



**COMMUNION:** Remembering Jesus over a Meal, Sharing How the Gospel is Changing You

In what are you struggling to be obedient with right now? How does the Gospel change you?

**COMMANDMENT:** Being formed by the Story of God

Text: Mark 14.32-52

Summary of Text: *this is for you, group leader... to help you in preparing & thinking about discussion!*

Jesus' agony in the garden is almost indescribable. Mark stumbles over himself trying to communicate the mental and emotional turmoil going on in the soul of Jesus. In a time when Jesus most wants to be surrounded by friends and comforted by prayer with his Father, his disciples are too sleepy and spiritual blind to even stay awake and his Father is astonishingly silent. Mark's account of the garden is gritty: Jesus throwing himself on the ground to pray for an alternative to the cross, the disciples unable to do even the smallest act of faithfulness, Judas' betrayal kiss, and the naked young man fleeing the scene. What is going on?

First, we need to see the "weakness of the flesh." Despite Peter, James, and John's great claims to faithfulness, they utterly fail Jesus in his moment of need. This is the human condition: full of great aspirations, ideals, and verbal commitments, yet utterly unable, impotent, strengthless to follow through.

Second, we need to see the result of our "weakness." Jesus is in the garden praying about "the cup" he must drink. The OT references (ex: Ps 75.8) are to God's wrath against man's rebellion and sin. God's Holy Justice, his necessary hatred of all that is evil, ensures that he will punish sin totally. Jesus wrestles in the garden with the full weight of human sin & shame and the just penalty against it.

Third, we need to see Jesus' resolve to take our sin and accept the just payment for it. We need to recognize that our weakness caused him the agony of the garden and then nailed him on a cross. And we need to see the Father turn away from his beloved Son so that we can call God "Daddy!"

Discussion:

Who do you most identify with in this story, and why?

What contrasts do you see in this text? (Human frailty vs. Jesus' courage; swords & clubs vs. non-violent surrender; ease of failure vs. the difficulty of surrender to God's will, etc)

Why does Jesus take Peter, James, and John further? Why does Jesus call Peter "Simon?"

What sense do you make of Jesus drinking the cup of the wrath of God?

Does God's Justice give you hope?

Challenge Point: *try to land the discussion here!*

How do you see this kind of weakness in yourself?

How does the incredible work of Jesus effect you?

How can seeing Jesus in the garden encourage our daily call to serve the city?

**COMMISSION:** Together for Restoration, Redemption, and Relationship

Who are you eating with that doesn't yet know the grace & mercy of God in Jesus?