and strengthened him. ⁴⁴ And being in anguish, he prayed more earnestly, and his sweat was like drops of blood falling to the ground. [a]

⁴⁵ When he rose from prayer and went back to the disciples, he found them asleep, exhausted from sorrow. ⁴⁶ "Why are you sleeping?" he asked them. "Get up and pray so that you will not fall into temptation."

COMMENTARY

22:39. Prayer was a way of life for Jesus. He had a special place in the Mount of Olives where He habitually went for prayer. The disciples followed, an ironic statement in light of Christ's original call to follow Me (5:8-11; 9:23; 18:22). Now they followed, but only to fall asleep in Jesus' greatest moment of need and in the face of Satan's renewed attack on them. They followed, but not in the way a person takes up a cross and follows.

22:40. Jesus gave them a prayer assignment. It centered on their chief need. The renewed activities of Satan called them to pray to escape temptation as Jesus had

escaped Satan's tempting. Judas and Peter were not the only ones Satan wanted. He wanted all of Christ's disciples and would tempt each of them.

22:41-42. Prayer time for Jesus. Every major decision called for special prayer time for Jesus (3:21; 5:16; 11:2; 18:1). Jesus knew what lay ahead. The cup of the blood of the new covenant must be spilled. Yet He, as a human being, did not want to suffer. He did not want to die. He would have liked to have found another way to follow God's plan.

Still, He submitted to the Father. The Father's will He would do, not His own. The Father's will He knew was best. The Father's will was what He always prayed for and did, even when the human side wanted something else.

Cup is a metaphor for Jesus' suffering. He voluntarily drank the cup of suffering (Matt. 20:22; 26:39, 42; Mark 10:38; 14:36; Luke 22:42; John 18:11). It is a metaphor here not only for physical death in general, but also for the particular death Jesus would suffer on behalf of mankind. As He contemplated the awful experience awaiting Him, His soul drew back from the horror of the essence of sin. In spite of this "cup," Jesus willingly obeyed God's will, bearing the sins of all people so that mankind could be saved.

22:43. Verses 43-44 are missing from many of the best Greek manuscripts and may reflect the interpretation by an early Christian scribe. Christ found immediate answer to His prayer, but in a somewhat unexpected way. Rather than tell Him what to do, God sent an angel to feed and encourage Him. The angel's presence reaffirmed what Jesus knew. He had to face the task God had placed before Him. He had to go to the cross. But He went with heavenly presence, heavenly strength, and heavenly nourishment. Angels played a significant role in Luke.

22:44. Prayer was not a small thing for Jesus. It was a time of anguish as He sought God's will for His life. Just like us, He faced a difficult decision and suffered emotional distress while He tried to make it. He became so emotionally involved that He perspired profusely. His perspiration became so heavy that it did not run in little rivulets like water. Rather, it dropped from His skin as if each drop of sweat were as heavy as a drop of blood.

22:45-46. Jesus' prayer time came to an end. It was time to get back to the world of rejection and arrest. So He walked over to the disciples, hoping to find them in prayer. Instead, they were sleeping. Luke explains their sleeping. Finally, the reality of what Jesus said was creeping into their consciences. They realized Jesus expected to die. They began grieving His passing while He was still with them. Their grief wore them out. But while sleeping away their grief, they yielded to temptation by not praying for power to withstand temptation. Again, Satan had won a battle. But Jesus invited them to pray so temptation would not be too much for them.

MAIN POINT

Jesus gave Himself fully to the will of God in order to save sinners who would not.

INTRODUCTION

As your group time begins, use this section to introduce the topic of discussion.

What is the most difficult decision you've ever had to make?

How do you typically make difficult decisions?

Do you often second guess yourself?

What kinds of factors do you weigh when making difficult choices like these?

For many of us, the bigger the decision the longer the time it takes to make it. We weigh out alternatives and options, carefully examining the fallout of the choices we make. For the Christian, one of the questions we must ask in every decision regards the will of God. Thankfully, though, Jesus was committed to praying for God's will and carrying out the plan of God: His own death.

UNDERSTANDING

Unpack the biblical text to discover what the Scripture says or means about a particular topic.

What does it mean for God's will to be done?

Is it easy to know and follow God's will and plan all the time? Why or why not?

God's will is done on earth when believers follow God's revealed will, His desire for us to follow Him. On earth we get distracted by our business and fall into sinful patterns. Christ modeled following God's will for us in Luke 22.

- ASK A VOLUNTEER TO READ LUKE 22:39-46.

After the Lord's Supper, Jesus and His disciples went from the upper room to the Mount of Olives. This statement in verse 39 serves as a transition to the events that would lead up to Jesus' crucifixion.

Look closely at Jesus' prayer in verse 42. What, in your own words, was He saying?

What is the “cup” which Jesus must drink (v. 42)?

Does His prayer bother you or encourage you? Why?

Why do you think Luke included the detail that Jesus knelt to pray?

What does that indicate about the nature of prayer and what Jesus was feeling?

Jesus, more than any of us, knows anxiety. He knows the difficulty of aligning our desires with the will of God. The Father had given a cup of suffering and death. The Son, in obedience and subjection, would drink it. God knows that we can only find the strength we need to do the will of God through the power of God.

Why is it important that we understand that it was the will of the Lord that Jesus die?

If that is not the case, then how would we have to view the crucifixion?

How does understanding that the cross is the will of God impact the way we view the crucifixion?

How does it impact the way we view Jesus’ prayer in the garden?

Jesus didn’t approach the cross glibly. He was realistic about the physical, emotional, and spiritual pain He was about to endure. Though He was tempted to avoid pain, as we all are, Jesus was confident in the plan and goodness of His Father.

- ASK A VOLUNTEER TO READ ISAIAH 53:4-11.

How does this passage help us understand the will of God in the crucifixion?

Do you think Jesus thought often about this passage of Scripture?

How would the way He would have understood it been different from the way you or I might read it?

From the beginning, the Father knew that His Son would be the atoning sacrifice for sinners. Jesus, too, knew He was the suffering servant described in Isaiah 53. When it came to the moment, Jesus wasn’t questioning the will of God. He was fully given over to fulfilling His purpose.

NEXT STEP

Are you comfortable praying for God's will to be done?

What must we believe to be true about God's character in order to pray for His will to be done in our lives and the world?

Are we obligated to live in God's will? What are the benefits of doing so? What are the dangers of not?

What happens when we view prayer as something to check off our daily spiritual checklist?

How might remembering the struggle of Jesus in the garden this week aid you in more fully appreciating the gravity of the crucifixion?

PRAYER

Praise Jesus this week for His commitment to the will of God. Thank Him for remaining strong, despite the temptation. Pray that you would follow God's will as Jesus did.