

Mark 14:32-42

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Preacher: Reverend David MacLeod

[0 : 00] Let's unite our hearts in prayer. Let's pray together. Our Heavenly Father, we thank you for this new day. We thank you for this the Lord's day. And we thank you that we have the desire, that we have the opportunity, and that we have the freedom to come together in this place at this time in the name of Jesus, our Savior.

We came towards the end of last year, and as we did so, we thought much over the Christmas period about the fact that the Son of God came into this world.

He who was the creator of the world, one who was greater than the world, came into this world in such humility, emptying himself of so much glory, and humbling himself to the extent that he was laid in a manger, carried in a womb.

And then we see, Lord, as we go from Christmas, even into the hymn that we have sung today, that the Son of God who came, he came not only as one who would live for us, and who would do mighty works, and who would have crowds gather around him, but he came to be the man of sorrows, the one who would, yes, live for us the life that we could not live, but who would die for us the death that we deserved.

And we pray that you would help us, Lord, to see that the words that we sang would not simply be words on our lips, but we pray that you would touch our hearts, that we would see that the shame that he bore and the condemnation that he took as he stood was shame and condemnation that was because of our sin.

[2 : 05] In my place condemned he stood, sealed my pardon with his blood. And when we see that, Lord, we surely must cry out from our hearts, Hallelujah, what a Savior.

Help us, Lord, we pray, to see the Lord Jesus today in a fresh way as our Savior. And as we see the sufferings into which Jesus entered as he went to Gethsemane, we ask, Lord, that you would enable us to see this not as a remote event in a distant location, but enable us to see all that Jesus did for us.

We cannot see this with our physical eyes. We cannot take hold of this simply with our minds, but we need the work of the Holy Spirit to touch our hearts.

And so, Holy Spirit, we pray that you would be active in the hearts of all who are gathered here today, that those who are your people, Lord, that our hearts would be stirred, that they would burn within us, that we would know that we are in the presence of Christ and that we would worship you, Lord, in spirit and in truth as we see all that Jesus did for us.

And for those, Lord, who are here this morning who have not yet trusted Christ, who do not yet feel the weight of their sin and the need for Jesus to take that from them, we pray that you would do for them what they cannot do for themselves and what we cannot do for them.

[3 : 44] Enable them, we pray, to know that conviction of sin, that heaviness of heart that causes them to look to Jesus for the eternal rest that he alone can give.

So be at work, Lord, we pray, for your glory in this place. Be at work, we pray, for the salvation of sinners, for the encouragement of your people. Enable us, we pray, as we see the verse behind me every week as we come into this church.

Enable us to see Jesus. Know man, not each other, but to see Jesus and to know the reality of the promise of Jesus that he will be with us in this place.

We ask, Lord, that you would help us in all the struggles that we have in this world. We pray for the world. We see such instability. We see so many threats and dangers at this time in the political sense and that could even spill out into the military sense.

And we recognize that you are sovereign, Lord. But we know that you are the God who hears prayer. And we know that you are the God who calls us to pray for those whom you have allowed to

be in authority.

[5 : 00] And so we pray for wisdom for world leaders. We pray for peace. We pray that where there is instability, where there is tension, that you would ease it.

And Lord, that we would see a calming of things over these next few days. We pray for our nation, our nation, Lord.

We see much in the way of need. We are distant from you. And we confess that sin. We confess that we have turned away from the creator to created things.

We worship them instead of you. We look to ourselves rather than looking to you for wisdom. And we pray that you would forgive us for that and that you would draw us back.

And for our community, Lord, and for all the needs that we feel, even as we gather here in this place, we pray that you would help us and that you would be at work in this locality.

[6 : 04] That you would cause many who don't yet know you to have their souls awakened, that they would come and seek the Lord while he may be found. We pray for those who are struggling with addictions and who may feel despair, that you would give them the help that they need, Lord, and that they would cry out for that help.

We pray for those who are in difficult circumstances at this time, some who may be close to us here, some who may be in different parts of the world, but whom we feel a burden for.

And we ask, Lord, that you would help all those that we know are struggling in different situations. And we pray that they would know that you are God and that you are with them.

We pray for those who are grieving, some who are preparing to go to funerals this week. We ask that you would comfort and uphold them. We pray for others who are going to hospital and who are waiting for test results to be revealed and who wonder what the future holds.

And we ask that you would help them. We thank you that you are the God who holds the future. And we pray that they and that we would be trusting you. So hear our prayers and lead us and guide us in worship, we ask.

[7 : 23] And we ask all these things together with the forgiveness of all our sins. In Jesus' name, amen. Let's pray. Dear Lord, we thank you for today.

And we thank you that you are the God who loves us and you are the God who calls us to follow you. We see the disciples in the Bible and they follow Jesus. And we pray that you would help us to be like the disciples and to follow Jesus.

And even though sometimes we slip and we fall, we make a mess, we thank you that when we cry out for your help, you pick us back up and you clean us up. And we ask that you would help us not to be discouraged when we go into these places like the pit of despair.

We ask, Lord, that you would help us not to listen to people who would take us off the path and who would try and cause us to stop following you, but help us to keep on listening to what you say to us in the Bible and keep on following Jesus.

And if there's any boys and girls or mums and dads or grannies or shenners that are here today and they haven't yet started following Jesus, we pray that even today they would start following Jesus, going the way of the cross, and that they would know the burden of their sin rolling away.

[8 : 48] And we ask all this in Jesus' name. Amen. Amen. If you could turn now in your Bibles, please, to Mark chapter 14, and we'll read from verse 32 to verse 42.

This is God's Word. They went to a place called Gethsemane, and Jesus said to his disciples, Sit here while I pray.

He took Peter, James, and John along with them, and he began to be deeply distressed and troubled. My soul is overwhelmed with sorrow to the point of death, he said to them.

Stay here and keep watch. Going a little further, he fell to the ground and prayed that if possible, the hour might pass from him.

Abba, Father, he said, everything is possible for you. Take this cup from me, yet not what I will, but what you will. Then he returned to his disciples and found them sleeping.

[9 : 55] Simon, he said to Peter, Are you asleep? Could you not keep watch for one hour? Watch and pray so that you will not fall into temptation. The spirit is willing, but the body is weak.

Once more, he went away and prayed the same thing. When he came back, he again found them sleeping because their eyes were heavy. They did not know what to say to him.

But turning the third time, he said to them, Are you still sleeping and resting? Enough. The hour has come. Look, the Son of Man is betrayed into the hands of sinners.

Rise. Let us go. Here comes my betrayer. Amen. And may God bless that reading of his word to us. As we turn back to Mark 14, let's pray.

Our Heavenly Father, we thank you for the verses that we have read and that we come to study just now.

[11 : 04] We pray that as we do so, you would clear our minds from anything that would distract us and that you would help us to focus on all that's before us.

we almost feel like we shouldn't be able to look into Gethsemane such as the seriousness and the weightiness of all that Christ was going into there.

And yet we thank you that these accounts are there for us so that we will behold our Savior and we will see all that he did to make it possible for us to be saved.

So still our hearts and give us eyes to see and ears to hear that we may come in faith to Christ.

And we ask this in Jesus' name. Amen. It's a new year and it's the beginning of a new year.

[12 : 18] 2020 for some of us we felt like 2019 had hardly begun and it it was ending but time doesn't stand still.

Preachers do well to remember that. As we sang just a few minutes ago time is like an ever rolling stream and perhaps some of us are just drifting on through time.

perhaps some of us here see the year go from one to the next to the next to the next and there's no clear sense of purpose there's no particular aims or ambitions there's no resolutions that have been made we're just kind of like a a twig that's floating aimlessly along an ever rolling stream called time.

What we see first and foremost in this passage today is that Jesus wasn't like that. Jesus stepped from eternity into time to make it possible for you and I to step safely from time into eternity.

Jesus didn't float along aimlessly he didn't come to this world with no clear sense of purpose he had a very clear mission a mission to save us and he was following a very clear timetable how do we know that?

[13 : 50] Well we we know that because in verse 41 Jesus said to his disciples the hour has come the hour has come we could go back to John's gospel and see various occasions where Jesus says to his disciples and to those who were coming to him my hour has not yet come but in the garden of Gethsemane Jesus says clearly the hour has come and this morning I want us to look at this hour in Jesus life this time this scene as he perseveres closer to the cross to do the work of salvation three points there's the leading of Jesus there's the teaching of Jesus and there's the suffering of Jesus first of all we see here the leading of Jesus it says in verse 32 they went to a place called

Gethsemane Gethsemane the word means oil press and this was the place where Jesus would feel the pressure and the intensity and the horror of what he had come to do building to an unbearable level almost within him but note here that Jesus was not pushed towards Gethsemane sometimes we find ourselves in a situation we'd rather not be there but somebody's pushed us on Jesus was not pushed into Gethsemane he was not pushed from eternity into time it says in verse 32 they went in Matthew's account it says Jesus went

Jesus led the disciples as we thought about with the children they followed it was another landmark on the way to the cross but at no point was Jesus being forced on at no point did Jesus lose control of the wheel he was steering he was guiding he was leading these disciples the way of the cross it was the only way that would lead to the possibility of our salvation Jesus had taught them that in Mark 8 repeatedly Jesus had said that he must suffer that he must die this was the way this was the course that had been set Mark 8 31 he began to teach his disciples that the son of man must suffer many things and be rejected by the elders chief priests and teachers of the law and that he must be killed and after three days rise again he spoke plainly about this and Peter took him aside and began to rebuke him but when

Jesus turned and looked at his disciples he rebuked Peter get behind me Satan he said you do not have in mind the things of God but the things of men see this plan of salvation was hatched in the mind of God father son and holy spirit before time began this hour had been set this way that the way of the cross the only way by which sinners could be saved had been a prescribed way in the mind of God it's the only way for people like you and I who are sinners to be saved and it's the only way for saved people those who are followers of Christ to be sanctified and to be made more like him to be made holy

Jesus made that clear when he spoke to the crowds in this same conversation that he had with Peter he called the crowds to him along with his disciples and he said if anyone would come after me he must deny himself and take up his cross and follow me see Jesus leads them as he leads us

the way of the cross yes we are sinners but sin must be put to death in your life and mine if we are Christ's we are called to holiness self the old man must not be allowed to rule in our lives and set the course sin and self are to be put to death if we are to follow

[19 : 23] Jesus in the way of the cross let me ask you the question as I've had to grapple with this question myself this week who's leading you into this new year who has control of the steering wheel of your life you know our natural sinful inclination is always to go the path of least resistance to always to go with the flow of this world to always to seek to avoid suffering to always to seek to please self but Jesus leads us another way he calls you and I to deny self he calls us to put the sins that we sometimes hold on to and cherish he calls us to put them to death day by day take up your cross he says follow me the leading of

Jesus is the first point the second point is the teaching of Jesus at these points in our lives where we feel pressure when things are intense and when we're struggling when we are at these points of crisis in life as they sometimes come we have no time for small talk in these kind of seasons we have no time when we are under pressure when we are feeling the intensity of suffering or whatever it is we're going through we have no time for trivial things you know we get to the point we focus on the important things somebody sick in hospital really sick you never find them on ebay looking for their next jacket you know there's a focus on the important things these pressure points we we latch hold of the things that are really important and in this pressure pot of gethsemane the oil press

Jesus has something critical to teach his disciples by way of example and by way of instruction and he doesn't give them five tips on how to improve their finances he doesn't give them seven ways to maximize their career opportunities he doesn't give them various tips on how to boost their self esteem he doesn't say to the disciples let me give you the perfect formula for how to preach let me give you some road maps for ministry management he says to them stop sleeping and start praying one point stop sleeping and pray and it comes repeatedly verse 32 sit here says Jesus will I pray verse 34 stay here and keep watch the implication there is linked to prayer verse 37 he returned to his disciples and found them sleeping

Simon he says remember that's his old name Peter is his new name Peter the rock Simon is the shaky one Simon he says shaky are you asleep could you not keep watch just for one hour watch and pray so that you will not fall into temptation and remember as Jesus has just told him in the last conversation you will fall and Peter says not me and off he heads Jesus says you need to pray Simon Simon says by what we see here not me watch and pray that you will not fall into temptation the spirit is willing but the flesh the body is weak verse 39 once more he went away and prayed the same thing when he came back he found them sleeping because their eyes were heavy they did not know what to say to him sometimes we read these accounts that come from the journals of soldiers

World War I and World War II and we can picture these scenes and films and from diaries where one of the soldiers is given the responsibility to stay up and keep watch through the night so they're given a shift pattern from 12 to 3 this man his job as everybody else gets some rest is to keep watch watch for the enemy watch for the attack stay alert and we know from these accounts how dangerous how sometimes fatal it was when they failed when they didn't watch and when they fell asleep and Peter and James and John there's almost a military like tone to all that Jesus does here Jesus the general he positions them in these posts that they would watch through the night that they would join with Jesus as he prays with all that's ahead of him it's hard for us to take this in here but what

[25 : 22] Jesus is actually doing with these disciples is he's asking them to pray for him we think of Jesus the son of God as the one in whose name we pray the one who is the intercessor the one who hears and who presents our prayers but here in the garden Jesus is asking these men to join with him in the battle to pray for him God the son asking for the prayers of these disciples in his hour of need it's all he asked for it's the only one point of teaching that he impresses upon them that they must stay awake and pray and yet this point of teaching it didn't go in every time that

Jesus came to check in on them they were sleeping you wouldn't have been sleeping would you we wouldn't have let Jesus down like that in his greatest hour of need would we we would have we often still do in this point see this teaching is not just for Gethsemane it's for today is there a spiritual battle that is still raging on yes there is are there still temptations that we could fall into just as Peter and the disciples could fall into them yes there are is the body still weak yes it is so we need to be

spiritually awake we need to be praying praying for ourselves praying for each other praying for the for the lost stop sleeping it's a call to prayer we think of the soldier on watch and how crucial it is that he stays awake if he doesn't stay awake people die do we not see that all around us there are souls dying perhaps even in this room this morning there are souls whose minds are running ahead into next week planning menus in the office working out classroom plans working out what's happening in the yard

I don't know physically here but spiritually far from Christ dying at least two thirds of Tarbert at this point in time will be in no church whatsoever they have no concept of the danger they're in they have no awareness of the fact that there's a heaven to gain and a hell to shun they're not aware of this burden of sin that they have on their backs they're dying have you ever gone to a fun day in the community centre for the children Christmas Easter these kind of things if a secular fun day is put on you will see dozens of little tiny children charging around having great fun now how many of them are in crest this morning this is a place that is bursting with babies how many are in crest none how many are in the crest in the other churches virtually none and maybe we're sleeping maybe you and I are fiddling around with apps on our phones and spending hour after an hour on Netflix or watching the television as I confess that I do maybe

I'm sleeping so Jesus word is not simply a word for them in Gethsemane it's a word for me it's a word for you in North Harris stop sleeping start praying you know we can we can be sleeping when we're on our feet charging from one job to the next it's much easier to be active than it is to be on our knees and yet our activity is nothing compared to what God can do in a moment in response to our prayers the reading of Jesus the teaching of Jesus and finally the suffering of Jesus verse 33 he took Peter and James and John along with him and he began to be deeply distressed and troubled when I visit people who are sick and who need surgery my observation and I know yours will be as well sometimes the suffering that people go through in anticipation of the surgery is almost as great as the suffering they go through on the day of the operation there is suffering in the waiting for something that's up ahead of us and Jesus is here and he is in the garden he is waiting for this cross that he knows that he is headed towards he's in the garden there's no coincidence that he's in the garden remember

[32 : 19] Adam where he fell initially when he fell into sin when he failed he was in the garden and now we see Jesus the second Adam and he would succeed he would not fall he would stand firm he would proceed in the work of salvation that will progress from this garden and that work of salvation would be costly it would involve terrible suffering and Jesus knows that when we suffer usually we're not given advance warning of the suffering that we go through and it still hurts Jesus knows every aspect of the suffering that is ahead of him he knows that in just a few hours this disciple that he had been with for these three years would hand him over with a kiss of betrayal he knows about the arrest he knows about the rigged trial he knows about the flogging he knows that soon he will hear the chants of the crowd that he so loved and showed such compassion to and they will turn on him he knows that soon there will be nails driven through his hands and his feet he knows that soon he will be gasping for breath and drowning from the inside soon he will be experiencing the most cruel and painful physical death that ever was devised he knew the suffering that was ahead of him and yet that suffering had already begun why does

Jesus take his three closest disciples and friends with him to Gethsemane why does he do that it's because he wanted their company God the son he wanted the company of those that he was closest to he wanted them to be with him that was his calling initially on the first day that he called him and he wanted them in this garden as he was suffering the most excruciating pain and prospect and reality he wanted them to be with him and we can identify with that when we're going through a hard time we don't want to be on our own we want the people who are closest to us to be with us we want to be able to tell them what we're feeling as

Jesus does here verse 34 he says my soul is overwhelmed with sorrow to the point of death my soul is overwhelmed with sorrow to the point of death I think sometimes you and I are guilty of underestimating the sufferings of Jesus we think because he is God he will somehow feel less than us in terms of having to go through suffering but that's not true yes he was fully God but he was also fully man so he felt the pain he felt the anxiety that the psychological trauma just as much as we would and look the doctor he shows us that look in his account says in

Luke 22 44 as he describes Jesus he says and being in anguish he prayed more earnestly and his sweat was like great drops of blood falling to the ground Luke sees the medical thing here it's a

medical condition called hematidrosis I think it's pronounced that's but in cases of extreme anxiety extreme anguish the capillaries in the body they burst and the blood is mingled with sweat and it falls from the body to the ground I doubt any of our nurses or doctors have ever seen it because it's reserved for the most acute awful cases of suffering and we see it in Christ such is the anxiety and the trauma of what is coming to him and what lies before him that his human body responds in this way it testifies to the suffering of Jesus and verse 35 says going a little further he fell to the ground and prayed that if possible the hour might pass from him you know we can go through church history even the most recent accounts of martyrs and the way that they face death is incredible we can read about martyrs who look death in the eye with such poise and such calmness and such dignity and yet we see

Jesus here in a state of extreme anxiety and anguish there's an account in early church history about a man called Polycarp he was a disciple of John the apostle and when he was close to 90 years old he was caught and he was pushed into the arena where Christians were tried and then executed and the account from church history has the proconsul who's charging him who says to Polycarp I'm quoting here have respect for your old age swear by the fortune of Caesar swear urged the proconsul reproach Christ and I will set you free and

[39 : 56] Polycarp's reply is 86 years have I served him and he has done me no wrong how can I blaspheme my king and my savior and Polycarp he stands firm the record continues to show that he faces death with a fierce courage and steadfastness and the question is this how can Polycarp and how can all those through the years face death with such calmness and yet here Jesus is overwhelmed with sorrow how is it that they can stand and look death in the eye and yet Jesus here he's shrinking from death in a state of extreme anxiety how is that possible and the answer to that question it's because Jesus was not dying as a martyr

Polycarp and all those that we can read of they die as martyrs Jesus was not dying as a martyr he was not dying as one who knew the blessing of sins forgiven he was not dying as one who had the help of the Holy Spirit and who was hearing a constant comforting word from his father Jesus was dying as the sin bearer that's the difference Jesus who knew no sin was even in Gethsemane now becoming sin for us that's what was bringing the torture the weight of your sin and mine was building on his shoulders the father's face that he had constantly known was beginning to turn away from him

Jesus was beginning to feel that state of isolation that would cause him to cry out on the cross my God my God why have you forsaken and me and why it was because of you and me the cup that Jesus could now see the cup that in verse 35 he asked could pass from him was a cup of God's wrath it was the cup of God's right anger we could go into the Old Testament and look at it but there's no time it was a cup that was filled up to the brim with all your sin and filth and mine take a moment to think about that think about the low points in your life think about the dark secrets that no one knows other than the Lord himself think about these things that we've said and done and left undone that when they come back to our memories make us make us shudder they're all in that cup and that's just you millions more all their sin is in there this is a cup of poison that would bring eternal death to our souls if it was left in our hands but in

Gethsemane it is handed to Jesus and he sees the horror of it and he begins to smell and taste something of the sufferings that it would bring and he says in verse 36 Abba Father everything is possible for you take this cup from me Derek Thomas the commentator says you hold your breath here you hold your breath here what if the father had looked down upon his son and said enough come home my son then we would forever perish there would be no forgiveness there would be no heaven there would be no smile from our heavenly father there would be no adoption into his family there would be no atonement there would be no reconciliation there would be no victory over sin and death and the grave and hell itself so we hold our breath here as Jesus prays as he says to his father take this cup from me but in response the father whose face was turning away said nothing it was silence from heaven and Jesus says yet not what

I will in my humanity but what you will and having said that Jesus continued on in prayer and then he rose to meet his betrayer and to go to his cross where his suffering would intensify and the salvation of those who believe would be secured do you believe did he take the cup of your sin and your suffering from you in that garden did he drain it at the cross or is this cup of sin and filth and death and wrath are you still holding on to it today let it pass to Jesus let him take that cup of sin and wrath away from you and in exchange by faith will you not take the cup of salvation that he

offers will you will you pray

[47 : 44] Lord God we struggle to understand this we struggle to take it in but we pray that with the help of the Holy Spirit as we go from here that you would continue to work in our hearts in our lives that we would see the suffering of Jesus and that we would take hold of the salvation that he procured at such great price and we ask this in Jesus name Amen