

“Crushed At Gethsemane”

Matthew 26:30-46

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Teaching Aim: To examine the events in the garden of Gethsemane on the night before the crucifixion of Jesus Christ. To realize how difficult the garden experience must have been for Jesus as He prepared to face the full fury of God’s wrath because of sin. To understand the eleven disciples (with Peter as their spokesman) were sincere in their desire to stand with Jesus, but unprepared “*in the flesh*” for the intensity of evil they would face on that holy night.

DIGGING DEEPER INTO GOD’S WORD (BIBLE STUDY)

Part I: Jesus predicts Peter and the other disciples will deny Him (Matt. 26:30-35)

1. Following the Passover Seder, Jesus and His disciples sang a song (probably from **Psalm 115-118**) and began their walk towards the garden of Gethsemane (**vs. 30**). What famous mountain is the garden of Gethsemane located on? How far from Jerusalem did Jesus and His disciples have to walk?

2. According to Jesus, how many of His disciples would “*stumble*” on that terrible night because of Him (**vs. 31**)? What would cause them to stumble? The word Jesus used for “*stumble*” in **verse 31** was the same Greek word that He used for “*offend*” in **Matt. 24:10**. Have you ever stumbled and found yourself disowning Jesus (or at least not acknowledging Him) when under pressure from others? If so, have you asked the Lord to forgive you? (See **1 John 1:9**)

3. What did Jesus say would happen to a herd of sheep if the shepherd was struck or killed (**vs. 31**)? Is this still true today in churches? How does this imagery present a good picture of what happened to the disciples during the crucifixion of Jesus Christ?

4. What two promises did Jesus make to His disciples in **verse 32**? What can we learn about the enduring love of Christ from this verse? (See **Heb. 13:5**) Why should this verse encourage every Christian who has ever stumbled in their walk with Christ?

5. Why do you think Jesus told His disciples to meet with Him in the region of Galilee (**vs. 32**)? Why is this region important to the ministry of Jesus and His disciples? Who was the only disciple not to come from Galilee? If Judas and his ancestors were from “*Kerioth*” as many believe, what tribe of Israel did he come from? (See **Josh. 15:20-32**) Who was the only other person in this group from Judah?

6. What impulsive statement does Simon Peter make in **verse 33**? Where had Simon gone wrong? Have you ever spoken before you thought through the consequences of what you said? (Note: Jesus used the name “*Simon*” to refer to Peter whenever he slipped back to his old lifestyle.) (See **2 Cor. 5:17**)

7. What did Jesus mean in **verse 34** when He said, “*Assuredly, I say to you that this night before the rooster crows, you will deny Me three times?*” How might we explain the apparent contradiction between **verse 34** and **Mark 14:30**? Is there a contradiction?

8. Was Peter the only disciple who said he was willing to die for Jesus (**vs. 35**)? Why do you think Jesus mentioned only Peter by name?

Part II: The agony of Jesus Christ in the Garden of Gethsemane (Matt. 26:36-39)

1. What is the meaning of the word “*Gethsemane*” (**vs. 36**)? How does the meaning of this word relate to the “*crushing*” experience Jesus was about to face? What did the priests use olive oil for in the temple? In what way was the golden lampstand a symbol of Jesus? (See **John 1:6-11; 8:12**) Was it during the darkness of night or the light of day that Judas and the authorities came to arrest Jesus? How does the time of day symbolize the events that were about to take place? Does the world seem to be getting darker today?

2. What did Jesus tell eight of His twelve disciples to do as He headed further into the garden to pray? Which three disciples did Jesus take with Him (**vs. 37**)? These three disciples are known as “*the inner circle*.” Where else in the Bible can we find Jesus taking only Peter, James and John along with Him? (See **Luke 8:49-56; Matt. 17:1-13**) According to **verse 37**, how was Jesus doing emotionally at this time? Why do you think He poured out His heart to His inner circle? Do you have anyone in your life that you can talk to and ask for prayer support when you are in trouble?

3. Why do you think Jesus said He was “*exceedingly sorrowful*” (**vs. 38**)? What did Jesus mean when He said He was sorrowful, even to the point of death? What did Jesus ask those closest to Him to do? Are you sensitive to the needs of others who are hurting around you? Are you willing to care for them spiritually in time of need?

4. At this point Jesus left Peter, James and John where they were and went further into the garden alone. Why do you think Jesus did this? In Scripture, we often see people falling on their face before God. Why? Why do you think Jesus did this in **verse 39**? Have you ever hurt so badly that you prostrated yourself on the floor in prayer before God? It is important to note that even though Jesus requested the prayer support of others, redemption was something that only Jesus could accomplish. What are some ways that you have faced your own fears in the past?

5. What can we learn about the weight on Jesus from His prayer (**vs. 39**)? Some have called this a weak prayer, is it? Was Jesus waffling under the pressure, or was this an incredibly powerful prayer of submission to the will of His Father? What can we learn in our own prayer life from the way Jesus prayed?

Part III: Sleeping instead of being alert and praying (Matt. 26:40-46)

1. Were the disciples praying when Jesus returned to them (**vs. 40**)? What were they doing? Why do you think Jesus questioned Peter and not the other disciples (**vs. 40**)? (See **vv. 33-35**) How can this illustration of the disciples sleeping be an appropriate picture of the Christian Church in the world today? When is the last time you prayed for a full hour without interruption? Why do you think praying is so difficult?

2. “*Watch*” means to be alert (**vs. 41**). Why do you think Jesus warned His disciples to watch and pray? What kind of temptations were the disciples about to face in the early morning hours of “*Good Friday*?” What happens to us today when we operate in the “*flesh*” and not the Spirit? Have you ever been overwhelmed by fear? How did it affect you both physically and emotionally?

3. What did Jesus pray when He went into the garden for a second time (**vs. 42**)? What can we learn about the human nature of Jesus from this verse? What “*cup*” was Jesus referring to? (See **John 3:36; Rom. 5:8-9**) What can we learn about submissive prayer in **verse 42**? Why is it important for each of us to be willing to submit to the will of our Heavenly Father? (See **Rom. 8:28**)

4. What did Jesus find when He returned to His disciples (**vs. 43**)? What did He do this time (**vs. 44-45**)? Do you find that most of the Christian Church is sleeping while our country is becoming more and more anti-God? How should the church respond to a time such as this?

5. Is there any significance to Jesus using the title “*Son of Man*” in **verse 45**? (See **Dan. 7:9-10, 13-14**) Was this moment a surprise to Christ or something that had been planned since before the creation of the world? (See **John 1:29; 1 Pet. 1:20-21; Rev. 13:8**)

6. How did Jesus react to the soldiers and His impending death (**vs. 46**)? What would you do if soldiers were coming to kill you? What is your response today when people challenge your Christian faith, do you run or take a stand? Based on the way you live your life, is there enough evidence to convict you of being a Christian?

7. Have you received Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord? If not, why not repent and do so in prayer right now?

MINER’S CORNER ~ *Manna to live by!*

- After instituting the Lord’s Supper during the Passover Seder, Jesus and His disciples went to the garden of Gethsemane to pray as danger quickly approached.
- Jesus had previously predicted His death, now He predicts His resurrection.
- Peter genuinely believed he would not deny Jesus, but he was operating “*in the flesh*” and not “*in the Spirit*”; at times we are guilty of doing the same.
- Jesus asked His closest disciples to pray “*with*” Him during this time of greatest trial.
- When people ask you to pray “*for*” them, stop and pray “*with*” them right on the spot.
- There are times in life when a prayer request is so pressing that we should prostrate ourselves before God in prayer.
- While living in the world we need to “*watch*” and “*pray*” lest we fall into temptation; our enemy is like a roaring lion waiting to devour us. (See **1 Pet. 5:8**)
- Even when the disciples abandoned Jesus, Jesus did not abandon His disciples; the good news is that Jesus is the same yesterday, today and forever!

