

Luke 22:39-54

Mount Of Olives

Image Church // Mountains Week 6

Intro

Happy **Palm Sunday**, Image Family! If you're a guest, we're so glad you're here!

Listen, **NEXT week is EASTER!**

- It's time to make the invite if you haven't done it yet!
- This is the most strategic time in our context!!!
- As your pastor, I want to challenge everyone to invite someone... Don't be someone's "No" by not asking... Don't walk in a spirit of fear- be bold and courageous!
- **We want to invite people to experience a people and, ultimately, a person!**

Last thing, remember, we've **ADDED A SERVICE for Easter Weekend!**

- **9 and 10:45...**
- Be present, be praying!

Alright, we're continuing in our **Mountains** series this morning...

If you have your Bibles, go ahead and grab them and turn to Luke 22... Everything we've looked at so far has been building toward the coming of Jesus...

- Jesus has come. He's lived on earth for 33 years up to this point...
- He's been doing ministry for about 3 years publicly...
- He's traveled to different places and done many incredible things...

But at this point in the **Gospel of Luke**, Jesus entered **Jerusalem** on Sunday...

- He came in on a donkey, and His followers laid down palm branches (John 12:13)... **Palm Sunday**
- It's Holy Week in Jerusalem... This is a week-long festival that leads to the Passover...
 - The most significant meal in the Jewish culture- It's a meal God told them to participate in to remind them of God's deliverance out of Egypt...
- Jews from all over would have come in to celebrate this special week...
- Jesus has spent most of the week teaching and answering questions from the religious elite...
- At this point it's late in the week...
- Jesus has taken the **Passover** meal with His disciples...
 - And in the process He shaped the whole meal around Himself... pointing to the reality that He would be the ultimate sacrifice once and for all...

Jesus has said that one among them would betray Him...

- Jesus tells Peter that He's going to waver but will not abandon his faith because He's interceded for Him...
- And then Jesus says the time is coming when they're going to be on their own for a few days because Jesus has to go and fulfill His purpose...

Big night! Well, they wrap up dinner that night, and they head to a familiar place... **The Mount of Olives...**

What's going to happen next?!?

Luke 22:39-54

³⁹ He [Jesus] went out and made his way as usual to the **Mount of Olives**, and the disciples followed him. ⁴⁰ When he reached the place, he told them, **"Pray that you may not fall into temptation."**

What is Jesus talking about? ... Well, at this point, Satan has already sifted Judas, and he's asked to sift Peter (**Luke 22:31**)...

There's a lurking **temptation** for them to walk away from Jesus, to not hold on in faith...

- **BTW:** Have you ever been there? Have you ever felt tempted to walk away from Jesus? Have you ever felt tempted to let go of your faith?

I think it's powerful here that Jesus doesn't tell them *to pray that the temptation will not come*. He says: pray that **when it does come, you don't fall into it!**¹

What Jesus shows us is that temptations are part of the Christian life...

- **Temptations themselves are not sinful. What's sinful is when we act on them...**

Quote: *You can't stop the birds from flying over your head, but you can stop them from making a nest in your hair...*

What Jesus shows us is that **prayer gives us the ability to press through temptation...**

- **Jesus modeled this:** He spent 40 days in the desert praying and fasting leading up to when He was tempted...

Illustration: *I had a buddy that tells the story of his battle with pornography... Addicted... Wehn tempted, he used to get two ice cubes, put them in his hands, and pray until they melted... He said this was the only thing that helped him...*

God's given us prayer as a means to lean into His power... It's an act of dependence where we call on Him to do what we can't...

- **Prayer & faith** go hand-in-hand- **prayer is an act of faith that serves to fuel our faith even more** by where it fixes our eyes!

In fact, a good way to see the depth of your faith, a good litmus test, is by looking at your prayer life...

Prayer is a tool that God's given us in the Christian life!

Illustration: go to build a house, and you have all the tools there on site, but you choose not to use the **level and the speed square (know what that is? It's a triangle that helps you keep things square)**. **Joke:** *my dad would ask for the square...*

- You can build a house without those two things... The same is true when it comes to prayer... We have to have it!

Some of you are struggling with sin...

- You're expecting that one day you'll just wake up and the temptation's gone...
- **Prayer** is the means to press through!

Verse 41:

⁴¹Then he [Jesus] withdrew from them about a stone's throw, knelt down, and began to pray, ⁴²“**Father, if you are willing, take this cup away from me—nevertheless, not my will, but yours, be done.**”

⁴³Then an angel from heaven appeared to him, strengthening him. ⁴⁴Being in anguish, he prayed more fervently, and his sweat became like drops of blood falling to the ground.

This is such a powerful moment... And can we first just state to obvious: Jesus could have been doing whatever He wanted- and He chose to use these last few moments to pray...

- **If prayer is essential for the Savior, how much more essential should it be for us?**

Here's the other thing, look at **how** Jesus prays- He's open and honest and, at the same time, fully surrendered to the Father's will...

Look at how raw and real Jesus is in this moment. *Do you see His agony in the face of suffering??*

¹ Shane Shadix, *The Mount of Olives*.

- Listen, if this is ok for Jesus to do, then it's ok for you to do as well!

We don't have to be heroic in the face of suffering, acting like everything is good and that we're fine...²

- Listen, being tough and unemotional through suffering is not the mark of a strong Christian... It's actually an indicator that there's a problem...
- Jesus doesn't model stoic toughness. He models authenticity before God...

*Jesus had the perfect faith, He had the perfect trust, He even knew the plan, but it wasn't absent of emotion in the midst of suffering...

- Jesus is in extreme distress, He's in intense sorrow... Sweat like drops of blood...
- He didn't try to hide them. He walked in them before the Father...

I think we feel like God can't handle it if we do this, or that it compromises our faith, or that it's a sign of weakness...

- Jesus breaks all of that down for us here...

God created us as emotional beings, I think if we learned how to walk in them before God it would actually take us deeper in our relationship with Him...

- Notice how it led Jesus to pray more fervently!

What ***is expressed here is the humanity of Jesus***; everything in his human flesh wanted to flee the impending physical torture of crucifixion. And He groaned in agony at the far greater spiritual torture of being forsaken by his Father.³

² Shane Shadix, *The Mount of Olives*.

³ Jon Bloom, *Not my will be done*. April 2, 2015.

In the most real way, here is what this points to: Jesus (*who is fully God*) entered into our pain and suffering, and not only did He enter into it, He experienced our pain and suffering in every way to the greatest degree...

- Emotionally, physically and spiritually... He experienced it all...
- He is in agony and anguish over what awaits Him...
- This is raw and real...

This is so powerful is that it shows us just how much Jesus can identify with our pain and suffering... Jesus was not outside of our humanity... He embodied it to the fullest degree...

- We have a Savior who can identify with our pain!
- He's not a Savior who says, deal with it. He can say, I've been there!
- ***I've endured it so that one day you don't have to!***

Again, what we see here is the **humanity** of Christ... But we also see the **divinity** of Christ...

There is a terminology that describes what we see here... It is the ***Hypostatic union***... Everything it means to be God Jesus is, at the same time, everything that it means to be human Jesus is...

- Jesus is fully human and fully divine... the ***Hypostatic union*** is the oneness of these two realities...

Jesus ***KNEW*** what was ahead of Him, not only in the *physical* crucifixion, which is horrific and gruesome, but in addition to that, having to experience the full wrath of God...

- Jesus not only physically died in our place, but He also took on the wrath of God in our place... It was unleashed on Him...

Let me show you the ***divinity*** of Christ...

We see the divinity of Christ through **Jesus' faithful and total submission to the will of God...**

*Jesus prayed for, and would act in accordance with the **will of God**...

See, **unlike humanity, Jesus would embrace perfect obedience to God's will**...

Jesus made the choice to obey even in the face of death, He chose to *go to the cross and to suffer in our place*, taking on the wrath of God in our place as the greatest act of *service and sacrifice*...

Paul would bring all of this together for us in **Philippians 2:6-8**...

[Jesus] ⁶ who, existing in the form of God, did not consider equality with God as something to be exploited. [or grasped]

⁷ Instead he emptied himself by assuming the form of a servant, taking on the likeness of humanity.

And when he had come as a man,

⁸ he humbled himself by **becoming obedient to the point of death— even to death on a cross.** [Reference verse]

God would become like one of us, to do what none of us could ever do... This is the beauty behind the incredible nature of Jesus, who was both **fully human** and **fully God**!

God came down as one of us, entering into our pain and experiencing our pain in order to ultimately free us from the source of it... Sin...

The beauty of what we see here in this moment in the garden is **Jesus in our place**...

- His perfect life in our place...
- His sacrificial death in our place...

Verse 45: ⁴⁵ When he got up from prayer and came to the disciples, he found them sleeping, exhausted from their grief. ⁴⁶ “**Why are you sleeping?**” he asked them. “**Get up and pray, so that you won’t fall into temptation.**”

Notice the second warning from Jesus shows the importance of prayer...

- **John Piper:** *Prayer is a wartime walkie-talkie... We are at war...*
- *Pray that you don’t fall into temptation...*

Again we see the link between prayer and **endurance**...

We’re still on the Mount of Olives **Verse 47:** ⁴⁷ While he was still speaking, suddenly a mob came, and one of the Twelve named Judas was leading them.

Judas shows up at a place where he had been often before with Jesus and the others... This is how well he knew Jesus... He knew where He would be...

- **Participated in the things of Jesus but faith to hold on in faith to the person of Jesus!**
- A warning that I want you to hear again: religious activity is not the same as saving faith...
 - Saving faith changes you, shapes you, and endures to the end...

Verse 47:

He came near Jesus to kiss him, ⁴⁸ but Jesus said to him, “**Judas, are you betraying the Son of Man with a kiss?**”

Keep in mind... Jesus chose Judas as one of the 12, knowing this would be the outcome...

- This was not a plot twist that caught Jesus off guard...
- This was all woven into the fabric of God’s redemptive plan... We see that explicitly in **Acts 4:27-28**...

And what we see in this is that God works through sin and brokenness to bring about something beautiful...⁴

Look at the power and the control of God... That **He works despite of sin, and He even through sin to bring about His perfect plan...**

Which means that even if it might seem like God's not at work and evil is prevailing, God is still very much in control and very much at work!...

*There's something else here that I think applies on a deeply personal level...

In the same way that God uses the sin of Judas to bring about something beautiful through Christ, **God can also use the sin in your life to bring about something beautiful in you...**⁵

This is what's so incredible about the redeeming God of the bible!

- That even the bad can be redeemed for good...
- **Romans 8:28...**
 - **V. 29:** For the purpose of being conformed into the Image of Christ!

God is a God who is always weaving together beauty from what seems like ashes for the sake of His glory... **This is the story of the Bible!**

Verse 49:

⁴⁹ When those around him saw what was going to happen, they asked, "Lord, should we strike with the sword?"⁵⁰ Then one of them struck the high priest's servant and cut off his right ear.

⁵¹ But Jesus responded, "**No more of this!**" And touching his ear, he healed him.

Now, this is just downright crazy right here... First of all, the Disciples are feeling the moment- they are ready to rumble... *Jesus, should we throw down?!?*

And then one of them, who John tells us is **Peter**, jumps the gun, classic Peter, and whips out his sword and cuts off a dude's **right ear...** **BTW:** Notice the detail from Doctor Luke... Got to appreciate it...

Peter, man, what a guy!

But then it gets even crazier... Jesus reaches out and touches the servant's ear and heals him... *Ear cut off on the ground- Jesus Heals it!*

My question is, what was this guy thinking that just got his ear healed?!?

- *Change sides? Have a discussion about what just happened??*
- Instead, the servant stays true to his side, which is crazy!
- Shows us a hard reality that even when people see the hand of God, there are those that will still choose to reject it...

Verse 52:⁵² Then Jesus said to the chief priests, temple police, and the elders who had come for him, "**Have you come out with swords and clubs as if I were a criminal?**"⁵³ **Every day while I was with you in the temple, you never laid a hand on me. But this is your hour—and the dominion of darkness."**

Jesus is like, really guys?

But everything that's happening here is feeding this moment. It's night, evil is at work, people are living out their rejection of Jesus...

And it's happening now because it's the time when Jesus allowed it to happen...

⁴ Some thoughts in this section attributed to John Piper, *Why did Jesus choose Judas?* March 5, 2021.

⁵ This concept comes from John Piper, *Spectacular Sins*.

Evil gets to prevail for a moment, but this dominion of darkness only lasts for a moment, and the irony is that it's determined by God, governed by God, and it **serves the purpose of God**...

Illustration: My brother- there were times my dad would let my brother do certain things for the purpose of a greater outcome...

- Running away... But Dad was right there...

Verse 54:

⁵⁴ They seized him, led him away, and brought him into the high priest's house. Meanwhile Peter was following at a distance.

Peter begins to distance Himself from Jesus...

- It is dangerous to follow Jesus from a distance...⁶
- For Peter, this would lead to his denial of Jesus 3 times!

Appeal...

For some of you, this is where you are... You've distanced yourself from Jesus either intentionally or unintentionally...

- You don't see Him as you once saw Him...
- You don't have the confidence in Him that you once had...

For some of you, it could be that you've been falling to temptation over and over again, and it's caused you to distance yourself from Jesus...

Or maybe you're walking through something in your life right now that's scary, or that's hard, that's uncertain...

- And like Peter, it's caused you to distance yourself from Jesus... To pull back...

This morning, would you lean in through faith, knowing that God is in control and that He is working...

- **We see how God does this in your salvation, and we can trust that He's also doing this in our circumstances...**

What we see in our text this morning is that the **tool** God's given us for **endurance**, and one of the main tools God's given us for **staying close to Jesus**, is **PRAYER**...

The question is, is your life marked by prayer? Or are you like Peter, following at a distance?!?

You can be open, honest, and real with where you are...

- But at the same time being fully surrendered to God, trusting that He's in control and He's working for your good and His glory!

God hears our prayers...

- He meets us in our hurt, our pain, and our weakness...
- **And through it all, God is working in and through our brokenness for our good and His glory!**

Would you see that there's incredible hope, a profound confidence that we can have...

Conclusion [VAMP]

Jesus came down to do what we couldn't do for ourselves...

Call to repent and believe...

Call to lean in and prayer...

Let me close with this... Peter, the same guy who was following at a distance, who denied Jesus 3 times, is the same guy who Jesus said on this rock I will build my church...

- Same guy who preached the first sermon after Jesus ascended and thousands get saved...

⁶ Christ-Centered Exposition, *Exalting Jesus in Luke*.