

Go to Dark Gethsemane

James Montgomery 1820

Go to dark Gethsemane, ye that feel the tempter's power;
your Redeemer's conflict see, watch with Him one bitter hour.
Turn not from His grief away; learn of Jesus Christ to pray.

See Him at the judgement hall, beaten, bound, reviled, arraigned;
O the worm wood and the gall! O the pangs His soul sustained!
Shun not suffering, shame and loss; learn of Christ to bear the Cross.

Calvary's mournful mountain climb; there, adoring at His feet,
mark that miracle of time, God's own sacrifice complete.
"It is finished!" hear Him cry; learn of Jesus Christ to die.

Early hasten to the tomb where they laid His breathless clay;
all is solitude and gloom. Who has taken Him away?
Christ is risen! He meets our eyes; Savior teach us so to rise.

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Luke 22:39-46 "Then, accompanied by the disciples, He left the upstairs room and went as usual to the Mount of Olives. There He told them, 'Pray God that you will not be overcome by temptation.' He walked away, perhaps a stone's throw, and knelt down and prayed this prayer: 'Father, if you are willing, please take away this cup of horror from me. But I want your will, not mine.' Then an angel from heaven appeared and strengthened Him, for He was in such agony of spirit that He broke into a sweat of blood, with great drops falling to the ground as He prayed more and more earnestly. At last He stood up again and returned to the disciples—only to find them asleep, exhausted from grief. 'Asleep!' He said. 'Get up! Pray God that you will not fall when you are tempted.'" The Living Bible¹

Can you imagine being in Jesus' place, knowing exactly what was going to happen, yet hoping that God might change things? Have you ever been in such a dark place? Have you ever cried out to God to "take this cup of horror"? What was that like for you? If you've never felt comfortable speaking to God like this, can you "learn of Jesus Christ to pray"? What might that feel like?

See Him at the judgement hall, beaten, bound, reviled, arraigned;
O the worm wood and the gall! O the pangs His soul sustained!
Shun not suffering, shame and loss; learn of Christ to bear the Cross.

Matthew 27:11-31 *“Now Jesus was standing before Pilate, the Roman governor. ‘Are you the Jews’ Messiah?’ the governor asked him. ‘Yes,’ Jesus replied. But when the chief priests and other Jewish leaders made their many accusations against Him, Jesus remained silent. ‘Don’t you hear what they are saying’ Pilate demanded. But Jesus said nothing, much to the governor’s surprise.*

Now the governor’s custom was to release one Jewish prisoner each year during the Passover celebration—anyone they wanted. This year there was a particularly notorious criminal in jail named Barabbas, and as the crowds gathered before Pilate’s house that morning he asked them, ‘Which shall I release to you—Barabbas, or Jesus your Messiah?’ For he knew very well that the Jewish leaders had arrested Jesus out of envy because of his popularity with the people. Just then, as he was presiding over the court, Pilate’s wife sent him this message: ‘Leave that good man alone; for I had a terrible nightmare concerning him last night.’ Meanwhile the chief priests and Jewish officials persuaded the crowds to ask for Barabbas’ release, and for Jesus’ death. So when the governor asked again, ‘Which of these two shall I release to you?’ the crowd shouted back their reply: ‘Barabbas!’ ‘Then what shall I do with Jesus, your Messiah?’ Pilate asked. And they shouted, ‘Crucify Him!’ ‘Why?’ Pilate demanded. ‘What has He done wrong?’ But they kept shouting, ‘Crucify! Crucify!’ When Pilate saw that he wasn’t getting anywhere and that a riot was developing, he sent for a bowl of water and washed his hands before the crowd, saying, ‘I am innocent of the blood of this good man. The responsibility is yours!’ And the mob yelled back, ‘His blood be on us and on our children!’ Then Pilate released Barabbas to them. And after he had whipped Jesus, he gave Him to the Roman soldiers to be taken away and crucified. But first they took Him into the armory and called out the entire contingent. They stripped Him and put a scarlet robe on Him, and made a crown from long thorns and put it on His head, and placed a stick in His right hand as a scepter and knelt before Him in mockery. ‘Hail, King of the Jews,’ they yelled. And they spat on Him and grabbed the stick and beat Him on the head with it. After the mockery, they took off the robe and put His own garment on Him again, and took Him out to crucify Him.” The Living Bible¹

How do you think Jesus felt that day, “beaten, bound, reviled,” and listening to the very people He’d come to save crying out for His death?

What do you think James Montgomery meant when he wrote “shun not suffering, shame and loss”?

There are many lessons in Jesus’ experiences and reactions in this story. What can you learn from Jesus about bearing “the Cross”?

Calvary's mournful mountain climb; there, adoring at His feet,
mark that miracle of time, God's own sacrifice complete.
"It is finished!" hear Him cry; learn of Jesus Christ to die.

Mark 5: 21-26, 33-34, 37 *"Simon of Cyrene, who was coming in from the country just then, was pressed into service to carry Jesus' cross. (Simon is the father of Alexander and Rufus.) And they brought Jesus to a place called Golgotha. (Golgotha means skull.) Wine drugged with bitter herbs was offered to Him there, but He refused it. And then they crucified Him—and threw dice for His clothes. It was about nine o'clock in the morning when the crucifixion took place. A signboard was fastened to the cross above His head, announcing His crime. It read, 'The King of the Jews.' About noon, darkness fell across the entire land, lasting until three o'clock that afternoon. Then Jesus called out with a loud voice, 'Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani?' ('My God, my God, why have You deserted me?') Then Jesus uttered another loud cry and dismissed His spirit."*
The Living Bible¹

On the Cross, Jesus prayed the words of Psalm 22 *"My God, my God, why have You forsaken me?"* (The Living Bible¹)

Have you ever cried out these, or similar, words? Does knowing that Jesus felt the same way you did affect how you feel about Jesus? In what ways?

Early hasten to the tomb where they laid His breathless clay;
all is solitude and gloom. Who has taken Him away?
Christ is risen! He meets our eyes; Savior teach us so to rise.

John 20:1-16, 19-21 *"Early in the morning on the first day of the week, while it was still dark, Mary Magdalene came to the tomb and saw that the stone was moved away from the entrance. She ran at once to Simon Peter and the other disciple, the one Jesus loved, gasping for breath. 'They took the Master from the tomb. We don't know where they've put Him.'*
Peter and the other disciple left immediately for the tomb. They ran, neck and neck. The other disciple got to the tomb first, outrunning Peter. Stooping to look in, he saw the pieces of linen cloth lying there, but he didn't go in. Simon Peter arrived after him, entered the tomb, observed the linen cloths lying there, and the kerchief used to cover His head not lying with the linen cloths but separate, neatly folded by itself. Then the other disciple, the one who had gotten there first, went into the tomb, took one look at the evidence, and believed. No one yet knew from the Scripture that He had to rise from the dead. The disciples then went back home. But Mary stood outside the tomb weeping. As she wept, she knelt to look into the tomb and saw two angels sitting there, dressed in white, one at the head, the other at the foot of where Jesus' body had been laid. They said to her, 'Woman, why do you weep?'
'They took my Master,' she said, 'and I don't know where they put Him.' After she said this, she turned away and saw Jesus standing there. But she didn't recognize Him. Jesus spoke to her, 'Woman, why do you

weep? Who are you looking for?’ She, thinking that He was the gardener, said, ‘Sir, if you took Him, tell me where you put him so I can care for Him.’ Jesus said, ‘Mary.’ Turning to face Him, she said in Hebrew, ‘Rabboni!’ meaning ‘Teacher!’ Later on that day, the disciples had gathered together, but, fearful of the Jews, had locked all the doors in the house. Jesus entered, stood among them, and said, “Peace to you.” Then He showed them His hands and side. The disciples, seeing the Master with their own eyes, were awestruck. Jesus repeated His greeting: ‘Peace to you. Just as the Father sent me, I send you.’” The Message²

Imagine yourself in Mary Magdalene’s or the disciple’s place that morning. How does it feel to see the empty tomb? What questions come to your mind as you stand there? Sit with those feelings and questions for a while.

Now imagine seeing the risen Christ! How does that feel? Psalm 30:5b says “*The deepest pains may linger through the night, but joy greets the soul with the smile of morning.*” (The Voice translation) How does the verse relate to the feelings you noted at seeing Jesus there in the garden?

What does “Christ is risen” mean to you?

What can you learn from Jesus about how to rise?

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