

### The Lord's Prayer to the Father, in Gethsemane

#### Mark 14:26-42

Mark 14:26-42 – *“And when they had sung a hymn, they went out to the Mount of Olives. <sup>27</sup> Then Jesus said to them, “All of you will be made to stumble because of Me this night, for it is written:*

*‘I will strike the Shepherd,  
and the sheep will be scattered.*

<sup>28</sup> *“But after I have been raised, I will go before you to Galilee.”*

<sup>29</sup> *Peter said to Him, “Even if all are made to stumble, yet I will not be.” <sup>30</sup> Jesus said to him, “Assuredly, I say to you that today, even this night, before the rooster crows twice, you will deny Me three times.” <sup>31</sup> But he spoke more vehemently, “If I have to die with You, I will not deny You!” And they all said likewise.*

<sup>32</sup> *Then they came to a place that was named Gethsemane; and He said to His disciples, “Sit here while I pray.” <sup>33</sup> And He took Peter, James, and John with Him, and He began to be troubled and deeply distressed. <sup>34</sup> Then He said to them, “My soul is exceedingly sorrowful, even to death. Stay here and watch.” <sup>35</sup> He went a little farther, and fell on the ground, and prayed that if it were possible, the hour might pass from Him. <sup>36</sup> And He said, “Abba, Father, all things are possible for You. Take this cup away from Me; nevertheless, not what I will, but what You will.” <sup>37</sup> Then He came and found them sleeping, and said to Peter, “Simon, are you sleeping? Could you not watch one hour? <sup>38</sup> Watch and pray, lest you enter into temptation. The spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak.”*

<sup>39</sup> *Again He went away and prayed, and spoke the same words. <sup>40</sup> And when He returned, He found them asleep again, for their eyes were heavy; and they did not know what to answer Him. <sup>41</sup> Then He came the third time and said to them, “Are you still sleeping and resting? It is enough! The hour has come; behold, the Son of Man is being betrayed into the hands of sinners. <sup>42</sup> Rise, let us be going. See, My betrayer is at hand.”*

#### Background Notes

*“After they had sung a hymn.”* The hymn that they sang was part of the celebration of the Passover meal, and it was probably from Psalms 115-118. Those Psalms are part of what's known as the *Hallel*, or “praise,” and they are sung at the Passover meal right after the Cup of Thanksgiving. In our last Talk we mentioned that it was most likely at this point, when the Cup of Thanksgiving was taken, that the Lord's Supper was instituted. Then they went across the Kidron Valley to the Garden of Gethsemane, on the lower slopes of the Mount of Olives.

In verse 27 the Lord quoted a Messianic prophecy from Zechariah 13:7 - *“I will strike the shepherd, and the sheep will be scattered.”* He indicated that this prophecy would be fulfilled soon. The disciples would scatter like sheep, because He, The Shepherd, would be struck down. But the Lord was quick to add a note of grace, when He said, *“But after I have*

*been raised I will go before you to Galilee” (v28).* Even though they would scatter, yet the Lord would not disown them. He would graciously go before them to Galilee and bring them back together again. Remember the Lord made breakfast for the disciples along the shore of the Sea of Galilee – and Peter was restored at that time?

Notice that verse 27 is another evidence of our Lord’s omniscience. He knew exactly what was going to take place. He, as the Shepherd, would be struck down; that the sheep would be scattered; that He would be raised; that He would then go before them to Galilee. This was certainly another indication of our Lord’s deity - His omniscience.

At this point all the disciples claimed that they would not forsake the Lord. Peter, of course, was the most vocal - so much so that the Lord had to tell Peter that before the rooster crowed twice, Peter would deny Him three times. The phrase “before the rooster crows” was an expression used in that day, meaning before sunrise. In this case a rooster really did crow twice in Peter’s hearing: *“And a second time the rooster crowed, and Peter called to mind the word that Jesus had said to him” (v72).*

In the Garden of Gethsemane, the Lord prayed - and the disciples slept. Even Peter, James and John, the inner core of the disciple group, could not stay awake - even after the Lord had specifically asked them to watch and pray! *“Watch and pray lest you enter into temptation. The spirit truly is ready (or willing), but the flesh is weak.”* Unfortunately, I think we all can identify with the disciples here, can’t we?

In the Garden of Gethsemane the Lord was deeply distressed and troubled. This is not primarily because He feared the physical pain of crucifixion that lay ahead, but because He knew that He would have to suffer the wrath of God for our sins. He would be made a sin offering for us, and as a result He would have to suffer the unprecedented separation from His Father. The name “Gethsemane” means *olive press*. It was a fitting name for the place where the Lord was exceedingly sorrowful. As olives are crushed in an olive press, so our Lord’s soul was crushed with grief and pain as He contemplated the awful work on the Cross that lay immediately ahead.

## **Doctrinal Points**

### **1. There was no other way to save us.**

In verses 35-36 we read that the Lord prayed that, if it were possible, He would not have to go to the Cross and suffer for our sin. *“And He said, “Abba, Father, all things are possible for You. Take this cup away from Me; nevertheless, not what I will, but what You will.”* As we said before, the Lord was not shrinking back from the physical pain of the coming Cross, but as He contemplated what it would mean to experience the wrath of God as He bore the penalty for the sins of the world, He made this request of His Heavenly Father. As the Son of Man, He requested that if it was *possible* to accomplish this work in any other way, that would be what He would desire. But notice He quickly added, *“Nevertheless, not my will, but Thine be done.”*

Notice that as **Man** our Lord had a **human will** that was **distinct** from **the Father's will**.

God did not grant that request. The Father did not grant that request - because there was **no other way to save us!** In God's moral universe, there is a penalty for sin, and that penalty is death. It is not only physical death, but it is also spiritual death - eternal separation from God. The only solution for us sinners is a **substitution**. But One who would be the substitute for us must be a **sinless human being**—not a sinless animal, not a sinless angel. The substitution must be a sinless human being, because **humans** sin, and a human substitute was necessary. The eternal Son of God took on humanity in order to be that sinless substitution that was required for our salvation. There was **no other way** to save us.

## 2. Watching and praying preserves believers from temptation.

Verse 38 once again: *“Watch and pray, lest you enter into temptation. The spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak.”* The disciples should have been watching and praying - but they were sleeping! And they fell asleep again, even after the Lord told them to watch and pray so that they would not enter into temptation. They continued to sleep, and as a result they yielded to temptation. In a short while, they all forsook the Lord and fled.

Believers today will be tempted. We need to watch and pray, because it's the only way we'll be preserved from temptation. We may have great intentions and willpower, but **all** of us are susceptible to spiritual failure. The spirit may be willing, but the flesh is weak. We need to watch and pray. Watching and praying preserves us from temptation.

Watching and praying is not easy. It takes work—especially since the flesh is weak! How many of you would agree the flesh is weak? We need to watch out for the enemy's deception, and we need to watch out for entanglements in this world. We need to watch that we don't become desensitized to sin. TV, movies, the internet - many things have a tremendous capacity to desensitize us to sin. We need to **watch what we watch!**

And **pray!** We need to pray about everything, and especially to pray that we be preserved from temptation. Remember that line in the model prayer the Lord gave us: “May we not be led into temptation, but deliver us from evil.” Watching and praying preserves believers from temptation.

## Practical Applications

### 1. Have you ever prayed for an hour?

In verse 37 the Lord said to Peter, *“Could you not watch one hour?”* The implication of this comment is that the Lord expected His disciples to stay awake, and to watch and pray with Him for at least an hour.

Have you ever prayed for an hour? If reward in heaven were based on amount of prayer, where would we be ranked? That's convicting to all of us, isn't it? So often our prayer times are short. There's nothing wrong with short prayers, but we ought to have long prayer times as well.

Martin Luther said that he was so busy in the work of the Lord that he had to spend several hours in prayer each day! We need to schedule prayer time into our day. That's hard to do. I find it much easier to schedule in study time than prayer time - but we need to make time for prayer.

Have you ever prayed for an hour?

## 2. When I am strong, then I am weak.

That sounds like a backwards text of Scripture, doesn't it? Well, it **is**! In 2 Corinthians 12:10 the apostle Paul said, "*When I am weak, then I am strong.*" When Paul was being battered around to the point of weakness, he found that a source of spiritual strength was available from the Lord. And the same is true in our lives. When we are weak, and when we're the end of our rope, many times we'll find strength in the Lord. When I am weak – when I'm not trying to do things on my own strength, but relying on the Lord for wisdom and strength - then I'm strong.

The converse is also true, and we see it demonstrated here in Peter. When I think I can do something for the Lord in my own physical strength, I find that I fail. When I think I am strong, then I am actually weak. Look at Peter: "*Even if all are made to stumble, [meaning the other disciples, right?], but not I. Even if it means that I have to die with you, Lord, I will never deny you*" (v29 & 31). In essence Peter was saying, "Lord, you can count on me. I'll never deny you. All the others may stumble, but I won't!" Well, what happened just a few hours later? Peter **thought** he was strong, but it was in his own human strength. Thus, in reality, he was weak when the pressure came.

This is true of us, too. When we think we are strong in the faith, and we think highly of our spiritual strength, and that we don't need help or support - watch out! We certainly don't have to look far to find prominent Christians who have fallen morally and spiritually. Thinking they were spiritually strong, they tried to live the Christian life in their own strength; they failed to watch and pray – and sadly it turned out that they were actually weak. We need to learn the lesson that "when I think I'm strong, then I am weak." When we think we can handle life in our own strength, that's when we need to watch out. When we think we're strong, we'll soon fail - because we really are weak.

When I think I'm strong, then I am weak.