



Loving Jesus, Loving People, Plowing a Counter-Culture

SERMON TEXT: Matthew 26: 30-46

KEY POINT: Jesus invites all who trust in him to come and partake of the New Covenant.

FOR LEADERS

- **Digitized!** *As you undoubtedly aware, the COVID-19 situation has got us on lockdown for a little while. As a church, we cannot meet in gatherings over 200 people, and we are recommending that all of our Discipleship Communities opt to meet digitally for the next week or so until we are confident that the risk of infection has abated. Resources for our leaders will be provided as usual and, as leaders, we encourage you to use any and all means to help digitally foster community for your groups! We would recommend using a service like Zoom.us to host a video conference for your group to gather digitally during your normal meeting time. You can sign up for a free account via their website which will allow you to host a 40-minute conference for your Community for free.*
- **Emergence Connect!** *We are speeding up our timeline! Given the current situation with COVID-19, we will be onboarding our entire church from Realm to Emergence Connect immediately. Leaders, you may now invite / add your group members to your groups, create your weekly group events, and invite your group members to begin interacting on Realm! If you have any questions at all, please don't hesitate to reach out to your Campus Coordinator or our Pastor of Discipleship, Alex Houser, at Alex.Houser@emergencenj.org or via Emergence Connect!*

GETTING STARTED

- [1] Communities Video:** Watch this week's community extras video!
- [2] Icebreaker:** Given the current situation with COVID-19, what precautions are you taking?
- [3] Opener:** What stood out to you from the sermon this week? Did you find anything particularly helpful or eye opening?

CURSING & BLESSING

Ryan began this week by looking to this passage to help us better understand what is going on in Jesus' heart during the final minutes before his arrest.

Ask for a volunteer to read Jeremiah 17:5-8.

- [1]** What does it look like to go through trials trusting in man, or making "flesh your strength?" How does this compare to going through trials trusting in the Lord?
- [2]** Compare and contrast what this might have looked like with the trial Jesus is going through. How does Christ's example challenge you, personally, when facing trials?
- [3]** What trials have you personally faced in your life? Looking back on them, are there any ways you feel you could have better trusted in the Lord? How does this challenge you in trials you may be facing today?

PRIDE & HUMILITY

Ask for a volunteer to read Matthew 26:30-35.

In our passage this week, we see Peter display an overconfidence in his own ability and faithfulness to follow Jesus. The other disciples immediately follow suit, and this is perhaps the biggest part of Peter's downfall. Ryan



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went on to explain that God often uses the confidence of the prideful for their humiliation, and the humbleness of the lowly for their exaltation.

- [4]** When do you, personally, find that you are most tempted with arrogance or overconfidence?
- [5]** Can you recall a time where your own pride has led to humiliation?

Ask for a volunteer to read 1 Peter 5:6.

- [6]** Have you ever seen God move like this before in someone’s life? Explain.

FRUIT IN THE GARDEN

Ask for a volunteer to read Matthew 26:36-46.

Here, James, Peter and John receive a specific warning to be watchful and pray so that they may withstand the coming temptation. He also adds that “The spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak.”

- [7]** Think about your own approach toward temptation. Are there any areas that you feel are lacking diligence or sober-minded sweat? How do you personally strive to stay sober-minded to temptation and sin?

While the disciples display apathy towards what Jesus warns them about, Jesus himself is the model of watchfulness and diligence. In the sermon, Ryan offered 5 reasons for Jesus’ fruitfulness:

1. Jesus entered his temptation in Community.
2. Jesus prays.
3. Jesus enjoys intimacy with the Father.
4. Jesus knows the Father welcomes emotional honesty.
5. Jesus submits to the will of the Father joyfully.

- [8]** In what way(s) can godly friends help us in our trials? Why do you think that we are sometimes so hesitant to seek out such friends to help us in our struggles?

- [9]** Consider that Jesus’ closest friend fail him...how does he respond? How should that teach us to respond to our own friends when they (inevitably) fail us?

- [10]** Jesus displays a deep, emotional connection with God, and prays as one who knows him close and loves him dearly. How would you describe your own views / relationship with God? Would you say that it’s close or distant, and what needs to change to make it closer?

- [11]** Most of us realize that God knows us more intimately than we know ourselves, but why is it that we sometimes feel as if we need to “hold back” our feelings from Him? Which of your own emotions do you find the most difficult to bring to God in prayer?

- [12]** Are there any areas of your own life where you, personally, feel apprehensive about submitting to God’s will? How does Jesus’ example here help or encourage you in this?



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BONUS ROUND

[13] COVID-19 has disrupted nearly everyone’s life...how are you, personally, going to use this season of uncertainty to glorify God and drive down deeper roots of faith?

PRAYER

- [1] Pray that our church would be a powerful witness to an unbelieving world during this time of trial.
[2] Pray that God would reveal areas of your life where you’ve become arrogant or are drifting away from intimacy with Him.
[3] Pray that the Lord would make you humble like Jesus in the challenges ahead of you.

LEADER’S COMMENTARY

- Wild speculations abound over what exactly Jesus is most troubled by in the Garden. This is a good opportunity to exercise interpretive caution in not going beyond what is written. The truth is that Matthew gives us no clues as to Jesus’ internal state, beyond telling us that he was “sorrowful and troubled” (v. 37). Contextually, we know that this has to do with his suffering on the cross. Moreover, Matthew has already taught us to think of his death as a ransom for (20:28) and as a sacrifice that brings forgiveness (26:28).
• One common suggestion here is that Jesus is worried about being abandoned by the Father. While it is true that Jesus suffered as a substitute, “to bear the sins of many” (Heb 9:28), “becoming a curse for us” (Gal 3:13), and that God “made him to be sin” (2 Cor 5:21), it is not biblical to say that Jesus was abandoned by the Father. Jesus’ statement, “My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?” is no more an indication that God had actually forsaken him than it was when David uttered these same words in Psalm 22:1. Rather, this is an expression of the anguish that Jesus felt on the cross, and his identification as the suffering Davidic Messiah. The Father was with Jesus up to and through his suffering, which is why he could exclaim, in Luke 23:46, “Father, into your hands I commit my spirit!” Thus, we should avoid language that suggests that Jesus is in dread of being deserted by the Father, and especially the heretical idea that on the cross Jesus somehow ceased to be part of the Trinity.
• In the podcast this week, we will address the incorrect idea that Jesus went to hell when he died.