



WEEKLY STUDY

The Last Days of Jesus - Week Three

This week we followed Jesus as he prayed on the Mount of Olives. It was a moment when the fullness of his humanity was on display. He knew that suffering was coming his way, and he would have preferred not to face it. But he made himself available to God's will anyway. May we become increasingly open to God's good work in our lives as we pray and study this week.

Peace of Christ,
Pastor Mark Youngman

If you are studying with your Providence Small Group or Discipleship Group, you can share from your own daily reflections and consider the Group Discussion questions below. If you would like to get connected visit prov.church/smallgroups.

DAILY STUDY

MONDAY: LUKE 22.39-46 (ESV)

And he came out and went, as was his custom, to the Mount of Olives, and the disciples followed him. ⁴⁰ And when he came to the place, he said to them, "Pray that you may not enter into temptation." ⁴¹ And he withdrew from them about a stone's throw, and knelt down and prayed, ⁴² saying, "Father, if you are willing, remove this cup from me. Nevertheless, not my will, but yours, be done." ⁴³ And there appeared to him an angel from heaven, strengthening him. ⁴⁴ And being in agony he prayed more earnestly; and his sweat became like great drops of blood falling down to the ground. ⁴⁵ And when he rose from prayer, he came to the disciples and found them sleeping for sorrow, ⁴⁶ and he said to them, "Why are you sleeping? Rise and pray that you may not enter into temptation."

- The disciples were instructed to ward off temptation with prayer. Jesus was pointing to their own agency. He knew their emotional and physical fatigue and was calling them to stay focused on the high calling of the moment. Have you ever found it difficult to pray because you are so overwhelmed by current or impending events?

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- **Prayer Prompt: For the Spirit God gave us does not make us timid, but gives us power, love and self-discipline. (2 Timothy 1.7)**
 - *God would you help to focus my prayers? Forgive me for the fears that distract me, and know my heart even when the words do not come! Amen.*

TUESDAY: LUKE 22.39-46 (ESV)

- Many people have connected the cup referred to by Jesus in this passage to the cup of God's wrath mentioned in several places throughout the Bible. The idea of sparing the cup in exchange for a more palatable outcome is understandable to us. We all have times in our lives when we recognize that we were spared from a more difficult outcome. Jesus knew that his heavenly Father was with him, and had experienced his merciful intervention. But this time, the fact that God was with him meant that he needed to go through the suffering, not around it. Have you ever prayed the prayer that Jesus prayed? Have you ever felt like there was a cup that you had to take up in the face of suffering?
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- **Prayer Prompt: Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of compassion and the God of all comfort, ⁴ who comforts us in all our troubles, so that we can comfort those in any trouble with the comfort we ourselves receive from God. (2 Corinthians 1.3-4)**
- *Jesus, I see that although you are God, you were also like me as you walked the earth. Thank you for becoming acquainted with my grief, and remaining faithful in times of trial. Amen.*

WEDNESDAY: LUKE 22.39-46 (ESV)

- The disciples fell asleep from sorrow-induced exhaustion. They had been through the ringer and the road ahead did not look any smoother. They were already filled with sorrow even though Jesus was still with them. Do you know what it is like to feel sorrow for events that are yet to come? Is there anything impending in your own life that you carry sorrow for today?
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- **Prayer Prompt: He will wipe every tear from their eyes. There will be no more death' or mourning or crying or pain, for the old order of things has passed away.” (Revelation 21.4)**
 - *God, I grow tired with sorrow for the state of the world around me. I long for you to set things right. May my tears represent the hope I have in your ultimate victory over death and sin. Amen.*

THURSDAY: LUKE 22.39-46 (ESV)

- One commentator wrote that prayer is the antidote that turns temptation from a trial to a test. The temptation facing the disciples was the temptation to get away—to escape the days ahead. Jesus was going to do his work either way, but he longed to have the movement-makers stay alert and in line with the mission. Have you ever felt that it might be easier not to follow Jesus? Are there sacrifices in following Jesus that sometimes seem too heavy to hold? How have you chosen to stay the course with Jesus?
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- **Prayer Prompt: Whoever does not take up their cross and follow me is not worthy of me. ³⁹ Whoever finds their life will lose it, and whoever loses their life for my sake will find it. (Matthew 10.38-39)**
- *God, I pray for resolve and focus in the face of the many temptations coming my way today. Draw me back to this place of prayer often today. Amen.*

FRIDAY: LUKE 22.39-46 (ESV)

- Jesus' posture during his olive garden prayer revealed the desperation of the moment. A typical prayer position would not involve falling to the ground, but he knelt and prayed on that night. When was the last time you were brought to your knees in prayer? Have you ever been so overwhelmed that your time of prayer ended up with you asleep like the disciples?
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- **Prayer Prompt: Come, let us bow down in worship,
let us kneel before the LORD our Maker;
⁷for he is our God
and we are the people of his pasture,
the flock under his care. (Psalm 95.6-7)**
 - *God, my Creator, may I bow before you today and cast all of my cares on you. You can be trusted. Amen.*

SATURDAY: LUKE 22.39-46 (ESV)

- Jesus' honest and sweaty prayer is a model of faithfulness. Several verses earlier, Peter had just expressed how ready he was to face what was ahead. "I am ready!" he had said. To which Jesus predicted his denial in the coming hours. Jesus was willing to do what was necessary to bring about God's salvation, but he wasn't eager to have to come face to face with the brokenness of this world. Several saints of the church have written about the "dark night of the soul" in which they faced the gravity of their sinfulness and need for God. Have you ever felt like you were wrestling with God? What is it like to come face to face with your own inability to fix every wrong?
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- **Prayer Prompt: Trust in the LORD with all your heart
and lean not on your own understanding;
⁶in all your ways submit to him,
and he will make your paths straight. (Proverbs 3.5-6)**
- *God, I need you. Without you I would wander around trusting only in my own understanding. Make my path straight today. Show me the way to go. Amen.*

GROUP DISCUSSION

In Pastor Jacob's message, he explained the chiasmic structure of this passage of scripture. We learned that there are several examples of this structure that help the reader to focus on the key word or words at the center. Here is how Luke 22:39-46 looks in this structure.

A Pray that you may not enter in to temptation (v.40)

B Then he withdrew from them (v.41a)

C knelt down and prayed (v.41b)

X "Remove the Cup, but not my will but Yours"

C when he got up (v.45a)

B he came back to the disciples (V.45b)

A Pray that you may not enter into temptation (v.46)

- What does the use of this literary device tell us about the story?
- Are you able to identify with the struggle that Jesus felt in his request to "remove the cup"?
- How do you draw attention to the most important things in your life?