

Message by Pastor Don Shoemaker – April 15, 2018

“Prayer in the Hour of Crisis”

(Matthew 26:36-46)

The realities of Jesus’ humanity and the crisis he is about to face come through vividly and dramatically in this prayer scene in Gethsemane. *Do not minimize his agony in your thinking!*

This story is a two-fold prayer lesson. Jesus models for us the importance of getting away to pray. The disciples model our failure to pray and what the outcome of this failure may be.

Let’s learn four lessons on prayer from Jesus and his disciples:

1. Jesus prayed in PRIVACY but he didn’t want to pray in isolation (36-38)

Jesus would get away from the demands of ministry to pray (Mark 1:35; Mark 6:46; Luke 5:16).

At Gethsemane the pressure on Jesus was profound –

“My soul is very sorrowful, even to death” – Matthew 26:38

“He fell on his face and prayed” – Matthew 26:39

“He began to be greatly distressed and troubled” – Mark 14:33

“And being in agony...his sweat became like great drops of blood falling down to the ground” – Luke 22:44

“Jesus offered up prayers and supplications with loud cries and tears” – Hebrews 5:7

Jesus longed for the support of his friends –

“My friends and companions stand aloof from my plague” – Psalm 38:11

“A friend loves at all times, and a brother is born for adversity.”

– Proverbs 17:17

“Do not forsake your friend and your father's friend... Better is a neighbor who is near than a brother who is far away.” – Proverbs 27:10

2. Jesus’ prayer was PETITIONARY but not out of selfishness (39)

Satan’s goal to dissuade Jesus from the Cross (1) by offering him glory without suffering (Matthew 4:8-9) and (2) by arguing how contrary this would be to his Sonship (16:21-23).

Jesus desired to escape the suffering of the Cross, but only if it fit his Father’s will.

3. Jesus prayed with PERSISTENCE but not with empty repetition (39, 42, 44)

Three times he prayed, boldly but submissively. Once convinced of his Father’s will, he was steadfast to do it (“he learned obedience through what he suffered.” – Hebrews 5:8).

4. Jesus prayed to PREPARE HIMSELF so he would not face his crisis in weakness (40, 45-46)

“Continue steadfastly in prayer, being watchful in it with thanksgiving.” – Colossians 4:2

“Finally, brothers, pray for us, that the word of the Lord may speed ahead and be honored.” – 1 Thessalonians 5:25

“Be strong in the Lord and in the strength of his might. Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the schemes of the devil. ...praying at all times in the Spirit, with all prayer and supplication. ...keep alert with all perseverance, making supplication for all the saints.” – Ephesians 6:10, 11, 18