In The Garden

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Preacher: Dr. Michael Staton

[0:00] This is the First Mustang Pulpit Podcast, a podcast of the weekly preaching and teaching at First Mustang.! Thank you for joining us. You can be seated.

So good to see you here in our first worship service this morning. Thank you for our choir and musicians for leading us. Jeff mentioned the choir loft being full.
And I'll just say if more of you want to be a part of our choir on Wednesday nights and we need to add room, we will do that. I don't want you to look up there and think that just because it's so full, there's no room for you.
There is. They meet every Wednesday at 6.30. And if you would like to be a part of that, you're encouraged to. I will assure you we will find a way to make it work if we need more space up there.
We love what our choir musicians do in leading us in worship every single Sunday. Jason Flores and his wife are here, the BCM director at Oklahoma City Community College.
[1:07] Thankful to have you here with us and for the work that you do. BCM was such a huge part of my background and a huge part of Marcy's life and a big factor in us being married.

And so, we're grateful to have you here with us and thankful for the work that you do. I hope you come back tonight at our evening service at 5. One of the things we're going to do throughout this semester, we're studying through 1 Thessalonians on Sunday nights.
We're also going to take time and most of our evening service is starting tonight through the rest of the semester to highlight some different ministries and let you hear testimony of how the Lord is at work in those ministries.
Tonight, you're going to hear about our Crossroads ministry, which is for our college-age students from 18 to 25. And we'll look forward to being able to hear how the Lord is at work in their life.
And then that Crossroads group is coming to our house afterwards, and so we're looking forward to hosting you guys and girls tonight after evening service. So, I hope that you can come back and be a part of that. And then one last thing, Jeremy Davis, who oversees our Crossroads ministry, also does our church podcast, our 412 podcast.
[2:18] And he and I recorded one just a couple of weeks ago that just came out this past week, and where we discuss what we're studying on evening service.

We discussed the fall. He asked me some rules about when you can decorate for fall and when you can decorate for Christmas, those kinds of things that you just need to know that there are rules about these things.
And so, like I told him on the podcast, the problem is I know the rules. They're just not written down, and there's my way and the wrong way. So, but I appreciate Jeremy's role in doing that podcast and helping us be able to bring some of the behind-the-scenes part of our church to you.
And so, I want to encourage you to check that out and be a part of it. So many great things going on this semester, and the Lord is at work among us in so many great ways.
But let's never forget that our most important work we do as a church, whether it's in this sanctuary or in Sunday school classrooms or in people's living rooms, is when we open up the Bible and with humble hearts ask the Lord to speak to us through the work of the Holy Spirit as we read and seek to apply His Word.
[3:39] If we were to be doing 10,000 good things and neglecting the study of the Word, we would have missed it. There is nothing more important we can do than to know who God is and what He has said to us in the pages of the Bible.

And one of the great examples that we believe that is that you as a congregation are here each Lord's Day with an open Bible looking at it to make sure that what I say comes from the Word.

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As I told our new members class this past Wednesday, I hope that you trust me, I hope that you believe me, and I hope that you never once take my word for it.
It needs to be clear that what I say comes from His Word. This is our great privilege every single Sunday to hear from the Lord.
There's a hymn that many of you know. It's one of the favorites of many senior adults called In the Garden.
[4:45] In the Garden, and it speaks of, as a believer, communing with the Lord in the garden in a quiet, private place.

I'm borrowing that title from that hymn for the message this morning, In the Garden, because this is where we find ourselves, in the Garden of Gethsemane with Jesus and His disciples.
There is something that, I just have to confess to you, feels, it just feels a bit strange to me that we get access to what is just one of the most raw moments in the life of Jesus.
We're allowed to see behind the veil of what's going on with Jesus in His heart, praying to His Father in a moment that would just truly be beyond description.
It almost feels too personal, like we shouldn't even be able to see it.
[6:06] And yet, the Holy Spirit, through His marvelous work of preserving for us this sacred text, has seen fit that we should see.

that we should see these final moments leading up to the arrest of Jesus, of what He is doing and what He is saying, what He is thinking, and even how He communes with His Father.
Most often, when people think about the cross and the things related to crucifixion, when they think about the pain and the horrors of the cross, they often think about the torture that happens physically to the one being crucified, and to be sure, it was a torturous event.
But that's not the worst part for Jesus, not even close. The worst part is recorded for us in the New Testament where it says, for our sake He made Him who knew no sin to become sin, that we might become the righteousness of God.
It's the sin payment that Christ is having to pay. It's the weight of our sin being poured out upon Him. It's having to experience His Father turning His face away from Him as an act of our propitiation that is the most severe part of the suffering.
[7:43] Before a nail would even go through His hands, before He would receive a single lash upon His back, He experiences the pain and the anguish in the Garden of Gethsemane as He prays to His Father.

It's personal. It's gut-wrenching. It's raw.
It is so real. And all of it for the sake of the glory of God and the salvation of His people.
Mark 14. We find ourselves in our journey here in verse 32. It says, They went to a place called Gethsemane, and He said to His disciples, Sit here while I pray.
And He took with Him Peter and James and John and began to be greatly distressed and troubled.
And He said to them, My soul is very sorrowful, even to death.
[9:02] Remain here and watch. And going a little farther, He fell on the ground and prayed that, if it were possible, the hour might pass from Him.

And He said, Abba, Father, all things are possible for You. Remove this cup from Me. Yet, not what I will, but what You will.
I want you to make note of three things this morning as we look at this passage begin to unfold for us.
Number one, let's look at the honest and faithful agony of Jesus. The honest and faithful agony of Jesus.
And I want to show you under that heading two specific things to take your attention to. One is let's look at His true anguish.
[10:12] Back to verse 32. They are going now to a place called Gethsemane. Here's how it unfolds. Jesus and the apostles are going to cross the Kidron Valley.

There was a stream that ran through the Kidron Valley, it's there between the temple and on the east side of Jerusalem, the Mount of Olives.
Those who have traveled with us to Israel, if you can picture where the Temple Mount is when we are there on the Mount of Olives looking over, that's looking over there, the Kidron Valley.
And this is a very fascinating thing. And I want you to try to picture this with your mind's eye here because here's what's happening. Jesus is leading His disciples. They've left the upper room.

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They've gone down the valley. And they're going to cross now this channel of the Kidron. And something is happening here, even as they cross it, that would be so eerie.
[11:17] The Passover lambs are beginning to be sacrificed. Blood poured out upon the altar. Hundreds of thousands of lambs being sacrificed.

And from that altar where the animals would be sacrificed, there is a channel that runs down into the Kidron Valley to that brook there where the blood from the lambs would flow.
The spring rains have been falling and filling the area. Now the water mingled with the blood of sacrifice.
So that as they cross over, they see the red. A picture for those who see it, no doubt, of the blood of the lambs that were slain in Jesus' mind, knowing within just a few hours it would be His blood that flowed.
Not the blood of lambs or animals that are symbolic, but the true blood of the lamb that would take away our sin.
[12:39] They come, verse 32 says, to a place called Gethsemane. It's an area likely owned by a follower of Jesus. It was a normal meeting place, this gathering place for Jesus and His apostles.

Luke 22, 39 tells us that. It says He came out and He went as was His custom. Jesus was often in this place, in this garden area owned by someone who was one of His followers.
Many of us in our church have been there on our trips to Israel to be able to gather, to worship, and to sing, and to pray right there in the garden of Gethsemane. And let me ask you a question this morning.
What is the man's name who owned the garden of Gethsemane and allowed Jesus and His disciples to gather to pray?
What's the name of the person who did that? What's the name of the person who did that? If you're thinking of a name in your mind, you're wrong.
[13:57] Because we don't know who it is. Which is very telling to me that you don't need to be known by men to be meaningful for the purposes of God.

This man was nameless. Known only to Jesus. And that was enough.
In this world that tries to persuade and convince you that you need fame and popularity and this wide range of influence, if the Lord wants to grant that to someone, He certainly is free to do that. But you do not need to be known by the world to be useful for the Lord. You and I may not know the man's name, but Christ did.
And this man was faithful to the Lord. And while His name may not have been preserved for us, rest assured, great is His reward in heaven.
[15:06] And the same is true for you. The Lord sees every act of worship, of ministry, of sacrifice, of kindness. The Lord knows every time that you labored in faithful ministry, the world maybe didn't see it, but the Lord did.

The Lord knows every act of service and ministry you pour out through our church, and maybe your name is not recognized, and maybe even at times you feel overlooked.
Rest assured, the Lord knows every act of service and of teaching and of giving and of sacrifice and of evangelism. The Lord knows your heart to try to teach, to make disciples, to share the gospel. And it may or may not ever be that you are recognized by some title or that you would rise to some place of formal leadership. Just understand this.
Many who are nameless in their life on this earth have given everything they have for the cause of Christ, and great will be their reward for all eternity.
[16:12] Come to Gethsemane, it tells us in verse 32. It's a word that means the olive press. John 18 adds that they had crossed the brook Kidron where there was a garden where He took His disciples.

It says, Judas, who betrayed Him, also knew the place for Jesus often met there with His disciples. This is fascinating. Jesus would often go to the garden with His disciples.
Judas is looking for an opportunity to betray Him. Jesus, when in the upper room, chronologically, just a couple of hours ago, dismissed Judas, saying what you do, go and do quickly, so that Judas was not present when he would institute the Lord's Supper because Judas was not a believer, then it shows us how important it is to make sure that we recognize that the Lord's Supper is not for believers.

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He's accomplished that. Now, Jesus knows what Judas is doing. He knows He's looking for an opportunity to betray Him.
He's even dismissed Him to go do it. The place that Judas would most suspect Jesus would be is in the garden. That was His custom.
[17:48] Jesus goes anyway. He says to His disciples, sit here while I pray.

Those instructions are for eight. There's 12 disciples. Judas is gone. We're down to 11. He's going to take Peter, James, and John deeper into the garden.
So, it's to eight of His apostles He says, sit here while I pray. And then He says in verse 34 these deeply personal words, my soul is very sorrowful even to death.
Remain here and watch. He tells them to keep watch, to stay spiritually engaged in the battle. His soul is in anguish.
Not just because of the physical suffering that awaits Him though certainly anyone in our human nature would not look forward to that.
[19:01] It's the true anguish He faces is the wrath of the Father He knows about to be poured out upon the Son. That's the true anguish He feels.

But it's not just true anguish. Make note secondly of true trust. Verse 35 Going a little farther He fell on the ground and He prayed.
Luke 22 says He knelt down. Matthew 26 that He fell on His face. The customary posture for prayer in the first century for the people would be to stand and pray.
But here Jesus kneels down falls down face on the ground as He prays in agony. Luke 22 adds that there appeared to Him an angel from heaven strengthening Him.
by the way when Jesus says that He could call down the armies of heaven the angels He could have.
[20:14] He did not. Verse 44 says being in agony He prayed more earnestly and His sweat became like great drops of blood falling to the ground.

Luke 22 44 This could refer to sweat pouring out of His brow so profusely that it looked, it appeared as though He were cut and bleeding or it could be a rare medical condition known as hematidrosis where subcutaneous capillaries dilate until He burst and flushing blood out through the skin.
He is pictured in the most deep anguish possible yet submitting Himself to His Father in the deepest act of trust.
And you can't read about the Garden of Gethsemane without going back to your mind to the wilderness where Jesus' ministry right after He's been baptized, He's led by the Spirit into the wilderness and one of the three temptations the devil throws his way is to get him to not trust the Father.
The devil says to Jesus on that occasion, look at all of these stones, why don't you just turn these stones to bread? You've not eaten for 40 days, here you are, the Son of God and look how famished you are.
[21:57] If your father really took care of you, if you could really trust your father, surely he would have fed you better than this. You ought to distrust your father and take it into your own hands and turn these stones to bread.

Now, there's nothing wrong with a hungry man eating, and there's nothing wrong with Jesus performing a miracle. He did many of them. What's the temptation going on as the devil tries to persuade Jesus in the wilderness to turn stones to bread?
The temptation was to get him to no longer trust the will of his father. And here in the garden of Gethsemane where Christ is in his deepest anguish, he submits himself to the will of his father.
He says, verse 35, if it were possible, I pray the hour might pass, but verse 36, he cries out, Abba, Father, all things are possible for you.
Abba, this Aramaic term that encompasses two sides. One is closeness and intimacy and love and the other of respect.
[23:21] Jesus cries out to his father showing his love, his nearness to his father, and yet in his humanity, his submission to his father's will.

All things are possible for you, he prays. Remove this cup from me, yet not what I will, but what you will.
You've had the occasion perhaps where you walk into somebody's office and you didn't realize they were on the phone and they're talking and you think there's, oh, I need to step away, I'm not

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supposed to be here.
Or maybe even at church, you turn the corner and you see someone, you want to talk to them, but you notice they are talking quietly with somebody, maybe sharing a personal need or prayer request, and you think I should probably step away that this conversation isn't for me.
I feel a bit like that even as we read these words. These words are so gut-wrenching. I mean, here we are literally listening to the conversation between Jesus the Son and God the Father hours before His crucifixion.
[24:45] and yet the Lord says we're allowed to hear. The hour is the time of His suffering.

The cup He speaks of in verse 36 would refer to the actual events of what Jesus would have to endure. The Old Testament often would speak of the cup in a reference to the suffering of Jesus. Psalm 11 6, Isaiah 51, among many others that refer to the cup as a place or a time of suffering.
And Jesus is, as one author said, He recoils at the thought of bearing sin, not because He doesn't want to do the Father's will, but because He is so perfectly holy and pure.
to be so closely associated with having sin upon His shoulders is the most awful thing imaginable.
In the wilderness, when Jesus was tempted, it was the goal of the devil to get Jesus to embrace sin.
ironically, if the devil could have his way now in the Garden of Gethsemane, it would be for Jesus to cling so tightly to His personal holiness that He would abandon the act of redemption where He who knew no sin would become sin for us.
[26:29] Jesus affirms in this prayer the sovereignty of His Father, all things are possible for you, verse 36 says.

He affirms the true agony of His condition and He affirms that He is submitting to His Father's will, yet not what I will, but what you will, He says.
And while for sure the first and primary thing that I want you to see from the Garden of Gethsemane is the work Christ did on our behalf, the first thing to notice for sure is the purpose of God in the plan of redemption through Christ the Son.
However, while we look at that, don't miss this faithful example Jesus gives us of precisely how we should pray because we too submit ourselves to sovereignty of God and then express our honest human condition and then ultimately rest by submitting ourselves to the Father's will as Christ prayed is exactly how you and I should pray.
So when you pray to the Lord, begin by acknowledging the sovereignty of God. God, with you all things are possible. God, I know that you hear and God, I believe in your power.
[27:59] God, I know that you can do anything you choose to do. Begin your prayer by acknowledging his sovereignty and then express your request, express your need, express your condition.

As you pray through that, you've got to come to the place of submission where you say at the end of that prayer, nevertheless, this is not about ultimately what I will, this is about your will.
The reason why, even though there's all this debate that exists about God's sovereignty which kind of baffles me a bit because if you don't believe God is sovereign, why do you pray to him?
What's the point? If he can't do all things, what good is praying to him? Now the question becomes, if God can do all things and if he's sovereign, if he knows all things, if he accomplishes all things according to his will, then why do we pray?
Well, among many reasons, here's one reason, because Christ did. He's our faithful example. So, if you want to try to wrestle with the theology of how all that fits, then in a biblical way, have at it.
[29:23] But just understand, if you land anywhere other than God is sovereign, you've gotten completely off course biblically. If you land anywhere other than we are to faithfully pray, you've gotten completely off course biblically.

It is because God is sovereign that we faithfully pray. And our example of that is Christ himself. And that's enough for us.
Christ prays, declaring the sovereignty of God, expressing his own need, and then in his humanity, submitting himself to the will of his Father. And nevertheless, not what I will, but what you will.
This is a good way for you to pray. For the healing of your sickness, for the job that you're looking for, for the relationship that is broken, for the strife that exists in your home, for your financial needs, for the people that you are sharing Christ with, for the ministry in which you serve, whatever it may be, start by saying, God, let's just begin with you, you're good, you're sovereign, you're holy.

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Let's just acknowledge the character of God. And then, once you've done that, submit your request to the Lord, express the need, express what your heart longs for, and then as you pray and wrestle through that, come to the place of submission where you can say, Lord, it is because I trust in your sovereignty, because I trust in who you are, that even if you don't do what I hope, think, or expect you to do, nevertheless, this is not about my will, this is about your will being done.
[31:10] This is the honest and faithful agony of Jesus. Second, let me show you the rebuke and encouragement of Jesus.

The rebuke and encouragement of Jesus. First, the rebuke, verse 37, and he came and found them sleeping. Now, you just got to stop for a minute and just say, did you expect anything else, these guys?
But I want to say what I said last week. As much as the disciples miss it, as often as we see their failures, like I said last week, at least they're still there with him.
Now, they're sleeping, and they should be praying, but at least they're there. And while there's a lot of things about the disciples that we don't want to emulate, a lot of things we should learn and do better, at least these men are still there.
Judas has left. Judas has walked away. Judas is betrayed. At least the other 11 are trying. Having said that, Jesus has called them to watch and pray, and he comes back in verse 37, and he found them sleeping.
[32:38] Simon, are you asleep? Could you not watch one hour? Now, they should have stayed awake and prayed.

That's what they should have done. But let's also understand, it's getting quite late in the evening. We're probably around 10 o'clock at night.
They're going to pray for a bit. Judas is going to come with a mob and arrest Jesus, and they're going to begin the trials right around midnight. So, we're getting pretty late in the evening. It's been an emotional night.
They've just finished a walk going from the upper room through the Kidron Valley to the garden. Their bodies are tired.
But he gives the rebuke to them. This is when you need to be on alert. When your body doesn't want to. When you want to cave in to your flesh, it's then we remind ourselves, 1 Corinthians 9, 27, that we are to discipline our body and keep it under control.
[34:03] We do what is right, regardless of how we feel. That's the rebuke he gives. He says in verse 38, watch and pray that you may not enter into temptation.

He says stay alert. Be actively engaged in the work of prayer. Be in constant readiness. Now, here's a question.
Jesus has left the eight to pray. He takes Peter, James, and John deeper into the garden and tells them to stop and pray.
And then Jesus goes further by himself and he prays. So, regardless of what the apostles do, even if they're all snoring sound asleep, Jesus is still praying.
Isn't that sufficient? I mean, if Jesus himself is praying, what good is it going to do for 11 other guys who tend to mess up all the time anyway?
[35:29] What's the point of them praying? If Christ himself is praying, whatever is being accomplished in prayer, why isn't it enough that Jesus prays?

And I think what we see from this is a reminder that prayer is not first about getting something from God. Prayer is first about conforming our heart to the will and the purposes of God.
Jesus is praying. But these disciples need to be praying too. Because their hearts need to submit to the will of the Father.
And here is another great example of where we see that divine sovereignty seen in the prayer of Jesus in no way does away with our human responsibility to do what we've been tasked to do.
Divine sovereignty is the pillow upon which we rest our head. But never the license for which we would disobey.
[36:58] He goes on to say the spirit indeed is willing but the flesh is weak. We know that, don't we?

We know what it's like to make commitments to the Lord in our heart to mean them but it's just hard to get up early and read. It's hard to stay up late and study.

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It's hard to turn off the television to pray. The spirit is willing but the flesh tends to be so weak and just live by fleshly passion instead of by spiritual priority.
We see this rebuke and the encouragement that Jesus gives. The rebuke is that you need to stay awake. Why are you sleeping? Why are you sleeping? The encouragement is that you have a role to play in the work and the purposes of God.
Your prayers are powerful. Let me show you one last thing here in verses 39 to 41. The persistent and predictable experience of Jesus.
[38:10] The persistent and predictable experience of Jesus. Verse 39, and again, he went away and prayed saying the same words, the text says.

Jesus is persistent in prayer. Again, look at verse 39. And again, so what's happening here is Jesus is praying. He comes back.
The apostles are asleep. He wakes them up and tells them to pray. He goes back to pray. Comes back, checks on the apostles. They're asleep. He wakes them up. He goes back to pray.
This is the repeated prayer of Jesus. Verse 40, and again he came and found them sleeping for their eyes were very heavy and they did not know what to answer him.
Three different times Jesus comes back when he put all the gospels together and finds them asleep. Jesus is persistent in prayer and predictably the disciples keep falling asleep.
[39:27] The disciples seem to have these repeated patterns of disobedience. Jesus is persistent in prayer. Jesus is persistent in prayer. Jesus is persistent in prayer. Just like us. Have you ever had the experience of confessing sin to the Lord and you're embarrassed not only because of what you've done but because you've done it again?

You ever said, Lord, I did it again. I said I wasn't going to do it. I did it again. Once again, I let my heart get distracted by things of the world.
Once again, I was disrespectful to my spouse. Once again, I said I was going to lead my home in prayer and family devotion. And once again, I let that slip.
Lord, once again, I said I wasn't going to say that anymore. I wasn't going to do that anymore. I wasn't going to look at that anymore. I wasn't going to talk like that anymore. And once again, Lord, here I am.
These patterns of disobedience. But we can relate to the disciples because we too have been there. Verse 40, again, he came to them and found them sleeping.
[40:47] Happened again and again and again. Verse 41, and he came the third time and said to them, are you still sleeping? I don't want to trivialize this because what's happening in the garden is far, far more important than what I'm about to say.

But just for sake of some grasp of what this is like, if you've got little kids and maybe you've woken them up to go to school and you say you need to get out of bed and then you leave and you come back.
Are you ready? And they're still in bed asleep. And you say, get up. Get dressed. You've got to eat breakfast. You've got to get your clothes on. You've got to get your hair brushed. You've got to get your homework done.
And we're leaving in 30 seconds. Hurry up. And you leave and you come back and all they've done is rolled over. Are you still asleep?
Are you still failing to listen to me? That's what the parents are thinking in their mind. How is it that you've heard me so clearly and you still haven't acted on what I said?
[42:06] In a far more serious, far more significant way. Verse 41, Jesus says, are you still sleeping and taking your rest?

Luke 22 adds, why are you sleeping? Rise and pray that you may not enter temptation.
And here it is. This is why the disciples need to be praying. Yes, Christ is praying. Yes, even if they sleep, Jesus prays.
Here's the problem. The disciples need the effects of prayer to strengthen their own heart of faith and trust.
Jesus says, you need to rise. Luke 22, 46. And pray that you may not fall into temptation. Yes, God answers prayer.
[43:06] Yes, God moves on behalf of the prayers of His people. Yes, we pray. And many times the Lord answers and gives us what we pray for. But even if God didn't answer one single tangible request, you and I need the faith-strengthening work of denying our flesh and praying to the Father

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and submitting our will to Him.

You need to pray, Jesus says. I mean, can you imagine what Jesus has experienced? Two hours ago, He was in the upper room and He was washing their feet and He was talking about service and He was talking about laying down His life as a payment for sin.
He was talking about the bread as His body and the cup as His blood. And the disciples break out into an argument about what?
About which of them is the greatest? And now two hours later, Jesus says, you need to pray because the hour is approaching.
We're just moments away from the arrest and the trials of Jesus. And once again, the disciples fall into repeated failures of distraction and they can't even stay awake.
[44:36] Are you still sleeping and taking your rest? And then chilling words in verse 41.

It is enough. The hour has come. The Son of Man is betrayed into the hands of sinners.
Rise. Let us be going. See, my betrayer is at hand. And with that, we have gone from praying, preaching, and preparing to the first act that leads to His crucifixion.
The arrest. Which by God's grace, we'll look at next Sunday. But for today, the applications from this passage, I suspect, could be so numerous.
Maybe you need to be recommitted to pray. Maybe you need to pray more in submission to His will.
[46:06] Maybe you've been too sleepy, so to speak, instead of serving. Maybe you've been too distracted instead of being faithful in spiritual warfare.

Maybe you've let the things of this world discourage you more than it should. Maybe you've lost sight of the work you're to be doing as a child of God.
Maybe your trust has begun to waver. Maybe because you're not getting your way, you're attempting to let your love grow cold.
You need to return and submit yourself to the Lord. Or maybe, just maybe, all the talk of prayer, and reading your Bible, and worship, is a bit like reading somebody else's mail, because you don't know the author.
I want you to understand that today, even though the Bible says we have all sinned, even though as we've read today, Christ is going to the cross to take on our sin as a payment for us, even though the Bible is clear that the wages of our sin is death and judgment and separation from God, I want you to understand, everything we've read today is all about God making a way for sinners to know forgiveness and to be brought into a relationship with Him.
[47:47] The Bible says that this day, if you would acknowledge your sin, confess that you are a sinner, if you would acknowledge to the Lord from your heart in prayer that you know that you deserve judgment, but you're pleading for mercy, the Bible tells us that as we believe the promises of God and call upon the name of the Lord that we will be saved.

As much pain and anguish is in the garden that we've read about, understand the purpose behind it is that Christ is preparing to go pay the price for our sin, that you don't have to die in judgment.
Your sin can be covered, your guilt can be erased, and you can be brought into a relationship with God through the work of His Son, the Lord Jesus Christ.
And this day, if you would acknowledge your sin and plead to the Lord for mercy, the good news is our God saves.
Not by your works, not by your church attendance, not by your offering, but the Bible says it's by grace through faith.
[49:25] the grace of God poured out upon unworthy sinners for those who would but call upon His name.

I urge you and plead with you even this day to call upon the name of the Lord and be saved. Lord, we thank You for Your Word today.
It overwhelms us. It convicts us. It stuns us. It persuades us. And I pray for all who are here would transform us.
We thank You, Lord, that You are a Savior, that You took our place on the cross, that You suffered for us.
We thank You that You were our propitiation that You satisfied the wrath payment for our sin. And we pray today that every believer in this room would be encouraged as they're reminded of all You've done for us.

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[50:48] And we pray for any who are here today who may not know You as Savior, that even this moment they would sense in their heart the truth of what we have studied today and that the work of Your Spirit would bring them to a place of belief and trust and salvation.

We ask it in Christ's name. Amen. I'm encouraged you to come back tonight at five o'clock. Our kids' choirs, youth choirs will be meeting.
We'll meet in here from five to six as we continue our study through First Thessalonians. Encourage you to come back and worship with us. I love you, church. God bless you. You're dismissed.
Okay. Thank you.
Thank you. Thank you.

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