

“Things Accomplished Among Us” (Luke 1:1)

Selected Reflections From Luke

As Was His Custom

Luke 22

I’m in Luke chapter 22 this time, beginning at verse 39:

³⁹And he came out and went, as was his custom, to the Mount of Olives, and the disciples followed him. ⁴⁰And when he came to the place, he said to them, “Pray that you may not enter into temptation.” ⁴¹And he withdrew from them about a stone's throw, and knelt down and prayed,⁴²saying, “Father, if you are willing, remove this cup from me. Nevertheless, not my will, but yours, be done.” ⁴³And there appeared to him an angel from heaven, strengthening him. ⁴⁴And being in agony he prayed more earnestly; and his sweat became like great drops of blood falling down to the ground.^[a] ⁴⁵And when he rose from prayer, he came to the disciples and found them sleeping for sorrow, ⁴⁶and he said to them, “Why are you sleeping? Rise and pray that you may not enter into temptation.”

It should never fail to strike us and impress us – *these passages which report Jesus Christ praying!* I’ve often said, if Jesus needed to pray – how much more to we, weak and frail as we are, need to approach the throne of God repeatedly – to praise God, to ask for His help and wisdom; for strength – and in our case, for forgiveness.

In this passage, Jesus tells His disciples to pray. Then, “as his custom was,” He knelt down and prayed. I want to bring to our attention three simple things He said:

First, consider those three little words: “Not My Will.” If we could just embed those words in our minds and hold our will in check under the superior will of God – how much better we would be.

Second, “he prayed more earnestly.” Prayer must not become a routine ritual of memorized words. When we hurt, we ought to express to God our passionate interests in His strength. The fervent prayer of a righteous person has so much power.

Third, through prayer, we received strength against temptation. Jesus finished praying and said to His disciples, "Rise and pray that you may not enter into temptation."

As you read Luke and the other gospels – I want to recommend that you slow down and attend carefully to these accounts of Jesus Christ praying.

Thank you for listening.

-Warren E. Berkley