The Daily Choice: Prayer or Temptation

Luke 22:29-46
January 5, 2024

The Big Idea: Jesus is about to face the supreme test of His life. The disciples' faith will be tested like never before. Jesus is prepared for His test, but the disciples are not. How do we prepare? Just as Jesus did – by spending time with the Father in deep and sincere prayer.

Luke 22:39-46 (ESV)

22 39 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*."

Observations about Jesus and His Way of Living

☐ **Jesus, the Son of God, had a favorite place to go for the essential habit of His life – prayer.** [v. 39] Jesus didn't wait until the time of great testing to begin to pray.

☐ **Jesus believed that our choice is simple – if we don't pray then the test becomes a temptation.** [v. 40] God tests us in order to both reveal our heart and to strengthen it. Satan tempts us to disobey God and choose our will over the Father's will.

☐ **Jesus was God but also a man. In His humanity He didn't hesitate to ask His Father to deliver Him from the deep suffering and pain.** [v. 42] We should freely follow Christ's example!

☐ **Surrender of His will and submission to the Father's will is what Jesus always did.** [v. 42] This is a beautiful model prayer for us to pray daily, perhaps hourly!

☐ **There are spiritual powers and struggles going on that often we cannot see.** [v. 43] Jesus gladly received the strengthening of an angel as He agonized in prayer.

☐ **For Jesus, when the level of personal agony increased He saw the need to go deeper and longer in prayer.** [v. 44] To fully appreciate this scene it is imperative that we *understand what caused Jesus' agony*.

- He knew death was the wages of sin (Romans 6:23) and that He would pay that price.
- He knew the Father's wrath on Sin and Sinners would be poured out on Him. (2 Corinthians 5:21)
- He knew that though He was Holy and obedient to God in all things and in all ways, on the Cross as He became Sin. In that moment, our Holy God turned away from Him as Jesus became sin for us and took our punishment. (Matthew 27:46)

☐ **Sadness, grief, and fears have a way of draining all our energy and driving us to seek a way of escaping.** [vv. 45-46] Jesus comes into those circumstances and calls us to wake up and pray and be strengthened so we can face what is before us. In prayer we come back to God and to the reality of life and its circumstances.

Any concern too small to be turned into a prayer is too small to be made into a burden.
— Corrie Ten Boom