

# “The Great Wager”



*“From that time Jesus began to show His disciples that He must go to Jerusalem, suffer many things at the hands of the elders, chief priests and scribes, be killed, and be raised on the third day. Peter took Him aside and began to rebuke Him, ‘God forbid it Lord! This shall never happen to You.’ But Jesus turned and said to Peter, ‘Get behind Me Satan! You are a stumbling block to Me; for **you are not setting your mind on God’s interests, but man’s.**’” **Matthew 16:21-23***

## **Key Scripture References:**

**Matthew 16:13-23; Luke 22:3-4; 2 Thessalonians 3:3; John 17:15; Psalm 63**

## **Key Questions for Walking with Jesus**

1. How are the accounts in Matthew 16:21-23 and Luke 22:3-4 similar? Different? What is the key question that must be asked when comparing these two accounts?
2. Why is Matthew 16:13-20 so important? How does it relate to Matthew 16:21-23?
3. How did Satan tempt Jesus in Matthew 4 and 16; Mark 1:12-13; and Luke 4:1-2? Why did Satan not try to just kill Jesus?
4. What is the promise God revealed in Genesis 3:15? Why must this refer directly to Jesus? Why would no one else ever come remotely close to being qualifying?
5. How does Luke 22:1-6 show the human and satanic enemies of Jesus plotting against Him? Why is this important? What biblical truths can we learn from this passage?
6. What is significant for Jesus’ suffering in Satan’s “hour of darkness” in Luke 22:53?
7. How much angelic assistance was available to Jesus in Matthew 26:53-54? Why did He refuse to call on their help?

8. What does Scripture reveal about demons, Satan's "angels?"
9. What was required for Jesus to be the perfect Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world (John 1:29; 1 Peter 1:18-19)?

### **Key Questions for a Deeper Walk with Jesus**

10. How does Jesus' humanity make you appreciate Him more? See Hebrews 4:15.
11. Though Jesus was completely human just like you, He was "uniquely human." How was His human experience similar to yours? Different from yours? Why were the burdens He carried far heavier than yours? How does this make you appreciate and love Him more?
12. What would've happened to you if Jesus had called for angelic help during His suffering and death?
13. Referring to His suffering and death, why did Jesus say to the eleven disciples, and He still says to you today, "Where I am going, you are not able to come"? How does this make you appreciate Jesus even more?
14. Peter was influenced by Satan to put his own interests ahead of God's, and Jesus rebuked him. Are you living for God's interests or for your own? Explain.
15. What can you do to live for God's interests and not your own? See 2 Corinthians 5:15.
16. How do we tend to follow Jesus "at a distance," like the Apostle Peter did?
17. "Longing for God" is the very heart of true religion (Psalm 63). Why is this so rare in today's world? How and why do Christians seek their satisfaction in things other than God?

Adapted from *"The Darkness and the Glory"* by Greg Harris, Kress Publications, 2008.



# The Great Wager

LUKE 22:53

# A Far Off Look

*“Jesus was led away to Caiaphas the High Priest, but Peter was following Him at a distance.”*

***Mt. 26:58; Mk. 14:54; Lk. 22:54; Jn. 18:15***

*“...another disciple entered into the court with Jesus...”*

# Psalm 63 Distance

## Three Types of People in Any Christian Gathering

1. Christian in name only;
2. Following Jesus “at a distance;”
3. Clinging intensely daily.

# Psalm 63

Psalm of emotional passion:  
In wilderness fleeing own son!  
Away from Jerusalem Temple;  
Longing for God's presence;  
Barren Judean Desert symbolic of  
his condition away from God.

# Longing for God

*“These poets knew far less reason than we for loving God. They did not know that He would die to win their eternal joy. Yet they express a longing for Him, for His mere presence which comes only to the best Christians or to Christians in their best moments.*”

# C.S. Lewis

*They long to live all their days in the Temple so that they may constantly see “the fair beauty of the LORD.” Their longing to go up to Jerusalem and “appear in the presence of God” is like a physical thirst (Psalm 42).*

# Longing for God

*From Jerusalem, the LORD's presence "flashes out in perfect beauty" (Psalm 50:2).*

*Lacking that encounter with Him, their souls are parched like a waterless countryside."*

# Soul Satisfaction

*“Most people do not even know that it is God their souls truly desire. They are seeking satisfaction in other things. Others know God but do not cultivate His presence; they do not long after Him.”*

*F.F. Bruce Psalm Commentary*

# Sole Satisfaction



“Is it not this above everything that explains the weakness of the contemporary church? Is it not this that makes us so hollow spiritually?”

F.F. Bruce Psalms Commentary

# Seeker-Friendly

**Psalm 63:1** - “to seek earnestly” or  
“to seek early”

Used by early church each day as a morning song. The point is the desirability of a regular, early, daily longing after God. Do you have it?

# Satisfaction Guaranteed



Past: 63:2 – “I have seen You!”

Present: 63:3, 6-8, “You help me!”

Future: 63:5, “I will be satisfied!”

God’s inexhaustible capacity to satisfy our deepest spiritual desires.

# I Demand Satisfaction

Even though David is cut off from God's presence in the sanctuary in Jerusalem, God has not cut Himself off from David – “You ARE my help.

Your right hand upholds me.”

God does not hold Himself back from those who seek Him.

# C.H. Spurgeon

*“Though there was a  
desert all around him,  
there was no desert in his  
heart.”*

*Hebrews 11:6; 13:5*

# Psalm 63:3

Comparison of two good things:

“life is good” and “God’s love”

“Your love is better than life”

“A man will give all he has for his own life” (Job 2:4).

Hang onto life no matter the cost!

# Better than Life!

*“hesed” = “loving-kindness, loyal, faithful, steadfast, unchanging”*

Better than even the best thing in life, than life itself! Life itself can be lost, even though we protect it at all costs, but the love of God can never be lost! (Romans 8:38-39)

# Long-Distance Running

*“In view of such great love, isn’t it strange that we spend so much time trying to find satisfaction elsewhere, even in earthly loves, and so little time seeking and enjoying the lasting love of God?”*

# John 4:13-14

“Everyone who drinks of this water will thirst again, but whoever drinks of the water I give him shall never thirst.”

All earthly satisfactions are ultimately unsatisfying – because they are earthly, and we are made for eternity.

# Restless Legs Syndrome



Peter followed “at a distance,”

King David did not.

Why was Peter keeping his  
distance? Why do you?

We cannot “drink the cup” from a  
distance.