

Greg Locke on Jesus in the Garden and the Ultimate Sacrifice

As many Christians around the world are currently observing Lent leading up to Resurrection Sunday, this time is a moment of observation and reflection on all that Jesus went through to pay the great price for the atonement of sins.

Perhaps one of the most overlooked parts of Jesus' journey to the cross was His time in the Garden of Gethsemane. Yet, just as Pastor Greg Locke of Global Vision Bible Church in Mount Juliet, Tennessee notes, this night and this location was incredibly special and critical to Jesus completing the will of God.

"If you'll read the book of Mark, it says it is a place that He and His disciples resorted to on a number of occasions," Locke says. "But this night was different. Judas was going to betray Him with a kiss."

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Unlike every other time that Jesus and His disciples had been to this special place, Jesus knew what was lurking around the corner this time was different. He knew His very own disciple would betray Him with a kiss, all for 30 pieces of silver. He knew that Peter, the one who promised to love and defend Him no matter what, would end up cutting off the ear of Malchus and later deny Jesus three times.

The pain and torment heading towards Jesus was the most horrendous torture any person ever had and ever would feel. It was in the garden that Jesus prayed and submitted to this

greater plan by the heavenly Father.

“The Bible says that Jesus came to the Garden of Gethsemane, the place of pressing, and it says that He was in great heaviness and the King James says, ‘agony,’” Locke says.

It was in this place of heaviness, here in the garden that Jesus asked for the heavenly Father to take this cup from Him. As Locke notes, it wasn’t because Jesus was trying to get out of something. It was because He knew that He was not only taking on the weight of the world’s sins, but that He would ultimately become sin, as the Scriptures say, “He who knew no sin became sin so that we might become the righteousness of God in Him,” (2 Cor. 5:21). This would mean separation from the heavenly Father and the Holy Spirit so that the Father could judge Jesus according to the standards of sin.

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Knowing this was coming to pass, Jesus still chose to say “not My will be done, but Thine will be done.” Jesus was obedient even though it meant taking on the death He did not deserve out of His love for us.

This decision to fully submit to the will of God that would bring down His wrath and perfect judgment was so distressing that it caused Jesus to sweat blood.

“He has this encounter with His Father in the garden, and the Bible says that He sweat, as it were, great drops of blood,” Locke says. “Medically, that is called medical phenomenon that happens when someone is mentally and emotionally under such distress, they are literally in such vile agony that literally the pressure from the inside will burst the blood capillaries, mix with the sweat and come out of the pores of your skin.”

Each of us know what it’s like to sweat and to feel distressed, but imagine how much more these feelings and

emotions were for Jesus? The pressure and the pain He felt was so much more than any of us have ever experienced.

The garden is not only representative of the emotional and mental distress that Jesus was feeling, but it was the actual place of betrayal, the moment where all His disciples fled, and He was arrested, taken for questioning, mockery and finally the cross. It is by studying Jesus' time in the Garden of Gethsemane that we can see the beginning of the brutality Jesus faced, and what total submission to God's will truly looks like. {eo}

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