

That You May Know — Matthew 26:36-46

In this text John brings to view the behind the scenes look at the personal agony that Jesus endured to bring us into reconciliation with God. We tend to take it for granted from time to time. Reflecting on Jesus in the Garden of Gethsemane is a pointed reminder given to us by God as to the depth of His great love for us. It would do us well to take some time and meditate on this passage and savor the love with which the Father has lavished on us that we should be called children of God. Let's look at a few questions.

Discussion questions — *do not feel the pressure to cover them all

1. We talked about the fact that we tend to enjoy the benefit of something and from time to time tend to forget the sacrifice needed to attain that something. For instance, we appreciate the freedoms in our country but tend to forget the men and women who gave their lives for that freedom. Maybe it's the sacrifices our parents endured to give us the opportunities that we were afforded. How do we tend to do this when it comes to the rescue of Jesus (i.e just see it as what He does, entitlement, etc.)? What would you suggest to someone to avoid this pitfall? How have you been able to guard against this in your own life? How have you found yourself guilty of this neglect and forgetfulness?
2. Jesus had communicated to the disciples that they would all fall away, strike the shepherd and the sheep will scatter. The response is they would never walk away, Peter even commented he would die for Jesus. We see that Jesus knows what is coming. In the garden he asks the inner three; Peter, James, and John to stay and pray. From exhaustion the men are unable to stay awake and obey His command. What can we see about the love of Jesus in the interaction with these men? He was clearly under extreme duress and agony, yet he does not write them off. What does this say about Jesus? What was important about the men being asked to pray?
3. We see that as Jesus prays, he is seeking to do the will of the Father. He replied, "not my will but yours be done." As followers of Jesus this should be our heart's desire as well. How are we guilty of wanting to do our own will? We may know God's plan, purpose, and promise but we tend to still want to do our own will (i.e. relationships, children, money, time, etc.). We may do a version of God's will but avoid the sacrifice and suffering. We may even justify our rebellion. What are some ways that we may fall asleep and not carry out his will? How often do you think about the will of God? Does following His will ever lead you into sacrifice and suffering? If so, why? If not, why not?

4. Jesus in the middle of the agony of the garden, experiencing the weight of the moment to come and feeling like he might die still has time to come to the disciples and care for them. Still having their best interests in mind. In their failure He still loves them. As we have studied in 1 John we see this remarkable love. It's not like we are trying to earn His love, it is just bestowed on us. He first loved us. How might we love others the way we have been loved? What about those who betray us, those who may be super close to us but walk away in the hardest time in our life, or those who neglect to help us in time of need, or even those who deny us? What can we learn and implement from Jesus?