



# SERMON DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Speaker: Chris Royalty // Sunday: July 9, 2023

- 1) Begin your time by briefly praying and asking the Holy Spirit to help you as you discuss and study.
- 2) Read Matthew 26:36-56 together.
- 3) What stuck out to you as you read? Is there anything you don't understand? Is there anything you'd like to discuss?
- 4) What can we learn about prayer from observing Jesus' prayer in this passage?
- 5) What is the meaning of, "the spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak?"
- 6) If the spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak, how can we ever overcome temptation?
- 7) Speaking of Jesus' fear and suffering in the garden (and then on the cross), Tim Keller comments on why Jesus was so shaken. He notes that other martyrs throughout history have often suffered and died with joy and without Jesus' reaction. Why was Jesus' reaction different? Keller says:

"The death of Jesus was qualitatively different from any other death. The physical pain was nothing compared to the spiritual experience of cosmic abandonment. Christianity alone among the world religions claims that God became uniquely and fully human in Jesus Christ and therefore knows firsthand despair, rejection, loneliness, poverty, bereavement, torture, and imprisonment. On the cross he went beyond even the worst human suffering and experienced cosmic rejection and pain that exceeds ours as infinitely as his knowledge and power exceeds ours. In his death, God suffers in love, identifying with the abandoned and godforsaken."<sup>1</sup>

What is your reaction to this comment from Keller?

- 8) Peter (according to John's account) was the one who cut off the ear of the servant of the high priest. Jesus told Peter to put away his sword, and healed the man. Leon Morris comments:

"Peter saw the use of his sword as the way of deliverance from the present

trouble, but Jesus viewed it as out of character with all that he stood for. . . . It comes naturally to us to seek to impose our will on others. But that is not God's way. His way is the way of the cross with its repudiation of compulsion and its call for us to trust him.”<sup>2</sup>

What does it mean that Christianity is not the way of force, but the way of the cross? What are the implications of this?

- 9) Judas betrayed Jesus with a kiss, and all the disciples fled from Jesus. Why is this important to note?
- 10) Why is Jesus determined to go to the cross?
- 11) End your time in prayer. Ask God to help you apply the things you've discussed and learned during this time of study.

<sup>1</sup> Keller, Timothy. *The Reason for God: Belief in an Age of Skepticism* (p. 30). Penguin Publishing Group. Kindle Edition.

<sup>2</sup> Leon Morris, [\*The Gospel according to Matthew\*](#), *The Pillar New Testament Commentary* (Grand Rapids, MI; Leicester, England: W.B. Eerdmans; Inter-Varsity Press, 1992), 675.