



# THE CUP

Preaching and Teaching Resources

ADRIAN ROGERS





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# The Cup

**SERMON REFERENCE:** Luke 22:39-46

**LWF SERMON NUMBER:** #1776

In Luke 22, Jesus told His disciples about His coming crucifixion at the Last Supper. When He later came to the garden of Gethsemane, He prayed three times: Lord, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me.

This wasn't a literal cup; rather, a symbolic cup, meaning to experience something fully. Was He afraid of His coming crucifixion? Did the cup symbolize the physical pain He would soon feel? What was it that caused Jesus to dread the drinking of that cup? It was sin; every sin through all the ages polluted the cup, as well as the punishment of that sin. It was not the physical pain He would feel that caused Him to plead for another way. No; it was the vileness and filth of sin He would soon take on that caused Him agony. And the silence from heaven said, there is no other way.

God will never overlook sin, for He is holy. By His holiness, He has sworn that sin will be punished. So, when Jesus took on our sins, God the Father, in holy justice, treated Jesus as if He were a sinner, and punished Him as such. Jesus knew this, yet He consumed the contents of the cup anyway. He chose it.

In His holy humanity, Jesus shrank back. But in His divine love, He said, "Thy will be done."

Jesus wrestled between His holy humanity and His divine love. His love won. Adrian Rogers says, "The cross is God's way to punish sin and forgive the sinner at the same time."

There is one more cup, one that we drink. Just before Jesus went into Gethsemane, Jesus was at the last supper with his disciples. He told them: this is the New Testament in my blood. Drink it.

This is the cup of communion, and it is ours to drink.

He drank the cup of sin that we might have the cup of redemption.

## Life Application

Have you accepted the cup of communion? Have you wrestled with submitting your will to the Father? Can you truly say, "Not my will, but Yours be done?" Adrian Rogers says, "As I look at dark Gethsemane, there are two things it tells me. Number one, I want to hate sin. Number two, I want to love Jesus Christ."



# The Cup

SERMON REFERENCE: Luke 22:39-46

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## 1) INTRODUCTION

- a) To the east of the city of Jerusalem, there is a mountain called the Mount of Olives.
  - i) It sits about 300 feet above the city on a limestone ridge.
  - ii) On the western slope, there is a garden that contains primarily olive trees.
    - (1) Eight ancient olive trees stand there.
      - (a) Some believe that they go back to the time of Christ.
      - (b) They stand like sentinels watching over the garden where Jesus came to pray.
    - (2) All the way back to the second century, tradition tells us that this is Gethsemane.
      - (a) The word "Gethsemane" means "oil press".
        - (i) In this garden, there was a giant press used to press the oil from the olives.
  - b) Jesus would often come to this place and kneel and pray, but this night was like no other night.
    - i) Jesus had been up on Mount Zion.
      - (1) There in an Upper Room, He had the Last Supper with His disciples.
        - (a) He talked about His coming crucifixion and betrayal.
    - ii) The Lord Jesus, needing prayer, left Mount Zion and crossed the Kidron Brook.
      - (1) Scholars tell us that when animal sacrifices were made on the Temple Mount, the blood would run down into the Kidron Brook.
        - (a) It would literally be crimson with blood.
      - (2) Jesus crossed that brook running crimson with blood.
        - (a) It must have reminded the Lord Jesus that soon His blood would flow in that same spot on Moriah, the Temple Mount.
    - iii) In Gethsemane, Jesus kneeled at the rock of agony and prayed.
      - (1) Three times Jesus prayed.
      - (2) Luke 22:42
        - (a) He didn't speak about a literal cup.
        - (b) He used a metaphor or a figure of speech.
          - (i) A symbol meaning to experience something fully, or to take something into one's very being, as one would take a cup and put it to his lips.
  - c) It was the cup of agony that Jesus drank in Gethsemane, and He drank it there alone.
    - i) When the Lord Jesus began His ministry, when He performed miracles, the crowds followed Him.
      - (1) They loved the miracles that He did.
    - ii) But when Jesus began to speak to them of deeper eternal matters and of full surrender to His Lordship, they began to leave Him.
      - (1) They left Him in droves.
    - iii) The Lord Jesus asked His disciples if they would also go away.
      - (1) John 6:66-67



- (2) One of the twelve left Him.
  - (a) Judas went to betray Him.
  - (b) Then, He only had eleven.
- iv) Out of the eleven, He chose three disciples to go and watch and pray with Him.
  - (1) But those three failed Him.
    - (a) They fell asleep.
- v) Only Jesus the Son and God the Father were there.
  - (1) But in Gethsemane, Jesus knew that soon God the Father must turn His back on Him.
  - (2) Jesus would drink that cup alone in Gethsemane.
- d) Luke 22:39-46
- e) In today's message, we will look at the cup that Jesus drank in the Garden of Gethsemane.

## 2) THE CONTENTS OF THE CUP

- a) The contents of the cup were so vile, so filthy, and so terrifying, that the very Son of God shrank back with dread.
- b) Was it physical death by crucifixion that caused such dread that was in that cup?
  - i) Never has a form of execution been known to man that was more ignominiously painful, hurtful, and shameful than death by crucifixion.
  - ii) But others had died that way.
    - (1) Other martyrs had gone to their deaths, not with dread, but saying that they would gladly die for the Lord Jesus Christ.
  - iii) It wasn't physical death that the Lord Jesus shrank back from, not even the pains of a crucifixion.
- c) Was it some extraordinary attack of Satan that was in that cup?
  - i) Jesus had already met Satan in the wilderness.
    - (1) He had already conquered Satan.
      - (a) Luke 4:1-14
  - ii) Satan still hounded Him all the way to the cross, but Jesus had no fear or dread of Satan.
    - (1) John 12:31
- d) Was it the betrayal of Judas that was in that cup?
- e) Was it the failure of the disciples that was in that cup?
  - i) Jesus was disappointed, but there is a difference between disappointment and dread.
- f) The pollution of sin was in that cup.
  - i) The Bible says that Jesus was tempted in all points as we are, and yet He was without sin.
    - (1) Hebrews 4:15
  - ii) In order for Him to redeem us, our sin had to be placed upon Jesus.
    - (1) 2 Corinthians 5:21
  - iii) The sin of the ages was in that cup.
    - (1) Our sin was in that cup.
      - (a) Not some of our sin, but all of our sin.
    - (2) Every vile thought, every wicked deed, every hurtful and hateful thing was in that cup.



- (3) The sins of every people group in every city and nation and the whole world were in that cup.
- (4) All of the sins of the past and all of the sins of the future were in that cup.
  - (a) Rape, sodomy, child abuse, Hitler's gas ovens, murder, blasphemy, etc., were in that cup.
- iv) Jesus did not just bear sin, He became sin.
  - (1) He Himself did not sin; He never sinned.
  - (2) But He was made sin for us.
    - (a) He carried that sin to the cross.
- v) We may not understand what sin is, but Jesus Christ knew.
  - (1) Jesus had seen sin turn angels into demons and men into beasts.
  - (2) Sin is a clenched fist in the face of God.
- vi) Jesus knew that when He drank that cup, He would be numbered with the transgressors.
  - (1) He, whose name is holy and who is the antithesis of sin, would become sin.
- g) The punishment of sin was in that cup.
  - i) Jesus knew that the punishment, not of some sin but of all sin and not of some people but all people, would be upon Him.
    - (1) One man, the God-man, would bear it all.
      - (a) When He did, God the Father would have to treat Him as if He had committed the sins of all of the people.
        - (i) Romans 8:32
        - (ii) Isaiah 53:10
      - (b) When Jesus took our place, God the Father, in justice, had to treat Him as He would treat us.
  - ii) Jesus knew that He would suffer the very fires of Hell.
    - (1) Jesus would receive God's wrath.
  - iii) Jesus Christ, who had been in the bosom of the Father from eternity, would be separated from God on that cross.
    - (1) Matthew 27:46
      - (a) "God is of purer eyes than to behold iniquity."
        - (i) God the Father had to turn His back on God the Son.
  - iv) At the cross, the sins of the world were distilled and the eternities were compressed.
    - (1) Jesus, being infinite, bore in a finite period of time what we, being finite, would bear in an infinite period of time.
      - (a) Jesus Christ suffered an eternity of Hell on that cross.
  - v) Only those in Hell can begin to know the price that Jesus paid, but they will never know the extent because they are only paying for their sin.
    - (1) Jesus paid for all of the sin of all of the people for all time.
      - (a) No wonder Jesus said, "Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from Me."
        - (i) Matthew 26:39



### 3) THE CONSUMPTION OF THE CUP (LUKE 22:42)

- a) Jesus drank it to the bitter dregs.
- b) This was not some charade; this was real.
- c) If we don't understand why Jesus shrank back, then we don't know what was in the cup.
  - i) In His humanity and in His holiness, seeing the vileness and the filth of sin, Jesus asked if there were some other way.
    - (1) The silence from Heaven said that there was no other way.
  - ii) In His holy humanity, Jesus shrank back.
    - (1) But in His divine love, He said, "Nevertheless, not My will, but Thine be done."
      - (a) Luke 22:42
- d) Jesus paid a price.
  - i) We will never know the agony that the Son of God endured on the cross.
  - ii) Jesus did not have to die; He had a choice.
    - (1) John 10:18
  - iii) Jesus was the only man who ever chose to die.
    - (1) Romans 6:23
      - (a) There was no sin in Him.
        - (i) There would have been no death in Him.
      - (2) Some may say that those who commit suicide choose to die.
        - (a) They just choose to die a little sooner.
          - (i) Hebrews 9:27
    - iv) Jesus was the only man who could say, "No man takes My life from Me. I lay it down of Myself."
      - (1) John 10:18
  - e) Luke 22:42
    - i) Satan became Satan.
      - (1) Isaiah 14:13-14
      - (2) Satan said to God the Father, "Not Your will, but mine be done."
    - ii) But Jesus said in His humanity, though He were very God to very God, "Not My will, but Thine be done."
    - iii) Adam, following Satan, in the Garden of Eden, said, "Not Thy will, but mine," and ruined the human race.
    - iv) In another garden, Jesus (the last Adam) said, "Not My will, but Thine," and redeemed the human race.
      - (a) That was the consumption of the cup.
    - v) The Lord Jesus willingly, voluntarily, and victoriously said, "Not My will but Thine."
      - (1) Had He said no, every one of us would have gone to Hell forever.
      - (2) Had He said no, all of those who had already gone to the place of redemption, where Jesus had promised to pay, would have had to come out and go to Hell.
      - (3) It was because Jesus suffered, bled, and died on the cross that we can be redeemed.
        - (a) Jesus took our sin and carried it to the cross.



- f) God will never overlook sin; He cannot overlook sin.
  - i) God is holy, and by His holiness He has sworn that sin will be punished.
    - (1) All sin is punished; no sin goes unpunished.
  - ii) If God were to let even one-half of one sin go unpunished, then God would no longer be holy.
    - (1) The chief attribute of God is not love; it is holiness.
    - (2) God must punish sin.
- g) The cross is God's way to punish sin and forgive the sinner at the same time.
  - i) And that is by having an innocent, sinless sin-bearer take sin and carry it to the cross.
    - (1) 2 Corinthians 5:21
- h) There is another cup that we drink.
  - i) That is the Lord's Supper.
  - ii) Before Jesus went to Gethsemane, He was at the Last Supper with His disciples.
    - (1) Luke 22:20
  - iii) Jesus drank the cup of sin that we might have the cup of redemption.

#### 4) THE COMMUNION OF THE CUP

- a) We drink the cup of communion because we meet Jesus here.
  - i) He takes our sin.
    - (1) He drinks it down.
  - ii) We take His righteousness.
    - (1) We drink it in.
- b) God forbid that we should fail to be moved by Gethsemane.
  - i) Matthew 26:38
    - (1) Had not an angel come to minister to Him, He would have died there.
  - ii) When He perspired, the sweat was blood.
    - (1) Luke 22:44
    - (2) The minute capillaries had ruptured.
    - (3) He was in such extreme duress that blood dripped from His brow.
  - iii) Sometimes Jesus would pray standing, sometimes He would lift His face to Heaven to pray, and sometimes Jesus would kneel and pray.
    - (1) But in Gethsemane, He fell on His face.
  - iv) Can you imagine what He must have looked like when Judas led that group into the garden?
    - (1) His face was matted with blood and dirt.
    - (2) His heart was broken.
      - (a) This was the way they found Him when Judas planted that kiss of shame upon the Lord Jesus Christ.
  - v) Matthew 26:37-38
    - (1) The word "heavy" here has the idea of being separated or alone.
    - (2) Before the nails ever went into the hands of Jesus, they had already come into His soul.
  - vi) Gethsemane was the vestibule of Calvary.
    - (1) The victory really was won in Gethsemane, not on Calvary.
      - (a) It was paid for at Calvary.





- (b) It was won in Gethsemane.
- vii) Jesus knew what He would go through.
  - (1) Matthew 26:38
    - (a) In this verse, the word “exceeding” has the idea of being surrounded with no way out, no escape, no hope, and absolute abject suffering.
- viii) Jesus spoke of His agony.
  - (1) The place where Jesus prayed was called, “The Rock of Agony”.
    - (a) The “agon” was an athletic contest in Greek.
      - (i) It was a wrestling match.
  - (2) Jesus was wrestling.
    - (a) He didn’t wrestle with God the Father.
      - (i) The great desire of His heart was to please the Father.
    - (b) He didn’t wrestle with Satan.
      - (i) He never needed to.
      - (ii) He had absolute authority over Satan.
    - (c) Jesus wrestled with Himself.
      - (i) There was His holy humanity and His divine love, and there was a contest.
        - 1. But love won.
          - a. Love paid the price in dark Gethsemane.

## 5) CONCLUSION

- a) There is a story that comes down to us through the ages.
  - i) It is said that Nero had forty men in his army.
    - (1) These forty men were wrestlers.
      - (a) They would go to the agon to wrestle for Nero.
      - (b) They were the finest athletes in all of Rome.
        - (i) They would chant, “We are forty wrestlers wrestling for thee, O Emperor. To win for thee the victory and for thee the victor’s crown.”
  - ii) Word came to Nero that some in the army had become Christians.
    - (1) To be a Christian was a crime worthy of death.
    - (2) Nero sent word to his commander-in-chief, Vespasian, to execute any Christian found in his troops.
  - iii) Vespasian told the wrestlers that if any confessed to being a Christian, then they would be put to death.
  - iv) When he asked if there were any Christians, he wasn’t prepared for what happened.
    - (1) As one man, forty men stepped forward.
      - (a) All forty of the wrestlers had given their hearts and lives to Jesus Christ.
      - (b) They believed that Jesus Christ is the Son of God.
  - v) Vespasian asked them to renounce their faith.
    - (1) Not one of them moved.
    - (2) He thought, surely, they would renounce their faith.
      - (a) It was in the middle of winter; Vespasian built a fire.



- (b) He took from them their helmets, breastplates, shoes, shirts, and undergarments.
  - (i) He stripped them down to absolutely nothing in sub-zero weather and turned them away in the darkness.
- (c) He told them that they would stay out in the darkness until they froze.
- (d) If any of them decided to renounce Christ, then all they would have to do was come to the fire.
- vi) Vespasian heard the chant that he had heard many times, but it was different.
  - (1) They chanted, "We are forty wrestlers wrestling for Thee, O Christ. To win for Thee the victory and for Thee the victor's crown."
  - (2) As the cold grew deeper, they continued to chant, but it grew weaker and weaker.
    - (a) They were being numbed by the cold.
- vii) The chanting stopped, and Vespasian saw the form of one of the soldiers coming across the ice, turning his back on Jesus Christ and coming to the fire.
  - (1) Vespasian thought the others would follow soon.
    - (a) Instead, he heard in the darkness, "Thirty-nine wrestlers wrestling for Thee, O Christ. To win for Thee the victory and for Thee the victor's crown."
- viii) Vespasian took from his head his helmet, from his chest his armor, from his back his shirt, from his feet his shoes, and ran toward the thirty-nine saying, "Forty wrestlers wrestling for Thee, O Christ. To win for Thee the victory and for Thee the victor's crown."
- b) The Lord Jesus wrestled for you.
  - i) Do you want to wrestle for Him?
    - (1) Are you a soldier of the cross?
- c) Gethsemane tells us two things:
  - i) We should hate sin.
  - ii) We should love Jesus Christ.
- d) Do you know Jesus personally? If not, you can pray to Him today by asking Him to come into your life.
- e) Call upon Jesus today. Repent (turn) from your sins, and turn to Jesus. Ask Him to forgive you of your sins, and acknowledge Him as Lord of your life.
  - i) Romans 3:23
  - ii) Romans 10:9-10
  - iii) Romans 10:13
  - iv) Acts 16:31
  - v) John 3:16



# The Cup

**SERMON REFERENCE:** Luke 22:39-46

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To the east of the city of Jerusalem, there's a little mountain, it's called the Mount of Olives. It's about 300 feet above the city of Jerusalem, a limestone ridge, it's about a mile in length. It's about 2,700 feet about sea level, and on the western slope of the Mount of Olives is a garden. If you go to Israel today, you can visit that garden; I have visited it many times. And in that garden, there's some beautiful shrubs, primarily olive trees. As a matter of fact, eight ancient olive trees stand there, some believe that they go back to the time of Christ. Their massive trunks are knotted and gnarled. And they stand like silent sentinels, watching over that garden where Jesus came to pray. We believe that it is the exact spot. Tradition, all the way back to the second century, says this is the place; it's Gethsemane. The word Gethsemane literally means "oil press". Because it was in this garden that they had a giant press to press the olive oil from the olives. Jesus would often come to this place and He would kneel and pray.

But this night was like no other night. Jesus had been up on Mount Zion, there in an upper room He had the last supper with His disciples. He talked about His coming crucifixion and prior to that, His betrayal. And Judas had gone out away in the darkness to do that dastardly deed. Then the Lord Jesus needing prayer, left Zion, Mount Zion and He came down and crossed a brook. The brook was Kidron. And scholars tell us that when they would make animal sacrifices on the temple mount, that the blood would run down into the Kidron, into that brook. And it would literally be crimson with blood. And when Jesus left that upper room and came down and crossed the valley to go up to the place, He had to cross that brook running crimson with blood. Surely it must have reminded the Lord Jesus that soon His blood would flow in that same spot on Moriah, the temple mount.

But Jesus came to this place. Jesus kneeled at that rock of agony and Jesus prayed. Three times Jesus prayed, "Lord, if it be possible, let this cup pass from Me." "I don't want to drink this cup!" Now He wasn't talking about a literal cup like I hold in my hand. He was using a metaphor, a figure of speech, a symbol, meaning to experience something fully. To take something in to one's very being as one would take a cup and put it to his lips. And Jesus said, "Father, please, if it be possible, let this cup pass from Me." It was the cup of agony that Jesus drank in dark Gethsemane and He drank it there alone.

Do you know, when the Lord Jesus began His ministry, when He was performing miracles, when He was feeding the multitudes, opening blinded eyes, healing withered limbs, oh, how the crowds followed Him! Oh, they loved the miracles that He did. But when Jesus Christ began to speak to them of deeper eternal verities and full surrender to His lordship, they began to leave Him. As a matter of fact, they left in droves. And the Lord Jesus, in John 6 and verse 67, had to turn to His disciples and say, "Will you also go away?" And from multitudes, now He just has twelve. But now, one of the twelve have left. Judas has gone to betray Him. Now He only has eleven. But out of that eleven He chooses a trinity of disciples to come and watch and pray with Him. Now He has three. But those three failed Him, they're asleep. And now He goes to Gethsemane. Only Jesus the Son and God the Father are there. But in Gethsemane He knows that soon, God the Father must turn His back on Him. And Jesus will drink that cup alone, alone in Gethsemane.



Take your Bibles and turn to Luke 22. Look with me in verse 39 through verse 46, “And He came out, and went as He was wont,” that is, as He often did, “to the mount of Olives; and His disciples also followed Him. And when He was at the place,” you see, this was a place that Jesus often went to, “when He was at the place, He said unto them, ‘Pray that ye enter not into temptation.’ And He was withdrawn from them about a stone’s cast, and kneeled down, and prayed, saying, ‘Father, if Thou be willing, remove this cup from Me: nevertheless not My will, but Thine be done.’ And there appeared an angel unto Him from Heaven, strengthening Him. And being in an agony He prayed more earnestly: and His sweat was as it were great drops of blood falling to the ground. And when He rose up from prayer, He was come to His disciples, He found them sleeping for sorrow. And He said unto them, ‘Why sleep ye? Rise and pray, lest ye enter into temptation.’” Then the story goes on to tell how Judas came and betrayed the Son of God with a kiss.

I want us to think together this morning about the cup, the cup that Jesus drank in the Garden of Gethsemane. I want us to think about **the contents of the cup**. What was in that cup? So loathsome, so terrifying, yes, terrifying because you’re going to see that Jesus shrank in horror from it! What was so vile, so filthy that the very Son of God shrank back in dread? What was in Gethsemane’s cup? What was the content of that cup? Was it physical death by crucifixion that caused such dread? Indeed it might cause such dread because never has a form of execution been known to man that was more ignominiously painful and hurtful and shameful than death by crucifixion. But others have died that way and other martyrs have gone to their death. Not with dread, but saying, “Gladly will I fling my body in the grave for the Lord Jesus Christ.” It wasn’t physical death that He shrank back from. Not even the pains of a crucifixion.

Well, was it some extraordinary attack of Satan? Is that what was in that cup? Is that what Jesus shrank back from? No. Jesus had already met Satan in the wilderness. He’d already conquered Satan. Satan still hounded Him all the way to the cross, but Jesus had no fear of Satan, no dread of Satan. He said in John chapter 12 verse 31, “Now is the prince of this world cast out. Now is the judgment of this world.” What was it that was breaking the heart of the Lord Jesus Christ? Was it the betrayal of Judas? Was it the failure of the disciples? Yes, He was disappointed. But there’s a difference in disappointment and dread. What was it that caused Jesus to dread the drinking of that cup? What was in that cup? **The pollution of sin was in that cup**. You see, the Bible says that Jesus, “Was tempted as in all points as we are and yet He was without sin.” The Bible tells us that in Hebrews the fourth chapter and the fifteenth verse. But the Bible also teaches us that in order for Him to redeem us, our sin had to be placed upon the Lord Jesus Christ. And Second Corinthians chapter 5 and verse 21 says this, that, “God hath made Him,” Jesus, “to be sin for us. That we might become the righteousness of God in Him.”

Do you know what was in that cup? **The sin of the ages was in that cup**; my sin and your sin was in that cup. Suppose we were to go through this congregation this morning and put your sin in it, and yours, and yours, and yours, and yours, and yours, and yours, and yours, and yours, and yours, and yours, and yours, and yours; put it right in there. Not some of your sin, all of your sin. Every vile thought, every wicked deed, every hurtful, hateful thing. All of the sin of this congregation and then the sin of this city and then the sin of this nation and then the sin of this world. Now put it in the cup and then take all the sins of the past and all of the sins of the future, distill it, put it in this cup. Put rape in there. Put sodomy in there. Put child abuse in there. Put Hitler’s gas ovens in there. Put murder in there. Put blasphemy in there. Put



witchcraft in there. Put filth in there and say, "Jesus, drink it. Drink it. Drink the bitter dregs, become sin." Not just bear sin, but become sin. I didn't say He sinned; He never sinned. But He was made sin for us. Because He carried that sin to the cross. You may not understand what sin is, but I can tell you Jesus Christ knew what sin is. Jesus had seen sin turn angels to demons and men to beasts. Sin is a clenched fist in the face of God. And Jesus knew when He drank that cup, He would be numbered with the transgressors. And Him whose name is holy, who is the complete other, the antithesis of sin would become sin.

The pollution of sin was in that cup, but wait a minute. Not only was **the pollution of sin in that cup**. Friend, with the pollution of sin, the punishment of sin was in that cup. Jesus knew that the punishment, not of some sin, but of all sin, not of some people, but all people would be upon Him. One man, the God-man, would bear it all and when He did God the Father would have to treat Him as if He had committed the sins of all the people, and all of the sins of all of the people. And that's the reason the Bible says in Romans chapter 8 in verse 32 that, "God spared not His own Son." The Bible says in Isaiah 53 and verse 10, "It pleased the Lord to bruise Him." When Jesus took my sin and your sin, God the Father, in justice, had to treat Him as He would treat me, as He would treat you. And Jesus knew that He was going to suffer the very fires of Hell. The pains of Hell were getting hold of the Lord Jesus Christ and Jesus was going to baptize His soul in Hell. Jesus was going to walk the burning corridors of the damned. Jesus was going to receive the thunderbolts of God's wrath and Jesus Christ, the eternal Son who had been in the bosom of the Father from eternity was going to be now separated from God on that cross. He was going to cry out, "My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken Me?" That's in Matthew 27 verse 46. But then read Habakkuk chapter 1 and verse 13, and the answer is that, "God is of purer eyes than to behold iniquity," and God the Father had to turn His back on God the Son.

I've told you before and you listen well, that at the cross, the sins of the world were distilled and the eternities were compressed, and Jesus, being infinite, bore in a finite period of time what we being finite would bear in an infinite period of time. I'm telling you that Jesus Christ suffered an eternity of Hell on that cross. The price that Jesus paid only the damned in Hell can begin to know, but they'll never know because they're only paying their sin. He paid all the sin of all of the people for all time. And friend, if that doesn't move your heart, your heart is harder than a rock. That is the content of that cup. No wonder Jesus said in Luke 22 verse 42, "Father if it be possible, let this cup pass from Me."

But I want you to notice not only the content of that cup, I want you to notice **the consumption of that cup**. The Lord Jesus drank it to the bitter dregs. Did He shrink back? Yes, He shrank back! Does that make you think less of Him? It makes me think more of Him. And I'll tell you why, this was not some charade. This was real. If you don't understand why He shrank back, you don't know what was in there. In His humanity and in His holiness, seeing the vileness, the filth of sin, He said, "O God, if there be some other way." And silence from Heaven said, "There is no other way." So in His holy humanity, He shrank back. But in His divine love He said in Luke 22:42, "Nevertheless, not My will, but Thine be done."

You see, He paid a price. You will never know the agony that the Son of God endured there on the cross. He didn't have to die, He had a choice. Jesus Christ said in John 10:18, "No man taketh My life from Me. I lay it down of Myself." Jesus was the only man who ever chose to die. The wages of sin was death. There was no sin in Him, there would have been no death in Him. You say, "Well, a suicide chooses to die." No he doesn't. He just chooses to die a little sooner. "It's appointed unto man once to die." Jesus



was the only man who could say, “No man taken My life from Me. I lay it down of Myself.” And Jesus said, “Nevertheless not My will, but Thine be done.”

Satan became Satan. If you’ll read Isaiah chapter 14 verse 13 when he said, “I will, I will, I will, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God.” And Satan said this to God the Father; “Not Your will, but mine be done. But Jesus said, though He were very God to very God, in His humanity, “Not My will, but Thine be done.” Adam following Satan in the Garden of Eden said, “Not Thy will, but mine”, and ruined the race. Jesus, in another garden, the last Adam said, “Not My will, but Thine”, and redeemed the race. That’s the consumption of the cup. The Lord Jesus willingly, voluntarily, vicariously, victoriously said, “Not My will, but Thine.” Had He said, “No”, every one of us would have burned in Hell forever. Had he said, “No”, all of those who had already gone to the place of redemption where Jesus had promised to pay would have to come out and go to Hell. But Jesus said, “Not My will, but Thine be done.” It was because Jesus suffered, bled and died on that cross that you and I can be redeemed. Because Jesus took my sin, your sin and carried it to the cross.

Now look up here at me, I want you to get this in your heart, and I don’t want you to miss it. God will never overlook sin; He cannot. God is holy and by His holiness He has sworn that sin will be punished. All sin is punished. No sin goes unpunished. If God were to let one half of one sin go unpunished, God would no longer be holy. The chief attribute of God is not love, it is holiness. He is infinite, measureless, spotless in His holiness. And God must punish sin. I say, if He did not punish sin He would topple from His throne of holiness. The cross is God’s way to punish sin and forgive the sinner at the same time. And that is, by having an innocent, sinless sin-bearer to take that sin and carry it to the cross. “Him who knew no sin,” God said in Second Corinthians 5:21, “Him who knew no sin, God has made to be sin for us that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.”

Now there’s another cup that we drink. We drink that. That’s **the Lord’s Supper**. Don’t you enjoy the Lord’s Supper? You see, just before Jesus went into Gethsemane, in this same twenty-second chapter of the book of Luke, in verse 20 it tells how He was there at that last supper with His disciples, and He told them, “This is, this is the New Testament in my blood. Drink it. Drink it.” Because you see, He drank the cup of sin that we might have **the cup of redemption**.

And so there’s the content of that cup. There’s the consumption of that cup. But thank God **there’s the communion of that cup**. Thank God because He drank this cup we drink that cup. We drink the cup of communion, because I meet Jesus here. He takes my sin. He drinks it down. I take his righteousness. I drink it in. Isn’t that wonderful? Say, Amen. That’s wonderful. God forbid that we should fail to be moved by Gethsemane. When you think of the words that are used there in all of the Gospels to talk about what the Lord Jesus Christ bore; in Matthew 26 verse 38, He said, “My soul is exceeding sorrowful even unto death.” Had not an angel come to minister to Him, He would have died there. I mean, He was dying. When He was perspiring, the sweat was like blood, it was blood. The minute capillaries had ruptured. He was in such extreme duress that blood was dripping from his brow. Sometimes Jesus would pray standing. Sometimes Jesus would lift His face to Heaven to pray. Sometimes, Jesus would kneel and pray, but in Gethsemane He fell on His face.

Can you imagine what He must have looked like when Judas led that group into the garden? Can you see Him? His face is matted with blood and dirt. Red blood and black dirt on His face. His heart is broken. This is the way they found Him when Judas planted that kiss of shame upon the Lord Jesus Christ. He said,



“My soul is exceeding heavy.” The word heavy has the idea of being separated, alone. Before those nails ever went into the hands of Jesus, they had already come into His soul. Gethsemane was the vestibule of Calvary. The victory really was won in Gethsemane, not on Calvary. It was paid for at Calvary; it was won in Gethsemane. Jesus, knowing what He would go through.

There’s another word that Jesus used when He said, “Exceeding sorrowful.” And that word exceeding has the idea of being surrounded with no way out, no escape, no hope, absolute abject suffering. And Jesus paid that for me and for you. But in our text, Jesus spoke of His agony. Do you know what the agony means? Why they call that place where He prayed, the rock of agony? The agon was an athletic contest in Greek. It was a wrestling, a wrestling match. Jesus was wrestling. He was in agony. There was a wrestling, a contest. Was He wrestling with God the Father? No, never. The great desire of His heart was to please the Father. Was He wrestling with Satan? He never needed to. He had absolute authority over Satan. Who was He wrestling with? With Himself. There was His holy humanity and there was His divine love. And there was that contest. There was that wrestling. And I’m glad that His love won, aren’t you? I’m glad. I’m glad that love paid the price in dark Gethsemane.

There’s a story that comes down to us through the ages. It’s been told so many times that it must have been rooted in history. It is said that Nero had forty men in his army. These forty men were wrestlers. They were Nero’s wrestlers, gladiators who would come there to the field of endeavor, to the agon to wrestle for Nero. And they wanted to please their emperor. And as these forty wrestlers would come there to wrestle before the emperor, the emperor would sit there in his finery, in his velvet box draped, sit there upon his throne and watch the games as these wrestlers would wrestle. They were the finest athletes in all of Rome. They would come out there with their square shoulders and bulging biceps, look up into the box of their Emperor and they would chant, “We are forty wrestlers wrestling for thee, O Emperor, to win for thee the victory and from thee the victor’s crown.” Everybody in the empire knew who these wrestlers were. They were the counterpart of our Olympic champions today.

Then word came to Nero that some in the army had become Christians. Christianity was beginning to spread. To be a Christian now was a crime worthy of death. Christians must be put to death by fire, by sword, by beast. And so, Nero sent out a word to his commander in chief, Vespasian, and said, “You need to go through the ranks of your troops. If you find any Christians they shall be executed.” Vespasian lined his troops up and he said, “An edict has come from the emperor, should there be any Christians I’m going to ask you to confess to being Christians, and I am told that a Christian will never deny that he’s a Christian. But I want to say before you, confess that you are a Christian if you do this, you will surely be put to death.”

Then Vespasian said, “Are there any Christians?” He wasn’t prepared for what was about to happen. Because as one man, forty stepped forward. All forty of these wrestlers had given their hearts, their lives to Jesus Christ. When Vespasian saw that, he said, “No, no. There’s some mistake. Not you forty.” To a man they said, “We believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God.” Vespasian said, “Please step back, step back. Renounce your faith and it will be over.” Not a one of them moved. Vespasian said, “I cannot put you to death with a sword. I believe you’ve not thought it through. Surely you will renounce your faith.”

He said, “I have a plan.” It was in the middle of winter. Vespasian built a fire by a frozen lake, a big roaring fire. Then he took from those forty men their helmet, their breastplate, their greaves of brass, their shoes, their shirt, their undergarments. Stripped them down to absolutely nothing in that sub-zero weather and



turned them away in the darkness and said, “You will stay out in the darkness until you freeze.” But he said, “If any of you out there in the cold and the darkness decide that you want to renounce Christ, all you have to do is come to the fire.” Surely thinking they would come to the fire.

Vespasian sent them out there and the forty men went out there, he wasn't prepared for what he was about to hear, because he'd heard the chant that he'd heard so many times. But now it's different. And this was what they were chanting, “We are forty wrestlers, wrestling for Thee, O Christ, to win for Thee the victory and from Thee the victor's crown.” Vespasian said, “Well, they're chanting now, but they will soon change.” But on through the night as the cold grew deeper, they heard this chant. “Forty wrestlers wrestling for Thee, O Christ, forty wrestlers for Thee, O Christ. To win for Thee the victory and from Thee the victor's crown.” It grew weaker and weaker and weaker. They were being numbed by the cold.

But then the chanting stopped and Vespasian looked and there slithering across the ice was the naked form of one of those soldiers turning his back on Jesus Christ, coming to the fire. Vespasian said, “Here he comes. The rest will soon follow, I knew it. I know men. The others will be coming soon.” But he wasn't prepared for what he was about to hear. He listened and he heard in the darkness, “Thirty-nine wrestlers, wrestling for Thee, O Christ. To win for Thee the victory and from Thee the victor's crown.” When Vespasian heard that, and he looked at the miserable form before him slithering on the ice, according to the story the way I heard it, Vespasian took from his head his helmet, took from his chest his armor, took from his back his shirt, from his feet his shoes and ran toward the thirty nine saying, “Forty wrestlers wrestling for Thee, O Christ, to win for Thee the victory and from Thee the victor's crown.”

Jesus wrestled for me. I want to wrestle for Him. Don't you? Am I a soldier of the cross? I want to be. As I look at dark Gethsemane, I'll tell you there are two things that it tells me. Number one: I want to hate sin. And number two: I want to love Jesus Christ. And so should every one of us.

Let's bow our heads in prayer. Thank You, Lord, for Your Word. And, oh God, how I pray that You will seal it to our hearts. And now while heads are bowed and eyes are closed, I wonder how many of you will say, “Pastor Rogers, I have received Jesus Christ as my Lord and Savior, and I know that I know, by the grace of God, if I should die today I'd go straight to Heaven.” Now if you couldn't say that, if you're not absolutely certain that you're saved and if you want to be saved, Jesus died and took your sin, He drank the cup of your sin that you might drink the cup of His salvation. Would you pray a prayer like this, “Oh God, I'm a sinner and I'm lost, I need to be saved, I want to be saved, You paid my sin debt on the cross with Your blood. I repent of my sin, I open my heart, I receive You now as my Lord and Savior. Come into my Heart, forgive my sin, save me, Lord Jesus.” Pray it, say it, and mean it, “Save me, Lord Jesus.” Pray it from the depth of your heart, “Save me, Lord Jesus.” And now pray this, “Lord Jesus, help me never to be ashamed of You, and give me the courage now to make it public.” That's right, ask Him to give you the courage to make it public. Don't be afraid of that, He died for you. “Lord, give me the courage to make it public. In Your name I pray, Amen.”





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