

# Go to Dark Gethsemane



We like to say that we follow Jesus. We wear T-shirts and bracelets that proclaim the question, "What Would Jesus Do?" – implying we would do the same. We proclaim with Paul that we have the mind of Christ.

High sounding words. Sincere words. Words that should not be said lightly. If we mean them, the implications are severe.

If we are going to pray like Jesus, we find ourselves in the garden. Jesus went to Gethsemane to pray for deliverance, and God said, "No." Jesus sweated blood, literally, in fighting a battle that was not His own – it was ours. To follow Jesus means to watch with Him through bitter hours of conflict, a conflict that will end in total submission. If we really want to pray like Jesus prayed, we have to take in griefs and struggles and adopt the theology that says, "nevertheless, not my will but thine be done."

If we are going to walk with Jesus, we must follow to the hall of the irreligious, worldly, impenitent judges of the world's standards. We must endure the shame of a kangaroo court, of scourging, of jeers and curses, of those who would taunt and gamble for His clothes. We must follow along the Via Dolorosa, carrying an undeserved cross that is not our own. We must own the theology that silently takes on the sins of others.

If we are going to follow Jesus, we must look death in the eye. We must bow at the feet of the one who went like a sheep to the shearers. We must understand the true meaning of "Lamb of God." We must live the theology that understands that the most important work of Christ was finished not in feeding or healing but in sacrifice.

If we have followed that far, then, and only then, can we approach where His body lies. Only then can we experience the gloom of loss that comes when the One closest to us has been taken away. Solitude of that kind comes from understanding our own weakness, our own inadequacy, our own lostness without Christ. Then can we lift our eyes to see the outstretched arms of the Savior. Only then can we rise.

What would Jesus do? What did Jesus do? He prayed to a Father who turned away. He carried a burden that required death for people who turn away. He climbed a hill where even His own apostles turned away.

Make the journey. Walk where Jesus walked. Pray the prayer He prayed. Climb the hill he climbed. Then wait for Him to teach you how to rise.

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