

Sermon Series: “The Darkness and the Dawn”–LOL, Westfield–3/5/2003

Title: “Midnight in the Garden”

Text: Mark 14: 32-42

Intro: Monday Midnight collegial discussion--less than wholehearted commitment

God’s squeeze play (vs. 32-34)

- Often God leads us to moments in our life which press in from all sides
 1. Jesus was *greatly distressed and troubled* – inner turmoil / mounting anxiety as he considered physical death and eternal suffering for sins about to endure
 1. ***Garden of Gethsemane = name means “oil press”***
 2. We reach those points in physical health, family relationships, work struggles, crises at school and with friends — feel like we are in a vice being pressed closed
- Learning to lean on God
 3. Often we turn to the wrong things to comfort and encourage; deaden the pain
 1. Wrong relationships; alcohol or drugs; obsessive play or work; or things
 2. Even when Jesus turn to closest spiritual accountability group, they failed
 3. These things take our eyes of Jesus who alone can give us forgiveness and deliverance and add to the squeezing pressures of life as try to live in denial
 4. Jesus turned His Father in prayer
 1. “*Abba Father*”—had a relationship with God that could be trusted
 2. **Ills.: father and child swimming rescue**
 5. In Jesus--the power, example, and courage to lean on him during dark times (38)
 1. Forgiveness for where we failed and the ability to pick up and move on
 2. Redemption of the fallen destructive results of others on our lives
 3. “*Trust in the LORD with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways acknowledge him, and he will make your paths straight.*” *Prov 3: 5-6*

Turning from Slavery to Submission (vss. 35-42)

- A relationship with the Father brings a confidence in turning it over
 1. Jesus had a tight relationship with God, the Father, and could entrust himself
 1. “*During the days of Jesus’ life on earth, he offered up prayers and petitions with loud cries and tears to the one who could save him from death, and he was heard because of his reverent submission. Although he was a son, he learned obedience from what he suffered and, once made perfect, he became the source of eternal salvation for all who obey him*” *Heb 5: 7-9*
 2. Knowing that by faith in Jesus, God has nothing more to be ticked off about, we can come with confidence to find help
 1. “*For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but we have one who has been tempted in every way, just as we are--yet was without sin. Let us then approach the throne of grace with confidence, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help us in our time of need.*” *Heb. 4: 15-16*
 2. **Ills. When the kids come asking**
- Submitting to God’s will out of relationship rather than fear
 3. Jesus knew there was no other way but also knew Father would do it if there was
 4. Our obedience doesn’t come out of fear but can come out of relationship
 1. “*We love because he first loved us.*” *1 John 4: 19*
 5. We know that in Jesus the Father has nothing but our eternal well-being in mind
 1. “*Let us fix our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy set before him endured the cross, scorning its shame, and sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.*” *Heb. 12: 2*