

Watch With Me

Scripture Reading: Matthew 26:36-46

In our previous message (“In Remembrance of Me” – Matthew 26:6-30), we sought to look at specific things to remember about Jesus Christ and His sacrificial death on the cross. Jesus ordained a specific way for us, as a group / as a body of believers, that we should remember and honor Him. This is called Communion / The Lord’s Table / The Lord’s Supper. During this time, we can meditate and give thanks that Jesus came to...

- **Demonstrate God’s goodness and love – Matthew 26:30.**
- **Deliver us from sin and deliver us to God – Matthew 26:26-28.**
- **Destroy the works of the devil – Matthew 26:14-16.**
- **Develop a kingdom in which we can know and serve the Father – Matthew 26:29.**

Remembering and honoring Jesus Christ is not the same as remembering and honoring a dead hero. He is alive and actively ministering to us and with us today (Matthew 18:20; 28:18-20; Mark 16:19-20; Philippians 4:13 cp. Romans 15:18).

- In Matthew 26:6-30, Jesus is saying, **“Don’t ever forget My sacrifice for you.”**
- In Matthew 26:36-46, Jesus is in essence saying, **“Now join Me and let us labor together.”**

Matthew 26:36-38 – Jesus took His disciples to be alone with Him for some solemn time of prayer. Eight were simply asked to be there. Jesus asked them to sit in a certain place, to be together, to be available and ready for anything that Jesus wanted. They could rest, talk, and pray, but just be there – not wandering off. Peter, James, and John were asked to be closer to the situation. They were being prepared for greater leadership responsibilities. Jesus shared the sorrow of His heart with them (Matthew 11:29; I Corinthians 2:16; Philippians 2:5; Revelation 3:20). They were specifically asked to be closer and to watch with Him (i.e. stay awake, alert, attentive).

Note: The other eight, later Matthias (Acts 1:15-26), and eventually all of Christ’s disciples are called into closer involvement with the work of Christ (John 20:21 cp. John 17:14-23).

Mattew 26:39-41 – Jesus separated Himself only a little ways and poured out His heart to the Father. He came right back. The three had fallen asleep. Jesus expressed concern without rebuke. It was the end of the day. They had just eaten a meal. It was quiet and dark. Luke tells us that they slept because of sorrowful hearts (Luke 22:45 cp. Matthew 26:21-22). See how Jesus’ sorrow moved Him to resort to the Heavenly Father (Psalm 25:1; 27:8; 38:8-9; 61:1-4; 62:8). The natural tendency is to find relief through sleep and other things. Jesus said to, **“Watch and pray that you enter not into temptation: the spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak.”**

“Watch and pray” could apply to being attentive to situations in the world that are important, to understand what is going on around us and in the lives of others, to be involved with the activity of Christ’s kingdom and the work of the gospel (Romans 13:11; 15:30; I Peter 4:7; Philippians 2:4; Hebrews 10:24-25; Ephesians 6:18-20).

“Watch and pray” was specifically mentioned to warn us of personal temptations and the weakness of the flesh (Matthew 26:41). We mentioned the sorrowful hearts of Peter, James, and John and compared that to the sorrowful heart of Jesus. There is a sorrow in this world, that is natural to the flesh, that can produce deadly results: depression, a defeated fatalism (giving up or giving in to further rebellion), escapism, substance abuse, excess pleasure-seeking, self-destructive behavior, even suicide (II Corinthians 7:4-10 cp. Judas Iscariot – Matthew 27:1-5).

“Watch and pray” is telling us all to be alert, sober-minded, and attentive to Christ’s priorities. Particularly, we should guard our own heart and mind, not trusting the flesh. Beware of pride, lust, foolishness, and all unfaithful thoughts, words, and actions. The world wants to keep us broiling over many political and social issues. Many of these issues are important, but can become all-consuming and distracting. Note that the Lord’s Table (*“In Remembrance of Me”*) is a time of solemn self-examination (I Corinthians 11:28).

“Watch” the activity of your mind, keeping your thoughts in the positive areas of faith in God’s promises, of hope in God’s wisdom, power, character, faithfulness, and love (I Peter 1:13; 4:7 [*“The end of all things”* refers to the triumphant climax of Christ’s coming and the establishing of His kingdom. It also points to the time of the new heavens and the new earth – Titus 2:11-14; II Peter 3:10-14]; Philippians 4:4-9; Jude 1:20-21 [*“keep”* i.e., preserve yourself by focusing on God’s love cp. Ephesians 3:14-19]).

“Watch” the enemy’s activity and influence over you. Satan (the devil) and his demons work constantly and with subtility, seeking to destroy your life and testimony (I Peter 5:6-11; James 4:6-10; II Corinthians 2:11; Ephesians 4:27; 6:10-12; Revelation 12:9-11 cp. Luke 22:31-32).

“Watch,” not in fear, but with joy and thanksgiving (Colossians 4:2; Philippians 1:3-5; 4:4-7; Romans 8:14-15 cp. II Timothy 1:7; I Peter 1:3-9).

Consider Christ:

Jesus examined His own soul in the garden (Matthew 26:38-44 – especially vs. 39,42). He was not double minded about His mission. Rather, as a human, He was showing us that no man would want to experience what He was about to experience for us. The man, Jesus, carefully surrendered His will to the will of the Father. The first Adam failed us in a garden. The Last Adam (I Corinthians 15:45,47) was faithful to us in a garden.

Jesus still wants us to join Him, actively / interactively, in prayer today. His words, *“Watch with Me”* is for us, too. Today, Jesus is very present and is actively involved with our thoughts, our words, and our lives (Matthew 18:19-20; Romans 8:26-27,34 cp. Hebrews 2:14-18; 4:14-16; 7:25; 10:19-23; Revelation 2:2,9,13,19; 3:1,8,15 – *“I know”*).