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Sermon Notes

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Gethsemane: The Greatest Display of Courage in History

Matthew 26:36-46

“Take off your shoes, for the ground on which you are standing is holy ground.”

Thus it was said to Moses as he approached the mystery of the burning bush. All ground is God’s ground for God made it all. Our God is omnipresent, so He is everywhere, all the time. He is not in any one place more than He is in another. He’s not 90% here, 60% at McDonald’s, 25% at the ball park, etc. He is 100% present everywhere, all the time. And yet, He told Moses,

“Take off your shoes, for the ground on which you are standing is holy ground.”

What does this mean? I think it means that God was about to be revealed in an extraordinary way, and Moses needed to understand that his knowledge of God was going to be greatly increased by his encounter with God at the burning bush. God was going to reveal Himself in an amazing way to Moses, and Moses needed to consecrate his mind and body to get ready for a vast expansion of his understanding of the infinite God of the universe. The command to “take off your shoes” means “be careful not to defile this ground with your irreverence, your sin, your faulty preconceptions. Draw near to listen, draw near to fall on the ground in fear and wonder, worship and adoration.

Friends, if that was true at the burning bush, how much more true is it when we come to Gethsemane? Gethsemane is the greatest display of the perfect humanity of Jesus Christ in the Bible. It contains almost incomprehensible mysteries... but also tremendous opportunities to ponder the excellencies of Christ, His glories... the perfection of His character: His courage, His obedience, His trust in His Father, His willingness to suffer for us, His love for us, His reversal of the disobedience of Adam, His frailty and weakness, His mortality, His emotions...

We could spend eternity pondering these themes and others that flow from this account. This morning, we will spend a scant 40 minutes on them.

Here we have to come with great reverence and respect, because so many have messed up when they have tried to explain Gethsemane...

For example,

Swiss-born psychiatrist Elisabeth Kubler-Ross's 1968 work *On Death and Dying* identified 5 psychological stages dying people go through: denial, anger, bargaining, depression, and finally acceptance.

Some false commentators have found in Gethsemane a number of these human stages.. for example, bargaining... "Father, if it is possible, let this cup pass from me."

Andrew Lloyd-Webber's "Jesus Christ, Superstar" completely misunderstood Gethsemane:

I only want to say
 If there is a way
 Take this cup away from me
 For I don't want to taste its poison
 Feel it burn me,
 I have changed I'm not as sure
 As when we started
 Then I was inspired
 Now I'm sad and tired

Why, why should I die?
 Oh, why should I die?
 Can you show me now
 That I would not be killed in vain?
 Show me just a little
 Of your omnipresent brain
 Show me there's a reason
 For your wanting me to die
 You're far too keen on where and how
 But not so hot on why

Mormons believe that Jesus did much of his atoning work for our sins in Gethsemane... which the Bible never says

My goals:

- 1) To exalt Christ our Savior based on this account... that we may worship Him with all our hearts for what He did for us.
- 2) To understand more accurately the humanity of Jesus... His emotions, His submission, His mortality and frailty, His temptations,... and yet, His sinlessness
- 3) To understand the power of prayer in facing temptations, in strengthening us to do the will of the Father
- 4) To motivate us to trust in His finished work on the cross more than ever before.
- 5) To help us understand the proper use of the will... to imitate Christ every day in saying, "Not my will but yours be done."

Here we will plumb the depths of the EMOTIONS of Jesus at paying the cost for our salvation... the emotional life of Jesus as a fully human being is clearly on display here

Here we will understand the pressure, the almost incalculable pressure that weighed on Him

I. The Facts of Gethsemane

A. All His Life, Jesus Lived Under the Shadow of the Cross

1. B.B. Warfield: "The prospect of his suffering was a perpetual Gethsemane to Him."

Luke 12:50 I have a baptism to undergo, and how distressed I am until it is completed!

2. Michael Card

"Love crucified arose":

Long ago He blessed the earth
 Born older than the years
 And in the stall the cross He saw
 Through the first of many tears
 A life of homeless wandering
 Cast out in sorrow's way
 The Shepherd seeking for the lost
 His life the price He paid

Throughout Your life You've felt the weight
 Of what You'd come to give
 To drink for us that crimson cup
 So we might really live

3. Clear evidence in John's Gospel

John 12:27-28 "Now my heart is troubled, and what shall I say? 'Father, save me from this hour'? No, it was for this very reason I came to this hour. ²⁸ Father, glorify your name!" Then a voice came from heaven, "I have glorified it, and will glorify it again."

Warfield: "If a distant Gethsemane brought such agony to Jesus, how much more the ACTUAL Gethsemane!"

The time has come to face the cross straight on and make a final decision about what He will do

B. Following the Gospel Account in Order

1. Matthew 26:1-14: Jesus anointed by Mary at Bethany... “prepared for burial”
2. Matthew 26:15-16 Judas agrees to betray Jesus to the chief priests and scribes for 30 pieces of silver
3. Matthew 26:17-19 Jesus arranges for the Passover Meal to be prepared
4. Matthew 26:20-25 While eating the Passover Meal, Jesus predicts Judas’s betrayal
5. Matthew 26:26-30 Jesus institutes the Lord’s Supper
6. Matthew 26:31-35 Jesus predicts the disciples’ denial and flight

Summation: It is the first night of Passover; the Passover Lambs have been slaughtered and the Jewish people have partaken in the feast. It reminds them of the Exodus God worked through Moses, delivering them from bondage in Egypt. It hearkened back to the tenth plague when a Passover Lamb was slaughtered and its blood painted on the doorposts and lintels to protect the Jewish firstborn from the avenging angel. The time of fulfillment of these symbols has come that very night... Jesus proclaimed the blood of the New Covenant... the blood would be His own, shed the very next day on the cross

They have finished the meal, sung a hymn, and had crossed the Kidron Valley into the Garden of Gethsemane

Matthew 26:36 Then Jesus went with his disciples to a place called Gethsemane

C. What Was “Gethsemane”?

1. A private garden, probably walled off, owned by some rich benefactor of Jesus
2. He allowed Jesus and His disciples to frequent the place; it was out of Jerusalem, away from the maddening crush of a million or more pilgrims
3. It was on the Mount of Olives
4. The word itself means “oil press”... it probably included some kind of press for making olive oil from the harvest of Olives on the Mount...

Once the olives are gathered they were placed on a circular stone basin in which a millstone sat. Perhaps you have seen animals walking in circles around a millstone pushing the stone around grinding whatever is put beneath it. This is how the olives were crushed and eventually a paste was formed that included bits of leaves, twigs, and pieces of the millstone.

The crushing of the olives allowed the reddish, viscous and precious olive oil to flow into containers for use or sale

5. It becomes a kind of metaphor also for the crushing spiritual pressure that Jesus would experience... so intense that by the end of the time his blood was flowing like great drops of blood
6. It is hard to imagine the intense PRESSURE Jesus was under; the Gospel writers Matthew, Mark, and Luke almost seem to stretch language to the breaking point to give us a clear picture of what Jesus was experiencing

D. Why Did Jesus Go to Gethsemane?

1. It was a place of refuge and retirement and quiet prayer
2. It was commonly used by Jesus and His disciples... therefore, Judas, who had left to betray Him, would know exactly where to bring the soldiers to arrest him
3. Why was Jesus trying to make it easy for Judas? Well... not so much easy for Judas himself... John MacArthur: "Forever it will not be easy for Judas."
4. Rather... this was part of His willingness to lay down His life for us... He went there so that He COULD DIE
5. It is vital to remember as we contemplate the arrest and death of Jesus... He was never a victim, trapped in a circumstance He couldn't escape:

John 10:18 No one takes [my life] from me, but I lay it down of my own accord. I have authority to lay it down and authority to take it up again. This command I received from my Father."

E. Jesus' Command to His Disciples and His Separation of them

Matthew 26:36-37 he said to them, "Sit here while I go over there and pray." ³⁷ He took Peter and the two sons of Zebedee along with him

1. Jesus wanted His disciples to prepare themselves for the trials that were about to come on all of them
2. He separated out the three closest disciples to Him... Peter, James, and John... the same three who had accompanied Him to the summit of the Mount of Transfiguration... amazing that these same three saw Jesus at His most glorious, transfigured before their eyes, shining radiantly in glory on the Mount... but they would also see Him at His lowest here this night... groveling on the ground, begging God to remove the cup, close to death
3. Why these three in particular? They were the disciples Jesus chose to be closest to Him in His life... He didn't love them any more than the others... but in the limitation of His bodily existence, He couldn't give equal time to everyone...

4. We also see the humanness of Jesus... He wanted His friends closest to Him during this, the hardest hour of His life

F. Prayer

1. Jesus has one desire at this moment... to pray to His Father
2. Though His disciples will fail in their prayers in Gethsemane, Jesus knew that only prayer would get Him through this night and into the cross
3. Jesus shows His intense God-centeredness here in His prayer life

G. The Awesome Emotional Distress of Jesus

1. Stated plainly by Matthew as he wrote the narrative

Matthew 26:37 he began to be sorrowful and troubled.

2. Stated plainly also by Jesus

Matthew 26:38 Then he said to them, "My soul is overwhelmed with sorrow to the point of death. Stay here and keep watch with me."

- a. The sense of loneliness and pain is almost incalculable
- b. He yearns for their nearness, their friendship... He can't face this time alone... STAY HERE AND KEEP WATCH WITH ME
3. How do Matthew's words convey Jesus' emotions?
 - a. "sorrowful": root word has to do with grief, sadness of an overwhelming nature, usually associated with death
 - b. "troubled": word usually refers to a distracted, anxious state... like someone consumed with anxiety over an impending event
 - c. "My soul is overwhelmed with sorrow": Jesus refers to His "soul," clear evidence of His humanity... the inner part of Him, He says, is "encompassed with grief"

As though Jesus were SURROUNDED by grief, walled in with grief, no escape from it except death

So He adds these words...

- d. "to the point of death"
 - i) I think the agony of emotion and pressure was so great that Jesus was actually close to death

- ii) It is Luke that gives us a double sense of the physical nature of this agony in Gethsemane:

First:

Luke 22:43 An angel from heaven appeared to him and strengthened him.

Jesus was in such extreme straights at that point that an angel had to strengthen Him, with the clear implication that, if he didn't, Jesus would have died.

What an amazing picture is this of the FRAILITY of the Son of God in His humanity... the angel was created by Jesus, and yet Jesus is so much weaker than the angel. It is the second time that an angel strengthened Jesus in His life... the first time was after His forty day fast in the wilderness.

Secondly:

Luke 22:44 And being in anguish, he prayed more earnestly, and his sweat was like drops of blood falling to the ground.

Some commentators focus on the word "like" saying Jesus didn't really sweat blood, but just that the prayer was so intense that His sweat was like huge drops of blood flowing from a wound... but that seems odd; why not say "His sweat poured from Him in great drops?"

Others say the internal pressure was SO GREAT that, it seems, the capillaries under the skin of his face were bursting, and blood was flowing down His face... GREAT DROPS of blood

This would be, then, the first of the shedding of the blood of Christ for our sins

Either way, it is clear Jesus is in intense agony

- iii) Hebrews 5 gives us also a sense of how close Jesus was to death

Hebrews 5:7 During the days of Jesus' life on earth, he offered up prayers and petitions with loud cries and tears to the one who could save him from death, and he was heard because of his reverent submission.

- iv) Ultimately it seems like Jesus died of a ruptured heart on the cross.. in Gethsemane, the pressure was already there

John 19:34 one of the soldiers pierced Jesus' side with a spear, bringing a sudden flow of blood and water.

H. Jesus' Prayer Itself

Matthew 26:39 Going a little farther, he fell with his face to the ground and prayed, "My Father, if it is possible, may this cup be taken from me. Yet not as I will, but as you will."

1. Physical position: totally prostrate, falling on His face... totally weak, helpless, submissive to God... humble and lowly

View Him grovelling in the garden;
 Lo! your Maker prostrate lies;
 On the bloody tree behold Him;
 Hear Him cry, before He dies;
 "It is finished!" "It is finished!"
 Sinner, will not this suffice?

[“Come, Ye Sinners, Poor and Wretched”; Joseph Hart, d. 1768]

2. Jesus assumes a physical position even lower than the tax collector in his parable, who beat his breast and would not look up to heaven
3. The request: IF IT IS POSSIBLE
 - a. In Mark, it goes beyond this

Mark 14:36 "Abba, Father," he said, "everything is possible for you. Take this cup from me.

- b. For any parent of a child, this prayer is the most heart wrenching you can possibly imagine
- c. “Abba” = “Daddy”... He’s reduced to speaking like a child
- d. I can scarcely imagine what this must have done to the heavenly Father, who loved this perfect Son so completely we cannot even imagine how great that love would be
- e. Jesus is probing the limits of God’s sovereignty... what is POSSIBLE
- f. Jesus Himself had said,

Matthew 19:26 Jesus looked at them and said, "With man this is impossible, but with God all things are possible."

- g. Later, in the arrest account, He makes it clear that there is NO OTHER WAY:

Matthew 26:53-54 Do you think I cannot call on my Father, and he will at once put at my disposal more than twelve legions of angels? ⁵⁴ But how then would the Scriptures be fulfilled that say it must happen in this way?"

- h. So, once “It is written,” and God has made His commitment, and signed it in the blood of millions of sacrificial animals, and thousands of years of promises spoken to His people through the Prophets, there is no other way

4. What is the CUP?

- a. In the Psalms, the “cup” often represents God’s choice, God’s will for your life, usually in the sense of blessing

Psalm 16:5 LORD, you have assigned me my portion and my cup

- b. But frequently it represents God’s wrath and judgment

Jeremiah 25:15-17 This is what the LORD, the God of Israel, said to me: "Take from my hand this cup filled with the wine of my wrath and make all the nations to whom I send you drink it. ¹⁶ When they drink it, they will stagger and go mad because of the sword I will send among them." ¹⁷ ¶ So I took the cup from the LORD's hand and made all the nations to whom he sent me drink it

- c. It is clearly the cross... the substitutionary death on the cross... going deeper, it represents the perfect wrath of God

Revelation 14:10-11 he, too, will drink of the wine of God's fury, which has been poured full strength into the cup of his wrath. He will be tormented with burning sulfur in the presence of the holy angels and of the Lamb. ¹¹ And the smoke of their torment rises for ever and ever. There is no rest day or night

5. Jesus is staring into the cup of God’s wrath and is understandably shrinking back from it is horror
6. The wrath of God is TERRIFYING... God is a CONSUMING FIRE... the wrath of God is His omnipotence focused like a raging laser beam on the destruction of His enemies
7. So, Jesus is shrinking back from drinking the cup of God’s wrath in our place
8. We could also imagine He’s shrinking back from the defilement of being our sin bearer, and from the isolation from His heavenly Father, and from His enemy DEATH itself

I. The Submission of Jesus

Matthew 26:39 Yet not as I will, but as you will.

1. This is the centerpiece of this magnificent moment
2. This is the greatest act of submission in the history of the human race
3. Also the most courageous act, the most humble act, the most loving act
4. Here we have the paradigm of what God wants from each of us for the rest of our lives

5. More on this in a moment

J. The Admonishment of the Sleeping Disciples

Matthew 26:40-41 *Then he returned to his disciples and found them sleeping. "Could you men not keep watch with me for one hour?" he asked Peter. ⁴¹ "Watch and pray so that you will not fall into temptation. The spirit is willing, but the body is weak."*

1. By contrast, we have the weakness of the disciples exposed
2. Jesus speaks of "falling into temptation"
3. He says the remedy is to WATCH AND PRAY
4. He marvels that they were not able to keep watch with Him for ONE HOUR
5. He focuses on Peter, the leader
6. Remember that Peter has already boasted:

Matthew 26:33 *"Even if all fall away on account of you, I never will."*

7. Furthermore, Jesus has warned Peter what is going to happen to him that very night:

Matthew 26:34 *I tell you the truth," Jesus answered, "this very night, before the rooster crows, you will disown me three times."*

8. Peter should have been getting ready for the most intense spiritual struggle of his life; but instead, he is giving in to the weakness of the flesh
9. Jesus' statement is timeless and famous: better known in the KJV:

the spirit ... is willing, but the flesh is weak.

K. Jesus' Second Prayer

Matthew 26:42 *He went away a second time and prayed, "My Father, if it is not possible for this cup to be taken away unless I drink it, may your will be done."*

L. The Disciples' Second Failure

Matthew 26:43 *When he came back, he again found them sleeping, because their eyes were heavy.*

Luke 22:45 *When he rose from prayer and went back to the disciples, he found them asleep, exhausted from sorrow.*

M. Jesus' Final Prayer

Matthew 26:44 So he left them and went away once more and prayed the third time, saying the same thing.

1. The only way we would have a record of this prayer is by Jesus telling the Apostles later or by the direct reporting of the Holy Spirit
2. Everyone else was asleep!
3. Jesus has not changed His mind one bit, though... He continues to pray, saying the same thing... repetition is of the essence of prayer... no need for new words, better words, more flowery or profound words... just the simple pouring out of the heart to God

N. The End of the Account: Jesus' Arrest is at Hand

Matthew 26:45-47 Then he returned to the disciples and said to them, "Are you still sleeping and resting? Look, the hour is near, and the Son of Man is betrayed into the hands of sinners. ⁴⁶ Rise, let us go! Here comes my betrayer!" ⁴⁷ ¶ While he was still speaking, Judas, one of the Twelve, arrived.

II. The Mysteries of Gethsemane

Herman Bavinck: "Mystery is the vital element of Dogmatics. ...the idea that the believer would be able to understand and comprehend intellectually the revealed mysteries is...unscriptural. On the contrary, the truth which God has revealed concerning himself in nature and Scripture far surpasses human conception and comprehension."

A. The Mystery of Jesus' Incarnation: Weakness, Yet Deity

1. The incarnation of Jesus Christ is perhaps the most profound mystery in the Bible
2. How can Jesus be fully God and fully man?
3. Many have questioned this and sought to deny one or the other
4. Dualistic philosophies and theologies (like the gnostics and the docetists) have tried to deny the full humanity of Christ... saying He only SEEMED to be human
5. Gethsemane is a powerful antidote to this heresy... Jesus' humanity is on full display here... especially in His WEAKNESS, His frailty, His ability to waver

and to fear and to shrink back, and to sweat great drops of blood and almost to die in the Garden

6. Jesus' emotional life is real and full and perfect... He fully displays the reality of the title "MAN OF SORROWS"
7. How then can Christ be omnipotent deity, and yet so weak?
8. How can we understand the frailty of Christ Jesus, groveling on the ground in the Garden
9. Many martyrs and even pagan soldiers, like the Romans, faced death with far more outward display of courage than Jesus does here

Socrates took the cup of hemlock and drained it without flinching in the least...

Martin Luther: "No man ever feared death like this man."

10. How can the infinite Creator of all things, visible and invisible, need help from an angel? How can the omnipotent God need STRENGTHENING??
11. Clearly the answer to these questions is a mystery... but it shows so clearly the humanity of Christ

B. The Mystery of Jesus' Amazement: Why Does Mark 14:33 Say Jesus was Amazed?

When Christ entered Gethsemane, He knew exactly what was going to happen—He would most certainly die on the cross as a ransom for sinners. But apparently there was still a dimension of "knowing" that was withheld from Him by His loving heavenly Father.

All of this comes from a meditation on one word in Mark's gospel, which the KJV accurately translates: *And he taketh with him Peter and James and John, and began to be **sore amazed**, and to be very heavy.* (Mark 14:33, KJV) The word "amazed" stops us in our tracks! In some sense Christ was amazed at the cross in Gethsemane. The same word is used of crowd reaction to Jesus' ministry (Mark 9:15) or to the Apostles' healing of the lame beggar (Acts 3:11). It was the reaction of the Mary and the other women at the empty tomb when they saw an angel... It is translated in those places "astonished," and it implies some sense of wonder, as if seeing something they'd never seen before.

Now how does that apply to Jesus in Gethsemane? I believe when Christ began to pray, God revealed to Him in an immeasurably more vivid way what it would be like to die on the cross as a substitute for His sheep, drinking the cup of God's wrath poured full strength for Him. The revelation occurred within Christ Himself, within His mind, and it shocked Him. It was akin to the difference between seeing a grainy black and white photo of the Grand Canyon and seeing an IMAX movie of a helicopter ride through the Grand Canyon. The impression on the soul is much livelier, causing a much more intense reaction. As Christ began to pray, God turned up the intensity in Christ's mind of what it would be like to drink

the cup of His wrath, to absorb the lightning bolt of His indignation, to go through hell in our place, as our substitute. And it literally knocked Jesus to the ground and so increased the pressure in His body that blood began to flow from His sweat pores and fell in great drops to the ground (Luke 22:44).

The Father did this, I believe, to give Christ the ability to make a more informed choice as to whether or not He would go through with their plan. He refrained from doing it sooner, because the level of suffering would have been too great for His human body to bear for any great length of time.

But now comes the most heroic moment in human history: *Going a little farther, he fell with his face to the ground and prayed, "My Father, if it is possible, may this cup be taken from me. **Yet not as I will, but as you will.**"* (Matthew 26:39) At this moment, Christ put His own will completely under the will of His Father. At this moment, He overturned the wretched choice Adam made in the Garden of Eden, and all the wretched choices God's elect have made in their willful sinning since Adam's first sin. Here Christ showed the proper use of human will: to do the will of the Father. Thus Christ concluded His prayer time with these stirring words: *"My Father, if it is not possible for this cup to be taken away unless I drink it, may your will be done."* (Matthew 26:42)

So, it seems like God the Father more fully revealed the cross to God the Son as a final question: WILL YOU DO THIS OR NOT?? His answer stands as the pinnacle of human courage and obedience: YES!!!

C. The Mystery of Jesus' Prayer: Is His Will Different Than God's??

1. Some have wondered if the wrestling Jesus displayed in Gethsemane, "If it is possible, take this cup away from me" was indicative that His will was somehow against the Cross... as though He and the Father disagreed about this
2. The mystery of Gethsemane is to treat it like the Holy Ground it is... Jesus' will and that of the Father as perfectly one...

John 10:30 I and the Father are one.

3. He wasn't against the Father's will; rather He delighted in it

Isaiah 53:10 Yet it was the LORD's will to crush him and cause him to suffer, and though the LORD makes his life a guilt offering, he will see his offspring and prolong his days, and the will of the LORD will prosper in his hand.

4. I've often felt before that Isaiah 53:10 implies that the Father wrote the sheet music and Jesus played the piece perfectly, with great joy and delight... He made the music the Father had written FLOURISH and PROSPER
5. It's just that Gethsemane shows the COST of the will of the Lord... it was INFINITELY DIFFICULT

III. The Glories of Gethsemane

A. The Free Will of Jesus Properly On Display

1. Jesus went to the cross of His own free will
2. He was not coerced... He was not forced against His will
3. Here we have the pinnacle example of human choice, of free will
4. He had no sin nature holding Him back, no corruption
5. His will was free... and He used it PERFECTLY... namely, to do the will of His Father
6. Because, the Father has a will too... and Jesus taught us that the best use of human will is to find its perfect consummation in the will of God
7. From this point on, Jesus would only be able to escape death on a cross by using supernatural power to kill the soldiers who were arresting Him... this He would not do; this was Jesus' last moment of natural freedom, and He gave Himself up

B. The Choice of Jesus and Romans 3:26

1. Some have blasphemously called the idea of substitutionary atonement "heavenly child abuse"... God the Father beating His cowering Son
2. Rather, in Gethsemane, we have God the Father revealing to the Son as fully as He could have ahead of time, what the cross and the atonement would be like... dying under His wrath
3. He gave Jesus the choice, and Jesus made it: NOT MY WILL BUT YOURS BE DONE
4. This removes the charge of injustice against the Father concerning the Son:

Romans 3:26 he did it to demonstrate his justice at the present time, so as to be just and the one who justifies those who have faith in Jesus.

5. Because Jesus went willingly to the cross, it was not unjust for the Father to transfer our guilt to Him

C. The Obedience of Jesus vs. the Disobedience of Adam

1. There is a clear parallel between Christ and Adam set up for us in Romans 5:19

Romans 5:19 For just as through the disobedience of the one man the many were made sinners, so also through the obedience of the one man the many will be made righteous.

2. This is the perfect act of obedience by which we are SAVED

Philippians 2:8 And being found in appearance as a man, he humbled himself and became obedient to death-- even death on a cross!

Hebrews 5:8-9 Although he was a son, he learned obedience from what he suffered⁹ and, once made perfect, he became the source of eternal salvation for all who obey him

3. Adam used his free will to sin, to disobey, to turn away from God
4. Jesus made His choice in Gethsemane to submit perfectly to the will of God

D. The Perfect Love of Jesus... First for God, then for His People

1. In Gethsemane, we see Jesus loving God and us sinners more than He loved Himself
2. It was revulsion of the thing itself that caused Jesus to shrink back
3. But it was LOVE... first and foremost, love for God; secondly, love for us, that caused Him to deny Himself

Hebrews 12:2 Let us fix our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy set before him endured the cross, scorning its shame, and sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.

E. The Courage of Jesus: Perfect Love Drove Out Fear

1. Human history is filled with tales of courage... In 1957, Senator John F. Kennedy won a Pulitzer Prize for his book *Profiles in Courage*... tales of bravery by eight acting Senators who followed the courage of their convictions and suffered for what they did
2. Many people have willingly laid down their lives to save other people

Romans 5:7 Very rarely will anyone die for a righteous man, though for a good man someone might possibly dare to die.

3. The United States Government gives out the Congressional Medal of Honor as the highest award for members of its armed services... for conspicuous acts of courage on the battlefield... it specifically singles out the virtue of COURAGE UNDER FIRE to save the lives of others

4. But in all the annals of human achievement, I believe the courage of Jesus Christ in Gethsemane and beyond is the greatest

IV. The Application of Gethsemane

- A. Come to Christ
- B. Worship Christ for His Courage, Submission, and Love
- C. Rest Totally in Jesus' Choice for You
- D. America a Nation of Choiceaholics... Beware of Idolizing Human Choice
 1. Benign choices surround us in the Supermarket and on Airplanes for in-flight entertainment
 2. Freedom of choice is celebrated in the abortion issue
 3. Recently, the State of Massachusetts ruled that students should have the freedom to choose their own GENDER without any societal hindrance, and made it a crime to oppose them in any way; so if a boy wanted to be a girl, he was free to choose that option
 4. CHOICE CHOICE CHOICE
 5. Jesus shows us what choice is for
- E. Imitate Jesus' Pattern for the Rest of Your Life

Matthew 26:39 Going a little farther, he fell with his face to the ground and prayed, "My Father, if it is possible, may this cup be taken from me. Yet not as I will, but as you will."

Matthew 26:42 "My Father, if it is not possible for this cup to be taken away unless I drink it, may your will be done."

1. Sometimes the will of God may be extremely hard for your flesh
2. You know that God wants you to pray longer, or fast, or witness to a challenging person, or go on a mission trip, or face great danger in bringing the gospel to a Muslim unreached people group
3. At those times, your heart will pull you away, seeking to get you to choose what is most comfortable for the flesh... then, Jesus' words must drive you:

NOT MY WILL BUT YOURS BE DONE!!

4. Live that out every moment:

Romans 12:1 Therefore, I urge you, brothers, in view of God's mercy, to offer your bodies as living sacrifices, holy and pleasing to God-- this is your spiritual act of worship.

F. PRAY so that You May Conquer Temptation!!!

1. Jesus did this Himself
2. Jesus commanded His disciples to do it
3. WATCH AND PRAY so that you will not fall into temptation
4. Prayer is the remedy to a weak will