

## Day Ten

### Jesus: Real, Relevant, Raw and Radical!

#### The Battle rages

***Luke 22:41(NLT) He walked away, about a stone's throw, and knelt down and prayed,***

***Matthew 26:36-39(NLT) Then Jesus went with them to the olive grove called Gethsemane, and he said, "Sit here while I go over there to pray." 37 He took Peter and Zebedee's two sons, James and John, and he became anguished and distressed. 38 He told them, "My soul is crushed with grief to the point of death. Stay here and keep watch with me." 39 He went on a little farther and bowed with his face to the ground, praying,***

There is not a single human being that has lived, or that is alive today, who can completely comprehend the magnitude of this moment. Scholars have debated it, skeptics have doubted it, and believers have argued about it, but in the end, only Jesus experienced it. What happened in the garden? Instead of making assumptions and coming to conclusions let's have Jesus' Words lead us. What happens in the garden can only be understood from what Jesus says, what He does and what He experiences. He went further than anybody else and He is alone with the Father. The crowd of Palm Sunday is gone. The twelve He was with in the upper room is now eleven. He whittles the eleven down to only three: Peter, James and John. Then He is alone.

The pressure is mounting. Place yourself there, feel the tension, a grove filled with olive trees. In normal circumstances, this is a place of peace, a place of tranquility, a place of rest. But this night, rest is absent and war is raging. This quiet place has become a war zone, albeit, a spiritual war zone. The very fact that this takes place in the Garden of Gethsemane is significant. ***Gethsemane means "oil press."*** Jesus withdraws in prayer because the weight of what is about to happen presses in on Him. The enormity of what is about to take place is now squarely on Jesus' shoulders. There is no retreat or going back. This is a fight 'til the bitter end, and our Champion is fighting on His knees. The enemy is working, but so is the Father.

Remember, Jesus was one hundred percent God and one hundred percent man. In His humanity, the reality of this moment is daunting. He takes Peter, James and John apart and He is anguished and distressed. Jesus is visibly shaken. He is not just visibly shaken, He tells them: ***V38 "He told them, 'My soul is crushed with grief to the point of death. Stay here and keep watch with me.'"***

What is going on here? Is Jesus afraid of the cross? Is He afraid of the suffering? Listen to His Words. Listen to what He says: ***“My soul is crushed with grief to the point of death. Stay here and keep watch with me.”*** Note the second part of Verse 38, it will clue us in. ***“Stay here and keep watch.”*** Is Jesus telling them to watch for someone coming? Absolutely not. He is telling them to pray and engage in this war that is raging. He tells them that His soul is crushed with grief to the point of death. In other words, “I am fighting for my life; fight with Me.” The three men He trusted the most, the three He shared with more intimately, the three that saw Him on the Mount of Transfiguration, He is asking them to be (pardon the expression) in the foxhole with Him.

How do we know this is true? Remember just hours ago they were in the upper room. In this discourse, there are a couple of clues we should not miss. We could easily skip over it, but it will help us to understand this moment. ***John 13:2-3(NLT)*** *“It was time for supper, and the devil had already prompted Judas, son of Simon Iscariot, to betray Jesus. 3 Jesus knew that the Father had given him authority over everything and that he had come from God and would return to God.”* In all of this, don’t miss the fact that the devil is working overtime. It might be subtle, but it is as real as the nose on your face. The disciples are clueless. Jesus tried to clue them in, but they, just like us, cannot see the forest from the trees. The devil has already trapped Judas, but Jesus clearly states His authority over everything.

We find another clue in Chapter 14. ***John 14:30-31(NLT)*** *“I don’t have much more time to talk to you, because the ruler of this world approaches. He has no power over me, 31 but I will do what the Father requires of me, so that the world will know that I love the Father. Come, let’s be going.”* Jesus clearly tells them the devil is on his way, but Jesus reiterates again, the devil has no power over Him. Then notice the next phrase: ***31 “But I will do what the Father requires of me.”*** Jesus’ mind was not being made up in the garden; His mind was already made up before He ever came to the garden.

The devil is doing everything he can to stop Jesus. He wanted to stop Him from fulfilling the very purpose He came for. Jesus is not battling His own will in the garden. He is standing against the enemy’s attack on His very life. The anguish that He is in and the grief that His soul is in, as well as His physical condition, tells us that He is in a battle for His life, but we know that He knew what He was in for. He was already prepared because He saw the enemy coming and told His disciples. He also told them that the enemy has no power over Him. The devil is a murderer from the beginning, according to Jesus (***John 8:44***). Jesus said that the thief comes to steal, kill and to destroy. (***John 10:10***) Killing is the devil’s nature. The devil did not try to kill Jesus on the cross; he tried to kill Jesus before He could go to the cross. The cross is where Jesus suffered because of God’s wrath against sin.

Jesus is not afraid of the suffering of the cross, the physical pain of the cross. He is grieved over the consequences of the cross. He is grieved over the fact that He has to bear the sin of the world and that means separation from the Father. **Isaiah**

**53:10-12(NLT)** ***“But it was the Lord’s good plan to crush him and cause him grief.***

*Yet when his life is made an offering for sin, he will have many descendants. He will enjoy a long life, and the Lord’s good plan will prosper in his hands. **11** When he sees all that is accomplished by his anguish, he will be satisfied. And because of his experience, my righteous servant will make it possible for many to be counted righteous, for he will bear all their sins. **12 I will give him the honors of a victorious soldier, because he exposed himself to death. He was counted among the rebels. He bore the sins of many and interceded for rebels.”***

Jesus overcame the devil in the pressing of the garden. He overcame sin in the suffering on the cross. Isaiah prophesied that Jesus would be given the honors of a victorious soldier because He exposed himself to death. Hallelujah to our Champion! He was pressed to the point of death, but the devil had nothing on Him. Jesus shows us how to overcome when the battle rages. How do we win these spiritual battles that we find ourselves in? The same way Jesus did. When we are pressed. When we are tempted. When we are tested. When our souls are stricken with grief. When what we are facing is more than we can bear. Then we do what Jesus showed us to do; we press into our Father’s presence.

We do what our Champion showed us to do...

### **Prayer:**

- **Ask the Lord to give you a discerning heart and mind so that you won’t be ignorant of the devil’s devices.**
- **Pray for the Lord’s strength during the battle.**
- **Remind yourself that the battle is the Lord’s and victory belongs to you.**
- **Thank the Lord for what He did for us, not only on the cross, but also in the garden.**
- **Pray for others who might be struggling in this spiritual war.**