DIVING DEEPER DISCUSSION GUIDE



TEXT SUMMARY

Our text is Mark 14:27-42, where we see Jesus predicting his disciples' cowardice, then pleading with the Father in Gethsemane. Once again, Mark interweaves his sub-plots. Here he shows us Peter's bold assertion that even if everyone else abandons Jesus, he will remain faithful. This is followed by Jesus' sober prediction that Peter will deny three times that he even knows Jesus (v. 27-31), words that will come to fulfillment later in the narrative.

But this sermon focuses on Jesus' anguished prayer in the Garden of Gethsemane (v. 32-42):

- 1. His prayer was driven by his suffering in the moment, not just in his future.
- 2. His prayer was driven by his desire to do God's will, which superseded his desire to escape suffering.
- 3. His prayer was neglected by his disciples.

INTRODUCTION (OBSERVATION):

- 1. What was Jesus' frame of mind as he approached his time of prayer? Why do you think he was in such distress?
- 2. Which disciples does Jesus take further with him when he goes to pray? Where else in Mark's gospel have we seen Jesus single out these three disciples? What did they see in those other episodes?
- 3. What is the main thrust of Jesus' petition before God?

DISCUSSION (INTERPRETATION):

The word "possible" appears twice in this text. Jesus wanted the Father to release him from his coming suffering if it were possible.

- 1. What was God's <u>aim</u> in allowing His Son to suffer in this awful way?
- 2. <u>Was</u> it possible for God to achieve His aim any other way? Why?

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SO WHAT? (APPLICATION):

Here we move toward first-person pronouns as we begin to consider how we must **respond** to what God has said in His Word.

This account of Jesus' travail in prayer is valuable for at least two reasons:

- 1. It shows us that even Jesus, the sinless One, struggled with the whole idea of obeying his Father. From this we can see an important truth: it is not wrong for us to struggle with our desire to obey God. Even Jesus struggled in this way.
 - Have you ever struggled with your feelings and desires with regards to obedience to God's will in a matter? Are you struggling now with such a matter?
 - What was/is at stake that has made obedience such a struggle for you?
 - How have you handled that struggle in the past? How do you want to handle that struggle differently in the future?
- 2. This text also shows us that even the Son experienced silence from Heaven in response to his prayer, even though he cried out in anguish.
 - Have you experienced (or are you now experiencing) the heartache of unanswered prayer?
 - Most of us have lived long enough to know we're glad God hasn't always given us what we were sure we needed. But sometimes even in hindsight, we cannot see why God would refuse to give us what we desperately prayer for. How can we handle this kind of spiritual disappointment?