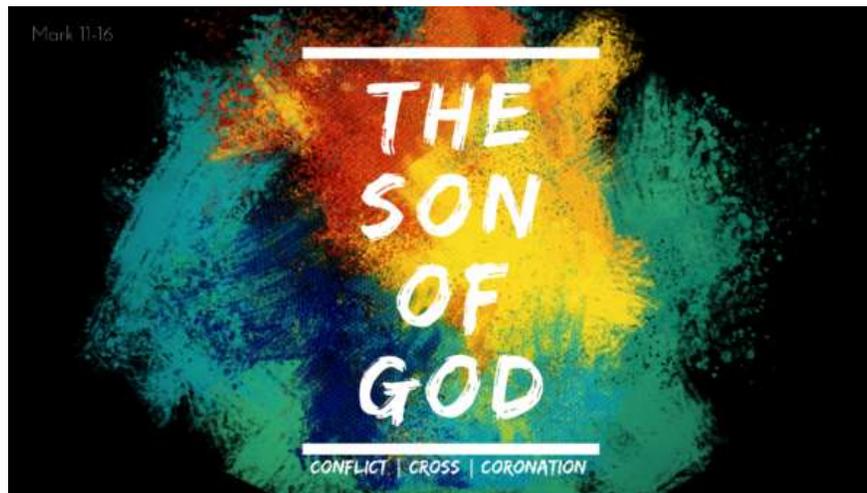


In the Press



Mark 14:32-42

Open to Mark chapter 14. We're going to be reading verses 32-42. Many of you know this about me. When it comes to eating and drinking, I'm very particular. There are just some things that if it looks or smells a certain way, I just can't put it into my body. I don't know if any of you are like that. There are things that people drink and eat that I just can't. No matter how good they tell me it is, or how good it is for me, I just refuse. But sometimes you get in situations where you have to drink something you don't really want to drink. A couple of years ago I was on a mission trip in Nicaragua. We were in a little village that I affectionately call Matthew's village. Matthew is the leader of the village and he had come to know Christ. We were discipling him to be the leader of the community and they were so excited about receiving Christ. It happened to be my birthday and they decided to make a birthday meal to honor me. There are some things you can't do when you're in some rural villages in the places you're in, and one is you can't eat certain foods unless they're cooked a certain way, and you sure have to be careful about the water. We had been told before we went that the water in Matthew's village just wasn't good at all. So this lady is in the kitchen making a special drink for me that everybody is telling

me I can't drink. She brings it out to me and sits it on the table, the translator said "Don't you dare drink that." I promise you I didn't want to drink it. I promise you I knew that it would not be good for me, but the more I sat there, the more we talked and the more she watched me, and the more I looked at that glass. I just knew, not for my sake but for her sake, I needed to drink that. I did. That isn't even close to what we are going to talk about this morning, but there was actually a cup that Jesus had to drink of. It was horrible for Him. He didn't drink it because it was good for Him; He drank it because it was good for us. We're going to read about it this morning and the struggle He had in drinking from this cup. If you have been with me a long time and you've heard me preach this before, you're going to hear me preach this in a different way. For years, I have refused to believe what I believe today. I just never could bring myself to believe what I'm going to say to you this morning. After being alone with the Lord, I fully believe what I'm going to say about this cup Jesus had to drink and His attitude toward drinking it. Open to Mark 14:32-42. I need to remind you to listen better than you've been listening lately. I don't know if you've been able to tell, but it's been taking me longer to say what I've needed to say, and that's not my fault; it's your fault because you're not listening well enough. ☺

Scripture

"And they went to a place called Gethsemane. And he said to his disciples, "Sit here while I pray." And he took with him Peter and James and John, and began to be greatly distressed and troubled. And he said to them, "My soul is very sorrowful, even to death. Remain here and watch." And going a little farther, he fell on the ground and prayed that, if it were possible, the hour might pass from him. And he said, "Abba, Father, all things are possible for you. Remove this cup from me. Yet not what I will, but what you will." And he came and found them sleeping, and he said to Peter, "Simon, are you asleep? Could you not watch one hour? Watch and pray that you may not enter into temptation. The spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak." And again he went away and

prayed, saying the same words. And again he came and found them sleeping, for their eyes were very heavy, and they did not know what to answer him. And he came the third time and said to them, "Are you still sleeping and taking your rest? It is enough; the hour has come. The Son of Man is betrayed into the hands of sinners. Rise, let us be going; see, my betrayer is at hand."

(Prayer)

Father, what a privilege it is for me to get to teach these awesome people Your Word. Father, thank You for Your will for my life. You know this is not what I wanted to do, but I am so thankful now because I can see things clearly from Your perspective. What a privilege we have to get together on this first day of the week and study Your Word together and believe You have a word for us. Father, I confess to You that I never thought I would teach what I'm going to teach from this passage this morning. I have just never been able to come to grip with the truth that Jesus actually wanted the cup to pass from Him. Father, it just seems to contradict everything He taught and everything He knew. Father, I thank You for opening my eyes to the truth and let me understand that in a real sense He was just like me. Even though I know it, this reveals it; He was a man and was tempted just like me. Where He is different from me is He never sinned. He never gave in, and for that, we thank You. He is our hope of eternal salvation. Father, let us see how this passage is not just giving us an historical narrative, but how it's been woven together in a gospel to truly give courage and inspiration to be used as an example to us as followers of Christ so that we can be like Him and be faithful and not be unfaithful like Peter on many occasions. Instead of being faithful, he was being faithless. Father, we want to be faithful this morning in every situation. Father, I pray that You open our eyes as married men, married women, single men, single women, to the truth of how we need to watch and pray that we are not into temptation because our spirit is willing, but our flesh is weak just as Jesus said. It's in Your precious Son's name we pray, amen.

If you were here last week, you realize that Jesus has just instituted what we call the Lord's Supper with His disciples. He held up a cup and proclaimed that this was His blood, the blood of the new covenant which was poured out for many for the remission of sins. They sang a hymn, leave, and go out toward the Mount of Olives. Jesus reminds them that soon the shepherd is going to be stuck and they will be scattered like sheep. Then Peter said, never Lord, the rest of these may deny You, but I would die for You. I would die with You before I would ever deny You. Now they come to Gethsemane. Most scholars believe they are probably somewhere at the foot of the Mount of Olives. They've come to what we would call a garden. It is a small piece of land that has many olive trees there. There is a stone wall most likely around that garden, marking it from other gardens on that mountainside. There is an olive press on this piece of property, thus, it gets its name Gethsemane. Jesus brings the eleven with Him to the entrance of that garden and He asks the eight to sit. There are eleven, but He specifically asks eight of them to sit there and just remain. Then He turns to James, Peter, and John and asks them to go a little farther in with Him. As they go with Him, Mark says Jesus began to be terrified. He began to be stressed. He began to be distressed. He began to be troubled. When you look these words up in the Greek dictionary, what they literally mean is that Jesus was amazed; Jesus was astonished with horror. All of a sudden, He looks at James, Peter, and John and says 'sorrow is overwhelming Me, I'm at the point of death!' He had emotions that were so strong that He felt like He, as a man, couldn't endure what was going on emotionally within Him, and He felt like He was going to die! The horror that's in His mind is killing Him, so He asks them to sit and watch, to be on guard, on high alert. Then Mark says that Jesus went a little farther into the garden. Luke tells us He went about a stone's throw. We don't know exactly how far that was; it depends on how big the stone was. It depends on if you threw the stone with all your might or not. The point is He is just right over there. The way this is recorded, you sense that James, Peter, and John who are supposed to be watching, guarding, on high alert can probably see Jesus through the trees, and that might even be able to hear what He is saying. All of a sudden, Jesus falls to the ground.

Now, the first thing Mark tells us is the purpose of His prayer. He's going to ask God if it's possible to let this hour pass from Him, and then Mark records the actual prayer. He was not sitting in a chair, not standing with His hands raised, but overwhelmed with horror. Inside His soul, He is literally falling apart. He falls to the ground and cries out to God, "Abba Father, all things are possible for You. Remove this cup from Me. Yet not what I will, but what You will." We're going to look at two things this morning as we come to the garden with Mark. We're going to look at what Jesus said to God, and then what He said to Peter.

Did you hear what Jesus just said to God? Why is He saying this? He wants this cup to pass from Him. I've got to be totally honest with you; I have struggled my entire life since I've been a Christian with this passage. I have refused to say what I'm going to say to you this morning because I just did not believe it made sense. I've studied my Bible, you've studied your Bible, and we know that Jesus told His disciples from the very beginning that there was an hour that was coming and when that hour came He would hang on a cross and He would die. On this journey with Mark, we've seen Him stop three times and prepare them for what was going to happen in Jerusalem. If you've read John's gospel, you know that just a couple of days before this event, the disciples bring some Gentiles to Jesus (though they don't know they are Gentiles) and He uses this example to say 'if I am lifted up, I will draw all, not just Jews but Gentiles to Myself.' John says 'He thus spoke of how He would die,' then he says 'now the Son of Man is going to be glorified, and then he says 'shall I say to God save Me from this hour? No, I can't say God save Me from this hour because this is the very reason why I came into the world.' Are you listening? Two days before this, He is saying to a crowd that He would never ask God to let this pass from Him because this is reason He came. Now, He has just held up a cup during the Passover, instituted the Lord's Supper saying this is My blood of the new covenant which is shed for many for the remission of sin, and now, He goes out into the garden now He is overwhelmed with the thought of this cup, this hour that He's going to face. He's horrified! He is so shook up He doesn't think He's going to live through this emotional experience! He's going to drink something that's

going to be horrible for Him, but He knows it's good for you. You know what this cup is, what this hour is.

I want to make sure we're clear here. Jesus is not referring to being horrified at the thought of dying. He's not even horrified at being a martyr. But His death is not a martyr's death. Jesus isn't dying like martyrs die, to prove something is real and worth dying for, and to prove something is right. He's going to die to make us right. So this cup He's going to drink of, He, the sinless Son of God, the perfect man, is going to die on a cross and have every sin of the whole world laid on Him. He's going to taste death for every one of us. He's going to suffer the consequence of being a drunk. He's going to suffer the consequence of being an adulterer. He's going to suffer the consequence of being a thief. He's going to suffer the consequence of...just name it. Everything that His nature opposed, everything that's against who He is, He is going to become on a cross! He's not just going to have it laid on Him; it's going to cause Him who knew no sin to be sin. That thought is killing Him to the point that He thinks He's going to die in the garden and not even make it to the cross, so He's asking God if it is possible for this to pass. But when He talks to God, He says 'Abba Father.' It's an Aramaic word that we just transliterate into English, but it should be translated like this...Daddy.

When I was a kid, I got to stay at granddaddy Bogard's a lot. I was always kind of worried about my cousin, Kenny, when he would come. When he came, he would never come in the house and talk to Granddaddy Bogard; he always called him Grandfather Bogard. That always sounded so strange to me. Kenny was raised in the city and I was raised in the country. In the country, father just sounds formal. Father sounds like he is way over there and you are way over here, but daddy is a term of closeness. I always wondered if Cousin Kenny wasn't as close to granddaddy as I was and that's why he called him grandfather. Then I realized it was just formal terms.

Listen to me. What Jesus is doing here is choosing a word that talks about intimacy of relationship, and He refers to God, not as Father who are in Heaven, but as Daddy. 'All things are possible with You, Daddy. Daddy, I know who you are. You're the sovereign Lord of the universe. You're

omnipotent. You're omniscient. You're omnipresent. All things are possible with You, Dad! Because it is, remove this cup from Me.' Before He answer, He says, 'yet not what I will, but what You will.' I'm blown away...let me tell you what's helped me.

There's another passage in the New Testament that gives commentary on what's going on here in the garden, and it's in Hebrews 5:7-10. It talks about a time during the days of Jesus' flesh when He prayed with supplications, with loud cries, and tears to He who could save Him from death, and He was heard because of His godly fear. I think that's referring to Jesus in the garden of Gethsemane. I want to be it in context for you. I think the letter to the Hebrew people is a sermon. It starts off by telling them, Jewish people, you don't need to turn away from Christ because if you do and go back into Judaism, there is no salvation in the Law of Moses. Christ has come and He has offered a death on a cross that's atonement for sins once and for all. He is your High Priest, and as such, He sympathizes with you because He was made just like you. In order for Him to be a faithful and merciful High Priest, He had to be like us, otherwise He wouldn't understand. I don't think some of us get this. I'm not being rude or obnoxious; I'm just telling you what I believe. I think some of us have so heard how Jesus is the God-man that we think because He's God it overruled His nature of being a man, so that there were some things Jesus couldn't do if He wanted to because He was God. We always focus on the deity of Christ. The writer of Hebrews focused on the humanity of Christ, and he tells us Jesus is just like you and me in all regards, just like us, fully man, fully human.

Do you know how He became a perfect High Priest? He had to suffer. Do you know when He suffered? He suffered when He was tempted. Being tempted shows He was just like you. He's been where you've been. The difference is when He was tempted He didn't sin. You can say 'been there, done that,' Jesus can say 'been there, didn't do that.' Watch this. Some of us love to run to people who have been where we've been and done what we've done, and we get comfort from them. I kind of understand that. But there is One who has been where you've been, and He didn't do it. Do you know what that meant? That meant that when you and I gave into the

temptation, He went deeper into the temptation, and deeper into the temptation, and to the deepest point of the temptation, and you haven't been there. While He's been where you've been, you've not been where He's been. Because He was tempted just like you, just like me, but He never gave in. I think the garden episode is teaching He is being tempted. He is being tempted because He's in a body just like ours, and that body was weak. That body had to be fed, rested, and taken care of. Now, as He is facing the prospect that within a few hours He's going to be betrayed, lay His life down on a cross, going to become sin, and drink of this cup. When He drinks of this cup as the sin offering from God, God almighty in Heaven is going to pour His wrath out on Him, and He fully knows the wrath of God. He fully knows the wrath of God against man's sin is that man must spend eternity separated from God forever and ever. On a cross, He's going to die a death that can pay for sin that can never be paid for other than His death on a cross. On that cross, all of the intensity of all the punishment of the whole wide world is going to be rained down on Jesus, and in that moment, He's going to be separated from His God for the first time in forever! The thought of that, of being sin and separated from God brings Him to the point to say 'God please remove this from Me!' But He doesn't wait for God to answer. He knows the answer. Oh, there is one other possibility, and that's Him not dying. But if He doesn't die, the whole world goes to Hell forever and ever. In that moment of the deepest temptation known to man, He stops and says 'yet not My will, but Your will be done.'

Wow! Jesus, the God-man, fully God, fully man, is now seated at the right hand throne of God, and you can come to Him at any moment. The only reason you really want to come to Him is because you want to come to somebody that understands, and He understands. He's been there, but He didn't do it. See, when He prays Your will, not Mine, please note this. Jesus isn't really coming to this to pray so that his circumstances will change. He is coming to this so that He will be changed. He's not coming to God to get what He wants; He's coming to God so that God will get what He wants from Jesus. He didn't do what many of us do. Many of us come to God and really want God to change our desires, the way we feel. Have you ever wondered why God doesn't? If God changed the way you feel or your

desires, wouldn't life be easy? Our desire to do something you shouldn't do and God changes that desire, then you don't do what you're wanting to do. There is no temptation to you. If God would change the way you feel about a person then you could get back in a relationship with that person and everything would be fine. No, no...there is something deeper here. The desire shouldn't be for God to change the way you feel, or what you desire, but for you to choose God's will, not yours. The temptation or test that will ultimately be used by God will reveal you. It revealed Jesus. In spite of the horror of dying as a sin offering in the presence of God, He desired God's will to be done, and that's why He was faithful. Peter lived by desire and feeling, therefore he was unfaithful, and that's why many of us are unfaithful because what we really want from God is our will to be done. We want God to do whatever we want Him to do because we ultimately believe we know what's best. Jesus, as the perfect man, submitted fully to the will of God.

He prays about an hour and then He comes out. All eight of them are asleep, and He looks at Peter and says 'Simon.' Remember, this is before the resurrection. The name Peter means 'rock.' Peter is not a rock now. That's the potential Peter has. He has the potential to be a rock, but Jesus calls him Simon. It goes back to that pre-Christ name. 'Simon, are you sleeping? Could you not watch? That's all I asked you to do. Could you not watch for just one hour?' and now the positive, 'Watch and pray lest you enter into temptation. The spirit is willing, the flesh is weak.' Why did Peter deny Christ? Because instead of being awake, he was asleep, he wasn't praying. He wasn't wanting God's will to be done in his life; he wanted his will to be done. Therefore, when he faced that temptation, he ran. When he finally did get a little closer, he denied Jesus three times.

I've got a question for you. How many of us are asleep, honestly? I hate to say this, but I believe because of where we live and the blessing we have of having the life we have, many of us live but are asleep. If we don't wake up, some of you will wake up and wonder how in the world you got here. Other people in this church have already woken up and have no clue how they are where they're at. Do you get it? Sleepwalking. Asleep, but look like you're awake, and you have no clue to the reality that there's possibly

a betrayer in your life. There's an enemy in your life. There's a temptation coming, and you're asleep. You're not watching. You're not on guard. You're not on full alert, spiritually. The world has drugged us, so to speak. The world has intoxicated us, so to speak. The world has lulled us to sleep where we're in a safe world, a safe environment, a safe area. Everything is good in our life and we have no clue of what's around the corner or in our future. Therefore, we don't watch. We don't live with the spiritual armor of God on. We don't really pray. I'm talking about a prayer where we're driven to our knees, not because of what we want from God, but so that God can get from us what He wants. Do you see the difference? Watch and pray lest you enter into temptation, lest temptation surround you, ensnarl you, defeats you. Hey, the spirit is will; the problem is our flesh. This isn't referring to the unredeemed nature of man. This is referring to still living in a body that's not perfect. It's not glorified yet, therefore, there's not one of us here who can be confident we'll be without sin every time we're tempted unless we watch and pray. Why did Peter deny? Because he didn't watch and pray. Why was Jesus faithful even when He was overwhelmed? Because He lived on high alert. When His three closest friends let Him down, His faith wasn't in his friend, it was in the One He was alone with, and that is God.

Get this picture. Jesus dies, is buried, rises again, and then ascends back to Heaven. In Heaven, He sits down at the right hand throne of God. Tell me you see that. This God-man, who was tempted, yet without sin, who had been there, didn't do that, is now at the right hand throne of God, and the writer of Hebrews says you can come to Him because He's your High Priest. He understands why you're coming to Him because He's been where you've been. He wants you to know to come to Him with confidence because He's been where you've been. If you come to Him confidently to the throne of grace, you will receive mercy and grace in the nick of time. Wow! Jesus lived His entire life in the shadow of the cross! He could teach about going to a cross, but a few hours before, it broke Him! We can talk about what we won't do and what we will do our entire life until we get to that moment. In that moment, let's turn to Jesus and the Bible says we will receive mercy and grace. Mercy is the ability to get over whatever we've done. Once you get over it, grace is the ability to get on with it so you live

the rest of your life for His honor and His glory. Watch this. It doesn't matter if you did the sinning, or got sinned against, when you come to Jesus He gives you the ability to get over your past. Yeah! Whether you are the betrayer, or you were betrayed, He gives you that ability. Once you get over it, you don't sit on the sidelines. You get back in life and get on with the Christian life for His honor and for His glory. Why is this in the Bible? Because most of us here proclaim to be a follower of Christ, but we want to hang out with Peter and say that we're just like him. No, our desire is not to be like any of the disciples; our desire is to be like Jesus. Mark is writing this so it gives each one of us the hope we can come to Him and we can do the same thing He did as we're empowered by the mercy and grace of God.