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From One Garden to Another; Matt 26:36-46

GPBC

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Introduction – Genesis 2 tells us God created man, placed him in a garden called Eden and instructed him to work and keep it. He created woman so that man would not be alone but have a companion, and as husband and wife, they would join in God’s creative work through procreation. God created a paradise on earth, gave Adam a fulfilling job, brought him a delightful, lifelong companion in Eve, instituting true marriage, and in that sacred union between husband and wife, established the family. In that perfect place and perfect situation, Adam and Eve enjoyed communion with God. Everything was as it should be and God called it very good. He gave Adam one command – don’t eat from the tree in the middle of the garden. And in the very next chapter, Adam disobeyed God. He believed the lie of Satan and forfeited God’s blessings. Sin entered creation, and since then every human being born from Adam inherited a sin nature and creation itself was marred and corrupted. Adam failed in the Garden of Eden.

Today in our text we come to another garden of olive trees, Gethsemane. And we see another man, Jesus Christ. In 1 Cor 15:45 Paul speaks of the first Adam and of a last Adam, which is Christ. Whereas Adam disobeyed God’s will, Christ perfectly fulfilled the Father’s will. Whereas Adam faced his test in the garden and failed, Christ faced His test in the garden and won. So that as children of Adam, he brings us sin and death, but as followers of Christ, He brings us salvation and life. 1 Cor 15:22 says, “For as in Adam all die, so also in Christ shall all be made alive.”

So it is from one garden to another, we see the gospel. We are sinners because we are of our father Adam, and like him, we too have disobeyed the Father. But God has sent His Son, so that if we are in Him, like Him, we may be counted as righteous before the Father. There are several ways we could approach our text today, but for this morning I want us to see that when we face the temptations, trials, and tests of this life, through Christ we can follow His example and resist following our first parent Adam.

- I. Jesus Turned to Prayer (v36)
 - a. Jesus knew what was soon to come. He would be betrayed. He would be falsely accused, humiliated, and tortured. Eventually, He would

bear the sin of the world upon His shoulders. There He would enter the darkest place imaginable, a literal hell on earth, as He would willingly lay down His life to pay for the sins of all who would trust in Him. So dark were those hours that it would seem to Christ in His humanity that He was separated from the Father as He was weighted down with sin. Even the sky would become dark. This is the cup Christ knew He would soon drink. It was the greatest test and trial He would face. And so he turned to prayer.

- b. He turned to the Father. He sought strength from communion with God. He poured out His soul to God. Luke would describe the anguish of His prayer to the point that His sweat became as drops of blood. His heart was heavy. So He turned to prayer.
 - c. When we read of Adam's fall in Genesis 3, we find that prayer is absent. Adam didn't pray. He simply yielded to temptation. The fruit was pleasing to the eyes, it looked scrumptious to the palate, and even more it came with the false promise to give him more than God had given. And so he didn't pray, he ate.
 - d. And so the lesson is clear for us, isn't it? So often in our dark trial, or heaviness of heart, or enticing temptation, we just go along and follow Adam's path. But there is another path, another example, another way – we too can turn to prayer. We can face the darkness in prayer. We can turn our heavy hearts to our Father. We can resist temptation through prayer. It so often is our last course of action when we stubbornly discover once again that all of our efforts and all of the world's answers miserably fail. Let us resolve today to make prayer our first course of action in the face of trial and temptation.
- II. Jesus Drew His Close Friends Closer (vv37-38)
- a. Out of the 12 disciples, Jesus drew Peter, James, and John close at times. Once when He was transfigured to display the glory of His deity, and here when He would display the sorrow of His humanity.
 - i. This says something first about the compassion and mercy of our Savior that He would still include Peter in this very personal and private moment, knowing that Peter would deny Him and had just contradicted Him publicly. There is a lesson there about the nature of our Savior toward us and also how we are to relate to those who may fail us.

- b. But I especially want us to make note that in His time of deep sorrow, when His soul was heavy to the point of death, the human part of Jesus didn't want to be alone. He drew His close friends closer.
 - c. God never meant for us to face our deepest trials and temptations alone. That's why He gave us the local church. That's why we have brothers and sisters in Christ. We need each other to shoulder our burdens together, to bear with one another, to pray together, to be there for each other. There are no Lone Ranger Christians in the NT. Even the Lone Ranger had Tonto.
 - d. We need one another. We need to be faithful and trustworthy toward one another. You know where Adam first failed? It wasn't when he bit the apple. It was when he failed to pull Eve from the delusion and deception of sin. He could have helped her rather than join her.
 - e. We desperately need to be those kinds of fellow believers. Get in between sin and your sister in Christ. Lift up your brother when he is weak and distraught. We need to hold one another accountable, to encourage one another, and to lock arms with one another in dark and heavy days.
 - f. Seal Teams. Accountability partner.
 - g. When we face the tests of this life, draw godly friends closer, don't push them away and withdraw. Embrace the strength that comes through godly friendships.
- III. Jesus Prayed for the Father's Will (v39)
- a. Prayer is not trying to persuade or convince God to perform our will but rather seeking and leaning into the Father's will.
 - b. Having said that Jesus, in His humanity, did express His human will to God – if it be possible, let this cup pass from me. So it is always proper for us to pour out our hearts to God, to make our burdens and petitions known – but Jesus doesn't stop with what His human nature desired. He left the answer to the Father's will in humble submission.
 - c. Now that's no easy surrender. But here's what Jesus knew that we need to know. The Father's will may be difficult, may be terrifying, but will always prove to be best.

- i. Heb 12:2 – looking to Jesus, the founder and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame and is seated at the right hand of the throne of God.
 - d. We can humbly surrender to God’s will for our lives when we know that whatever God brings into our lives He will use for our good and His glory.
- IV. Jesus Taught the Necessity of Prayer (vv40-41)
 - a. Jesus found His disciples sleeping, and He said to Peter, “So, could you not watch with me one hour?” The “you” there is plural, so Jesus is talking to all three but He directs His focus on Peter. You see Peter had just claimed that he would never fall away and would never deny Jesus, but how’s he going to do that if he can’t even stay awake and be present with Jesus?
 - b. As Jesus has just exemplified, now He instructs – watch and pray – that is, stay spiritually alert and pray – that’s the only way to resist temptation.
 - c. Be alert, be aware, of our own inclinations and wayward passions and fleshly weaknesses and pressures from around us – watch and pray. That’s how we lay aside the sins that so easily beset us!
- V. Jesus Kept Praying
 - a. He went a second time and a third time and prayed the same prayer! He kept praying until He was ready to face the trial. He prayed through. And then comes v46.
 - b. Sometimes you can pray once and your spirit and faith are renewed and you are ready to face whatever is before you. But sometimes the state of our heart and the heat of the trial require fervent, persevering, relentless prayer. Just keep praying until God moves or speaks or refreshes your heart. Pray on through. Ask and keep asking until the answer comes.

Conclusion – Adam failed in his garden, but Jesus won in His. And because Jesus won, we not only have salvation in Him, He also is our source for all we need in this life! Turn from your trial and look to the Savior. Turn from our sin and look to the Savior. Turn from our temptation and go to our Father in prayer!