

**Matthew 26:36-46 (New International Version, ©2011)**

<sup>36</sup> Then Jesus went with his disciples to a place called Gethsemane, and he said to them, “Sit here while I go over there and pray.” <sup>37</sup> He took Peter and the two sons of Zebedee along with him, and he began to be sorrowful and troubled. <sup>38</sup> Then he said to them, “My soul is overwhelmed with sorrow to the point of death. Stay here and keep watch with me.”

<sup>39</sup> Going a little farther, he fell with his face to the ground and prayed, “My Father, if it is possible, may this cup be taken from me. Yet not as I will, but as you will.”

<sup>40</sup> Then he returned to his disciples and found them sleeping. “Couldn’t you men keep watch with me for one hour?” he asked Peter. <sup>41</sup> “Watch and pray so that you will not fall into temptation. The spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak.”

<sup>42</sup> He went away a second time and prayed, “My Father, if it is not possible for this cup to be taken away unless I drink it, may your will be done.”

<sup>43</sup> When he came back, he again found them sleeping, because their eyes were heavy. <sup>44</sup> So he left them and went away once more and prayed the third time, saying the same thing.

<sup>45</sup> Then he returned to the disciples and said to them, “Are you still sleeping and resting? Look, the hour has come, and the Son of Man is delivered into the hands of sinners. <sup>46</sup> Rise! Let us go! Here comes my betrayer!”

**OASIS: LivingClose: Prayer Partners, Mt. 26:36-46**

Preface: Welcome to our 3rd Bible study in our six sermon LivingClose series, as we explore biblical relationships that are spiritually influential and inspiring. The sermons are complemented by three LIFE Community studies, which use the same biblical text and allow your Life Community to continue the conversation and go deeper in personal application. Go for it!

Possible starter question: We have all gone through difficult zones in our lives (or have friends who have) —disappointments, losses, times of grief, or insurmountable challenges. What are some of the “preferred” acts of kindness or ways of support that friends can provide during such times?

Transitional comment: Today we are going to look at a passage when Jesus was in the midst of probably the most challenging of all stretches. We will get to see how Jesus sought guidance and help from both his Heavenly Father and his closest circle of companions.

Let’s listen as to our narrative passage as it is read aloud (Mt. 26:36-46).

*(Pray for the Holy Spirit to lead your study, if you haven’t already prayed.)*

Read and Overview: Take several minutes alone to read again this passage. Who are the central figures? What is happening? What do you learn about their relationships? What patterns do you see?

- O Lets note the context. Take a quick glance at the paragraphs that precede this section. What things just happened in the previous few hours? And what is about to happen? (3 min.)

First Section (vs. 36-38):

- O What do you observe about why Jesus goes to Gethsemane?

*(n.b. Gethsemane means “olive press.” Jerusalem was reknown for its olive groves and oil production. It seems that Jesus and his disciples frequently retreated to this garden, which was a part of the Mount of Olives.)*

- O What does he instruct his disciples to do? In addition, what does he ask of Peter and James and John?

- O How is Jesus feeling?

I What do you imagine is pressing on his mind? How might that have factored into his request of the three?

I Imagine if you had been one of the three. What would that have been like? What might have been some of your feelings or questions or thoughts?

Second Section (vs. 39-42):

- O In this section, what do you learn about Jesus’ relationship with his Father?

- O What is the focus of his prayers?

*(n.b. “cup” is a metaphor for suffering. Is. 51:17 sheds light on the cause or necessity, as the image it is the image of a cup that contains God’s wrath against sin.)*

O How does his initial prayer in v. 39 compare with his subsequent prayer in v. 42? What is similar and what differences are there?

I What do you think has changed in Jesus perspective?

A Are there times in your life that you have learned to pray something similar to Jesus' prayer—that you would put God's will ahead of your will? Anyone willing to give an example?

O (v. 40-41) How have Peter, James and John done? What does Jesus explain to them?

I In what ways do you think prayer works to help us from falling into temptation?

A Identify a few situations when it would be wise for you to “pray away temptation.”

Third Section (vs. 43-46):

O In these verses, Jesus returns to his disciples two more times. What are they doing? Why?

I What opportunities did they miss as a result? (for their sake? For Jesus' sake?)

I Why do you think Jesus didn't act upset with them?

Prayer together: Pray...

- ❖ that we'd be able to learn the deep lessons about life and prayer from Jesus' model.
  - ❖ that we would find times and ways to really “be there” for one another in prayer, perhaps even serving one another as prayer partners.
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Text notes (you can access biblical texts via [www.Biblegateway.com](http://www.Biblegateway.com))

- a. BIG idea: Spiritual friends help us see ourselves and others as God sees us all. And as a result, God brings unlikely people together.
- b. Key verse: Mt. 26: 38: “Stay here and keep watch with me.”
- c. KEY: O = Observation; I = Interpretation; A = Application (or C = Challenge)

Advice to study leaders:

- d. Complement your OIA questions with “process questions” (what else? What more? What do others of you see/think?).
- e. Determine the core questions you'll ask (know which ones to skip if pressed for time).
- f. Always reword questions in words that are comfortable for you (and, if the question doesn't make sense to you, then discard it.) You want to “own” each question.
- g. When you ask questions, give people ample time to think and respond. How long do you wait? Take your time; don't rush people but encourage their participation. And avoid answering your own questions!
- h. Timing/pacing: allocate your time and move forward gently, with a steady pace.
- i. Application: Pace the study to conclude with “difference making” application.
- j. Secondary texts—use other texts very sparingly, even if they are relevant. Otherwise, other texts will push you more into the “teacher role,” rather than that of facilitator. It also can cause some people to feel distracted or de-powered.
- k. If you are utilizing this “on-line” study and not part of the OASIS course, I recommend you get the one volume commentary New Bible Commentary, Revised (21<sup>st</sup> Century Edition, IVP). Well worth \$35.