

THE GARDEN PLACE

Text: Luke 22:39-46

Key Word: Garden

Key Thought: Jesus Went Through What We Try to Avoid in His Garden Place for Our Sake

Do you have a place that you really like to go to and find yourself very comfortable while you are there? The kind of place I'm talking about is probably your little getaway. Perhaps you'll be spending part of your summer getting back to the basics at a retreat spot.

I know of some who simply enjoy taking a hike along a favourite trail in a forested area. Others launch a boat and let out a fishing line with the hope of catching a few fish. Some are drawn to a tennis court or swimming pool. While others can contemplate upon life while etching a picturesque scene. I know a few people who kick up their heels, open a good book and get lost for a few hours in the mind set of some inspirational story.

Whatever the case, it seems to be getting more important to have a place that you can call your own. We need a place where we can be ourselves and yet a place where we can choose to reach our full potential. It is a place where we challenge ourselves at a speed that we can handle. It's a place of honesty. A place of personal maturity and consistent growth.

Jesus had a place like this. I call it His Garden. The Garden of Gethsemane (Matthew 26:36; John 18:1) was located on the lower slopes of the Mount of Olives on the N.E. side of Jerusalem. Travellers passed it as they made their way from Jericho, Bethany, and then Bethage before crossing the Kidron Valley and entering the Eastern gate of Jerusalem.

This Garden Grove Represented a Number of Very Important Aspects of Jesus' Life Quite Different than We Look Forward To.

I. IT WAS A PLACE OF EXHAUSTING PRAYER (Luke 22:40,41,44,45,46)

II. IT WAS A PLACE OF MULTIPLE PAIN (Luke 22:44,45)

III. IT WAS A PLACE OF INCREASED PERSEVERANCE (Luke 22:42)

I. IT WAS A PLACE OF EXHAUSTING PRAYER (Luke 22:40,41,44,45,46)

Can you remember a time when you really became worn out and wondered if you could possibly carry on in life? You may even have reached the point when you wanted to give up and throw in the towel. The problems confronting you seemed overwhelming. What have you done during times like this?

I. IT WAS A PLACE OF EXHAUSTING PRAYER (Luke 22:40,41,44,45,46)(Contd.)

Jesus gave us an excellent pattern to follow just prior to His crucifixion. Nothing could be more intense than facing death - especially a very painful and violent death. You would think that God the Father would try to make the time period just prior to our Lord's arrest a very peaceful time. Yet it was just the opposite. His prayer time became very exhaustive upon Him.

"He offered a prayer so deeply devout that He seemed kneeling and praying at the bottom of the sea."

Herman Melville
"Moby Dick"

4567 Epigram

"Prayer gives you courage to make the decisions you must make in crisis and then the confidence to leave the result to God."

General Eisenhower

During times of sheer exhaustion we can say the worst of prayers.

4562 Eenie, Meenie . . !

*** A mother listening to the evening prayers of her sleepy little daughter was astonished and amazed to hear the following:

"Now I lay me down to sleep, I pray the Lord my soul to keep, And when he hollers let him go, Eenie, meenie, miny, mo."

Balance Sheet

Jesus kept focussed during His prayer time. The Bible uses words like *"temptations, strengthened, anguish, earnestly, exhausted from sorrow"* to describe the setting. It was not easy for Jesus to pray during this time. But He knew He had to pray. When the troubles of life seem to be overwhelming, begin as our Saviour did in prayer - even if you feel you too exhausted to pray!

"If you're swept off your feet its time to get on your knees."

Fred Beck: Evangelical Beacon

"The heartfelt and persistent prayer of a righteous man (believer) is able to accomplish much [when put into action and made effective by God--it is dynamic and can have tremendous power]."

James 5:16 Amplified Version

II. IT WAS A PLACE OF MULTIPLE PAIN (Luke 22:44,45)

The Garden Place was not just a place of **Exhausting** Prayer. It was also a place of **Multiple Pain**. If you're like me, you're not welcoming more pain in your life. **Yet pain is a common denominator of life.** It came about as a result of the curse placed upon Eve for being beguiled by the serpent.

I am so thankful that Jesus was willing to walk the pathway of pain. By doing so, He understands what we are going through.

"For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but we have one who has been tempted in every way, just as we are - yet was without sin."

Hebrews 4:15

Our Lord's prayer led Him into a time of great pain. Prayer has its way of releasing the pain that is trapped in our heart. The word "**anguish**" (NIV) or "**agony**" (KJV) means "**a conflict, contention, fight, race, struggle.**" This is the only time this word is used in the N.T. Jesus was the only One placed into this intense level of pain and this was to benefit us. Not even one of His disciples had to suffer in this way. He walked this path to prepare the way so our walk would be easier to withstand. **It is like He cut the way through the dense forest of intertwining pain so we could travel the same pathway with a lesser impact.**

We so often appreciate the **pleasure of our Garden** but do our best to shun the **pain of our Garden.** Yet pain can so often bring about tremendous gain.

"Pain insists upon being attended to. **God whispers to us in our pleasures, speaks to us in our conscience, and shouts to us in our pain.** It is His megaphone to rouse a deaf world."

C.S. Lewis
"The Problems of Pain"
Quoted by Michael Green
"Illustrations for Biblical Preaching"
#940 p. 256

II. IT WAS A PLACE OF MULTIPLE PAIN (Luke 22:44,45)(Contd.)

"Pain can serve a definite purpose in our lives. Dr. Paul Brand of Carville, Louisiana, one of the world's foremost experts on leprosy, describes how "leprosy patients lose their fingers and toes, not because the disease can cause decay, but precisely because they lack pain sensations. Nothing warns them when water is too hot or a hammer handle is splintered. **Accidental self-abuse destroys their bodies.**"

Philip Yancey
"Pain: the Tool of the Wounded Surgeon"
Quoted by Michael Green
"Illustrations for Biblical Preaching"
#939 p. 256

Our Lord's Garden included a place of great pain. It spread to His disciples.

"When he rose from prayer and went back to the disciples, he found them asleep, exhausted from sorrow."

Luke 22:45

They felt the pain that they saw their Saviour endure that entire week. They knew a very tragic event was about to happen. They could feel their lives coming apart at the seams. **Everything they had given their lives for seemed to be falling through their fingers and they felt helpless to overcome the problems.** Their hearts ached with the agony of seeing their world fall apart.

III. IT WAS A PLACE OF INCREASED PERSEVERANCE (Luke 22:42)

What do you do when you are at the end of your road? Jesus chose to do His Father's will even though He would have to drink a bitter cup of suffering.

"Father, if you are willing, take this cup from me; yet not my will, but yours be done."

Luke 22:42

Some people **GIVE UP** when they are at their wits end - Jesus **GAVE IN**. **He chose to do what was right not what was easy.** It is recorded in the other gospels that Jesus brought this request three times before His heavenly Father. **This was not an attempt to change the Father's will as much as it was to confirm what had to be done.**

III. IT WAS A PLACE OF INCREASED PERSEVERANCE (Luke 22:42)(Contd.)

Jesus increased in His perseverance during this time of severe testing.

"Many a man has failed because he has a wishbone where his backbone should be."

"Failure is the path of least persistence."

"The trouble with some people is that during trying times they stop trying."

"There are four steps to accomplishment: Plan purposefully. Prepare prayerfully; Proceed positively; Pursue persistently."

E.C. McKenzie

14,000 Quips and Quotes

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Date: July 7/24

Place: FCA

Time: 10:30 Am

Song: I Will Rise

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