

## The Path of Pain

Luke 22:47-65

### Via Dolorosa...

It is Latin for the **Way of Suffering** or the **P\_\_\_\_\_ Way**. Within the Old City of Jerusalem, the **Via Dolorosa** is a street that's traditionally considered the path Jesus walked on the way to the cross. I don't know how authentic it is, but there's no denying that the path to the cross was one of great suffering for Jesus.

But our Lord's **Way of Suffering** actually began here in Gethsemane where, in intense agony, He desired the cup of God's wrath to be removed from Him. But, knowing it was *God's* will, and desiring *His* will to be done, the agony only intensified in the garden. Then, after Gethsemane, Jesus experienced one painful encounter after another. God's plan is best for His Son, but it's not without searing pain. **His path toward the cross is indeed the painful way.**

However, the pain that's included in following God's plan, as agonizing as it may be, *ultimately, it's much \_\_\_\_\_ painful than the pain that accompanies \_\_\_\_\_ following God's plan.* For us, ultimately, the pain of our disobedience would far surpass the pain caused by our submission. So, as beyond-comprehension-awful as Christ's pain was to and on the cross, if He would not have walked the **Via Dolorosa**, *His pain and ours* would have been eternally awful! Consequently, I can say in all truth that what's coming for Jesus is...

### The path of \_\_\_\_\_ pain:

#### 1. Jesus is \_\_\_\_\_ (47-48).

In the Greek word order, "with a kiss" is in the emphatic position, that is to say, it's at the beginning of the statement. It's literally: "Judas/with a kiss/the Son of Man/are you betraying?" A "kiss" is a concrete expression of \_\_\_\_\_. In fact, in the Greek, "kiss" (*philema*) and "love" (*phileo*) are related like jelly is to peanut butter. Have you ever been betrayed by a kiss? \_\_\_\_\_, isn't it? Think about how Jesus must've felt about the disloyalty of one of His handpicked twelve...

## 2. Jesus is \_\_\_\_\_ (49-51).

John's Gospel tells us Peter is the one who didn't wait for the Lord to answer before he pulled his sword, and Malchus, the high priest's servant, was the one whose ear Peter cut off. Peter was determined to be true to his word: "Lord, I will die for You!" But there's a problem: it wasn't God's will for Peter to die here; and it wasn't God's will to stop the mob; it was God's will for Jesus to walk the **Way of Suffering**. So, John, who was there, tells us, "Jesus said to Peter, 'Put the sword into the sheath; *the cup which the Father has \_\_\_\_\_ Me, shall I not drink it?*'" (18:11). Peter would say, "God forbid it, Lord," because Peter wasn't on God's page in God's plan for our redemption.

*The sword* isn't God's way to glory—that's the world's way. *The cross* is God's way to glory. And the cup which God gave Him was beyond-description-painful. But, it was the Father's cup *given* to the Son, and the Redeemer *will* drink it!

Can you imagine the political and civil uproar if Jesus wouldn't have cleaned up Peter's mess? All of a sudden, the high priest would look good and Jesus would look bad. The disciples would've been arrested with Jesus, and disciples everywhere would've taken up swords *instead of God's \_\_\_\_\_*. Think of the chaos created *if* Jesus hadn't reversed Peter's pathetic attempt at religion.

But, Jesus repays darkness with love, and Malchus gets *a real* kiss of love—he got his ear back! But, none of these *God's-will-happenings* happen for you and me without our own Gethsemane experience. We will submit to our Father's will in our walk through life *only if* we first have a Gethsemane experience where we once and for all commit ourselves to our Father's will. Otherwise, we slam through life doing Christianity our \_\_\_\_\_ way instead of doing God's will God's way!

## 3. Jesus is \_\_\_\_\_ (52-54).

Jesus is in perfect control. He gave them this hour of power. *But the hour won't last*. There's an hour of darkness that visits us as well, isn't there? But know this, child of God, it is an " \_\_\_\_\_," not an eternity. And if we submit to God's will for our lives, and pass through "the hour" *by His power, in His time*, we will burst forth into God's Glorious Light!

Darkness has its hour, but we have the Eternal Light on our side. So, I stubbornly argue that *submission* is **the path of lesser pain**. The hour of darkness will pass, and Jesus keeps showing us **the better way**.

#### 4. Jesus is \_\_\_\_\_ (55-62).

**Verse 55:** Who's "they"? Servants of the house, but also, Matthew indicates, some members of the mob who arrested Jesus, they're all in the court yard. And, Peter is sitting among them! **Verse 59:** His Galilean accent is too obvious to miss. **Verse 61:** "And the Lord turned and looked at Peter." What a look it must've been—a look of love, of sadness, of pain... His best friend had just denied Him three times... "And Peter remembered...<sup>62</sup> And he went out and wept bitterly." Peter felt awful. But think how Jesus felt... How that must have pained Him.

#### 5. Jesus is \_\_\_\_\_ (63-65).

When people treat the Son of God like He's \_\_\_\_\_ than God, like He's a nobody, like He's the scum of the earth; when they hate Him, mock Him, beat Him, blindfold Him, and say *anything* untrue about Him or against Him, they are blaspheming Him, and it happens all the time! But, He made a commitment in the garden to walk this path of pain, and for Christ there's no turning back.

By the way, when you hear blaspheming from the lips of a blasphemer, how do you react to that? Do you get fighting mad? Are you ready to get in a verbal fist fight? Although it *seems* worthy to defend Jesus from blasphemy, that's not our calling. Our calling is to defend our \_\_\_\_\_ in Christ as a winsome witness seasoned with grace. Remember what happened in the garden with the sword of defense? Such defense offended Jesus. For us today it's like, "Put your tongue back in your head! Instead, pray for the poor, deceived soul; and walk with Me on our Father-given path of pain!" Because I believe the path of pain that's found in submission to God's will and way is far less painful than doing life my own stupid, worldly way!

**Do not \_\_\_\_\_ your pain!**

Let us follow Jesus. He gave us **His better way!** We are always looking for hopeless ways to avoid pain, but Jesus showed us pain avoiders the better way: I'm not going to do life my way ever again; Your way, Father, smothered in divine grace and submissive determination.

If you can believe with me that this is truly **the path of lesser pain**, then let's follow this **Hebrews 12** directive: "Lay aside every weight that slows us down, and the sin which so easily entangles us, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us [by God Himself], fixing our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame [but not the pain], and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God. For consider Him who has endured such hostility by sinners against Himself, so that you will not grow weary [of the pain] and lose heart" (1-3).