

Bibles???

The Word of God is the Absolute Truth and the Final Authority

Let's pray...

[Mar 14:27-42 NKJV] 27 Then Jesus said to them, "All of you will be made to stumble because of Me this night, for it is written: 'I will strike the Shepherd, And the sheep will be scattered.' 28 "But after I have been raised, I will go before you to Galilee." 29 Peter said to Him, "Even if all are made to stumble, yet I [will] not [be]." 30 Jesus said to him, "Assuredly, I say to you that today, [even] this night, before the rooster crows twice, you will deny Me three times." 31 But he spoke more vehemently, "If I have to die with You, I will not deny You!" And they all said likewise. 32 Then they came to a place which was named Gethsemane; and He said to His disciples,

"Sit here while I pray." 33 And He took Peter, James, and John with Him, and He began to be troubled and deeply distressed.

34 Then He said to them, "My soul is exceedingly sorrowful,

[even] to death. Stay here and watch." 35 He went a little

farther, and fell on the ground, and prayed that if it were

possible, the hour might pass from Him. 36 And He said,

"Abba, Father, all things [are] possible for You. Take this cup

away from Me; nevertheless, not what I will, but what You

[will]." 37 Then He came and found them sleeping, and said to

Peter, "Simon, are you sleeping? Could you not watch one

hour? 38 "Watch and pray, lest you enter into temptation. The

spirit indeed [is] willing, but the flesh [is] weak." 39 Again He

went away and prayed, and spoke the same words. 40 And

when He returned, He found them asleep again, for their eyes

were heavy; and they did not know what to answer Him. 41

Then He came the third time and said to them, "Are you still

sleeping and resting? It is enough! The hour has come; behold, the Son of Man is being betrayed into the hands of sinners. 42 "Rise, let us be going. See, My betrayer is at hand."

Last Sunday, our text here in the Gospel of Mark – took us to when Jesus celebrated His final Passover feast with His disciples.

However, this partaking of this feast which was supposed to memorialize the deliverance of their ancestors quickly turned somber as Jesus also announced that one of the twelve, who had followed Him for three years and seen the many miracles and wonders – and heard his words from His own mouth, one of those closest to Him was going to betray Him.

I pointed out that in the gospel of John, Jesus identified who His betrayer was by giving Judas the piece of bread that was dipped.

And the Gospel of John also reveals that when Jesus handed Judas the bread – immediately Judas leaves to betray Jesus.

It is moments later on the same evening that Jesus drops another bombshell on the remaining eleven disciples.

And the message that Jesus gives them is magnified when we read in Luke's account that after the institution of the Lord's Supper, the disciples once again started arguing among themselves who was going to be the greatest among them.

[Mar 14:27 NKJV] 27 Then Jesus said to them, "All of you will be made to stumble because of Me this night, for it is written: 'I will strike the Shepherd, And the sheep will be scattered.'

Now, notice the words that Jesus uses.

First of all, He says, All of you – this applies to every single one of the disciples that were in the room with Him. No exceptions.

"Made to stumble" conveys the idea of being caught in a trap.

The disciples would be caught and overwhelmed by what would happen to Jesus that very night.

The events that would transpire that night were going to stagger their faith and shake their confidence in Him as the Messiah.

It was going to challenge their loyalty to Him.

But note that Jesus was telling them in advance so that they could overcome it by faith.

Church, as believers, we are also told to expect traps to be set for us as we walk with the Lord. We're told to expect the trying of our own faith:

[1Pe 4:12-13 NKJV] 12 Beloved, do not think it strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened to you; 13 but rejoice to the extent that you partake of Christ's sufferings, that when His glory is revealed, you may also be glad with exceeding joy.

These eleven disciples were given specifics.

Jesus told them this very night.

In a few hours, they would be made to stumble as Jesus was betrayed and killed.

And to top it off, Jesus tells them that this will happen because the word of God has already declared as Jesus recites a verse from Zechariah 13:7.

When Zechariah wrote those words, he didn't know it, but the "sheep" he was writing about were Peter, Andrew, James, John, Philip, Thaddeus, Bartholomew, Thomas, James the less, Matthew, and Simon.

They didn't need to see their names there; because they knew it was them.

The problem of the disciples was that they fixed their attention to what Jesus said in verse 27, that they forgot the wonderful promise that Jesus gave them in verse 28.

[Mar 14:28 NKJV] 28 "But **after I have been raised, I will go before you to Galilee.**"

Jesus willfully went to the cross for you and me.

He expected to die – a death on the cross that was going to fulfill the scriptures.

However, He also expected to rise again He didn't say "if" I rise again, He says after I have been raised...

The most precious part of this promise is the promise He makes to the disciples in the second part of verse 28 – **I will go before you to Galilee.**

I will see you again – even though they will all stumble that night, they could all be restored and see their risen Lord in the near future.

One of the problems that we as believers face is that when we stumble, many times we feel that He is there to condemn us for our

fall when in reality, He is simply convicting us so to draw us back to Him so that we can be restored.

So let's look at Peter's response –

[Mar 14:29 NKJV] 29 Peter said to Him, "Even if all are made to stumble, yet I [will] not [be]."

I grew up in a Spanish speaking home. We learned English by watching cartoons and listening to my mom play her Beatles records on the stereo.

English tended to be my weakest subject in school – especially when it came to grammar. It was hard to follow all the rules and exceptions when it came to the English language.

For example, in spelling you have the rule "I before E except after the letter C"

If this was the only exception to the rule, then spelling would be easy.

However, you have words like neighbor and weigh that are spelled “ei”

In fact, a third of the words in an English dictionary with these two letters side by side are spelled with the e before the i.

In Math, you have the rule “all prime numbers are odd – with the exception of the number 2.”

In the same way, after the disciples were told by Jesus that all of them were going to stumble, Peter took it upon himself to make himself an exception.

“I am not like those guys Jesus – I am the exemption”

Think about what Peter is doing here.

Not only is he contradicting what Jesus told him, he is contradicting the word of God. Remember, Jesus made His point based on the fulfillment of scriptures. All the sheep would be scattered.

Now, before we start calling out Peter for being such a big dummy – let's think about how many times we have read the word of God or hear a sermon, and we think to ourselves, "But I am the exception"

Name any sin – and there will be someone who says, I know what the bible says about that but – I am the exception.

We compromise the word of God.

That is why the Psalmist says (Psalm 119) "Joyful are people of integrity, who follow the instructions of the LORD. Joyful are those who obey His laws and search for Him with all their hearts. They do not compromise with evil, and they walk only in His paths. You have charged us to keep Your commandments carefully"

Paul warns the Corinthian church and us about this misplaced confidence in 1 Corinthians.

[1Co 10:12 NKJV] 12 Therefore let him who thinks he stands take heed lest he fall.

The problem with Peter, other than sticking his foot in his mouth all the time was that he boasted in thinking that he would never stumble.

And if we are not alert and stay on guard against temptation, then we will surely fall too.

I don't think Peter was insincere in what he said – he had every intention in not letting Jesus down.

Do I think that Peter loved Jesus? Absolutely.

You see, church, Peter's problem wasn't a failure of intention or of love. He failed because of the weakness of his flesh, because he was putting his confidence in his flesh.

[Mar 14:30 NKJV] 30 Jesus said to him, "Assuredly, I say to you that today, [even] this night, before the rooster crows twice, you will deny Me three times."

Jesus gets very specific with Peter. He doesn't just say, "No, you're wrong Peter". Instead, He says, "Let me tell you the truth here Peter...

You're not just going to deny Me, but you're going to **do it today**, and in fact you are going to deny me three times before this night is over, three times before the rooster will crow two times".

Always remember church, that each one of us is capable of falling at any point in our walk if we take our eyes off of Jesus.

In the book of Romans, the Apostle Paul told us that our sinful nature, our "flesh", doesn't have a lot of hope when it comes to doing things that please God.

[Rom 7:17-19 NKJV] 17 But now, [it is] no longer I who do it, but sin that dwells in me. 18 For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh) nothing good dwells; for to will is present with me, but [how] to perform what is good I do not find. 19 For the good that I will [to do], I do not do; but the evil I will not [to do], that I practice.

Trusting in a something that's broke won't help us church. Learning to depend more and more on God is the answer.

[Mar 14:31 NKJV] 31 But he spoke more vehemently, "If I have to die with You, I will not deny You!" And they all said likewise.

After Jesus had just told Peter, one would think that Peter would have chosen his words more carefully here.

But instead of humbling himself, he doubles down on his claim here in verse 31.

In the original Greek text, when Peter says I will not deny you, he is using two negatives in a row to really stress that he will not deny Jesus.

“Never, under no circumstances will I deny You”

And the other disciples upon hearing the words of Peter, followed said the same thing.

[Mar 14:32-34 NKJV] 32 Then they came to a place which was named Gethsemane; and He said to His disciples, "Sit here while I pray." 33 And He took Peter, James, and John with Him, and He began to be troubled and deeply distressed. 34 Then He said to them, "My soul is exceedingly sorrowful, [even] to death. Stay here and watch."

A few weeks ago, I showed you a topography map of the Mt of Olives –

This is where Jesus took His disciples to warn them about the things that were going to occur as they overlooked the temple.

In order to get to the Mt of Olives from the temple, you had to cross the Kedron Valley and on the upslope was the Garden of Gethsemane.

The word Gethsemane means “oil press”.

And it was a place where olives from the neighborhood were pressed or crushed for their oil.

And it is here that the Son of God would be crushed as well.

The eleven remaining disciples all travel with Jesus to Gethsemane. It is here that Jesus tells eight of them to sit and wait.

Jesus then takes Peter, James and John further into the

Gethsemane.

These are the same three guys that He took with Him to the Mt of Transfiguration, He also took them into the home of Jairus when Jesus brings Jairus' daughter back to life.

And here he brings the same three to Gethsemane.

You see Jesus knew that He was about to experience great suffering – and because He was 100% man, He brought with Him these three to share the burden that He was about to experience.

Why was Jesus deeply distressed and sorrowful???

Because He knew that the hour had come.

[Mar 14:35-36 NKJV] 35 He went a little farther, and fell on the ground, and prayed that if it were possible, the hour might pass from Him. 36 And He said, "Abba, Father, all things [are] possible for You. Take this cup away from Me; nevertheless, not what I will, but what You [will]."

Jesus knew that He was going to go to the cross.

His agony was not because He had reservations about going to the cross.

It was not death He dreaded but rather the hour of the cross – that moment when sin was to be put upon Him, the awfulness of being made sin for us.

Because He knew that at that moment, He would be isolated from His Holy Father.

That is why on the cross – Jesus cries out, “My God, My God, why have you forsaken Me”

It was precisely at that moment, that all the sins of the world were placed on His shoulders.

And because sin cannot exist in God’s presence, Jesus endured the separation from God that you and I deserve.

Church, that was the agony of Jesus in Gethsemane.

[Heb 5:7-9 NKJV] 7 who, in the days of His flesh, when He had offered up prayers and supplications, with vehement cries and tears to Him who was able to save Him from death, and was heard because of His godly fear, 8 though He was a Son, [yet] He learned obedience by the things which He suffered. 9 And having been perfected, He became the author of eternal salvation to all who obey Him,

The struggle of the cross was won at the Garden of Gethsemane. This struggle at Gethsemane – the place of crushing – has an important place in fulfilling God’s plan of redemption. If Jesus failed here, He would have failed at the cross.

Jesus knew His suffering and death couldn't be avoided, so why pray that way? For one thing, it highlights that His death on the

Cross is the only way for mankind to be saved. If there were any other way, then Jesus did not have to die.

That is why we do not add works to the work that was done on the cross already by our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

To do so, would diminish His sacrifice for us.

[Mar 14:37-38 NKJV] 37 Then He came and found them sleeping, and said to Peter, "Simon, are you sleeping? Could you not watch one hour? 38 "Watch and pray, lest you enter into temptation. The spirit indeed [is] willing, but the flesh [is] weak."

Jesus returns to the three disciples and finds them fast asleep.

The disciple who had boldly professed that he would die for Jesus hours earlier, demonstrated that he could only snore for Jesus when He needed him the most.

The reason Jesus had called them to prayer was for their benefit, not His.

They would all soon be faced with the trial of His arrest and the challenge to how they would identify with Him.

And only prayer would prepare them for the coming trial.

Earlier, I had made the point that Peter's boldness, in himself, was one of the reasons that he was going to stumble and fail Jesus – here is reason number two. He failed to pray.

And church, this is probably the main reason that we stumble. We fail to pray.

And one of the reasons that we don't pray, is that we feel that we don't need to pray.

Even though we are told the exact opposite in scripture.

[Jhn 15:5 NKJV] 5 "I am the vine, you [are] the branches. He who abides in Me, and I in him, bears much fruit; for without Me you can do nothing.

[Jas 4:2 NKJV] 2 You lust and do not have. You murder and covet and cannot obtain. You fight and war. Yet you do not have because you do not ask.

[Mar 14:39-42 NKJV] 39 Again He went away and prayed, and spoke the same words. 40 And when He returned, He found them asleep again, for their eyes were heavy; and they did not know what to answer Him. 41 Then He came the third time and said to them, "Are you still sleeping and resting? It is enough! The hour has come; behold, the Son of Man is being betrayed into the hands of sinners. 42 "Rise, let us be going. See, My betrayer is at hand."

Two more times, Jesus left them with the instructions to pray and both times Jesus found them asleep upon His return.

It had been a long day for the disciples both physically and emotionally – yet Jesus being 100% man, still prayed to prepare Himself for the battle that awaited Him the following day.

This is the reason that all of them stumbled. They failed to realize that the battle begins in the prayer closet and not in the battlefield.

Think about how many times we have stumbled as we faced a temptation that we were not prepared for.

Always remember, that we can only resist temptation, avoid sin, and defeat the devil by a conscious reliance upon God's power.

Amen!!!

Let's pray...

To Receive Christ do the following:

Admit, "I am a sinner."

Confess and be willing to turn from your sin.

Believe, by faith that Jesus Christ died for you on the cross.

Receive, through prayer, Jesus Christ into your heart and receive eternal life.

Dear Lord Jesus,

I know that I am a sinner and need Your forgiveness. I believe that You died on the cross for my sins. Please forgive me for my sins and cleanse me by Your blood. I accept You by faith as my personal Lord and Savior. Give me a thirst for Your Word and Help me to follow You all of my days. In Jesus' name I pray, Amen.

