THE PURPOSE IN GETHSEMANE

John 18 / Luke 22

Have you ever been extremely lonely? Have you ever felt as though your friends abandoned you? Or that you were completely misunderstood? Where you experience times of ultimate stress which seems too much to bear? If so, you have a faint idea of what Jesus Christ went through as He agonized in the Garden of Gethsemane. We will see in these verses that Christ has given us a model of what to do when we face times of uncertainty, when we don't know God's will, don't like it, or when it doesn't make sense.

PRACTICAL PRINCIPLES

1. **Jesus who was God yet human experienced intense loneliness.** In the Garden we see Jesus sweating blood, and next to the cross, Gethsemane was likely the lowest moment in the life of Jesus. He knew for a time that he would be separated from God, feeling intense loneliness as He bore the sin of the world. So if you're lonely, you're not alone. Jesus knows how you feel.

2. **Jesus wanted to be with others in His low point.** In Matthew's account, Jesus took Peter, James, and John with Him to the Garden. It was a crucial moment in His life. He was in agony, He was in pain, and He wanted someone there with Him. He didn't need a sermon or an explanation. In the same way we may need to just be there for those who may be in a crisis.

3. **Gethsemane stands in contrast to Eden.** In the Garden of Eden, men sinned. In the Garden of Gethsemane, Jesus conquered sin. In the Garden of Eden, Adam hid himself. In the Garden of Gethsemane our Lord boldly presented himself. In the Garden of Eden, the sword was drawn. In the Garden of Gethsemane the sword was sheathed.

4. **Jesus could have gotten out of this all with one word to Heaven.** In John 10:17–18 Jesus said, "Therefore my Father loves Me, because I lay down My life that I may take it again. No one takes it from Me, but I lay it down of Myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again" (NKJV). Jesus could have called on thousands of angels to deliver him, but He didn't because He knew there was no other way that we could be made right with God except by dying on the cross for our sins.

RELEVANT REMINDERS

- When you don't understand what's happening to you, always fall back to what you do understand, that God loves you and He has a plan for your life.
- In times of ultimate stress when the cup seems too much to bear, God wants His children to say, "Not my will, but Yours be done." Trust Him completely.

APPLICABLE ACTIONS

There was a purpose in Gethsemane for Jesus and a purpose for us as well. It's a place where we realize obedience overrules personal desire. Where spirit becomes more important than flesh. It's where the glory of God is more important than our glory and desires. Jesus said, "If you lose your life for My sake, you will find it." Don't be afraid to surrender yourself to God's perfect will for your life because His plans, His purpose, and His future for you are good.