

Our Part in God's Plan

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All Scripture quotations, unless otherwise noted, are from the King James Version. Italics for emphasis are ours.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

Introduction 5

Chapter 1 7

*JESUS THE SON OF MAN AND HIS NEEDS ON
EARTH*

Chapter 2

FORSAKEN SO WE MIGHT BE FORGIVEN

Chapter 3

*HAVING COMPASSION THAT MAKES A
DIFFERENCE*

CONCLUSION

INTRODUCTION

It may be hard to imagine, but Jesus Christ has certain needs. It may be even harder to fathom that it is our part in the plan of God to meet those needs.

Jesus Christ died for our sins. He was buried, and then He was resurrected from the dead. He ascended to heaven, where He is seated at the Father's right hand, and He has promised that if we are saved, we will be with Him for all of eternity. But He left us here on earth to operate as His Body, to fulfill His purposes.

In the Garden of Gethsemane, Jesus was under tremendous assault from demonic forces that were trying to keep Him from the Cross. In those moments, He, being fully human even as He was fully God, needed and desired the prayers of His disciples. Yet, the heavy atmosphere and oppression weighed on Peter, James, John, and the others. So they slept.

Jesus Christ had certain needs in the Garden

of Gethsemane. In this booklet, we will see some of the needs that the Lord Jesus Christ has today. Open your heart and allow the Holy Spirit to dispel the wandering thoughts of the common, mundane things, and realize that our precious Savior has needs—real needs that relate to His redemption, to His humanity, and to His divine attributes.

As born-again believers, we have the advantage of being filled with the Holy Spirit who was sent to quicken and empower us. Through the Holy Spirit, we receive the divine initiations from Christ, for He is our Head. Consider with me how that we, through grace, can fulfill our part in God's plan to meet His needs.

Chapter One

JESUS THE SON OF MAN
AND HIS NEEDS ON EARTH

“Then cometh Jesus with them unto a place called Gethsemane, and saith unto the disciples, Sit ye here, while I go and pray yonder.

“And he took with him Peter and the two sons of Zebedee, and began to be sorrowful and very heavy.

“Then saith he unto them, My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death: tarry ye here, and watch with me.

“And he went a little further, and fell on his face, and prayed, saying, O my Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me: nevertheless not as I will, but as thou wilt.

“And he cometh unto the disciples, and findeth them asleep, and saith unto Peter, What, could ye not watch with me one hour?

“Watch and pray, that ye enter not into temptation: the spirit indeed is willing, but the

flesh is weak.

“He went away again the second time, and prayed, saying, O my Father, if this cup may not pass away from me, except I drink it, thy will be done.

“And he came and found them asleep again: for their eyes were heavy.

“And he left them, and went away again, and prayed the third time, saying the same words.

“Then cometh he to his disciples, and saith unto them, Sleep on now, and take your rest: behold, the hour is at hand, and the Son of man is betrayed into the hands of sinners.

“Rise, let us be going: behold, he is at hand that doth betray me” (Matthew 26:36-46).

In one of the greatest trials of His life, the Lord Jesus Christ taught us some valuable lessons. First, this passage reveals how He responded to the trial that was before Him. He went into the Garden of Gethsemane, a place He probably knew well, and there He prayed. In that garden, the Lord Jesus Christ got alone with God.

As He entered into this place of prayer, which apparently meant so much to Him, He fell before God and made a special request to

His Father for strength. He had fellowship with God in a very unusual but definite way. But notice that Jesus brought His disciples with Him, and He said, "Sit here and watch with Me while I pray."

The Lord Jesus Christ had a particular need, and He let it be known along with several other needs. Because He was a man as well as God, in a hypostatic union, operating in the full weakness of His humanity, identifying Himself with us, His first need for us was clear: His need was to have fellowship. So the Lord Jesus Christ said to His disciples, "Sit here. Watch with Me while I pray."

In the midst of the trial, Christ had a need to have fellowship with God and with His disciples, because the Word of God says, "Five of you shall chase a hundred, and a hundred shall put ten thousand to flight" (Leviticus 26:8). The Lord Jesus Christ needed fellowship to strengthen His humanity in the midst of the tremendous trial that He was facing.

Lonely and Forsaken

I received a letter from a servant of God, and in this letter he said that he was resigning from the ministry. He communicated that he planned

to withdraw from all evangelical Christian activity (even though he said he would not withdraw from God because he loved the life of Christ). He planned to go into a business and to remain true to God. Nevertheless, he withdrew from Christianity as far as being a pastor and a minister of the Gospel.

His story was that he felt alone and misunderstood. He stated that his church, the corporate Body, did not minister unto him, to his spiritual and emotional needs, even though he was ministering consistently to the needs of the congregation.

This is not new problem. The Lord Jesus Christ went to the garden. The disciples were with Him, but the disciples were not sensitive to His needs. May I say, one of the tremendous needs of the hour is for every true child of God to learn to be sensitive to the Holy Spirit and sensitive to each other's needs.

Think about it. The world is filled with anxiety and noise and frustration. The world is filled with people who wonder what they will do next. There is so much focus on "self" that even many believers cannot see the tremendous needs of their brothers and sisters in Christ. We have a tremendous part in God's eternal plan.

He has a need for us to contribute.

God Himself longs for people to see *His* way of having their needs met. Instead of understanding the purpose of heaven, too many believers have a shallow, superficial attitude of caring that exists—a certain kind of concern, yet without sensitivity to the needs of Jesus Christ and to the needs of others.

Jesus took His disciples into the Garden of Gethsemane because He needed their fellowship. He asked them to watch and to pray, then He went on further, alone, and He fell on His face and prayed. He said, “Father, if it is possible, let this cup pass from me. Nevertheless, thy will be done.” Then, when He went back to where He left them, His disciples were sleeping. They were not sensitive. They were not spiritually conditioned to meet the needs of Jesus Christ in the greatest trial of His life, and they went to sleep instead of watching with Him. They did not recognize their part in God’s plan.

Chapter Two

FORSAKEN SO WE MIGHT BE FORGIVEN

“For though he was crucified through weakness, yet he liveth by the power of God. For we also are weak in him, but we shall live with him by the power of God toward you” (2 Corinthians 13:4).

Jesus’ first need was that the disciples would love Him. He began to feel lonely as He went down that trail through Gethsemane and to the Cross. He wanted Peter, John, and James to express their love to Him—the same love he had shown them since the day they began to walk with Him. He took them to the garden because He wanted a fellowship of love. He had a need to be loved with His own precious love.

The greatest need of every individual in this world is to receive God’s love.

Operating in the weakness of His humanity in the unbelievable conquest of His trial, Jesus

Christ needed the disciples to love Him. But they went to sleep. They were with Him, yet they went to sleep. They were in the garden, but they were not sensitive to His heartbeat.

In a ministry such as ours, every one of us is becoming more sensitive, realizing that every church service is an opportunity to worship God, to fellowship with God, and then to be sensitive to the needs of God and the people around us. Every time we gather together—whether it be two or three of us or several hundred—it represents a time to be sensitive to God, to love Him and worship Him and become sensitive to the needs of others.

In so many words, Jesus was saying in Matthew 26, “I need you to love me. I need you to sit and to pray with Me. I need you to care, because right now I am beginning to operate in the fullness of My humanity, and I am going to be crucified in weakness (see 2 Corinthians 13:4).

“I am entering into the very lowest ebb of My human existence. I am getting ready to take the sins of the world upon My body. The sorrow and the suffering, caused by sin, of every individual throughout the ages will be on my mind. Love Me. Pray with Me. Stay with Me. Strengthen Me, because now I am personally

learning obedience by the things that I suffer (see Hebrews 5:8).

“In my humanity, I fear because of the nature of your sins and the nature of the trial. I fear what it will be like to be separated from my Father, even for a few moments. I sense all the demons as they begin to organize and mobilize and make Me the object of their attack. I sense it coming in, and I need you.”

And, so, He said, “Pray. Pray with Me. For an hour—just pray.”

Still, Jesus came back and the disciples were sleeping. So He went and fell on His face. A tremendous need was upon Him. He said, “Father, if it is possible, let this cup pass from me. Nevertheless, thy will be done.”

But it wasn’t possible. If we were to be redeemed, if our sins were to be covered, if we were to have heaven as a place prepared for us, it was not possible for the Father to let the cup pass from His Son.

It may be that when He prayed for the cup to be removed, because the physical oppression at that time was so great, He meant, “If it is possible, don’t let the cup of death happen to Me here in the garden. Let Me go to the Cross, for which I am purposed to do” (John 17). In His

humanity, as He faced the torment of hell and being separated from His Father for the first time in all of eternity, Jesus Christ had our redemption first and foremost in His mind.

When Jesus went back to His disciples for the third time, they were still sleeping. So after letting them sleep, He finally said to them, "Rise up now, because the enemies are ready, and the Son of man is about to be betrayed. It's all ready. So rise up now, and let us be going."

The Father Turned His Face Away

Another need that Jesus Christ had during His time on earth was His need for fellowship with His Father. More than any time in His humanity, in His human existence as a man upon earth, He needed that. But the Father cut it off when, at Calvary, our sins were placed upon the Son.

The Son cried out in Matthew 27:46, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me? Why, at a time like this—when I am weak, when I am hurting, when My body is bleeding, when I need You so much? You have never left Me before. You have always been with Me. Why hast thou forsaken Me?"

He was in need of the Father's fellowship,

but He couldn't have it, because our sins were upon Him. His needs were great, but He took our sins upon Himself, and He went through a time of being utterly forsaken. He did this all for us because He loves us.

When we enter into sin, into a place where we should not go, we have tremendous need for the Father's fellowship, but we cannot have it because sin separates us from that fellowship. We want to hear the voice of God, and we want to hear the Word of God. We want to experience forgiveness, but we cannot because of sin. Jesus was taking our sins upon His body, and the Father had to turn His back. The Son cried, "Why have You forsaken me?"

At that moment, the Father and the Holy Spirit completely detached themselves from intervention. They detached themselves from entering into Christ's need, from entering into His trials, from entering into His pressures. While He was operating in the fullness of His humanity, though Jesus was still fully God, the Father and the Holy Spirit detached themselves completely.

Christ identified with us when every single sin that anyone has ever committed was put into one package and placed upon Him. He desper-

ately needed the Father's fellowship but could not have it. Though He was sinless, He became sin so that He could make us the righteousness of God in Him (2 Corinthians 5:21).

Hanging on the Cross, in total desperation, the Lord Jesus Christ looked up to heaven and said, "I am in need. The disciples have forsaken Me (Matthew 26:56). *You* have forsaken Me (Matthew 27:46). I am in need! Won't somebody hear Me?"

The Lamb Suffered for Our Sake

Because of His submission to the plan of God, the perfect, spotless Lamb of God endured the Father turning away from Him at that particular time and with that particular mood. The Lord Jesus Christ, misunderstood and forsaken, with our sins upon Him, entered into a tremendous need that was not being met. His need was not met by God, nor by man, nor by His grace and mercy. And because He endured that separation, we will never have to face a time of being utterly forsaken when we cry out to God.

Even though we will fail and even though we will feel guilty, He will always hear and always answer because He can fellowship with us when we confess our sins to Him and repent. He

can fellowship with us because of what His precious Son did in our place, as our substitute, in the vicarious atonement at Calvary.

With worship, with appreciation, and with thanksgiving to God, consider Christ's sacrifice. Thank Him that He went through a period when His need was not met by God the Father. He went through a time when His need was not met by His close associates or friends or loved ones. His need was not met, and it was a tremendous need, an unbelievable need. But He went through it so that every single need in your life could be met by Him, by grace and through faith.

Chapter Three

HAVING COMPASSION THAT MAKES A DIFFERENCE

“And Jesus went forth, and saw a great multitude, and was moved with compassion toward them, and he healed their sick” (Matthew 14:14).

“Then Jesus called his disciples unto him, and said, I have compassion on the multitude, because they continue with me now three days, and have nothing to eat: and I will not send them away fasting, lest they faint in the way” (Matthew 15:32).

“And when he was come near, he beheld the city, and wept over it” (Luke 19:41).

“Jesus wept.

“Then said the Jews, Behold how he loved him!” (John 11:35-36).

Jesus has a need for us to reveal His compassion to the world. He wants you and I to have the same compassion, because that is why He died. In our hurrying, in all the hustle and

bustle of life, He wants us to know that the hour is late and that the time is short.

Jesus Christ wants us to join with Him. He wants us to join Him in revealing His compassion to the lost, to the weak, to the sick, to the needy, to the lonely, to the suffering, to those who have heartaches. He wants us to do more than just acknowledge it. He wants us to enter into His divine heart of compassion. He has a need for us to do that so that we may share with others His life and His love, personally.

Jesus Christ has a need that we love one another as He loved us (John 13:34).

Do you realize His need—that we would love each other with the same love that He has for us? He has a tremendous need for us to express that love and share it. Sharing His life, which is His very nature, conditioned Him to have a need. And because He gave His life, it produced a need to receive love from His disciples and from us.

Jesus Christ, the precious God-Man in heaven—because He so loved the whole world, because He loved so deeply—conditioned His own heart for a need of love, a need of fellowship, a need to be ministered unto. This is our part in His plan.

This is why the priests in the sanctuary of the temple were to minister first to Him (see Ezekiel 44:15). This is why He said, “Be ye witnesses unto me first before you are witnesses in Jerusalem, and Judaea” (see Acts 1:8). He has need to be loved, a need to be worshipped, a need for your fellowship. He has a need because He is still a Person with a personality and a portion to share. Because He loves so much and loves so deeply, He needs that love returned. He needs to receive our portion. He loves it and enjoys it and cherishes it and gets so much pleasure and glory out of it (see Revelation 4:11; Isaiah 45:7). What’s more, He wants it today.

Loving with His Love

Jesus Christ has a need that we love each other as He loves us. He wants us to share His character, to share His likeness, and to reveal His image. The Word of God says, “And be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ’s sake hath forgiven you” (Ephesians 4:32).

He has a need that we forgive one another with a tender heart. When He sees us doing this, we are meeting His need because we are responding to His love. We are responding to His

own forgiveness, which was extended toward us personally. He has a need that we forgive and forget with a tenderhearted love that only has its origin in God.

That is His need. That is our part in His plan.

He has a need that we would be witnesses in every single area of life—not mechanically and methodically, but spiritually, as we communicate His life and His Gospel. He has a need that we look to India and their starving masses, and that we would get down on our knees and weep before God and say, “Lord, save souls and meet the needs of those starving for truth in India.”

He has a need that we would consider the different mission fields in the world and be missions minded with a Christ-centered love for the world, with a heart that is honest and true and motivated by Him.

He has a need that we would build up one another and edify each other, that we would minister life and meet each other’s needs in the sensitivity of His own Spirit.

He has a need that we would live as the “one new man” of Ephesians 2:15, that we would function as God functions, live as God lives, and love the Word as God declared it.

He has a need that we would come together

through His grace and through His mercy and band together with the same fervency—one heart, one soul, one mind, one purpose, and one heartbeat of love. He has a need that we would submit ourselves to the Cross and enter into His resurrection and ascension. He has a need that we would dwell together, not only in unity but much more importantly, in the union of the Trinity (John 17:11-26).

He has a need that we would pray fervently and earnestly for one another, for the lost, and for our enemies. He has a need that we would come together and let our hearts beat under the banner of heaven, and let our understanding have the knowledge of His wisdom. He has a need that we would let His fervency come into our hearts with the very earnestness of His divine attributes.

Walk in the Spirit

He has a need that we would be filled continually with the Holy Spirit. He has a need that we would walk by faith and not by sight, trusting Him for every detail. He has a need that we would share Him in every situation. He has a need that we would turn to Him and not circumstances or self for rationalization.

He has a need that we would minister grace instead of legalism, love instead of law; that we would minister heaven instead of hell, that we would minister His life instead of death.

He has a need that we would come before Him and then share Him in every situation and declare that He is beautiful (Psalm 48:2).

He has a need that we would study and grow in the Word of God, praying without ceasing (1 Thessalonians 5:17); that we would allow circumstances to happen without murmuring, without doubting, and without rationalization, conforming us to His very image right here on earth in a progressive growth of faith while we operate in our humanity.

“But as it is written, Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither hath entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him” (1 Corinthians 2:9).

Jesus Christ has a need that we would yearn daily for His Second Coming. Jesus Christ has a need that we would operate by every Word of God with faith in our hearts as circumstances give us needs (Deuteronomy 8:3). He has a need that every single child of God would join one another as never before in being sensitive to His needs.

Jesus Christ has needs and He has made us a part of His plan—that we would hear from Him, and by the Spirit of God we would meet those needs in this world. That is our part in God’s plan.

CONCLUSION

Take time to love Jesus Christ. Take time to enter into your part in His plan. Take time to worship Him. Take time to meet His need, because He is meeting the needs of thousands. Do not forget that He has a need. He has need of your fellowship. He has need of you coming to Him and just plain loving Him for love's sake and worshipping Him for worship's sake, and talking to Him for fellowship's sake.

In your hearing, in perhaps the many things that you have to do, please learn to be very sensitive to understand your part in the plan of Jesus Christ. He needs us to love Him. He needs for us to initiate the love He sheds in our hearts back to Him, and He needs it constantly and continually. Even now, though He is glorified, and though He is in heaven, the Christ that is living in our hearts needs us to initiate this love to Him.

He has a need, and it is a need that we

would come to Him and say,

“Lord, I just want to take some time and minister to You and love You. In everything I do, I want to minister to you. I thought that because You are God, You have no needs. I started to think of You as a mechanical God instead of a Person with a mind, emotions, and will, just as You created us. You have the same needs but on a different scope. And Lord, by Your grace and through what You have done and through who You are in me, I want to minister to Your needs.”

Father, I look to You now to teach me in the anointing of the Holy Spirit what Your needs are. Thank You that, as You have described in the Scriptures, I can see that You have needs, and Your needs relate to our needs, and our needs are Your needs. I thank You and praise You, and I ask it in Jesus' precious name. Amen.