

## DEVOTIONAL *Mark 14*

- Dr. Court Greene

We do not hear much from the disciples in the garden, and yet, in terms of word count, they tend to have most of the focus in Mark's gospel. At no point do they open their mouths to speak. None of them seems to lift a finger to do a single thing. Two of them, Peter and James, take a few steps to be with Jesus, but that is all we get from them.

In Mark 14:32, Jesus gives the disciples crystal clear instructions. "Sit here while I pray." That is quite literally all that was expected of them. When he returns to them, though, it appears they could not even do that! He finds them asleep (in verse 37), implores them to keep awake *this time* as he prays again, and once again (40) returns to find that even after his impassioned request, they did not have it in them!

Most of us, often myself included, would consider them failures as followers. They had one job. It was not a difficult one. They left it undone. They failed.

Let the words of my mouth and  
the meditation of my heart be  
acceptable in Your sight, O  
LORD, my strength and my  
Redeemer.

-Psalm 19:14

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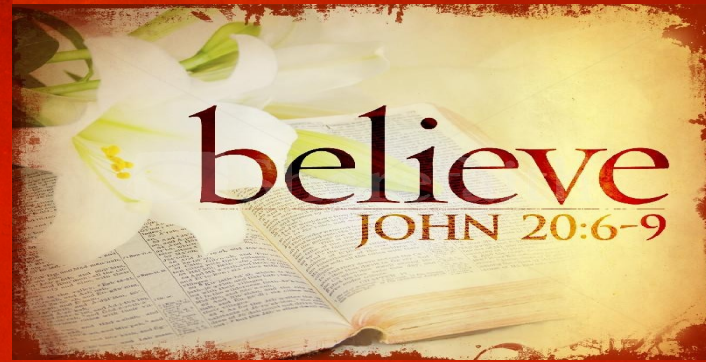
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This is probably where you expect me to say "don't be too quick to judge them." I say that a lot, so I cannot blame you for such an assumption. In this case, though, I am right there with you. We should call a spade a spade here, and acknowledge that they did in fact fail at the task to which the savior called them.

But are they alone? Of course not! All of us have, in some way, failed to follow Christ acceptably. All of us have "fallen asleep" on our duties or expectations as Christians, and so while it is fair to call them failures in the moment Mark speaks about, it is only fair to do so after recognizing the fact that we are too. If there is any hope to be had in their weakness, however, it is found in how much of Mark's focus (and with it, Jesus') is devoted to them. We know next to nothing about the time Jesus spent with the Father in the Garden of Gethsemane. We know that he asked for release that was not granted. We know that he was anguished. We sort of think we understand that as well as we can. What we know plenty of, is that it clearly mattered to Jesus how his followers acted. It mattered that they failed, but it only mattered because he had such high hopes for them to succeed. It mattered that he placed these hopes on them because that shows us how much he loved and respected them. In other words, he was disappointed that they could not meet the task, because he trusted in them in the first place.

As modern day disciples (those who follow Christ today) we can find hope in the fact that so much of Jesus' attention, which probably should have been focused inwardly, was directed to them. We may fail from time to time, but that does not mean that God no longer loves us, trusts us, or expects great things from us. There is great hope found in the fact that God still focuses attention on us, in those great times when we are up for it, and in the rougher times when we fall asleep on the job.



## "THE GARDEN OF GETHESEMANE"



# THE WITNESS

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## CHRIST'S ANGUISH - Jeff Conard

Matthew 26:36-46

Do we really understand the agony that Jesus was consumed by in the Garden of Gethsemane? To me it shows what true authentic faith is and how prayer is our path forward to give up self to God no matter what circumstance life throws at us. Jesus is our example again in our battle of self will versus God's will.

In the scripture, Jesus asks his disciples to come with him to a local garden and be with him while he prays. Scripture describes Jesus' spirit as being sorrowful and heavy. Something I am sure Jesus did often while teaching his disciples. However, he asks them to watch while he prays. As in typical human fashion they fall asleep. Jesus teaches them to watch and pray three different times. Something we find hard to do as does his disciples.

Jesus teaches us all to be on watch and be patient, ask God to give us strength in temptation in fighting our own will and choose to do God's will through all circumstances no matter how hard that is.

### Devotions for Holy Week Preparing for Easter 2021

Christ's Anguish • 4 Reasons for Jesus Experience in the Garden • Jesus Sorrow  
God's Love For Us Revealed in Jesus • Add • Add

Palm Sunday Worship 11 am March 28 • Maundy Thursday 6 pm April 1

Resurrection Sunday Worship 11 am April 4



## Experience of *Jesus* - Keith Clark

There are several reasons why the garden experience was both heart-breaking and gut-wrenching for our Lord Jesus Christ.

Reason #1 was that He had ridden into Jerusalem on the back of a donkey just as the prophets had predicted that the promised Messiah would do. Then He made His way to the Temple and presented Himself to the Jews publically, fulfilling the prophecy that the Messiah would appear at the Temple. God had promised the Jews that their Messiah would come in like manner and now He was going to be rejected by His own people, the Jews, as their Messiah.

Reason #2 was that He had known for about 6 months that He would die on His next trip to Jerusalem. He knew this at his meeting with Moses and Elijah on the Mount of Transfiguration. The scriptures tell us that they had discussed the matter of His decease in Jerusalem. The scriptures do not reveal exactly what manner of death that Moses and Elijah told Jesus He would experience. However He knew the Romans often used crucifixion and He may have known that would be the horrible way He would die.

Reason #3 was the fact that although He was totally God in a flesh and blood. He was also totally human. The scriptures reveal that the flesh is weak even though the spirit is willing. He knew that His mission on earth as the Messiah was to die for the sins of lost people. He was dreading the punishment that His fleshly human body would receive along with all that pain.

Reason #4 was probably the greatest reason of all. While He would be on the cross he knew that as the human sacrifice for all the sins of all the people for all time He would be rejected by God His Father. Throughout all eternity He had never felt rejection like He would have to experience on the cross.

Even though Jesus had been informed about what would occur in Jerusalem He still showed up. Why? Because He could not stand the thought of having to spend eternity without you and me. He knew we would need a Savior who would take away our sin so that we could live in the presence of a Holy God forever.

## *Jesus'* Sorrow- Kathy Willetts

Three times, three times.....Jesus came back to find the disciples sleeping. Did they care, were they not concerned? He must have thought about these questions. After all, these were his chosen ones. It was just a simple request, "Stay here and watch with me."

It was not as if He was asking Peter, James, or John to take his place. For He knew what was about to happen. And they could not stay awake long enough to keep watch while He prayed to his Father above?

Jesus was overwhelmed with sorrow, even though he was not entirely of this world. He had a human soul and that soul was hurting. It would not be long before they came for Him. Jesus would be arrested, beaten, stand trial, and eventually crucified.

I ask myself, what if I was in their position? What would I do? Would I so easily, fall back asleep, not wanting to spend an extra few minutes in the presence of my Lord? As Jesus said to them, "the Spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak."

“ HE WAS  
**Wounded**  
FOR OUR TRANSGRESSIONS,  
HE WAS  
**Bruised**  
FOR OUR INIQUITIES;  
THE CHASTISEMENT FOR  
OUR PEACE WAS UPON HIM &  
**BY HIS STRIPES**  
WE ARE  
**Healed** ”  
ISAIAH 53:5

Join in-person, online, or on WPTL radio each Sunday at 11 am  
Links at [www.canton-fbc.org](http://www.canton-fbc.org)

# Palm Sunday

HOSANNA TO THE KING

Sunday March 28, 2021

## 4 VERSES TO PRAY OVER YOUR HOME

LORD, MAY OUR HOME BE A PLACE OF:

- H** HEALING WORDS  
The tongue of the wise brings healing. Proverbs 12:18b
- O** OVERFLOWING HOPE, PEACE & JOY  
May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace as you trust in him, so that you may overflow with hope by the power of the Holy Spirit. Romans 15:13
- M** MERCY, LOVE & JUSTICE  
He has shown you, O mortal, what is good. And what does the LORD require of you? To act justly and to love mercy and to walk humbly with your God. Micah 6:8
- E** ENCOURAGEMENT  
Therefore encourage one another and build each other up, just as in fact you are doing. 1 Thessalonians 5:11

## THANK YOU FOR VOLUNTEERING

“VOLUNTEERS DO NOT NECESSARILY HAVE THE TIME; THEY JUST HAVE THE HEART.”  
- ELIZABETH ANDREW

a truly amazing  
**Volunteer**  
IS SELFLESS, GENEROUS,  
HELPFUL, THOUGHTFUL, VALUABLE  
also  
PATIENT, KIND & GIVING.

## Thy Will Be Done - Rev. Ray Shepard

After the final meal and spending the evening together with His disciples, Jesus made his final journey to the Garden of Gethsemane. I believe he had been here before during his previous trips to Jerusalem and sought comfort in a familiar place as he spent His final hours on earth with His Father in guidance and prayer. I find myself returning many times to the same gardens that are located within the campus of Lake Junaluska, where I also find solitude and comfort spending time in familiar places while spending time in prayer with God. The gospel of Matthew records Jesus praying three times in the Garden of Gethsemane while intermittently checking back with His disciples, finding them asleep with each return visit

*And he went a little farther, and fell on his face, and prayed, saying, O my Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me: nevertheless not as I will, but as thou wilt. Matthew 26:39*

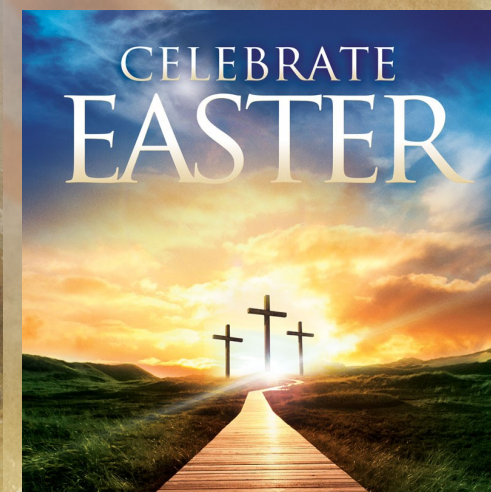
*He went away again the second time, and prayed, saying, O my Father, if this cup may not pass away from me, except I drink it, thy will be done. Matthew 26:42*

*And he left them, and went away again, and prayed the third time, saying the same words. Mathew 26:44*

Jesus prayed three times with each prayer seeking that God's will be done. Jesus had asked His three closest disciples, Peter, James and John to accompany Him while He prayed and to "watch and pray" with Him while He was in the garden. The significance of the triune nature of God is visible in each of these situation and circumstances. The word Gethsemane means "oil press" and the fact that this garden was located in a grove of olive trees has particular significance to the symbolism of the holy anointing by God that Jesus Christ was the Messiah to the world, as it was customary in that culture to anoint rising kings with olive oil on their ascension to the throne. The pressing of olives into oil is a three step process whereas each step pressed more and more oil out of the olive until all the oil had been fully extracted, showing that Jesus had truly fulfilled His purpose while He was here on earth. These prayers, while recorded by Matthew are simple to understand in words, had great importance as Jesus made His final push to the cross on Mount Calvary. Throughout His time on earth Jesus had constantly relied on God for His direction, purpose and guidance and Jesus leaves us the same model prayer to follow in our own lives. May your will be done God, not mine. May we remember this during this time of Lent and everyday that the true will of God be done in our lives and that we must live sacrificial lives in our journey to walk closer with God while here on earth.

May God richly bless each of you during this time of Lent!

alleluia!  
*Christ has Risen!*



Bring fresh cut flowers for the cross!  
11 am Easter Worship  
Canton First Baptist Church  
Take Family Photos after Worship

April 11, 18, & 25  
Sermon Series with  
Dr. Court Greene



Building Faith † Offering Hope † Loving Others



*Palm Sunday* March 28, 2021  
Music, Palms  
& Children

**In-Person & on Livestream\***  
**April 1 at 6 pm**  
**Maundy Thursday Service**  
**April 4 at 11 am**  
**Easter Sunday Worship**

THE  
**LORD'S SUPPER**

\*Pickup elements in Church Office



**EASTER CANDY**  
*Donations*

CANDY COLLECTION IN VESTIBULE AND HALLWAY  
WE WILL BE COLLECTING INDIVIDUALLY WRAPPED CANDY FOR OUR KIDS EASTER EGG HUNT!



EASTER SUNDAY 11 AM APRIL 4, 2021

**EASTER EGG HUNT**

come experience the fun & fellowship  
Preschool to 5th Grade Children's Church  
Individual distanced hunting areas  
Bring your own basket



*Wedding Bells*

Coming April 2021

*Olivia Burnette & Evert Ball*



**WEDDING SHOWER**  
COME CELEBRATE WITH US

Drive-by Shower for Olivia Burnette & Evert Ball  
April 24 2021 from 1-3 pm  
Canton First Baptist Church 74 Academy St, Canton, NC 28716

## MEMORYverse

"For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believes in Him should not perish, but have eternal life."

-John 3:16

## God's Love for Us Revealed in *Jesus* - Rev. James Markey

1,000,000,000,000,000,000,000,000+ (That's a 1 with 24 zeros...plus)

"My Father, if it is possible, may this cup be taken from me. Yet not as I will, but as you will." (Matthew 26)

One of my favorite classes in college was astronomy. I liked that it was an evening class, as at the time I did not particularly enjoy learning science-y stuff in the early morning. What I *really* liked was how the instructor, Dr. Dennis, made the incomprehensibly large scale of the universe feel accessible, even to one who chooses his science-y learning, in part, by where in the day it falls. It is estimated that the Milky Way Galaxy (our home) consists of between 100-400 billion stars, and around 100 billion planets. That's just in our galactic neighborhood. If you scale it out to the theoretical size of the universe, that number scales to crazy numbers, considering there are an estimated 200 BILLION galaxies in the universe. These numbers are literally astronomical, and are plenty brain numbing without going down the rabbit hole of multiverse theory. When dealing with numbers like this, zeroes that go on so long you have to count them by threes, over and over to keep from losing track, it's easy to throw up your hands and give up wondering.

I find it can be the same way when I try to "figure out" the Heart of our Great God. God, who created everything there is; so much of it is still yet far beyond the reaches of our physical ability to see it, much less touch. And yet, in the Garden of Gethsemane, Jesus is praying to His Father that the responsibility of saving humanity from their own chosen path be taken off His shoulders, were it God's will. The Trinity alone, and the idea that Jesus is essentially talking to Himself (but not really) is enough to make my eye twitch. The takeaway is that through the lens of the humanity of Jesus...He does not like where this part of the story is headed. He is scared. He's essentially alone. His friends, who have sworn to stand with Him and do whatever it takes, are literally asleep on the job. And it's on their behalf that Jesus has chosen to endure impending, unspeakable torture. He knows this. He knows He's chosen this. In spite of all that humans have done, are doing in that moment, and will continue to do in the thousands of years to follow that underscore that we are undeserving of a Savior, He still prays that the Father's Will be done.

If I put myself in Jesus' situation at that moment, I'm ashamed to say I wouldn't possess even close to the level of Grace that Jesus demonstrates. My prayer likely would have sounded something like: "God, seriously, I don't need this. I don't want this. I am LITERALLY the greatest gift in the universe. I possess the power, knowledge, and inheritance of every speck of galactic dust and was, is, and is to come, and this is the thanks I get? This is how the story is supposed to end? Sorry, no. Humanity is the worst. Please get me out of here and let their will be done as they deserve."

And yet He finds Himself there in the Garden, praying humbly that His Father spare Him the treachery, agony, and murder that we will freely inflict on Him. Author of the universe. Creator of trillions of stars, with hundreds of billions of other places He could have chosen to be at that moment. And yet, God sent His Son to die for the very people who scorned Him. I wish I could say I would know better. But how better are we today, with all of our science-y knowledge and literally the handbook for life everlasting? Sadly, in so many ways we live our lives with an indifference to what Jesus went through in the Garden, leading to the cross. Truly, our human nature is far easier to understand than the infinite Grace required to save us from it. Thankfully, God explains it throughout the bible, in ways that are plain.

***"This is how God showed his love among us: He sent his one and only Son into the world that we might live through him. This is love: not that we loved God, but that he loved us and sent his Son as an atoning sacrifice for our sins." (1 John 4:9-10)***

Even with constant encouragements and reminders of the Love of God throughout the Bible... Even as I witness acts of tremendous bravery, compassion and grace that demonstrate goodness in humanity reflective of God's Love...

The LORD is my *Shepherd;*  
I shall not want.

He maketh me to  
lie down in green pastures:

He leadeth me beside the still waters,  
He restoreth my  
*soul:*

He leadeth me in the paths of righteousness  
for His name's sake. Yea though I walk through the  
valley of the shadow of death.

*I will fear no evil:*  
*for Thou art with me;*  
Thy rod and Thy staff they comfort me.

Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies

Thou anointest my head with oil; My cup runneth over  
Surely goodness & mercy shall follow me  
all the days of my life;

And I will dwell in the house  
of the LORD *forever.*  
- Psalm 23

It's a lot to try and wrap my mind around. Maybe that's the point. I don't have to be big enough, or smart enough, or pious enough. God has called me to walk my own path, and commanded me to do what He's ordained for me. It's not always easy, and it can certainly be painful some of the time. To say that He understands what it feels like is surely a universe-sized understatement. Clearly, God has the receipts on how much He's willing to endure to express His Love, and we are blessed indeed that He continues His work through each of us.

***"For we are God's handiwork, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do." Ephesians 2:10***