

## **“Let This Cup Pass from Me...”**

As He contemplated His impending trial and execution, Jesus prayed to His Heavenly Father: “O My Father, if it is possible, let this cup pass from Me; nevertheless, not as I will, but as You will” (Matt. 26:39). Jesus knew the suffering that He would endure as a perfect sacrifice for sin (2 Cor. 5:21), and His prayer demonstrates that Jesus desired to find some other way to satisfy God’s justice. However, no other way was possible, and so Jesus obediently submitted to His Father’s will. Consider the implications of Christ’s prayer in the Garden:

***Sin has only one solution*** – God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son (John 3:16). The sacrifice of Jesus is the ONLY solution to the problem of sin: “He takes away the sin of the world” (John 1:29). God reconciled us to Himself through the body and blood of Christ (Col. 1:20-22). It was impossible for the blood of mere bulls and goats to take away sin (Heb. 10:4). Moral law-keeping is good, but the keeping of the law could never undo the effects of even one sin (cf. James 2:10-11). The fact that Jesus prayed, “Let this cup pass,” and yet still went to the cross forever confirms that there is but one solution to the problem of sin: the blood of Christ (Rev. 1:5).

***God’s will takes precedence even in the face of suffering and death*** – Jesus always did His Father’s will, no matter what: “I always do those things that please Him” (John 8:29). He had taught His disciples to pray, “May Your will be done on earth as it is in heaven” (Matt. 6:10), and so in the Garden He prayed, “Not as I will, but as You will” (Matt. 26:39). Jesus epitomized His own instruction to the church in the book of Revelation: “Be faithful until death, and I will give you the crown of life” (Rev. 2:10). A disciple of Jesus will do what He did: make God’s will the first priority in all the choices and decisions of life, even if those choices might result in suffering or death (Phil. 1:21).

***Eternal punishment is real*** – Jesus prayed, “If it is possible...” (Matt. 26:39). He came to buy us back from the wages of sin (cf. Rom. 6:23), and in so doing Jesus paid a debt that we could NEVER pay. He came to rescue us from what He describes as, “everlasting punishment” (Matt. 25:46). The reason hell is eternal in nature is because anything less than eternal punishment would mean that WE could somehow satisfy God’s justice by serving some kind of temporary sentence. If we could satisfy God’s justice by either being annihilated or by “serving time” to pay for our transgressions in hell, then Christ died in vain. His death on the cross validates the reality and eternal nature of hell (cf. Matt. 25:30, 41, 46).

***God’s servants are to cast all their cares upon Him*** – What a great comfort to know that our Heavenly Father wants to hear from us continually (1 Thess. 5:17). Of greater consolation still is the knowledge that He desires us to cast all our cares upon Him (1 Pet. 5:7). Jesus Christ could face the cross confidently and obediently because He had already poured out His heart and soul to God in prayer (cf. Phil. 4:6-7). God is able and willing to remove some difficulties from life, but many other difficulties must be endured

with the strength and grace He provides (cf. 2 Cor. 12:7-10). No matter the trial, God bids us to cast our concerns and cares upon Him. Thank God for Jesus Christ, who shows us the heart and mind of God while living in this sin-sick world! **--JB**