

The Anguish of the King – Mark 14:32-42

The gospel tells how salvation comes to us by answering the following questions: Why do we need to be saved? From what do we need to be saved? What has God done to make this salvation possible? What does it mean to live as people whom He has saved? Today's passage of scripture powerfully portrays the length to which the perfect love of God willingly went, for us to be saved into the eternal arms of our Father in Heaven. We will see, from these verses in Mark 14, answers to the four questions just posed and the sheer magnitude and majesty of God's gift to us.

We see Jesus here in a manner that we simply haven't seen before in this gospel. To date, we have Jesus the Almighty One; the worker of miracles, the master of the storm, the wise teacher - nothing has intimidated Him. And yet, it seems from the moment He enters this garden, Gethsemane, on The Mount of Olives, He changed. We see Jesus like we've never seen him before. Jesus is in agony in the garden because he knows there is a cup that His Father is about to hand him from which he must drink, it is a cup filled with the wrath of God and the very thought and anticipation of it caused the blood vessels in his skin to burst, so that he sweat drops of blood, such is the horror of this hour for Jesus.

1) Why Do We Need to be Saved?

Because God has seen every wrongful action; He has heard every harsh word, He has discerned every immoral thought, and He holds you responsible; there is a cup that has your name on it. Too many people live fearing death and yet far worse than death is the reality of God's wrath. We don't like the idea of a God who is angry. However, if God isn't full of wrath and anger toward sin, then he can't possibly be good and he can't possibly be loving. God sees all suffering, He hears every cry and because He is a God of love, because He is holy and just, His anger rages. If such things didn't move God to anger then we would simply have to conclude that he doesn't care, but we certainly cannot have a God of love if he doesn't care about the way in which we treat others, the way in which we treat ourselves and most crucially the way in which we treat our creator.

Q. How does God's anger towards sin and suffering show that God loves us?

Q. You are God's workmanship – You are His work of art – do you suppress that truth?

2) From What Do We Need to be Saved?

It is not Satan. It is not hell. We need to be saved from the one who is able to destroy both soul and body in hell.

Read Revelation 14:10-11

We need to be saved from the Wrath of God and His Anger. We have been rescued from something more terrible than we can ever imagine.

Q. What are the common views of life after death? How does God's Wrath affect our view of judgment?

Q. What's the worst that can happen – How does the knowledge of God impact our actions and the consequences of those actions?

3) What has God done to Make This Salvation Possible?

Your cup was given to Jesus to drink!

Every last trace of our sin; our shame, our guilt, and the anger of God toward every sin done by us and to us, it all went into the cup. Those of every person who has ever trusted in God for their salvation, the cup was filled with the wrath of God toward the sin of the world. Into the cup went the just and fair penalty for all the horror seen in the world. He took the wrath of God for you, so that you might receive the favour of God. The picture Gethsemane paints us reveals that the contents of The Cup tortured Jesus more than the lashings, more than the nails, more than the thorns.

Q. Consider how Jesus would have felt at this moment. From knowing no sin, to bearing the weight of ALL sin. How serious do you think God deals with your sin? What about the actions against you?

Q. 'For the joy set before Him He endured the cross' – Knowing the suffering Jesus endured, both physical and spiritual, how do we see the value God gives our salvation?

4) What Does It Mean to Live as People Whom He Has Saved?

He took from us the cup of God's wrath and drank it dry on the cross. In its place He hands to us another cup; this cup is called the 'cup of salvation'. A cup the psalmist says that overflows with the love of God, with the Joy of God, with the Peace of God and with the favour of God. For those who believe, the cup of wrath has been replaced with the cup of abundance.

There is no comparison between the cup of wrath on what we deserve and the cup that Jesus provides for us.

Q. How does the cup of salvation affect your view of judgement day when we meet God?

Q. What do you need to let go to receive the cup of salvation? What gets in the way of receiving the undeserved cup of abundant life prepared for us?