

The Lord Praying in Sorrow

Mark 14:32-42

“*The Gethsemane Prayer*” has been attributed to a number of painters. A copy (by *Hofmann*) hung in my grandparents' house, where I spent my childhood. The image of a man praying bitterly in the moonlit darkness frightened me as a child until I encountered the Gospel and learnt that this person was the Christ. In the depths of fear and grief, the Lord continued to pray earnestly.

Jesus was the only begotten Son of God, but He lived in this world as a human being. When He came to *Gethsemane*, He knew that His death was imminent. He knew it was God's will, but He wished to avoid it if possible. With three trusted disciples by His side, He must have wanted to teach them the importance of prayer. The disciples were proud until just before (v. 31), but while the Lord was praying, they fell asleep and repeated the same mistake later. Confronted with the weakness and sinfulness of man, the Lord was prepared to die an atoning death on the cross. This is when He saw clearly the way for man to be forgiven by God.

How deep was the Lord's grief? God's only Son must give His life as a substitute for human sin. He swallowed His own deep sorrow in prayer, though it was God's will. Saved by Christ's atonement, we must not forget to pray. Even if we fail, we can be forgiven and rise again. At the time of Lent, we want to reaffirm the weight of the Lord's crucifixion.

KK.