

## The Gospel according to

# Mark



### Lesson 17-Gethsemane, Betrayal, Trial, and Denial (The Darkest Hour) Focus: Mark 14:32-72

#### 1. Christ goes to the garden of Gethsemane with His disciples to pray (v.32-42) (Thursday night)

- a. After eating the Passover meal with His disciples, Jesus went to the garden to pray and seek His heavenly Father's strength. He knew the hour of trial was upon Him! He sat his disciples down in a certain place. Then He took his inner circle of disciples further along with him—Peter, James, and John (v.33). **He disclosed the burden of His soul to them** (although He did not explain every detail of it to them, yet He explained that he was intensely troubled about something—"even unto death!"). He told them to stay and "watch" while **he went a little further by himself to be ALONE WITH GOD THE FATHER IN PRAYER**. This was the darkest hour of trial for him! He prayed, "if it were possible" for the hour of trial to pass away from him—but not for His will, but for the Father's will. The Father's will in this matter can be found **in the ancient prophecy of Isaiah 53:7-11**.
- b. **We should not think that Jesus did not experience human emotion, feelings, and fears. He did.** He came into this world as one of us "for the suffering of death" (Hebrews 2:9). He was "made like unto his brethren..." and was "tempted in all points like as we are, yet without sin" (Hebrews 2:17,18; 4:14-16). However, **Jesus knew where to turn to for His strength, support, and power**. Let us also turn to the Lord prayerfully for our strength in every trial.
- c. (v.37-42) After stopping briefly to check on his disciples Jesus found them sleeping. Jesus had been pouring out his heart to God. He was agonizing with God. This was the darkest hour. Some of the gospels even tell us that Jesus was sweating drops of blood because it was so intense!! Yet, he **found his disciples sleeping!!** "The spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak." Jesus told His followers to **"watch and pray"** lest they should enter into temptation and lose track of the importance of the hour. They slept right up unto the last moment of the final crisis. It was now too late for them to spend the time praying. Let us pray that we are not doing the same these days—**spiritually sleeping while the final moments and the final crisis of earth's history are fast approaching us!** The time is at hand; let us watch, pray, labor, and be faithful to Jesus in these final hours! All of heaven is in a flurry of busyness. The final crisis is nearly upon us (according to the prophecies of the Bible and signs of the times)! Let us arise and be ready!

#### 2. Judas does his work of betrayal and Christ's disciples all fled from His side (v.43-52)

- a. Judas came to Jesus and betrayed him with a kiss. He came to greet like a friend, but his heart's intent was for evil. Jesus knew Judas' heart, and what was about to take place. For quite a long time he had been trying to describe to his disciples what would happen concerning his capture, death, burial, and resurrection. Jesus knew that the man coming to him was in the act of betraying Him. (In the culture of this time and place, a kiss was a common greeting for those who were close). The words and acts of Judas were deceptive—he did not have the heart of a faithful disciple of Christ. God knew it, even if the others had not recognized it. And even so it is today with false-hearted disciples of Christ. But, we pray for them all to have a change of heart and be truly converted to Christ—to serve Him faithfully.
- b. (v.47) One of the guards, named **Malcus**, had an ear cut off. The Apostle Peter had brought a sword and he took a swing at the young man, just missing his head. Jesus then told Peter to put away his sword. Then he reached out to this young man, took his ear, and restored it miraculously—whole as the other!(Luke 22:51; John 18:10,11). **Jesus loved even those who were His enemies. He has taught us to love even our enemies as well** (by showing practical kindness to them) (Matthew 5:43-48). This young man had been in the wrong place at the wrong time, and now he was suffering, but Jesus healed him.

- c. (v.50-52) **All the disciples fled from Jesus.** There was even a young man there who'd cast a sheet or something around his naked body to come and see this scene. The guards grabbed him by it and he fled from the naked without it. Mark is the gospel writer who mentions this young man fleeing naked. We do not know his identity exactly. **Perhaps if the disciples of Jesus had spent the time praying with Him instead of just sleeping,** they would have been more spiritually prepared to face this terrible trial that was upon them now. Let us remember to "seek the Lord while He may be found" (Isaiah 55:6).
3. **Jesus was taken to an unfair trial in the middle of the night without any proper witnesses against Him (v.53-65)**
- a. Peter followed Jesus "afar off," not wanting to get "too close" to Him or to reveal his direct association to Jesus during this dangerous hour (v.54). He then situated himself around a fire (for **the night was a cold dark night**), next to the soldiers and enemies of Jesus who were also warming themselves there. Peter had put himself into a risky situation.
- b. (v.55-59) Many false witnesses tried to testify against Jesus but their words could not agree with each other. One of them made a false statement about Jesus concerning the Temple. They had taken Jesus' words out of context. Jesus did mention about the Temple in Jerusalem, but he also mentioned about his own body "temple" being destroyed and raised up from the grave within three days.
- c. (v.60-65) The high priest asked Jesus a direct question and Jesus gave him a direct answer. At his answer, calling himself "I am" (v.62) they were outraged at Him and ready to kill him. They mocked him, spit on him, and beat him. The name "I AM" is one that applies only to God in the Bible, and in the Jewish mind (See Exodus 3:14). The rejection, trial, and suffering of Jesus at this time was also pointed out in the prophecy of Isaiah 53:3,7,8. In Christ's words, he pointed them all forward to the time when He would come in great glory to serve justice (Revelation 1:7).
4. **Peter denied Jesus while Jesus was inside suffering this false trial (v.66-72)**
- a. Peter was recognized by a servant girl of the high priest. She called him into question, but Peter felt that he was in a risky position. He decided to deny his faith in Jesus—not a good thing to do at all (see **Mark 8:38**). We must and should always stand faithful to Jesus. Let us not betray our faith because it is unpopular with those around us, or because it may be risky to follow Jesus (ref. Rev. 3:8; 12:11). Let us be faithful and clear about where we stand. People should "know" that we are followers of Christ (John 13:35; Matthew 5:16). This is how we may bear a faithful witness for Him. If we never point to Him, who shall get the glory?
- b. (v.71,72) Peter denied Jesus, even by cursing. Likely, he used language that was not becoming of a Christian. He tried to mask his identity by sharing filthy words that should never belong in the mouth of the Christian. Let us not speak such filth but let us have a pure heart and lips! After the rooster crowed **the words of Jesus came with convicted force upon Peter**, as he remembered what Jesus had said. When the words of Jesus come upon our minds and hearts by the impress of the Holy Spirit (John 16:8) we will feel true conviction and **sorrow for sin**. This is the work of God which leads us to **repentance**. Peter repented of his sin, even with true tears, and he turned back to the Lord Jesus for forgiveness of his sin and healing. We may do the same as to come back to Jesus (away from our sin), even though we'd wrong dishonored Jesus. Yet, his mercy will draw us back, and cleanse us of our sin (if we shall only come to Him).

### **Question (s) for the Heart:**

**Would you like to pray as Jesus did, to seek Him, and to be faithful unto Him?** \_\_\_\_\_ **Will you seek His forgiveness of sin, and prayerfully strive to walk in His righteous path?** \_\_\_\_\_