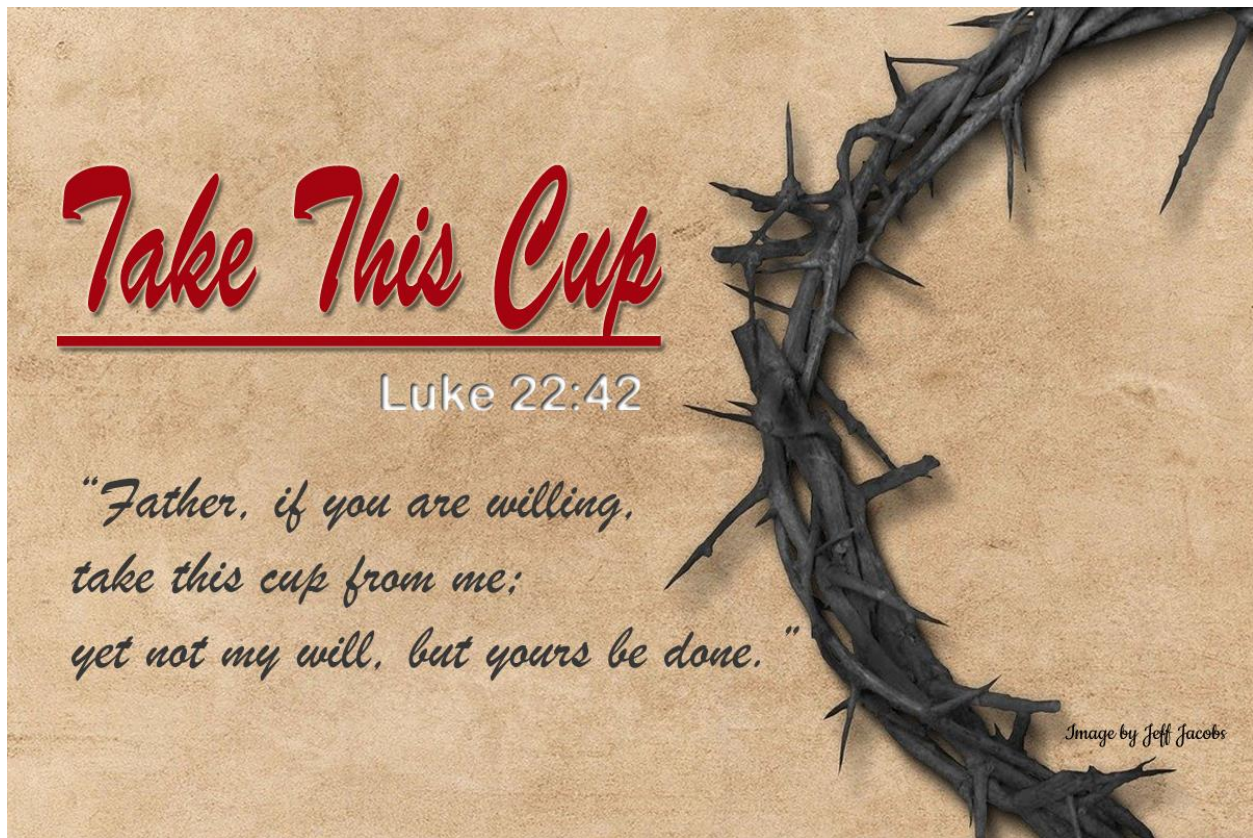


July 26, 2020

Take This Cup



Luke 22:42

"Father, if you are willing, take this cup from me; yet not my will, but yours be done."

Special Music: Gethsemane – Ted Neeley (Jesus Christ Superstar)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VyKDoivRdlo>

1. The story

- a. After He washes their feet, after the Lord's supper, after Judas has left to do the unthinkable, Jesus takes his disciples to the Garden of Gethsemane to pray.
- b. Three times he asks the disciples to wait with him, praying while he prays.
- c. Three times he returns to find them asleep.
- d. His fervent prayer is **"Father, if you are willing, take this cup from me; yet not my will, but yours be done."**

2. There are so many lessons in this story and you may think it is a little strange that we are talking about this now

- a. After all, isn't this a part of the Easter story?
- b. But that is not where we want to focus our attention today
- c. I want us to focus on the essence of the conversation

3. The Conversation

- a. This is not a conversation between the Creator of the Universe and Jesus the Messiah.
- b. This is a conversation between a struggling son and His father.
- c. This is a conversation where the son has been asked to do the impossible by His Father and He's not sure if He can, or even if He wants to. After all, the people receiving the benefit of the actions that His Father wants from Him are the same ones about to kill Him.

- d. This is an intimate conversation where a son is seeking wisdom. Insight and approval from His Father as He seeks to do the right thing even though it will cost Him his life.

4. The Fog of War

- a. What is The Fog of War?
- b. The use of hot air balloons in the Civil War to clear the fog of war

5. Life's Decisions

- a. Our future is like The Fog of War
- b. Too often we make assumptions without taking into account that God has the balloon view of our past, present and future.

6. Our passage today

- a. In the beginning was the word. Jesus was in the beginning with God.
- b. Jesus knew of an existence without a timeline.
- c. He chose to come to earth and live within the confines of the human experience.
- d. Jesus did not have to deal with the fog of war. He has two clear options as He prays that night in the Garden of Gethsemane.
- e. Jesus had to choose between what He felt was a better outcome for Himself and what God could see as the better outcome for all.
- f. Jesus has to decide whether to accept His fathers plan, trusting Him that all will go as expected, or giving into His own survival instincts.

- g. His Father was asking Him for His trust when everything was on the line.**

7. What do we think Jesus so afraid of?

- a. Was it the beating that He was going to take at the hands of the Sanhedrin?**
- b. Was it the humiliation of carrying His own cross through the streets of Jerusalem in the face of the crowds that only a week before had praised him as He entered Jerusalem on a donkey?**
- c. Was it being nailed to a cross, beaten and bleeding, only to die a horrible death of suffocation after hours of agony?**
- d. I truly believe that the thing that Jesus feared most was that moment when He found Himself separated from His Father as He took on the sins of the world. A separation that He had never experienced. He had been joined with the Father since before the creation. That darkness that comes with being truly completely alone must have been the greatest agony of all to face.**
- e. And He chose that, He chose us, rather than save Himself.**

8. Claiming Freedom

- a. We talked about Claiming Freedom in this series.**
- b. We talked about the “True Cost of Freedom” which is dying to self.**
- c. We talked about how we can Claim Freedom by realizing that many of the things that we have been taught actually bind us to inaccurate feelings and desires and we need to seek God’s guidance, strength**

and wisdom to break those bonds. To see the world as Jesus sees the world.

- d. We talked about the how we can claim freedom by choosing to be sheep rather than goats. That by choosing to follow the path that God has prepared for us and accepting the relationship that He offers us, there is freedom in acceptance and joy in the relationship.
- e. Ultimately, by seeing Christ's example as He struggles with the human desire of self preservation in contrast to the acceptance of His Father's plan, we can claim freedom in that acceptance.
- f. Ultimate freedom is understanding that we have a choice and that God loves us no matter what we decide. Nothing can separate us from the love of God.
- g. There can be pain in that decision. There can be heartache in that decision. But that is because we can only see the task before us and not the results on the other side. We are encompassed by the Fog of War. It is only by choosing to say **"Father, if you are willing, take this cup from me; yet not my will, but yours be done."** I know what I want. But I CHOOSE to live in a world where I embrace what YOU want.
- h. We can't receive the blessings resulting from being in God's will if we are unwilling to submit to his plan. It is so very difficult to see the blessings when we are in the throws of pain. We have to trust God's

plan so that when we look back on the event we can see how God lifted and carried us to a place of His choosing.

9. The greatest gift

- a. The greatest gift that God has given us is our salvation, so pure, so free. Such a wonderful example of how we can claim freedom in our decisions and watch the benefit that God brings to others through those choices.**
- b. The second greatest gift that He has given to us is... Free will. The freedom to choose. The freedom to decide for ourselves.**
 - i. Just as Christ has the freedom to choose to either call on the angels to save Him or to die on that cross for our redemption**
 - ii. God has given us the choice to either accept or reject that salvation.**
 - iii. We have the option to say “NO” to God. We have the option to say “NO” to the creator of the universe. We can choose not to give our lives over to Him. We can choose to focus on ourselves rather than those around us.**
 - 1. We don’t have to feed the hungry**
 - 2. We don’t have to give water to the thirsty**
 - 3. We don’t have to visit the sick**
 - 4. We don’t have to visit those in prison**
 - 5. We don’t have to provide shelter to strangers**
 - 6. We don’t have to lift those around us.**

7. We can choose to find fault

8. We can choose to condemn

9. We can choose exclusion over inclusion

iv. But if we choose that path, we choose a path that prevents us from receiving the blessings that God has in store for us as well as the blessings that he has for those that we can help.

c. The Path

i. God's path is not always the easiest

ii. God's path is not always the hardest

iii. God will, through the Holy Spirit, provide us with the information we need to find the path that He wants us on.

iv. That path will always bring both ourselves and others closer to Him and puts us in a place where we can receive his blessings.

v. And sometimes, it takes agonizing hours of prayer, alone in a private place, to discern that path. Hours spent on our knees not in the presence of the Creator of the Universe, but in the presence of our Father.

1. The choices before us can be agonizing

2. It can be tough figuring out what to pray for

3. In the end, our best option is always to submit to the will of God, no matter how painful it is, no matter how hard it is to let go.

4. In the end, if we want God's comfort and blessing to see us through the darkness, our prayer has to be:
- “Father, if you are willing, take this cup from me; yet not my will, but yours be done.”**

AMEN

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