

The Cup

Scripture Reading — Matthew 26:36-46

My Father, if it is not possible for this cup to be taken away unless I drink it, may your will be done. — Matthew 26:42

Gardens are usually wonderful, peaceful places where we can calm our spirits and focus on what is important. But on this night in the Garden of Gethsemane, Jesus was in pure agony.

Gethsemane means “oil press.” Gethsemane was a garden where olives were crushed and squeezed to extract their oil. In this garden, on the final night of his life, Jesus was crushed and squeezed to the limit. He was crushed in his awareness of the cup of suffering that he would drink the next day at the cross. This was the cup of God’s wrath and judgment (Isaiah 51:17).

At the cross, Jesus would have to endure God’s curse on our sin down to the last drop. That’s why he prayed that the cup might be taken from him. But he also prayed that God’s will would be done.

The next day Jesus willingly drank that cup. The sun quit shining. Darkness covered the land. Jesus cried out to God, “Why have you forsaken me?” But there was no answer. At that moment Jesus experienced the torments of hell so that we will never have to—if we trust in him as Lord.

Many churches will celebrate the Lord’s Supper today. As you take the cup, remember and believe that Jesus drank the cup of God’s judgment for you.

Prayer

Lord Jesus, we are forgiven because you were for-saken by God and you bore his wrath on the cross for our sins. May you always be our first love. In your name we pray. Amen.

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