

## Lent 2014 Bible Studies: Matthew 26

### **1<sup>st</sup> April: 'Deserting Jesus'**

<sup>31</sup>Then Jesus said to them, 'You will all become deserters because of me this night; for it is written, "I will strike the shepherd, and the sheep of the flock will be scattered."<sup>32</sup>But after I am raised up, I will go ahead of you to Galilee.'<sup>33</sup>Peter said to him, 'Though all become deserters because of you, I will never desert you.'<sup>34</sup>Jesus said to him, 'Truly I tell you, this very night, before the cock crows, you will deny me three times.'<sup>35</sup>Peter said to him, 'Even though I must die with you, I will not deny you.' And so said all the disciples.

<sup>36</sup>Then Jesus went with them to a place called Gethsemane; and he said to his disciples, 'Sit here while I go over there and pray.'<sup>37</sup>He took with him Peter and the two sons of Zebedee, and began to be grieved and agitated.<sup>38</sup>Then he said to them, 'I am deeply grieved, even to death; remain here, and stay awake with me.'<sup>39</sup>And going a little farther, he threw himself on the ground and prayed, 'My Father, if it is possible, let this cup pass from me; yet not what I want but what you want.'<sup>40</sup>Then he came to the disciples and found them sleeping; and he said to Peter, 'So, could you not stay awake with me one hour?<sup>41</sup>Stay awake and pray that you may not come into the time of trial; the spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak.'<sup>42</sup>Again he went away for the second time and prayed, 'My Father, if this cannot pass unless I drink it, your will be done.'<sup>43</sup>Again he came and found them sleeping, for their eyes were heavy.<sup>44</sup>So leaving them again, he went away and prayed for the third time, saying the same words.<sup>45</sup>Then he came to the disciples and said to them, 'Are you still sleeping and taking your rest? See, the hour is at hand, and the Son of Man is betrayed into the hands of sinners.<sup>46</sup>Get up, let us be going. See, my betrayer is at hand.'

#### **Opening Prayer**

God our Father, as we open the scriptures, open our minds that we may know the wonder of your grace, and open our hearts to receive the mystery of your love, in Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

#### **'You will all become deserters of me this night...'**

- What's the difference between 'betraying' (Week 1) and 'deserting'?
- In what ways do we desert or deny Jesus?

#### **'My Father, if it is possible, let this cup pass from me; yet not what I want but what you want.'**

- Do we have cups that we have to drink?
- How often do we pray 'not what I want, but what you want'?

#### **'Stay awake and pray that you may not come into the time of trial; the spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak.'**

- Do we have times of trial? What are they, and how do they affect us?
- Do we pray about them?
- In what ways are we willing in spirit, but weak in flesh?

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### ‘Deserting Jesus’ – Act of Worship

✠ In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

**Amen.**

The Lord be with you:  
**and also with you.**

*Silence is kept, while we call to mind our sins.*

Lord Jesus, you were faithful even to death.  
Forgive us when we have lacked faith in your love and mercy.  
Lord, have mercy: **Lord, have mercy.**

Lord Jesus, you are with us always.  
Forgive us when we have failed to recognise your presence with us.  
Christ, have mercy: **Christ, have mercy.**

Lord Jesus, you never desert your children.  
Forgive us when we have deserted you and denied even knowing you.  
Lord, have mercy: **Lord, have mercy.**

May almighty God have mercy upon us, forgive us our sins, and bring us to everlasting life.  
**Amen.**

READING: Matthew 26.31-35

HYMN

**1. From heaven you came helpless babe,  
entered our world, your glory veiled;  
not to be served but to serve,  
and give your life that we might live.**

*This is our God, the Servant King,  
he calls us now to follow him,  
to bring our lives as a daily offering  
of worship to the Servant King.*

**2. There in the garden of tears,  
my heavy load he chose to bear;  
his heart with sorrow was torn,  
‘Yet not my will, but yours,’ he said.**

**3. Come see his hands and his feet,  
the scars that speak of sacrifice;  
hands that flung stars into space  
to cruel nails surrendered.**

**4. So let us learn how to serve,  
and in our lives enthrone him;  
each other’s needs to prefer,  
for it is Christ we’re serving.**

PRAYERS are offered, concluding with the Lord’s Prayer.

BLESSING

Christ give you grace to grow in holiness, to deny yourselves, take up your cross, and follow him;  
and the blessing of God almighty, ✠ the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, be upon you and remain  
with you always. **Amen.**