

Good Friday Main Text: Mark 14:32-42

Reliance on the father

Good evening BCC, I'm Benjamin Small, but you might just want to call me the evening speaker for how often I seem to be up here during the night messages. I'm currently in my final semester at SIUE and I've been given the privilege of sharing God's word with you all tonight. As I get started, I want to do something, an idea that I took from author and pastor John Mark Comer in one of his teachings. You might have heard of him as the author of *The Ruthless Elimination of Hurry*. What I'd like to do is to take a second to simply breathe. I don't know what you're coming in here with today, but I'm sure it can be overwhelming, stressful, hard or even just busy. So, if you would like to join me in simply sitting in the presence of the Lord and admiring His glory, His goodness, and use this as a chance to take a deep breath and ask Him to work in and through us tonight. Ask the Holy Spirit to soften our hearts. To provide us with rest and a spirit of peace. BREATHE. (Take a few moments)

I want to remind everyone here of some truths before getting into this heavy message: Jesus loves you; He desires a deep and personal relationship with you. It doesn't matter who you are or what you've done, He loves you. Now I'm going to ask a heavy question. What's been your hardest moment? Deepest pit? A time that felt unbearable? Like nothing in the world could save you. There was no place to run. No comfort to be found. Maybe it was recently. Maybe it was after a bad grade on an important test. Maybe it was that time that you didn't feel loved by your own parents? Maybe when you lost one of your best friends? Was it ten years into your marriage when you thought about your spouse, I don't know if I love you anymore? Or maybe it was being found in a job you don't love, surrounded by a place and people you don't call home? Or maybe it was halfway through your first semester of college. You'd followed Christ your whole life but now find yourself slipping away. You'd missed Bible study that week and church the past two Sundays. You sat in the depths of your feelings, after having followed your own path that led to a destination of destruction and despair. Sitting and crying underneath your bed in the dark. Asking yourself all these questions. Who was I living for? How could He ever forgive me? How could He ever love me? Now I don't know what that moment was for you, and maybe it wasn't just one that you could pick out because there's a lot. But I do know of a man who went through a pain, a despair, a crushing, a death so unimaginable to the rest of us.

Here at BCC we've been walking through the Gospel of Mark, and tonight we're going to see Jesus at a point of unthinkable suffering. We'll be spending our time in chapter 14:32-42. Let me share some context. Up until now Jesus has led ministry like the world has never seen before. Blessings and miracles pour out from this man. He's walked on water, healed the sick, and expelled demons. He's so holy that people would be compelled to believe "If I just touch his clothes, I'll be healed" (Mark 5:28) and then they would touch Him and they would be healed. The gospel of Mark is truly the "good news about Jesus the Messiah, the Son of God." (Mark 1:1) But He's not simply a man, but God in the flesh. Fully God and fully man. As Isaiah also states, He's a "man of suffering." Jesus is going to die in just hours. He's already had His last meal with His disciples. And one of His own closest friends would betray Him and another would deny Him. Here we are, this perfect man, God in the flesh, is about to be led like a lamb to be slaughtered for our transgressions. Can you imagine His turmoil? Can you imagine what it must be like to be in His position? It's unfair. I can't fully comprehend what Jesus was going through. But we get a glimpse as we lead into the garden of Gethsemane.

As we read through these verses, I want you to imagine what you would do if you were in His place?

Verses 32-42

There's so much happening in these verses, but the first piece that I'd like to highlight is this cup Jesus is talking about. He's mentioned it before, once when talking with the disciples the third time that He had predicted his death. They had asked if they could sit next to Him in glory and His classic response was with another question. "You don't know what you are asking." .. "Can you drink the cup I drink or be baptized with the baptism I am baptized with?" Jesus says this because the cup He was to drink is different. It's a cup that every one of us deserves, but one that only He can drink. This cup is filled with the entirety of God's judgement against sin. This cup represents God's wrath. It represents a justice and a punishment. It's a cup filled to the brim with the weight of every injustice, every transgression. It's a cup that we deserve, but a cup that we desperately need Him to drink. Here, during this despair, we see Jesus falling to His knees in prayer. Might it be possible for this hour to pass from him? "Abba, Father. Everything is possible for you. Take this cup from me. Yet not what I will, but what you will." It's here that Jesus displays perfect reliance on the Father. The recognition that the weight of the world is on Jesus and He doesn't turn to His disciples. He faces the Father in recognition. He knows and fully believes in the power of His Father. He knows that the Lord has placed this in His path and

He surrenders in obedience. Regardless of what the will of the Father is. He accepts. Can you imagine? What would you do if you were told you must die for the rest of humanity? Would you turn to the Father in love and obedience? Would you rely on the Father so heavily that you know what He has for you is the best? Jesus puts His full faith in the Father. There's no doubt that drinking the cup is what He must do. It's not easy for Him, He's overwhelmed with sorrow to the point of death. But He goes to the father intimately, Abba. Mark is reminding us that Jesus is the Son of God. He comes with how He is; with this desire for the cup to be taken from Him. Not before recognizing the power God has, then continues understanding that the Father's will is what He truly needs and desires. That's how each one of us should be as Christians, as disciples of Christ. We need to rely on the Father and His will. Where do you run when times are tough? Who did you turn to in your darkest moments? Who did you rely on? Who did you submit to? It's not easy. Discipleship is a death. We'll see how the disciples acted in a second. But coming from the guy preaching to you. You might think that I have it figured out, especially during the midst of writing this sermon. With hours spent studying Jesus' reactions to His turmoil, that when I am met with similar situations, that I run to the Father. Sometimes that's the case, but it's a constant battle. A constant battle between our will, our wants; and His.

We see that after Jesus prays; He goes back to find the disciples sleeping. We might want to judge them for not having stayed awake, but can you imagine what it was like for them? To see their Rabbi fallen to His knees and weeping on the ground. In a state of despair they've never seen before. He was more than just their hero. He was their hope, their Savior. Laying on the ground defeated. I'd want to turn my head and fall asleep too. Wake up a few hours later hoping that it was all a bad dream. That my Savior wasn't going to die. That I wasn't going to betray, or deny, or hide from Him. They heard Jesus tell them to watch and pray, so they wouldn't fall into temptation. Something that we could all do more often. I've heard before that the battle with sin is fought long before the temptation comes. Which leads me to ask myself, am I praying before the temptation comes, or only reacting after I fall? Same with the disciples here, if they had watched and prayed, maybe Peter could have prevented Himself from denying the Lord. Or the rest from scattering. Or at least maybe they could have at least had this peace, being with the Lord. But instead, they slept. This reaction shows us as the reader just how much more deeply we need Jesus, and how we desperately need to rely on the Father. These were the men that had been with Jesus through every teaching and miracle, and even they fell short. They couldn't comfort the Savior in His time of need or even wake up to help themselves. How could we ever drink that cup? How could the men that were supposed to be the

disciples, not be the ones we should model ourselves after here? The disciples were probably asking quite a few of the same questions that I mentioned before. Who was I living for? How could He ever forgive me? How could He ever love me?

The advantage that we have is that we know what's coming in a few days. We know that this act, this crushing faced now and within the next hours of the passage would be necessary before the resurrection. We know the joy that is coming in a few days. We know that this act was out of a love for us. It was out of a desire to know us fully. That even during extreme pain, He could still be an example for us. As He relies on and surrenders to the Father. That as He walks through His own despair, He leads us to the light. We know that, that boy who was in that dark space crying underneath his bed freshman year, through the work of the cross in His life, would be standing on this stage to preach the good news of Jesus to you all. We know that after the death, comes the resurrection. We must all first watch as Jesus does and follow in suit. There's a death that each one of us also undergoes as we follow Christ. That once we can rely on and surrender to the Father. Then watch and pray as Jesus commanded us. There is new life in His name. Whatever that deep darkness that you thought no one could love you in. You should know that someone died for you. He loves you. He forgives you. He wants you to live for Him. But what does that look like, maybe waking up each morning and praying, Lord this is what I want in my life, this is where I want to be, but I'm going give that to you, and surrender to what you'd have for me.

We know the story isn't over yet. But the disciples don't know that yet. First, we must watch Him suffer. We must watch Judas kiss Him a final time as He's given into the hands of sinners. We must watch Him get dragged to the cross. We must hear Peter weep as He denies Him a third time. We must hear the piercing of the nails as they dig and cut through His hands and feet. We must watch as our Savior, our Messiah, our King, the one who didn't deserve the cup He was served, die. "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 delivered into the hands of sinners. Rise! Let us go! Here comes my betrayer!" Ultimately, in the Garden of Gethsemane, knowing death was coming His way, Jesus resolved to honor the Father's will. Let's pray.