

## The Quiet Hour.

### Jesus in Gethsemane

S. S. Lesson, 24th Feb.; Matt. 26: 36-46

Golden Text—Luke 22: 42.—Not my will, but thine be done.

He took with him Peter and the two sons of Zebedee, v. 37. There are some friends whose very presence, much more than that of others, is a strength and comfort in a time of sorrow. It brings Christ very near to us to notice how, in depression and anguish, He desired the presence of these, His closest human friends. His hour of darkness is now past forever, but He has not forgotten it; and He who wished to have His friends near Him will never withhold His presence from those who need it.

My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death, v. 38. We may, perhaps, wonder at the extreme distress manifested by our Lord in Gethsemane, and may contrast it with the conduct of martyrs and others who have gone through suffering to death without wailing and without fear. Now, it is probably true that even the physical sufferings of Christ were greater than those of other men; for suffering depends as much upon the sensitiveness of the sufferer as upon the character of the infliction. The same, no doubt, is true of His mental and spiritual nature. And yet these things do not account for the unexampled agony which Christ endured in the Garden. It is only when we remember that He was bearing the sin of the world, that we understand how it was that His burden seemed almost greater than He could bear.

If it be possible, let this cup pass, v. 39. This prayer teaches us that it is not wrong to shrink from pain and sorrow, and to ask God that, if possible, we may be spared. Human weakness and human fear are not in themselves sinful.

Watch and pray, v. 41. While human weakness and human fear are not, in themselves, sinful, we need to watch and pray lest the weakness of the flesh tempt us to sin. This is not only our Lord's injunction but His example. Satan used all his weapons against Jesus. He tried to lure Him into sin by the glittering baits of ambition (Matt. 4: 9); he sought to persuade Him by the remonstrances of his friends and disciples (Matt. 16: 22); he tried to drive Him by the scourge of pain.

Thy will be done, v. 42. The essence of all sin is opposition to the will of God. It was to this that Satan sought to tempt the Saviour. But he did not succeed. Naturally, Jesus desired to be spared suffering, if it were possible; but yet more earnestly He desired that God's will might be done. And if it were God's will that He should suffer, if God's purposes could be accomplished only in that way, then He was willing that it should be so. And whoever can express His ultimate desire in the prayer: "Thy will be done," has put Satan beneath his feet.

Notice what this victory is. It is not merely submission to the inevitable. That may be a sullen thing. This is the conviction that God is all-wise and all-loving and that therefore His will, whatever it may be, must always be the best. He who ends his conflict with the shrinking or rebellious flesh, with this conviction, may emerge from the conflict pale and exhausted, but he will be triumphant.

Sleep on now and take your rest, v. 45. The disciples had missed their opportunity

of watching with Jesus. The hour for this was past. It was now too late and as far as that was concerned they might as well sleep on. Men often fail still after the very same fashion. The formative period of life is allowed to pass, character is moulded in wrong forms—they would change now if they could, but it is too late. There are those whom we might have helped, but they have gone from us and it is too late. There are lives upon the downward track to day, that might have been saved if we had been faithful. But we missed our opportunity; it is too late now; we may as well sleep on.

Arise, let us be going, v. 46. While what has been said above is true in regard to the past, which is irreparable, it is not true in regard to the future, which is still available. Though we may have missed much that can never be recovered by our failure to watch in the past, we must not despair of the future. We may be forgiven, we may be made strong, we may yet serve acceptably, we may find a humble place in Heaven.

#### Points and Paragraphs.

Is trouble impending? Go to prayer? It is the surest refuge. v. 36.

"O my Father!" "This is the life-line that drew Jesus safely through the sea of trouble. v. 39.

Prayer is not conquering God's reluctance, but taking hold of God's willingness (Phillips Brooks.) v. 39.

The flesh may shrink while the spirit is steadfast, v. 39.

We may desire anything, if our supreme desire is that God's will may be done. v. 39.

The shrinking of the flesh is not sinful, but we need to watch and pray lest Satan take advantage of it to lead us into sin. v. 41.

He remembereth that we are dust." (Ps. 103: 14.) v. 43.

"Satan rocks the cradle when we sleep at our devotions." v. 43.

Let us watch while we have opportunity; it will be too late by and by. v. 45.

The past is irreparable; the future is available. v. 46.

Christ has many enemies; shall He not have a few true friends? v. 46.

A friend once called the attention of Napoleon to the blanched face of an officer as he was marching into battle, as showing that he was a coward. Napoleon replied that the man was the bravest officer in his army; for he saw clearly and felt keenly his danger, and yet went forward into the thickest of the battle.—Peloubet.

I could have wished at times that the three had been able to share that brief vigil with Him, that they could have supported just for one hour that sacred companionship. And yet in my own guilty failure, my own want of vigilance, my own weariness in prayer, I gain a faint consolation from their apathy though I feel a fresh condemnation in my own indignant censure of them. "You could not watch with Him an hour," I say to them, reproachfully; and they to me, "Nor you either."—Horton.

Have you ever seen those marble statues in some public square or garden, which art has so fashioned into a perennial fountain that through the lips or through the hands

the clear water flows in a perpetual stream, on and on forever; and the marble stands there—passive, cold—making no effort to arrest the gliding water? It is so that Time flows through the hands of men—swift, never pausing till it has run itself out; and there is the man petrified into a marble sleep, not feeling what it is which is passing away forever. It is so, just so, that the destiny of nine men out of ten accomplishes itself, slipping away from them, aimless, useless, till it is too late.—Robertson.

### A Servant of Christ.

Paul was a servant of the Lord Jesus. He held himself under obligation to serve. He was called to this, and the whole obligation of life centered there. While the relation is one of sub-ordination to another's will he did not feel any humiliation in it; on the contrary, gloried in it. What honor can be higher than to be the servant of the highest? Nor was there restriction of the freedom of his will. In his call there was a radical change in the course of his life, and its peculiar feature was this surrender of the will to Christ. "What wilt thou have me to do?" was his question. Freely he gave himself, and in that service found full range for all his powers and all his desires. In the service of Christ there is the highest freedom, for in it there is harmony with the will of God, which is perfect in rightness, and has for its object the best that can be done for, or made out of man. There is but one law for the servant, and that is obedience to his Lord's will. To know it should be his study, to do it, his constant effort. In so doing he will come more and more into the heart of the Master, and become more and more like his Lord. In that is the supreme blessedness of life.

### STATE OF THE FUNDS.

Under date 9th February, Rev. Dr. Warden writes:

I have just made an estimate of the amount that will still be required before the close of the church year for the several schemes. In the first column of the appended table will be found the amount still required, and in the second column the amount received from 10th February to 31st March last year.

Amount still required.	Received from 10th Feb. to 31st March 1900.
Home Missions.....\$46,000	\$41,500
Augmentation.....14,500	12,500
Foreign Missions.....25,000	25,000
French Evangelization..10,000	8,000
Pointe aux Trembles...3,500	3,000
Widows' and Orphans' 9,000	3,250
Aged and Infirm Min.. 6,000	4,000
Assembly.....2,800	2,300
Knox College.....6,000	3,500
Queen's College.....3,200	2,100
Montreal College.....3,400	1,400
Manitoba College.....1,000	1,500

While several of the Funds are behind, that of the Widows' and Orphans is relatively worse than any of the others. Unless there is a special effort made in this connection, there will not be funds on hand at the close of the church year sufficient to pay the annuitants more than 30 per cent of the amount due.

As the year now ends on the 28th Feb., Treasurers will kindly forward all contributions prior to that date.