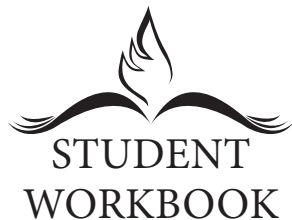


SPRING 2020

The Living Word

S E R I E S

Sharing His Mission



STUDENT
WORKBOOK

▶▶ FOCUS THOUGHT

Just like the wise man, we must build our lives upon the Rock.

▶▶ FOCUS VERSE

Matthew 7:24

Therefore whosoever heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them, I will liken him unto a wise man, which built his house upon a rock.

▶▶ LESSON TEXT

Matthew 7:24–27

24 Therefore whosoever heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them, I will liken him unto a wise man, which built his house upon a rock:

25 And the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell not: for it was founded upon a rock.

26 And every one that heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them not, shall be likened unto a foolish man, which built his house upon the sand:

27 And the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell: and great was the fall of it.

Ephesians 2:19–22

19 Now therefore ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellowcitizens with the saints, and of the household of God;

20 And are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone;

21 In whom all the building fitly framed together groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord:

22 In whom ye also are builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit.

Colossians 1:23

23 If ye continue in the faith grounded and settled, and be not moved away from the hope of the gospel, which ye have heard, and which was preached to every creature which is under heaven; whereof I Paul am made a minister.

▶▶▶ CULTURE CONNECTION

Oceanfront View

One drive to the beach is all you need to see houses worth millions of dollars because of their million-dollar-views. Some houses are beautiful. Some need a little work. But they are the envy of most inland homeowners because of where they are built. Beachfront homeowners can wake up in the morning, draw back the drapes, and watch dolphins playing in the waves. Or they can watch the sun as it makes its climb into the eastern sky over the sea signaling a new dawn.

Their backyard is the ocean. Those houses are perfect for calm days with just enough sunshine to stay warm and just enough breeze to stay cool. But nobody wants to be near them when a hurricane is swirling. In 2004, four hurricanes came to visit the state of Florida: Hurricanes Charley, Frances, Ivan, and Jeanne. Those houses with such enviable views of the Atlantic or the Gulf of Mexico were reduced to rubble by the time the four storms left town. They were built, not on solid, stable rock, but on shifting, unstable sand.

The view from the solid, stable rock may not be as breathtaking as the oceanfront view, but when the wind howls and the rains pound, you will be grateful you built your house on a firm foundation. Storms do not care whose last name is on the mailbox or how many zeros are on your paycheck. Heed the wisdom of Jesus. While the sun is shining, build your house for the days when it is not. Build your house on a rock.

▶▶▶ LESSON OUTLINE

I. BUILDING A HOUSE (Day 1)

- A. Blueprints
- B. Strong Foundation

II. FOOLISH MAN (Day 2)

- A. Foundation of Sand
- B. Storm Destroyed His House

III. WISE MAN

- A. Foundation on Rock
- B. House Survived the Storm (Day 3)

IV. SURE FOUNDATION (Day 4)

- A. Gospel of Jesus Christ
- B. God's Word (Day 5)

▶▶▶ APPROACH

Day 1

The prospects of moving into a home where everything is new is exhilarating. However, a lot of work goes into building a new construction “from the ground up.” This adage is ever so true when building a house. It starts with the ground. Proverbs 24:27 gives wise advice to the builder concerning the first work: “Prepare thy work

without, and make it fit for thyself in the field; and afterwards build thine house.” In other words, make sure things are done in order. Start with the ground. Make sure the earth beneath the foundation is solid.

»»» ASK AND APPLY

- » *What do you think Proverbs 24:27 means by “make it fit for thyself in the field?”*
- » *Why is it important to build on a firm foundation?*

Day 2

Jesus referred to the man who built his house on sand as being the foolish man. It is common knowledge that sand does not provide a stable foundation for construction. For anyone to attempt to build a foundation on sand certainly marks such a person as lacking in wisdom.

»»» ASK AND APPLY

- » *What do you think the Bible is referring to when it calls a foundation “sand?”*
- » *What are some examples of unstable foundations people build their lives on? How can you avoid building on these foundations?*

Day 3

Building on rock physically gives such a firm foundation that the house is never compromised, even in the greatest storm. There are people who go through horrendous experiences and seem to come out with their faith even stronger.

We cannot know what storms will come our way. Not all storms are from the enemy. Sometimes life brings troubles that come from being in this broken world. Sickness, loss, broken relationships, and other calamities can be the result of simply living in this world. We can be assured that whatever the source of our pain and suffering, if our foundation is solid, we have a better chance of surviving, even if we are a little battered in the process.

»»» ASK AND APPLY

- » *How can you develop a firm foundation to carry you through trying situations?*
- » *What have you found has helped you the most when facing difficult trials?*

Day 4

Watching people renovate old, dilapidated homes has become extremely popular. People buy old homes and upgrade them to like-new condition. They renovate them to look more modern and then sell them to satisfied customers. It is fascinating to see the progress and enjoy the drama of renovation. The most challenging setbacks come when contractors discover problems with the foundation. If there is something wrong with the foundation, everything else must stop until it can be corrected.

Our spiritual foundation is even more critical than a natural foundation. We should inspect our foundation often to make sure it has not been compromised. If we see an area that is in question or God reveals something to us that is lacking, we should give it our full attention right away. Whatever it takes to bring the foundation back up to code is worth the sacrifice. We want to make sure our basis of belief is established on a sure foundation of truth.

ASK AND APPLY

- » Name some habits and lifestyles that could be a detriment to our spiritual foundation.
- » What are some things you have personally learned to avoid because they have hurt your walk with God?

Day 5

Today we may not have Jesus walking beside us in a physical form as He did when He was on earth. However, we do have His Word to guide us and help us build a firm foundation. God's Word is relevant for every era and every person, no matter the age, race, or geographical location.

The writer of Hebrews declared, "For the word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any twoedged sword" (Hebrews 4:12). The New King James Version translated it, "For the word of God is living and powerful."

The word *quick* in the King James Version is taken from the word *quicken*, which comes from the root word meaning "to make alive." Just as God quickened Adam by breathing His breath into him, God breathes life into us through His Word. This tells us that God's Word is alive and powerful. It is living. It is the breath of God speaking to us.

God's Word is a solid foundation because it was established before time and lives on forever. "For ever, O Lord, thy word is settled in heaven" (Psalm 119:89). God's Word is eternal. It is an absolute truth we can put our trust in because it has been in existence from the beginning of time. "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God" (John 1:1). Knowing God's Word is not separate from Him but is His very essence makes His Word stand above all other texts ever written. His Word breathes life into us as we read it.

ASK AND APPLY

- » How can we utilize God's Word more in our daily lives?
- » How often do you read God's Word each week?



Parents: Discuss today's lesson with your child at
<http://pentecostalpublishing.com/homeconnection>

▶▶ FOCUS THOUGHT

Like the good soil, we must hear and receive the Word, allowing it to produce fruit in our lives.

▶▶ FOCUS VERSES

Mark 4:8, 20

And other fell on good ground, and did yield fruit that sprang up and increased; and brought forth, some thirty, and some sixty, and some an hundred. . . . And these are they which are sown on good ground; such as hear the word, and receive it, and bring forth fruit, some thirtyfold, some sixty, and some an hundred.

▶▶ LESSON TEXT

Mark 4:3–10; 13–20

3 Hearken; Behold, there went out a sower to sow:

4 And it came to pass, as he sowed, some fell by the way side, and the fowls of the air came and devoured it up.

5 And some fell on stony ground, where it had not much earth; and immediately it sprang up, because it had no depth of earth:

6 But when the sun was up, it was scorched; and because it had no root, it withered away.

7 And some fell among thorns, and the thorns grew up, and choked it, and it yielded no fruit.

8 And other fell on good ground, and did yield fruit that sprang up and increased; and brought forth, some thirty, and some sixty, and some an hundred.

9 And he said unto them, He that hath ears to hear, let him hear.

10 And when he was alone, they that were about him with the twelve asked of him the parable.

. . . .

13 And he said unto them, Know ye not this parable? and how then will ye know all parables?

14 The sower soweth the word.

15 And these are they by the way side, where the word is sown; but when they have heard, Satan cometh immediately, and taketh away the word that was sown in their hearts.

16 And these are they likewise which are sown on stony ground; who, when they have heard the word, immediately receive it with gladness;

17 And have no root in themselves, and so endure but for a time: afterward, when affliction or persecution ariseth for the word's sake, immediately they are offended.

18 And these are they which are sown among thorns; such as hear the word,

19 And the cares of this world, and the deceitfulness of riches, and the lusts of other things entering in, choke the word, and it becometh unfruitful.

20 And these are they which are sown on good ground; such as hear the word, and receive it, and bring forth fruit, some thirtyfold, some sixty, and some an hundred.

»» CULTURE CONNECTION

Broadcasting

Broadcasting is a modern marvel. It is possible to sit in a radio station in one city and broadcast a signal of songs to another. One Oklahoma station employee from KOMA recalls getting requests from listeners in South Australia. That is not even on the same continent. Now that we have internet access and online streaming, people who have never been to our church can be a part of our services. But as broadcasters understand, those who broadcast give up control of who receives the signal.

That is the same method Jesus referred to in the Parable of the Sower. But Jesus was not referring to radio stations; He was referring to seed. When the sower sowed his seed for a harvest, he broadcast the seed all over the field. There was no way to control where the seed fell, which is why some fell on wayside ground, some on stony ground, some on thorny ground, and thankfully, some fell on good ground. It would be safer and more economical to drop each seed carefully into the plowed soil. Less seed would be lost, but the sower would also reap less harvest.

We are not called to inspect the soil; we are called to sow the seed. It is up to God and the hearers where the seed falls and how it grows.

»» LESSON OUTLINE

I. THE SOWER AND THE SEED

- A. The Wayside
- B. Stony Ground
- C. Thorny Ground
- D. Good Ground

II. THE PARABLE EXPLAINED

- A. The Sower
- B. The Seed (Day 1)
- C. The Wayside (Day 2)
- D. Stony Ground (Day 3)
- E. Thorny Ground

III. THE GOOD SOIL (Day 4)

- A. Hear the Word
- B. Receive the Word (Day 5)
- C. Bring Forth Fruit

»» APPROACH

Day 1

“The sower soweth the word” (Mark 4:14). The seed of the sower is the Word of God. When we speak the Word of God, we are sowing the words of eternal life. Is it any wonder the Bible has had such an impact on human history?

If one is sowing something other than the Word, the value is limited. How easy it is when witnessing, teaching, or preaching to get off track and ramble on about other things. All who have ever attempted sowing the Word have been guilty of doing something else while making the effort to sow the Word. It requires intentional focus from the sower to keep the discussion, Bible-study session, sermon, or lesson centered on the Word of God. That is the duty of the sower. One who does not expound the Word is not sowing anything of eternal value.

A grave danger for sowers who do not focus exclusively on the Word is they could become distracted with popular fallacies of the day. Sowers must sow the Word regardless of how it differs with popular notions of the age. Courageous sowers diligently and rightly divide the word of truth, ensuring the seed they sow is the Word of God. Sowing the false ideas of pop-culture or even other well-meaning people can lead to false doctrine. Sow the Word.

▶▶▶ ASK AND APPLY

- » *What are some practical ways we can “sow the Word?”*
- » *Who is someone who has faithfully sowed the Word into your life? Take some time this week to thank the Lord for the influence they have had on your life.*

Day 2

Earlier we described the wayside, but in this passage, Jesus explained the spiritual implications of the wayside. The hardness of the soil prohibited growth. This happens in churches and in individual hearts. The seed is sown and some falls in a place where it has no chance to grow. What may seem to be a purely natural phenomenon was suddenly understood by the hearers as a deeply spiritual circumstance. “When they have heard, Satan cometh immediately, and taketh away the word that was sown in their hearts” (Mark 4:15). Satan promotes the hardening of hearts through bitterness, anger, envy, and disappointment, but ultimately the condition of the heart is determined by the hearer.

Unfortunately, having a hard heart means God’s Word has not impacted the person, creating a prime opportunity for the adversary to swoop in and steal away any lingering seed. What a disturbing description! An enemy comes in and snatches away the seed that was sown. This enemy will do everything he can to see that the seed is snatched away from someone’s heart.

Here we see another important truth about the sower, the seed, and the field. Jesus reported the seed was stolen from the heart of the hearer by the adversary. So the heart was the receptor of the Word. Heart is the most often used scriptural word, in both Old and New Testaments, to describe “the integrating center of man as a rational, emotional, volitional being” (*Dictionary of Paul and His Letters*). Another way to say or think of it is the heart “is the seat of human will and desire” (*Dictionary of the Later New Testament and Its Developments*). When the Bible speaks of the heart, it means the essence of humanity. The seed of the Word of God connects to the essence of humanity, yet people are responsible to cultivate the soil of their hearts so the Word will bear fruit in their lives.

ASK AND APPLY

- » *Have you ever worked to lead someone to the Lord only to learn, as time went on, the soil of that person's heart was hard? Explain.*
- » *Is there someone you could pray for this week who is struggling in their walk with God? How else might you encourage them?*

Day 3

Earlier we learned that the stony ground was not necessarily a gravel field; it was ground with just a thin layer of soil covering the rocks underneath. The sun caused the seed to sprout up quickly, but the hardness of the rocks meant no roots could form, so depth of growth was destroyed.

Since the common practice of the era was to not plow until after sowing, the sower would be unaware of the conditions just below the surface. This is a true analogy of any who sow seed even today. Often we do not know what is below the surface—our task is to sow as effectively as we can. Time will tell whether the soil beneath the surface is good for growing. Additionally, as hearers of the Word, our task is to stir up the fallow ground, or as God said through His prophet Jeremiah, “Break up your fallow ground” (Jeremiah 4:3). Stony ground can destroy growth, but it can be plowed up for better results.

ASK AND APPLY

- » *When working with those whose hearts seem to be “stony ground,” what have you found to be effective?*
- » *How can you keep your heart from becoming stony and unresponsive to the Word of God?*

Day 4

Thankfully not all soil was challenged. Some seed fell on good soil; when that happened fruit followed. Productivity depends on receptivity: “The contrast between the unproductive and the productive soils . . . illustrates the contrast between those in Israel who were rejecting the message of the kingdom and the disciples who received the message of the kingdom” (Mark L. Bailey, “The Parable of the Sower and the Soils”). In the life and ministry of Jesus, we find a profound dichotomy between those who believe (people from every nation, tribe, and tongue) and those who do not believe (the leaders of the Jewish people, those God called to be His own and blessed with the revelation of the first covenant). The truth of the good soil is the revelation that anyone, anywhere can receive the message of the Kingdom, mix it with faith and obedience, and live a life that is productive spiritually.

ASK AND APPLY

- » *What does “good soil” look like?*
- » *What are some signs you recognize in others that reveal they are good soil?*

Day 5

Hearing is a prelude to receiving the Word. But we can hear the Word and discard it. The thin soiled places of every human heart would like to do that every time a word comes that challenges. The call from God is to hear the Word, understand it, and then apply it to our hearts. Receiving the Word into our spirits is how to be the good soil

described in the parable. This is why prayer before and after church services is so important. Sometimes it is very clear to us that God is working on our hearts through His Word, yet at other times we are not so sure. But when we pray, we allow God's Spirit to illuminate His Word to us and help us receive it.

»»» ASK AND APPLY

- » *What are some ways we receive the Word?*
- » *What would you tell someone to convince them of the importance of receiving God's Word into their lives?*



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In Remembrance of Me

▶▶ FOCUS THOUGHT

We must keep in our remembrance the sacrifice Jesus made for us.

▶▶ FOCUS VERSE

Mark 14:22

And as they did eat, Jesus took bread, and blessed, and brake it, and gave to them, and said, Take, eat: this is my body.

▶▶ LESSON TEXT

Mark 14:17–26

17 And in the evening he cometh with the twelve.

18 And as they sat and did eat, Jesus said, Verily I say unto you, One of you which eateth with me shall betray me.

19 And they began to be sorrowful, and to say unto him one by one, Is it I? and another said, Is it I?

20 And he answered and said unto them, It is one of the twelve, that dippeth with me in the dish.

21 The Son of man indeed goeth, as it is written of him: but woe to that man by whom the Son of man is betrayed! good were it for that man if he had never been born.

22 And as they did eat, Jesus took bread, and blessed, and brake it, and gave to them, and said, Take, eat: this is my body.

23 And he took the cup, and when he had given thanks, he gave it to them: and they all drank of it.

24 And he said unto them, This is my blood of the new testament, which is shed for many.

25 Verily I say unto you, I will drink no more of the fruit of the vine, until that day that I drink it new in the kingdom of God.

26 And when they had sung an hymn, they went out into the mount of Olives.

I Corinthians 11:23–26

23 For I have received of the Lord that which also I delivered unto you, That the Lord Jesus the same night in which he was betrayed took bread:

24 And when he had given thanks, he brake it, and said, Take, eat: this is my body, which is broken for you: this do in remembrance of me.

25 After the same manner also he took the cup, when he had supped, saying, This cup is the new testament in my blood: this do ye, as oft as ye drink it, in remembrance of me.

26 For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do shew the Lord's death till he come.

CULTURE CONNECTION

Lest We Forget

September 11 is one of those days that most people remember where they were when they heard the news. Even the busiest business people stopped what they were doing to watch as passenger planes rocketed into the World Trade Center, the Pentagon, and a remote field in rural Pennsylvania. No one could believe the sheer terror brought on by the terrorists who overpowered the pilots and weaponized the planes. And everyone was amazed at the selfless heroism of the first responders and passengers to sacrifice themselves for people they did not even know.

Each year, on the anniversary of that unthinkable dark day, we pause in the morning to remember the sacrifice of the first responders, passengers, and workers. And we say their names, so we do not forget them or their sacrifice. Jesus knows we are prone to forget, so He instituted a way for us to remember His sacrifice. We call it communion, the Lord's Supper, the Last Supper, or Eucharist. It is a sober celebration for the blood He shed for us and for His body that was broken for us.

He was not the victim of a terrorist plot; He was the protagonist in the greatest story ever told. The Romans and the Jews did not take His life; He willingly laid it down. Jesus died so we can live. The next time our church celebrates communion together, remember Him. Remember His sacrifice. And remember that the same one who came to die for us is coming back for us.

LESSON OUTLINE

I. PREPARATION FOR THE PASSOVER

- A. A Man with a Water Pitcher
- B. Upper Room (Day 1)

II. JESUS WITH THE TWELVE

- A. A Betrayer
- B. Is It I? (Day 2)

III. LORD'S SUPPER INSTITUTED

- A. The Bread (Day 3) (Day 4)
- B. The Cup

IV. THIS DO IN REMEMBRANCE OF ME

- A. Practice of Communion
- B. Remember on Purpose (Day 5)

APPROACH

Day 1

The disciples followed the servant all the way to his master's house. There they asked the house owner for the room prepared for their Master. Following Jesus frequently meant sleeping and eating outdoors. They had heard more teaching during walks through fields, on a hillside, in a boat, or on the Temple grounds than they had heard

inside of buildings. This night they would eat inside in accordance with the Law and to provide memory guides for the future.

»» ASK AND APPLY

- » *Do you think these disciples sensed something was about to happen that evening? Why or why not?*
- » *Why is it important for us to be sensitive to what God wants to do? How do we become more sensitive to His purpose and plans?*

Day 2

Jesus revealed His pending death after the confession in Caesarea Philippi. This new revelation that one of them would betray Jesus brought sorrow on all of them. What started as a remembrance of God's deliverance quickly degenerated into self-questioning. One of them would end all their hopes.

Each disciple asked the Master, "Is it I?" Remembering the Lord's Supper calls disciples today to ask the same question. Like Judas, contemporary betrayers would be better off to have never known life than to turn back on Jesus' mission.

»» ASK AND APPLY

- » *How do unrepented betrayals hinder you from celebrating the Supper?*
- » *Why is it important to maintain a repentant heart each day?*

Day 3

And as they did eat, Jesus took bread, and blessed, and brake it, and gave to them, and said, Take, eat: this is my body. (Mark 14:22)

Jesus fed the multitudes in the wilderness as a sign of His delivering power. All participants linked the bread to Moses' manna, but Jesus wanted them to eat of the new bread that gave life. John 6 records Jesus' teaching on eating the bread of His body. This new bread would bring eternal life. The Lord's Supper included four acts which still guide us today.

Act 1: Jesus Received the Bread

Jesus received the bread on the table just as He had received the five loaves from the boy when thousands needed to be fed. He chose the most common staple of daily living to create the symbol of grace. In death He took the common nutrients of daily living and transformed them into a means of grace.

The common things of life become something else when placed in Jesus' hands. Disciples freely give their master everything they have. They do not hide their shame or keep honor for themselves. Instead they place all in Jesus' hands. He removes all shame and empowers the smallest gifts to become holy, Kingdom resources for the mission ahead.

Act 2: Jesus Blessed the Bread

As our true High Priest, Jesus took His blessing role quite seriously. His words brought life to all He blessed, even children, lepers, tax collectors, common fishermen, and prostitutes. All who place what they have in Jesus' hands receive the favor of God.

Those who follow Jesus do so to fulfill His missionary purposes. All good and perfect blessings come from above, from the one who will never turn from His commitment to bless those begotten by the word of truth. These blessings serve as a sign for many more to come (James 1:17–18). These blessings provide the resources to love our neighbors as ourselves. In the Lord’s Supper, disciples actively receive and count those blessings.

»»» ASK AND APPLY

- » *How do these first two acts challenge you?*
- » *What should you do in response to each?*

Day 4

Act 3: Jesus Broke the Bread

Following Jesus contains several paradoxes. If you want to gain your life, you must first lose it. If you want to live, you must first die. Jesus’ broken body reminds us that we too have the privilege of being broken with purpose.

More frequent celebrations of the Lord’s Supper would help the contemporary church recognize the value of suffering in Kingdom living. Sadly, many disciples follow the old way of pain avoidance rather than the new way of life in the Spirit. Rejecting suffering is to dip in the bitter bowl rather than partaking of the blessed bread. Learning to value brokenness will require Gethsemane-like prayer. Believers should take solace in the fact that seasons of brokenness always happen in the Lord’s hands. Jesus never lets us suffer alone.

Act 4: Jesus Shared the Bread

When all of life is placed in God’s hands, nothing gets wasted. All things work for His glory. Jesus shared His life with whoever was willing to follow for more than just the loaves and the fishes.

Brokenness produces blessings for others, even as the kernel of wheat’s death brings life for those who get to eat its bread. Disciples never represent the end users of the Lord’s Supper. They receive so they have something to give. Worship transforms disciples from wanting to get something from the Lord to wanting to share their blessings with others. Sharing our blessings with others further increases our capacity to receive gracious gifts.

»»» ASK AND APPLY

- » *How do these final two acts challenge you?*
- » *What should you do in response to each?*

Day 5

The Lord’s Supper serves as a wonderful memory device. Memories triggered by feeling the bread’s texture, tasting wine or grape juice, hearing the Lord’s words, and sharing the time with disciples of all ages guide the church in celebrating the Supper. A biblical understanding of memory fits well with contemporary neuroscience discoveries.

Memories recount events from the past. Each time we remember Jesus’ sacrifice, it takes on new layers of meaning. New disciples freshly experience deliverance. Elder saints remember the power of Christ’s body and blood through decades of

faithful service. Each remembering moment changes the memory to include the present realities.

Remembering Christ transforms current identity. When believers make room for the body and blood of Christ to be experienced, they open themselves for transformation. Such New Covenant moments bring holiness, unity, spiritual gifting, and focus on missionary service.

»» ASK AND APPLY

- » *How does a biblical understanding of remembering affect the way you approach the Lord's Supper? How does the Supper transform your outlook on tomorrow?*
- » *Take some time this week to meditate on the sacrifice Jesus made on the Cross.*



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▶▶ FOCUS THOUGHT

As disciples of Jesus Christ, we must watch and pray so we do not enter into temptation.

▶▶ FOCUS VERSE

Matthew 26:41

Watch and pray, that ye enter not into temptation: the spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak.

▶▶ LESSON TEXT

Matthew 26:36–46

36 Then cometh Jesus with them unto a place called Gethsemane, and saith unto the disciples, Sit ye here, while I go and pray yonder.

37 And he took with him Peter and the two sons of Zebedee, and began to be sorrowful and very heavy.

38 Then saith he unto them, My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death: tarry ye here, and watch with me.

39 And he went a little farther, and fell on his face, and prayed, saying, O my Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me: nevertheless not as I will, but as thou wilt.

40 And he cometh unto the disciples, and findeth them asleep, and saith unto Peter, What, could ye not watch with me one hour?

41 Watch and pray, that ye enter not into temptation: the spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak.

42 He went away again the second time, and prayed, saying, O my Father, if this cup may not pass away from me, except I drink it, thy will be done.

43 And he came and found them asleep again: for their eyes were heavy.

44 And he left them, and went away again, and prayed the third time, saying the same words.

45 Then cometh he to his disciples, and saith unto them, Sleep on now, and take your rest: behold, the hour is at hand, and the Son of man is betrayed into the hands of sinners.

46 Rise, let us be going: behold, he is at hand that doth betray me.

»» CULTURE CONNECTION

SEALS

They say it only lasts for six months, but it has been referred to as the longest six months some people will ever endure. It is known as BUD/S: Basic Underwater Demolition/SEAL training in Coronado, California. For six months instructors push young, aspiring Navy SEAL candidates to their limits. The first phase is the toughest. It is even referred to as “Hell Week.” On average, two of every three young military men or women dreaming to be a Navy SEAL call it quits during the first phase. But a slim remnant press further, even though their bodies are screaming to quit. Self-will presses them past the pain until they hear the instructors say, “Hell Week is secured.”

Their instructors are not their enemies, for without the training, SEALs may not survive in the arena of war. If captured, the enemy will push them even further than their instructors pushed them. So they train . . . and train . . . and train. So do we. We do not train with push-ups and underwater missions, but we train our bodies and our spirits to talk to God and to hear His voice. And we train our bodies to glorify Him, not just to satisfy us.

If we are weak, our enemy will pounce on us to destroy us every chance he sees, but thankfully, Jesus gave us the weapon of prayer. Through prayer we can stay close to God and far from temptation. And when we pray, we know God hears us and will help us because He loves us.

»» LESSON OUTLINE

I. JESUS PRAYED AT GETHSEMANE

- A. Sorrowful and Troubled (Day 1)
- B. Let This Cup Pass from Me (Day 2)

II. DISCIPLES WERE SLEEPING

- A. Spirit Is Willing
- B. Flesh Is Weak (Day 3)

III. JESUS SURRENDERED HIS WILL

- A. Thy Will Be Done
- B. Betrayed by a Friend

IV. WATCH AND PRAY (Day 4)

- A. Surrender to the Will of God
- B. Strength When Tempted (Day 5)

»» APPROACH

Day 1

It is hard to imagine what was running through our Savior’s mind while He agonized in the garden. Being God manifested in the flesh, He knew the future. He knew His purpose was to give His life for the sins of humanity, but He also knew what would transpire before that victory was achieved. The pain and suffering must have been

heavy on His mind. Being God did not diminish what the flesh would have to go through. His purpose was to suffer excruciating pain on behalf of generations of those bound by sin. In His journey from the garden, He would have to ascend into the depths of Hell before the work was complete.

The pain and suffering were not the only things on Jesus' mind as He agonized in the Garden of Gethsemane. He bore the sins of the world on His shoulders. I John 2:2 says, "And he is the propitiation for our sins: and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world." It is hard to imagine the magnitude of heaviness, sorrow, and emotional pain this caused Him. Sin is a heavy burden that pulls its victims down, even to the point of death. "Then when lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin: and sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death" (James 1:15). The emotional trauma of sin's finished product multiplied millions of times must have been excruciating. On the cross, Jesus bore all our sins. It was imperative for Jesus to carry our sins to provide atonement for them..

▶▶ ASK AND APPLY

- » *What are the emotions you feel when you think about the Crucifixion? Why?*
- » *Why do you think some take the reality of Crucifixion for granted? How can we keep from doing that?*

Day 2

Jesus cried out as the time was nearing for Him to accomplish His mission through suffering. He experienced every sensation we experience in the flesh. "There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man" (I Corinthians 10:13). By the foreknowledge of God, Jesus knew what was going to transpire in the last few hours of His life on earth. However, the thought of the suffering involved affected Him as it would any of us. With this great responsibility on His shoulders, His flesh struggled with His spirit. This cup of suffering seemed too much for Him to endure. He ultimately surrendered, but not without evidence of struggle. "And being in an agony he prayed more earnestly: and his sweat was as it were great drops of blood falling down to the ground" (Luke 22:44).

▶▶ ASK AND APPLY

- » *What is the significance of Jesus sweating "great drops of blood" in this passage?*
- » *How does recognizing the anguish with which Jesus prayed challenge you?*

Day 3

There are times when the spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak. We may be kneeling in obedience to God's call and realize an hour later that we have fallen asleep. Jesus offered an out for His disciples. He understood they were mere mortals and the flesh was not as strong as the spirit. It seems He gave them a generous dose of grace. God knows when we are tired and weary. He extends an extra measure of mercy on us when we at least show the effort. The time is not lost. Nothing is lost with God. "And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose" (Romans 8:28).

If we are tired and feel we have failed the Lord, we should take a moment and let Him turn it into something good. Even if we did not get in the hour we hoped for, a few moments of obedience goes a long way with the Lord. (See I Samuel 15:22.)

ASK AND APPLY

- » *Why is our flesh so weak?*
- » *What are some way we can gain control over our weak flesh?*

Day 4

Matthew 26:41 reveals the benefit of watching and praying. “Watch and pray, that ye enter not into temptation.” Watching and praying is a mighty duo. Praying is an extraordinary tool in itself, but keeping a watchful spirit, not only for the tactics of the enemy but also for the deliverance of the Lord, injects our prayer with faith. We pray with expectation, watching and waiting for God to show Himself mighty. If we could remove the cataracts from our spiritual eyes, we would see how anxious God is to answer our prayers and come to our rescue when we are into trouble. The following verse of Scripture gives us a glimpse of the emotional desire the Lord has for meeting the needs of His children: “For the eyes of the Lord run to and fro throughout the whole earth, to shew himself strong in the behalf of them whose heart is perfect toward him” (II Chronicles 16:9). When we pray with expectation, we literally watch for the salvation of the Lord.

ASK AND APPLY

- » *How can we pray with expectation?*
- » *What are you expecting from the Lord?*

Day 5

Jesus was our greatest example of how to fight temptation. When He went into the wilderness to fast and pray, He was grossly accosted by the devil. However, Jesus used the Word of God to combat the enemy. (See Matthew 4:4, 7, 10.) Through this example Jesus taught us how powerful a tool the Word of God is. Satan was defeated and finally gave up.

The Scripture outlines the power and ability of the Word. “For the word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any twoedged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discernor of the thoughts and intents of the heart” (Hebrews 4:12).

ASK AND APPLY

- » *Discuss the verses of Scripture Jesus used to defeat the devil in the wilderness. Can we use those same verses today to win our battles? Explain.*
- » *Take some time this week and put to memory the declarations Jesus made in the wilderness.*



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