

***An Easter Journey***  
**“The Road to Submission”**  
**Matthew 26:36-56**

*As the journey toward Easter continues, Jesus finds Himself utterly alone both in courage and in obedience. Gethsemane shows, in stark contrast, the submission of Christ compared to the competing agendas of His followers. What can we learn?*

## **1. Submission Displayed (vv.36-46)**

- **Confidence in God Alone**

The greater the agony, the deeper He pressed into the Father. If Christ could plead as boldly as He did, we should feel free also to unload all our deepest desires before God.

- **Spiritual Alertness**

One hour of prayer was not a long time by Jesus' standards. His comment to the disciples is often applied as an excuse for humanness, but He means it as an incentive for them to resist temptation. What a contrast to Peter's earlier boasts. (*Matthew 26:33, 35*)

- **Determined Obedience**

Prayer is not a means of bending God's will to our own, but a process of submitting our wills to His. He inquired about another way to accomplish God's purpose, but the determining factor was always God's will.

- **Supernatural Strength**

The decisive moment has come. Rather than being weakened and deterred by temptations, Jesus became stronger and more resolved; and instead of waiting for His enemies to come to Him, He goes out to meet them. (Compare *Matthew 4:1-11*)

## **2. Submission Discarded (vv.47-56)**

- **Temptation of a False Follower—Pretense**

Judas acts overjoyed to see Jesus by an excessive display of affection. The word implies multiple kisses. He is simultaneously identifying Jesus for the authorities and pretending to be a loyal follower. He acts like one overcome with emotion, but even now he thinks he is still deceiving Jesus.

- **Temptation of an Extrovert Follower—Control**

Peter acts as though Jesus meant none of the things He said. His love does not listen and obey; it assumes to dictate and to rule. Without the extended prayerful seeking of the Father's plan, Peter now looks at the immediate circumstances and decides that he knows best what to do next. In a sovereign act of grace, Jesus undoes Peter's damage.

- **Temptation of an Introvert Follower—Desertion**

Jesus now mocks the cowardice of His enemies in order to remind His followers to be strong because God is still in control of this situation. But while Jesus holds the attention of the crowd, His “bold” followers slip into the darkness and run away.