

The Gospel of Matthew

“Watch and Pray”
Matthew 26:31-46

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Then Jesus said to them, “You will all fall away because of Me this night, for it is written, *‘I will strike down the shepherd, and the sheep of the flock will be scattered.’* But after I have been raised, I will go before you to Galilee. But Peter answered and said to Him, “Even though all may fall away because of You, I will never fall away.” Jesus said to him, “Truly I say to you that this very night, before a cock crows, you shall deny Me three times.” Peter said to Him, “Even if I have to die with You, I will not deny You.” All the disciples said the same thing too.

Then Jesus came with them to a place called Gethsemane, and said to His disciples, “Sit here while I go over there and pray.” And He took with Him Peter, and the two sons of Zebedee, and began to be grieved and distressed.

Then He said to them, “My soul is deeply grieved, to the point of death; remain here and keep watch with Me.”

And He went a little beyond them, and fell on His face and prayed, saying, “My Father, if it is possible, let this cup pass from Me; yet not as I will, but as You will.”

And He came to the disciples and found them sleeping, and said to Peter, “So, you men could not keep watch with Me for one hour?

Keep watching and praying, that you may not enter into temptation; the spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak.”


He went away again a second time and prayed, saying, “My Father, if this cannot pass away unless I drink it, Your will be done.”

And again He came and found them sleeping, for their eyes were heavy.

And He left them again, and He went away and prayed a third time, saying the same thing once more.

Then He came to the disciples, and said to them, “Are you still sleeping and taking your rest? Behold, the hour is at hand and the Son of Man is being betrayed into the hands of sinners. Arise, let us be going; behold the one who betrays Me is at hand!”

(Matthew 26:31-46)




“Watch and Pray”

The Disciples’ Failure

1. Nature of their failure

- their desertion of Jesus was a lack of faith in Jesus and in God’s plan and provision
- not a permanent falling away but a temporary lapse of faith – they were restored



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The Disciples’ Failure

2. Reasons for their failure

- a self-confidence and an over-estimation of their own strength
- their failure to pray and keep a diligent watch against entering into temptation



"Watch and Pray"

The Disciples' Failure

3. Lessons from their failure

- do not underestimate the weakness of your flesh
- pray continuously not to enter into temptation
- watch over your heart with all diligence



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Jesus' Distress & Triumph

1. Nature of His distress

- He experienced a deep, emotional anguish and grief to the point of death
- Heb. 5:7: "*He offered up both prayers and supplications with loud crying and tears to the One able to save Him from death...*"



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Jesus' Distress & Triumph

2. Reason for His distress

- He abhorred the thought of the cross and desired to avoid it if possible
- He knew the nature of the cross – drinking the cup of His Father's wrath!



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Jesus' Distress & Triumph

3. Nature of His triumph

- He trusted His Father's goodness and purpose by submitting to His will
- through prayer He was enabled to endure the shame of the cross