

**Watch and Pray**  
**Mark 14:32-42**

It is wonderful to sing of the truths of the suffering of the cross because that is where we're going in our study in Mark's gospel as we look at Christ and His ultimate fate before Him to go to that cross where we see the love and justice of God coming together perfectly in Christ's death upon the cross. Well, we're very close to that moment, and we're leading up to it. And this morning we have the opportunity before us to talk of a significant concept, a wonderful topic of prayer. There's perhaps nothing more mysterious in the Christian faith than the concept or idea of prayer, talking to the invisible God who is not tangible and in front of you, and also that, more important too, when you think about it how we've been commanded to do so - how this is the part and the reality of what we are representing as believers, that we have relationship with God; that is, we hear from Him through His Word, and we speak to Him in prayer, this significant task, this wonderful privilege and blessing we have of prayer that is yet at the same time allusive and mysterious for us. The reality is when we think of this topic and this concept in all of Scripture, I would say, the reality is we do not encounter a more significant prayer than the one that we have before us this morning.

Jesus' prayer in the Garden of Gethsemane is the most important prayer in all of Scripture that you will find. How can we say such a statement? Well, the reality is this is the climax. This is leading up to the moments, moments literally before Jesus would be arrested and then go to the death upon the cross. Really, the reality of what takes place in this struggle, in this prayer time, is that so many things are falling in the balance. The fate of mankind, our salvation, and the guarantee that we can have that there is forgiveness of sins lies in the outcome of this moment. The consistency among the Trinity, the willingness to obey and work with one another, and the Son and the Father and the Spirit all working together is at stake in this moment. The plan of redemptive history, God receiving glory in what He's promised to do, and the fulfillment of all that, comes together and is decided in this moment. This is the most significant prayer you will find in the Bible. This is the most wonderful task that we have to look at, this prayer, to look at this moment so that we learn more about this concept of prayer. It can become less mysterious to us and more normal for us, a regular part of who we are and what we do as the people of God. This is what we find in our text, and I'm excited to get into it.

Let's look at Mark 14:32-42 "And they went to a place called Gethsemane. And he said to his disciples, 'Sit here while I pray.' And he took with him Peter and James and John, and began to be greatly distressed and troubled. And he said to them, 'My soul is very sorrowful, even to death. Remain here and watch.' And going a little farther, he fell on the ground and prayed that, if it were possible, the hour might pass from him. And he said, 'Abba, Father, all things are possible for you. Remove this cup from me. Yet not what I will, but what you will.' And he came and found them sleeping, and he said to Peter, 'Simon, are you asleep? Could you not watch one hour? Watch and pray that you may not enter into temptation. The spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak.' And again he went away and prayed, saying the same words. And again he came and found them sleeping, for their eyes were very heavy, and they did not know what to answer him. And he came the third time and said to them, 'Are you still sleeping and taking your rest? It is enough; the hour has come. The Son of Man is betrayed into the hands of sinners. Rise, let us be going; see, my betrayer is at hand.' " ...this amazing moment, this critical moment of climax of prayer in the Garden.

The reality is, leading up to this point, we've seen many aspects of Christ's character come out in terms of the entire study of the gospel of Mark, but the moments leading up to this, right before this, we have seen over and over again Christ's divine control, His divine nature coming out; that is, leading up to His death, He was knowing exactly what was going to happen, and He was actually bringing those things about. He had perfect control over everything leading up to His suffering, His arrest, His persecution and crucifixion. We saw this over and over just even with the Last Supper meal, He identifies Judas, one of the twelve, in the midst as His traitor, and He dismisses Judas. He doesn't prevent Judas from doing what he's about to do. He dismisses Judas to go and do what he's going to do in betraying Jesus. Jesus also goes further and identifies once again that He is going to the cross. He is not out of control in getting crucified. He's in complete control in going to the cross, and He identifies why He must do that, to inaugurate and bring about this new covenant, this relationship that mankind can have with God because of forgiveness of sins that will come through His body and His blood offered for us. And then even more specific, last time we saw Jesus prophesy and predict that even the eleven that were left would not stay with Him. They too would in fact scatter. They would not be able to hang in there. They would not be able to follow Jesus up until that moment. They

would scatter and leave and abandon Him, leaving Jesus deserted for this moment when He would go to the cross. It even gets so specific that He tells Peter himself, even though Peter disagrees with Jesus, that He has to tell Peter that "...you will deny me three times." in the midst of hours as this night has fallen upon them, "...before the rooster crows twice..."

Over and over and over, Jesus is in complete control, His divine nature on display. Well, this morning we have the opposite. We now see His humanity come back on display as has happened over and over in Mark's gospel where we will see His divine control and then His humanity come forth. We have that taking place again, this juxtaposition, these two things coming together, in really a wonderful display of who our Savior is. He is in fact God's own Son, and yet, He can identify with you and me. He is the Son of man. He is mankind, and that's what we find in our text that becomes the background for where we see Jesus now in this moment of going to pray to His Father. And in our first verses here, we see the decision Jesus makes here to pray at this point. At this time of night, He decides to pray. In verse 32 we read "And they went to a place called Gethsemane. And he said to his disciples, 'Sit here while I pray.'" ...Jesus making this clear decision to pray.

But notice the change of location. Once again, as we saw last time, they were done with the Last Supper. They had left the upper room in Jerusalem, and they were exiting, making their way east out of Jerusalem into where would be their destination of the Mount of Olives. They were simply on their way last time when Jesus was speaking to His disciples and telling Peter himself that he would deny Him; and so, they were en route when they talked last time, but now we see them arrive at a location called Gethsemane. This was a location that was actually frequented it was a normal location where they would gather, and they would actually have time together at this place. Apparently, we learn this from the other gospel accounts, this was His custom to go here with His disciples, to potentially even pray here as Jesus made it a habit to pray, and He often met here. This is why Judas is actually able to come, with the band of people he does, to arrest Jesus eventually. This is where they are; they're located at Gethsemane.

So, where exactly is Gethsemane in relationship to everything we've been talking about? As I've mentioned, it's at the base of the Mount of Olives. So, if you're at Jerusalem, specifically if you're at the temple the Temple Mount, looking east, you see a drop off into a ravine, a valley called the

Kidron Valley, and go back up into what would be the Mount of Olives which really looks like a hill, nothing crazy impressive as far as we know mountains. However, this is up in the hill country, so they're high in elevation. But this is the Mount of Olives. This is the view of the Mount of Olives from the temple, from Jerusalem. This is where they were going. They were making their way east out of Jerusalem to this Garden of Gethsemane which was at the base at the bottom of this mountain. In fact, if you see on this picture there, there's a church there, kind of near the bottom, right in the center, that is the traditional site of the Garden of Gethsemane. If you were to go to Israel, you can go to this traditional site where they believe this is where Jesus went with His disciples. Obviously, it's a guess, and we don't know for sure, but this is the general area of where these events now took place in this Garden of Gethsemane.

What do we know about Gethsemane? The word is simple; it just means "oil press." That is that they had olive trees there, so they would press these olives and make olive oil in this location. It was obviously something that would happen in multiple places here on the Mount of Olives, but this is the Garden where they were at this time, Jesus stopping here deciding He would pray and telling this to His disciples. In verse 33, "And he took with him Peter and James and John, and began to be greatly distressed and troubled." At this point, Jesus stops the eleven, and He leaves eight and brings with Him the inner three, Peter, James, and John. We've seen them have this privileged position at times. If you go back into Mark 5, we saw they were the ones in the house when they saw a lifeless twelve-year-old girl come back to life, breathe again. They saw Jesus raise Jairus' daughter. They were also the ones that got to go up on the mountain and see Jesus transfigured, showing His glory before them, and the voice of God the Father speaking affirmation that Jesus was in fact His Son, and that they needed to listen to Him. Peter, James, and John, very privileged people, very privileged individuals. They get to now bear witness to Jesus in his humanity, this trouble, this sorrow that is upon Him.

So, why? not just maybe because they're privileged, and Jesus is allowing some to see these moments in His life. We also recognize that these three, each of them, have declared at one point or another in Mark's gospel, their loyalty to Jesus, that they are so committed to Jesus, they will die with Him. We go back to Mark 10. We saw James and John coming to Jesus saying, "Grant us to sit, one at your right hand and one at your left, in your glory."

And Jesus said, “You do not know what you are asking. Are you able to drink the cup that I drink...?”, and Jesus is telling them, are you able to suffer and die like I’m going to suffer and die? And of course, James and John say, oh, yeah, absolutely. We will suffer and die. And then, of course, just our last passage when we saw Peter declaring that he was better than all the other disciples, saying that he would even die with Jesus. So, each of these men, Peter, James, and John, all declaring, at some point, their loyalty to Jesus even unto death. They now have this moment to see Jesus facing His death, right before them, for them to see what it really means to follow Christ unto death, for them to have the pressure and get a glimpse into what this really would look like.

Our text tells us that Jesus “...began to be greatly distressed and troubled.” It’s actually hard and difficult to even translate this from Greek to English before us. I mean, it’s a “shuddering horror” that comes upon Jesus. It’s that sudden realization when something has now hit you, and it just drops in your stomach, and you feel this shaking. You feel this weight upon you. This is what has come upon Jesus, and one commentator states “The Greek word refers to a feeling of terrified amazement. In the face of the dreadful prospect of bearing God’s full fury against sin, Jesus was in the grip of terror.” This is the reality. Jesus isn’t thinking so much about what’s going to happen when people arrest Him, and the fact that He’s going to maybe get whipped or beaten for that. He’s actually even going to get crucified on the cross, all physical agony and terrible things, obviously. Jesus is looking beyond, as this commentator is mentioning and as our passage will show for us, the full fury of God’s wrath against sin, Jesus having to bear that. Of course He’s distressed, of course.

He’s troubled. That’s why in verse 34, He actually states it; “And he said to them, ‘My soul is very sorrowful, even to death. Remain here and watch.’ ” He now verbalizes and tells them, Peter, James, John, you need to know what is happening. This is a weight unlike any weight I’ve ever felt. He was “...sorrowful, even to the point of death.” His sorrow was so severe that it even threatened... this feeling that he had physically... even of how weighty this really was and how much this was heavy upon Him. He asks the three disciples, “Remain here and watch.” Now, it’s important to note at this point what Jesus is actually saying when He says, “Remain here and watch.” They would’ve understood what He was talking about, not in the sense of, okay, we’ll be Your bodyguards. Okay, we’ll watch out to make sure that no one

comes and tries anything, Jesus. That's not what He's saying. In fact, as we see later on in the passage, we recognize that what He's talking about is for their own good, for their own concern; "Remain here and watch." In the sense of actually pray and be alert for your own spiritual wellbeing, this is what Jesus is commanding them. They will understand it that way, and they'll actually fail miserably in doing this, that He was going to pray, and they were to be alert, watchful, and prayerful as well in this moment.

You see, the reality is Jesus knew the time that was before Him. Obviously, He was feeling it. He told them the distress and trouble that was upon Him. He knew the full fury of God's wrath was coming, and that was what He was facing, and He could've made several decisions at that point. He could've just tapped out. He could've said I'm done. You know, I've done way more than I need to do for these people. This is good. I don't need to do this for them. I've given them so much. I've proven the point. They're obviously faithless people. He has different decisions He could make, but what does He do? He commits to prayer. He goes to prayer. This is His decision, and the most troublesome and the most distressing time in His life, He will move to pray. He knew the time and the events that were before Him, and He responds with prayer. Is prayer your first response to trouble in life? Is it your main priority when hard times come upon you, and difficulty? I mean, Jesus is a man just like us, encountering the trouble, and obviously, if we had to do some comparison here, He wins out in terms of the magnitude of trouble that He experienced. His troubles were far greater than anything we will come close to, yet His response and decision in this moment is to pray. Is that your resolution? Are you resolved to pray and make that your first response and priority no matter what difficulty comes upon you?

We get the privilege of not just seeing that that's Jesus commitment, that's how He responds, and we can learn from that, but we learn more in this demonstration of prayer. In verses 35-36, we get more details about prayer. Prayer's not just a necessary first response. We get to learn about what prayer even looks like in verse 35; "And going a little farther, he fell on the ground and prayed that, if it were possible, the hour might pass from him." Jesus now journeys not much farther. He now separates Himself in fact from the three. He separated Himself and the three from the eight, and now it's just Him and the three, and He separates even from them. Luke 22:41 says, "And he withdrew from them about a stone's throw..." He's not out of sight

necessarily. The disciples could still see Him, the three that were there, Mark tells us that "...he fell on the ground and prayed..." This is probably a combination of the weight of what He was feeling and at the same time the reverence that He has obviously for God His Father. He summarizes the prayer for us and that's Jesus is asking that "...if it were possible, the hour might pass from him..." What is "the hour" referring to? It's not a surprise. It's what's already been mentioned, will continue to be mentioned, this suffering, this hour of darkness, this calamity, this wrath, that would come upon Him in His suffering. Jesus was seeking another option in the plan of God if in fact there was another option.

We even get the details of the prayer, not just the summary. Look at verse 36; "And he said, 'Abba, Father, all things are possible for you. Remove this cup from me. Yet not what I will, but what you will.' " This content, this simple statement that we get recorded for us. Because it's a blossoming and wonderful picture of prayer - what we can learn about prayer - what prayer even is - what it ought to look like. You see, Jesus was not just one that told His disciples when they asked, hey, Lord, teach us to pray, and He said, okay, for you guys, here's your formula. Here's some words. Here's what you ought to pray. Do it because you guys need it. I don't. I'm Jesus, but you guys better pray. That's not the case. Jesus clearly practiced what He was teaching. He was obviously resolved and committed to prayer. He would often times wake up early and have these times of prayer with His Father. And so, we get the content of one of these times. At this critical moment, He begins by saying, "Abba, Father..." This is just a unique and kind of unapparelled way to address God. If you looked at the Jews of that time and some of their prayers, they weren't calling God, Abba. It's the Aramaic word for father. That wasn't the typical address for God. Obviously, Abba was a word for father, and they would use it in family relationships, but this wasn't how they would pray to God, yet here's Jesus God's own Son saying, "Abba, Father..." speaking to Him.

Some people would like to go too far and say that this word Abba means daddy like only referring to a little child speaking to his father, and that's not necessarily the case because there's other times recorded where people use this word, and they're grown adults, and they're speaking to their father. So, it also means just father, and that's exactly what's probably happening here. It's really a term of affection and respect. This intimate relationship that Jesus has with His father, I mean, it's a wonderful and intimate expression,

and it stands alone as unique. And yet, we are now brought into this pattern of prayer because Paul tells us in Romans 8:15 and in Galatians 4:6 that we have the Holy Spirit within us, and that is the means by which we can cry out as sons that have been adopted into His family, and we cry out to God, “Abba! Father!” with the same intimate relationship with God. Jesus cries out to His Father, and He affirms His powerful character; “...all things...” ... “... all things are possible for you.” You think Jesus knew that? Obviously, Jesus knew the power of His Father. Jesus was there in Creation. He saw what happened. Jesus knew the events and the unfolding of what took place in the Old Testament. He knew the power of His Father, and yet, here He is in prayer, affirming what is true of God and repeating it and speaking it to God. He’s adoring and praising God for who He is; “... all things are possible for you.” As one commentator states, “Jesus knew that it was in the scope of God’s power and omniscience to provide an alternate plan of salvation if God desired.

After affirming and recognizing God’s character and His power in all things, He makes His request; “Remove this cup from me.” ... “Remove this cup from me.” To be absolutely clear, to make sure we’re understanding what He’s saying when He says, “Remove this cup from me,” we are talking about the cup that is the wrath of God that is poured out upon the sins of mankind. I mean, Jesus has already alluded to this in Mark 10 when He’s speaking to James and John; “You do not know what you are asking. Are you able to drink the cup that I drink, or to be baptized with the baptism with which I am baptized?” Jesus at that time, in Mark 10, recognizing what was before Him, that He would in fact Himself have to drink the cup of God’s wrath and punishment, not just for Himself, but as the representative of all of mankind and all of man’s sins. We know this because of even the Old Testament. There’s several references. I give you one in Isaiah 51:17 where the prophet states, “Wake yourself, wake yourself, stand up, O Jerusalem, you who have drunk from the hand of the Lord the cup of his wrath, who have drunk to the dregs the bowl, the cup of staggering.” This is what is before Jesus, and this is the focus of His request, not recognizing that He’ll be betrayed and arrested, not recognizing that He will be unfairly treated when he goes on trial, not recognizing of course the fact that He’ll be beaten and nailed to wood and crucified, not recognizing those things, but instead “...the cup of God’s wrath...” That needs to be clear and understood. This is a trial in which none of us can relate because it is the “...the cup of God’s wrath...” It is trouble and distress beyond what we can even comprehend.

And here's the amazing part – Jesus, acknowledging God's character, presents this request but then immediately surrenders and submits to His plan. Jesus then surrenders to the will of God stating, "Yet not what I will, but what you will." ... "Yet not what I will, but what you will." And herein is one of the most wonderful aspects of prayer by which we can learn. We can have this lesson before us, our own Savior teaching us to pray and modeling it for us. Look at His total resolution and resignation to do the will of God. This was His mission to begin with. In John 6:38, He stated, "For I have come down from heaven, not to do my own will but the will of him who sent me." This was what Jesus was all about and even in this prayer, even in this final moment, even in knowing what was before Him, He's still asking, petitioning, requesting, to God and falling into a place where He is resolved to do the will of God. His desire was conditioned upon the will of God. He refused to set His will in opposition to His Father. He would be obedient to His plan. We know God's plan, and that was to go through with this suffering death of Christ as Acts 2:23 states, "...this Jesus, delivered up according to the definite plan and foreknowledge of God, you crucified and killed by the hands of lawless men." This was the definite plan of God. God had planned this out. He didn't just know beforehand. He had set this into motion, and Jesus is willing to submit to that plan if that is what God sees as best.

This is where we really start to learn about prayer. This is where we really start to understand more of the details of prayer because when people think of prayer, and other religions have prayer, and people like to send good thoughts and good wishes and good vibes towards people, what is even happening in prayer? And so, one of the first things that people jump to is, oh, prayer. Great, the means by which I can tell God what I want, the means by which I can order God around, the means by which I can make God my personal genie. Right? It's a vending machine; I walk up, I push what I want, and I get it. That's not prayer. That is not how it works. And we have a perfect example before us who is more qualified to tell God what He wants. There's no one that comes close to Jesus, the perfect sinless One, who walked His life and actually maintained righteousness. And yet, what does He say? "...not what I will, but what you will." I mean, herein lies the beauty of prayer. Why do you pray? Not to get God to do what you want, not to make God fulfill your agenda, but to actually align your thinking and your desires with His. I mean, this is the wonderful goal of prayer. You're

no longer are thinking what you want, and you're no longer desiring it and having a death grip on it. You are learning to release it and align yourself with what God wants. One commentator states it this way, "...Jesus' appeal to His Father is based on the twin assumptions that, on the one hand, God can do all things, but on the other hand, God has a will which is to be accepted rather than altered by prayer. It is the blending of these two convictions which gives all prayer its mysterious dynamic and frustrates any quick fix approach. But it is not for us or even for Jesus as God's Son to assume that the God who can will answer every request will necessarily be willing to do so. Prayer so understood consists not in changing God's mind but in finding our own alignment with God's will."

This was Jesus' goal, and in a sense, this is how God answered Jesus' request. It is My will that You drink this cup, and I will give You every ounce of strength You need to get through it. I will give You everything that You possibly need, in terms of energy and will, to go to this cross and to bear My wrath. This is a wonderful lesson on prayer. This has to challenge us. Not only are we just completely slack in our approach to God, and we don't even pray as we ought to, and we don't even pray enough, but when we come, our attitude is so off. So, prayer is so necessary because it aligns us with God. It brings us back into doing His will not ours. It reminds us of what He is doing, what His goal is, what the priorities of the kingdom and the church are, and not our own. That becomes more revealed in Scripture. You think to yourself I don't even know how to pray. I don't even know what to say. I don't even know what I am I supposed to do, just whatever You want God, I guess. Pray His Word. We have His truth. You know what God wants. It's right here. You meditate on this. You look at Scripture, and you just pour yourself over it and over and over, and after you do that time and time again, you then are moved to prayer. You move yourself to praise God for who He is. You thank Him for all that He has done for you. You are broken before Him as you bring your sins before His throne of grace, and He forgives you anew, and you have fellowship with Him, restored, and then you walk out the door no longer living for yourself, a renewed commitment not for you but for Him, His goals, His priorities, His agenda. That is prayer. That is a beautiful relationship that you and I have with our God, and Jesus models it perfectly because that is what we will find that it does.

Before we see His response and what He ultimately decides after praying, we see how He speaks to the disciples and the danger of not praying – the

danger of not praying, how these disciples become, as often they are, an example for us of what not to do. In verse 37, “And he came and found them sleeping, and he said to Peter, ‘Simon, are you asleep? Could you not watch one hour?’” After this time of praying potentially for an actual hour, Jesus comes back to the three, Peter, James, and John and they’re asleep. Peter’s claims that he is better than all the other disciples, that he will follow Jesus unto death, and he has the ultimate commitment. They’re not looking too good anymore. Peter’s big talk about how loyal he is, it’s seeming to fall short now that here he is already asleep in this critical moment. In verse 38, Jesus says, “Watch and pray that you may not enter into temptation. The spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak.” Jesus now gives more instruction. We understand what He’s meaning when He’s telling them to watch, to be alert, to pray. This is what He means; the Greek word means to keep alert. Jesus was encouraging Peter, James, and John, to discern when they were under spiritual attack. They were not to let their self-confidence lull them to sleep spiritually.

Here’s the amazing thing in this, of all the moments in the life of Jesus on this earth, this was by far the most difficult for Him. This was the most difficult moment He would encounter on this earth, and His disciples knew it. He told them over and over again. We all know what it’s like to go through something hard, and you know what makes it worse? When you’re all alone. You’re going through something difficult, and no one’s there to support you. Sure, they’re in proximity, but they’re sleeping, no help at all from these men, and yet, what does He do in this most difficult hour of what He’s going through, trying to prepare and get His will aligned with God’s for the cross? He comes back to His disciples, and He cares for them by instructing them and teaching them even more. He warns them. He tells them to pray, not for Jesus, but He warns them, and He tells them to pray for themselves so that they don’t fall into temptation, and they don’t sin. It’s amazing. It’s remarkable that this is the heart of our Savior. He could just say I’m done with you guys. You’re worthless to Me, literally. I’ve got this. But He continues to pour into them by teaching them more about where they need to be spiritually vigilant. They need to be alert, and that looks like praying, that you don’t fall into temptation.

Jesus offers the reality of mankind and why we need this; “The spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak.” ... “The spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak.”

This is not a reference to the good general spirit and attitude of mankind. That's not what He's saying. Man realistically, if we look at just simply what Scripture teaches, man doesn't have a generally good spirit and a good attitude on his own that propels him towards morality or righteousness or holiness. This is a reference to God's Spirit. Jesus is saying the Holy Spirit is willing. God's Spirit is willing and ready to draw near to anyone who would call out for help. He is ready and willing to come and bring that help. That's why in Ephesians 5:18 we're commanded to "...be filled with the Spirit..." Whenever it is we fall into temptation, it's not because God was lacking. It's not because, like, God didn't show up. He's always there. He's there and ready to help anytime. If we would just simply cry and call out to Him, and this is the lesson that Jesus is teaching them; "The spirit indeed is willing..." ... "The spirit indeed is willing..." in any moment of temptation that you might encounter. But on the other hand, "...the flesh is weak." And this isn't just stating that humans are feeble and fatigued by nature, and we just get physically weak, this is stating that the human nature is by default sinful. This is what Paul is talking about in Romans 7:18 when he says, "For I know that nothing good dwells in me, that is, in my flesh. For I have the desire to do what is right, but not the ability to carry it out." And again, in Romans 8:8, "Those who are in the flesh cannot please God." This is the reality; when you're in your flesh you "...cannot please God."

Prayer is key to thriving in this fight for holiness as we mortify our flesh through lust. Like the disciples, we have the tension before us in our lives. We long to submit to the Spirit, and we long to obey God, but we are still in this body, and we still have the surfacing of our old ways and tendencies and practices towards sins that arise. So, how do we approach this struggle which is a war for our soul? Be watchful and pray. You must be watchful and pray. Failing to watch and pray is like going into battle without a strategy at all. You have no game plan. Many believers fail on account of this. They don't even prepare for the battle through prayer. The temptation comes, and then you want to try and call out to God as if you know somehow that's going to work, and that final hail Mary pass that will work and secure your ability to exit righteous in the process. And the reality is you didn't go into it submitted to God in the first place. You weren't ready. You weren't watching. You weren't alert. You weren't prayerful, so what do you think was going to happen? You will fail every time, because how is your flesh at handling these situations? Terrible; it reverts back to sinful practices. You must walk in a consistent pattern of submitting to the Spirit, being

watchful, being alert, praying at all times on all occasions, for all purposes, that God might get you through whatever temptation you encounter. Are you disciplined to be watchful and prayerful at all times so that you're prepared for the battle when it comes? We have to pray. It's terrible. It's tragic, if we don't; it's catastrophic to our own well-being.

Finally, we see Jesus' resolve in light of His prayer time. The determination that came from prayer - the determination. In verses 39-42, "And again he went away and prayed, saying the same words." Jesus left a second time to be by Himself and pray more as if it wasn't enough to already for an hour, and Mark summarizes this prayer time as Jesus saying the same words, coming back and trying to align Himself with God's plan and God's will. And Jesus remains steadfast in prayer while the disciples fail to heed His warnings; in verse 40, "And again he came and found them sleeping, for their eyes were very heavy, and they did not know what to answer him." These men who profess such loyalty and commitment, continuing to fall short. Clearly, they were not convinced of the severity of the situation that was in front of them. You see, when an important test comes up... It's simple. Students will realize that this test is too important. They'll sacrifice all, even sleep, for the sake of passing the test. A committed employee will certainly put in extra hours and sacrificing anything including sleep to meet a deadline. If people understand the severity, they will rise up, but here are the disciples professing the loyalty and the commitment they have to Christ but obviously not understanding the situation in front of them because they just keep on asleep.

The problem is not their fatigue but their conviction of the situation and its significance. In verse 41, "And he came the third time and said to them, 'Are you still sleeping and taking your rest? It is enough; the hour has come. The Son of Man is betrayed into the hands of sinners.'" Jesus departed even a third time to pray more and then returned to find them sleeping again. He tells them that their rest is sufficient; "It is enough; the hour has come." Once again, the reference to this hour of suffering, this hour of trial, this greatest hour of darkness that was for Jesus. He states that the "The Son of Man is [being] betrayed [this is happening right now] into the hands of sinners." This is what is right around the corner for them. These sinners were Judas Iscariot and those that He had brought to arrest Jesus as verse 42 tells us; "Rise, let us be going; see, my betrayer is at hand."

Jesus called the inner three to rise from their sleep and to go with Him. And notice what kind of going this is. This is not fleeing. This isn't running away. I mean, how easy could that've been for Jesus. He wanted to. Alright, let's get out. We've got to get out of here. No. It says, "Rise, let us..." Go right into what is planned. So, how do you think the prayer time worked out for Jesus? What was the result of that time where He spoke to His Father? Clearly, there was an alignment of His will with God's will, that is He is embracing this hour. He's embracing this suffering that is in front of Him "...let us be going..." Let us go right into this betrayer and this hour that is before us. Jesus' determination to submit to and obey His Father's will is really the determination that comes from a man that has labored with God in prayer.

Are you determined to spend time in prayer so that you might have this determination to follow through in obedience and submission to God? This passage is the most significant prayer you'll find in all of Scripture because in it you find the example that you have, to make the decision to pray to begin with. You have to actually recognize where you are living and the situation you're in and to recognize that prayer is necessary, and then you must pray in the correct way with the right attitude, aligning your heart with God's, your desires with His, recognizing when you fail to do that, you will fall into temptation, and you will sin, but when you do follow through, when you are alert, watchful and prayerful, you will see that you will have a resolve, a determination that no one can thwart, a determination to do the will of God because you'll be convinced. You'll be convicted. Why? Because you have labored with God in prayer. This is significant. This is the type of people we need to be. Prayer is not a nice addition. It is not comparable to any of these other religions or meditative practices that exist in the world; that is not even close. We're talking about something that changes you to be more like Christ, to do what God would have you to do. Let us be that people.