

Bruce Larson and Lloyd Ogilvie (in their commentary of the passage we come to today)... have THIS to say. - Would you agree?

*“If you have an occasional sleepless night, you’re living in the real world. If you never have one, perhaps it’s because your life is too safe.”*

...[ P A U S E ] ... [ R E P E A T ] ...

Those authors wrote that in response to our passage which deals with a sleepless night that Jesus experienced. ... (Here’s the thing...) It’s kinda’ comforting to know... that even JESUS had sleepless nights. ... We are about to read of one - in which He is overwhelmed with all kinds of strong emotions.

You and I are passionate people... full of both constructive and destructive passions. I have a section that I teach my college students on how to deal with our emotions. (You see)... any emotion that you and I experience can be expressed as either “debilitative”... or “facilitative.” ... If an emotion – such as fear - leads us to constructive activity (like prayer... or turning to someone we know is wise...) it is “facilitative.” But if an emotion (like fear) leads to destructive behaviors... it is “debilitative.” Debilitative emotions often paralyze us... or lead us to detrimental/harmful expressions.

We always have our emotions and they are ready to sweep over us at any “given” time. ... They sometimes surprise us. (“*Where did THAT come from...?*”) ... So our passage is very useful to us.

We frequently discuss how all the Biblical signs seem to be showing us that Jesus’ return is soooo close. This frightens many people.... and others get very excited. **BIG** change is just right around the corner. ... We must

know how to handle the emotions that are sweeping over us (right now – and as they intensify.)

So... let's examine how we... from Christ's model and instruction that He gave to His disciples... can deal with our feelings. ... How can we do that constructively(?)... keeping our emotions that sweeps over us "facilitative" (?) – rather than "debilitative."

Jesus (on the sleepless night of our passage) made sure that His emotions remained "facilitative." It was the night that He knew He was being betrayed. He had just sent Judas out to do his shameful work... and the mob was coming to grab Him and torture Him to death. He KNEW that. But instead of allowing His emotions to paralyze Him or to stray into destructive debilitative expression – He used them to prepare His disciples for what they were about to experience. He taught them how to prepare for their own immediate hardship.

Luke 22:31–36 concludes the Last Supper scene with a discourse. Jesus gives what is in effect the final teaching of his ministry—a farewell discourse. Several practical points are made.

How wonderfully considerate is the Master. How big is His heart. So big that even during this night of bitter woe there is room in it for "others." His heart goes out to them... because Jesus fully realizes that the wrath of the Sanhedrin will not be appeased when He Himself (the Leader) is caught. That wrath will be vented next upon those who have been following Him. As a result... these disciples will be tempted to disown their Leader.

Last week we saw (as Jesus began this discussion to prepare them)... Jesus knew of the events concerning Him. He told His disciples that one

who was among them would betray Him. Jesus showed that it was a part of God's plan... and that He was in full control.

I see this as FOUNDATIONAL for directing our emotions to be expressed as facilitative. There really is no need for debilitative expression – when we know God is in full control. (And) Jesus showed that He was in full charge of the events by this revelation.

I don't know what the source of your strongest emotions (right now) is. But I do know this... and it is my job... and the job of every Christian in the room... to remind you that **GOD IS IN FULL CONTROL**. He is allowing those circumstances for your good. ... [ P A U S E ] ...

Jesus revealed that one of them would betray Him. ... The disciples are not sure who this could be... but they are now certain that Jesus is headed for death. ... They were finally understanding His fate.

But misunderstanding still reigned among them... because while Jesus was about to meet betrayal... we also saw in last week's passage that they were debating who was the greatest. The irony is strong. ... Jesus interrupted their argument to make another vital point. He (already) revealed how He was in charge... and NOW He tells them that leadership (in contrast to the world) is not found in domination (above others)... but in service.

Keeping our emotions facilitative involves **1)** knowing that God is in full control and is allowing the circumstances for our ultimate good... and **2)** directing the energy of our emotions into serving others. ... (NOT expecting to BE SERVED.) ... Now THIS brings us up to our passage for today... where the discussion after the Last Supper continues.

The Passover meal had been eaten... the symbols of the new covenant given... the plan of redemption set in motion - and with Judas scurrying to the temple. ... The disciples (unaware of the cosmic importance of that night)... bickered like children. ... In the meantime... their Master entered the longest night of His life... as they tried to settle the matter of who would sit where... in the new government.

In the middle of the Messiah's rebuke and reassurance... Jesus (suddenly) held the gaze of (Peter) - the future lead apostle.

### **Luke 22:31**

Something alien was still in the air. Judas was gone... but all was not well. This time the focus turned to Simon Peter. Jesus spoke to him: "*Simon, Simon!*" The double use of a name was intended to arrest attention. The device is used ten times in the Bible. Jesus used it on the cross (Matt. 23:37). Here... the Lord used the duplication of Peter's old name not only to capture his attention... but also to impress upon him his impending danger.

Jesus calls him "Simon"... not "Peter" (the Rock.) ... If any significance can be attached to this fact... it may well be that the Master wishes to fix the attention of this leader of the apostles upon the fact that (in himself) he is a weak creature... not at all a man of stability - no rock at all!.. The repetition ("Simon, Simon") indicates emphasis and deep concern.

Peter must have been startled when the Lord called him by his old name (the name of his unregenerate days.) ... But Peter (and each of the disciples) were not only vulnerable but also were being stalked by the Evil One. ... "*Behold, Satan has demanded to have you*" (and "you" is plural...

meaning **all** the disciples – not just Peter)... “*that he might sift you*” (all of you) “*as wheat*”. ... He must have sensed something of their greatness. Satan would like to do to Peter and the others what he was about to do to Judas — turn him into a suicide. ... Satan wants to test Peter and the other disciples... in order to prove that they are **phonies** as - Judas was. ... Satan also felt Job was a phony... and he would run him through the sieve of tests to **really see** his character. But Job won! ... So will 11 of Jesus’ disciples. But little did Peter and the others know how greatly they were about to be tempted.

“*Sift you as wheat*” is a figure of speech for testing something. This sifting of wheat basically refers to the repeated... swift... and violent shaking of the wheat in a sieve. ... Someone — often a woman — grasps a sieve in both hands... and begins to shake it vigorously from side to side so that the chaff will rise to the surface... which is then thrown away – as useless.

Jesus was warning them about the very emotional night they were about to have. Things are about to get a whole lot worse.

*“You are now moving into a whole new situation. When they arrest Me... they will (one day) arrest you. They will treat Me like a common criminal... and they will do the same to you – so... be prepared!”*

This was a warning to all of His men... but Jesus saw Peter’s failure in particular.

### **Luke 22:32**

Jesus saw Peter’s inevitable failure... but still encouraged him. He said (in effect) “*After you (Peter) have failed, remember that your faith need not fail; I command that when you recover from your stumble, you become a*

*stronger leader than you are now.” ... The pronouns (“you”) in verse 32 are singular. (“You – Peter.”)*

Jesus prayed for His followers. The Lord (today) is our intercessor. He sits at the right hand of the heavenly Father and intercedes for us. This is the whole point of Hebrews chapters 4 and 5... that discusses Christ as our High Priest. (Here is a short part of THAT discussion.)

**Hebrews 4:15 (ESV)**

*<sup>15</sup> For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but one who in every respect has been tempted as we are, yet without sin.*

So Jesus is doing for you and I what He told Peter that He did. ... He knows when you are moving toward the place of failure and stumbling. If you belong to Him... my friend... He has already prayed for you (and He consistently prays for you)... that your faith will not fail. ... You may stumble at times... you may falter... but if you belong to Him - your *faith* will not fail. The reason your faith will not fail is because He has prayed for you.

He died for the world... but He prays for His own that they will be kept while they are in the world. The Lord Jesus Christ prayed for you today. It may be that you did not pray for yourself but He has prayed for you. ... We can be sure that His prayers are always effectual.

Keeping our emotions facilitative (from last week’s passage) we saw that it involves **1)** knowing that God is in full control and is allowing the circumstances for our ultimate good... and **2)** directing the energy of our emotions into serving others. Continuing today... we see that it should involve **3)** realizing that Jesus is praying effectual prayers for you. And we can see from how He prayed for Peter – how He is likely praying for us.

Notice what it was that Jesus prayed for. Jesus prayed for faith... not the removal of the test. Apparently... Jesus knew that Peter would fail. (Otherwise)... there would be no need for Peter to repent. ... Yet Jesus was (also) confident of his turning back... and also understood that (having faced and overcome this trial)... Peter would be able to strengthen fellow believers.

Of all the things that Jesus might have commissioned His lead disciple to concern himself with (things like evangelism / winning lost souls)... Jesus commissioned Peter to the ministry of strengthening the saints. Later He is going to make this appeal again – “*Feed My sheep, Peter!*” This is such an important ministry.

(You know... for some reason)... people that I know... who seem to have the gift of evangelism... tend to treat evangelism as if it is the only commission that Christ gives to His followers. (Believe me... I am not diminishing the need that we all have to evangelize the lost – but strengthening the saints is just as important.) We should not over-emphasize either one over the other. I had a seminary professor tell me that every church is like an airplane that needs two wings to fly. The church’s two main wings are – evangelism and edification (strengthening the saints.)

Peter accepted his commissioning to edification ministry. Indeed... the book of 1 Peter deals entirely with encouragement for believers who are undergoing trials and difficulties. Peter became a source of strength to many who needed it.

How can we keep our emotions facilitative ? **1)** know that God is in full control and is allowing the circumstances for our ultimate good... **2)** direct the energy of our emotions into serving others. Strengthen the saints by using the spiritual gifts that God (the Holy Spirit) has given to you and every believer... **3)** realize that Jesus is praying effectual prayers for you. ... .. **4)** Accurately understand your strength. (Jesus will now help Peter do this next one. Peter protested... thinking that he was strong... stating that he would even go to prison or to death for Jesus.)

### **Luke 22:33**

Peter reacted to Jesus' prediction of his failure by saying: "*Lord, I am ready to go with you to prison and to death.*" ... It was a wholly sincere presumption—"I'm telling you, Lord, that right now I can do this. I'm a strong man, and if I put my mind to it, that's it!"

I am certain that Peter meant it. ... But it was dangerous presumption. Perhaps angelic beings who were watching - winced and reflected: "*Peter, you shouldn't have said that — at least not like you did. Proverbs 16:18, Peter—pride comes before a fall.*"

Peter seemed to ignore Jesus' words regarding intercession on his behalf and simply answered with bravado. ... Peter's pride resulted in a poor response to this information from Christ. He did some boasting about his faithfulness. **We all tend to think of ourselves to be stronger spiritually than we really are.**

We often see this kind of presumption in a naturally gifted athlete who finds it hard to listen to coaching advice because he feels no need. ... Sadly... the sidelines are strewn with has-beens who refused to learn from the



wisdom of others... and never developed the technique and understanding they needed. ... Perceived natural strength can be a disadvantage—especially in spiritual matters.

Peter's fateful presumption was also aided by his intense love for Jesus. How could he love Jesus so and conceive of disappointing him under any circumstance? Unthinkable! But Peter was also just plain naive. He did not understand the spiritual Everest before him. He figured all he needed were some strong legs and a good pair of sandals and he could scale any spiritual peak.

Peter's self-confident boasting is a warning to us that none of us really knows his own heart (Jer. 17:9) and that we can fail *in the point of our greatest strength*. Abraham's greatest strength was his faith, and yet his faith failed him when he went down to Egypt and lied about Sarah (Gen. 12:10–13:4). Moses' strength was in his meekness (Num. 12:3)... yet he lost his temper... spoke rashly with his lips... and was not allowed to enter Canaan (Num. 20).

**1 Corinthians 10:12 (ESV)**

<sup>12</sup> *Therefore let anyone who thinks that he stands take heed lest he fall.*

Peter was unaware of both the spiritual reality and the spiritual battle that Jesus could see. Peter just looked to how he felt at the moment... and at the moment he felt pretty brave! But when you are walking on feelings... all this can change pretty quickly. ... Soon... Peter will be intimidated before a humble servant girl... and deny to her that he even knew Jesus.

(LISTEN!) - **Only total dependence on the Lord and a sense of weakness without Him can preserve even the most zealous disciple.**

How can we keep our emotions facilitative ? **1)** know that *God is in full control and is allowing the circumstances for our ultimate good...* **2)** direct the energy of our emotions into serving others. Strengthen the saints by using the spiritual gifts that God (the Holy Spirit) has given to you and every believer... **3)** realize that Jesus is praying effectual prayers for you. ... .. **4)** Accurately understand your strength. *Only total dependence on the Lord and a sense of weakness without Him can preserve even the most zealous disciple.*

### **Luke 22:34**

Jesus unmasked Peter's presumption. Jesus' dire prediction challenges Peter's confidence. Jesus simply says that Peter is about to deny Him this very day... that is... before sunrise. ... In fact... Jesus knows specifically when that betrayal will occur. Before the cock crows three times... Peter will deny that he knows Jesus. ... (Jesus knew a lot about that night – before it happened. Jesus was in full control.)

Someone may well ask: "*If Jesus knew that Peter would fail... why did He allow it to happen...?*" The answer is the same answer for why He allows difficulty to happen to you and I. (You see) Jesus also knew that Peter would come out of it much stronger. Peter would be able to strengthen the saints far more effectively. Jesus also knows this about you and the circumstances that you are facing. (*God is in full control and is allowing the circumstances for our ultimate good.*)

A quick change of subject rescues Peter from further reproach. (Any more protesting from Peter would simply add to his humiliation later.)

### **Luke 22:35**

The disciples had been sent out to do ministry without Jesus - before **THIS** leaving them - (We studied it when we were in Luke 10:1–17... and this is what Jesus is having them recall.) ... They all returned from that jubilant! **THAT TIME** they were received with goodwill and hospitality. ... That was when He sent them to “the lost sheep of the house of Israel” at a time when there was still a possibility that national revival might occur. ... But this time it would be different. ... Now they are facing a **hostile** world - and will be without Jesus. They needed to prepare differently... and He tells them to...

### **Luke 22:36-38**

The Lord turned His attention to other matters. He had in mind the change in dispensations now instituted. The contrastive ἀλλὰ νῦν (*alla noon* – “but now”) indicates that a significant change has come.

Jesus pointed out to His disciples that they had never lacked anything while they were with Him and were sent out to minister for Him. ... However (now that He was to be taken away from them) they would have to make preparations for their ministries... including a purse ... a bag... and ... a sword for personal protection.

Some see the Lord’s reference to a sword as symbolic or metaphorical... perhaps illustrating their need to be armed for spiritual warfare. ... But this doesn’t fit with the other provisions... which (also) would therefore have to be metaphorical in some way. ... And that opens the door to interpret this verse in many fanciful ways that could mean anything. No. Don’t ever turn a verse into allegory without warrant to do so... (and especially not a handpicked part of the verse).

(Here)... it makes better sense to see the sword as literal... although not for the sake of violence. Carrying a sword on the highway was very common... standard equipment for travelers wanting to ward off robbers. Jesus advocated peace. He called His disciples to refrain from taking revenge and to love enemies in return for their hatred. But He wasn't naïve. He recognized the world to be a dangerous place... especially for those aligning themselves against the dominion of evil to become agents of the kingdom. Consequently... He encouraged self-defense in the face of mortal danger such as robbery (see 10:30).

Jesus... in alluding to a prophecy (found in Isa. 53:12)... implied that because the world has declared the Son of God a “transgressor”... the disciples would face similar treatment. The same powers that convict Jesus will also declare the disciples enemies of the state... simply because they associated with Him. ... The disciples heard the Lord’s warning... took it all literal... and produced two swords.

Today... God’s people are aliens in enemy territory... and we must use our faith and sanctified common sense as we serve the Lord. Warren Wiersbe wrote: “*This is a good warning to zealous people who foolishly get themselves into tight spots and then expect God to perform miracles for them.*” ... Keeping our emotions facilitative... includes realizing that we are in enemy territory... and we must use our faith and sanctified common sense in order to provide and protect ourselves.

How can we keep our emotions facilitative ? **1)** know that *God is in full control and is allowing the circumstances for our ultimate good...* **2)** direct the energy of our emotions into serving others. Strengthen the saints by using the spiritual gifts that God (the Holy Spirit) has given to you and every

believer... **3)** realize that Jesus is praying effectual prayers for you. ... ..

**4)** Accurately understand your strength. *Only total dependence on the Lord and a sense of weakness without Him can preserve even the most zealous disciple...* **5)** use your faith and sanctified common sense in order to provide and protect yourself.

**#6)** is to have a dependent spirit that communes with God. ... (This is so important!) The way to faithfulness in the midst of hostile rejection of Christ is a dependent spirit that communes with God. ... **[ P A U S E ]** ...

Jesus fears that the disciples will deny him - a very real danger... since Satan wants to sift them like wheat. ... This is more than a trial. Satan is trying to lead them to defect. ... Prayer will protect them from unfaithfulness and will encourage them to faithfulness and perseverance.

Prayer is important because it expresses a need for God... a desire to depend on Him and to rest in His care. ... This attitude is what the disciples need in the face of these difficult moments. ... So Jesus takes them to His special place for prayer. He asked them to pray with Him. In fact... in this context the present imperative is used (προσεύχεσθε (*proseuchesthe* – “pray.”) It suggests that this is to be a constant attitude. ... And even though we see them (here – in these next verses) **fail**... the disciples will eventually learn the lesson (we see in Acts 4:24–31). ... .. The way to faithfulness in the midst of hostile rejection of Christ is a dependent spirit that communes with God.

### **Luke 22:41-46**

Throughout his Gospel... Luke highlighted Jesus' consistent prayer life. This section provides an intimate look at Jesus' dependence on prayer...

right before his greatest hour of need. For Jesus... prayer was not an escape... but a relief - not a way to avoid difficulty... but a way to strengthen Himself to endure it.

We can only try to imagine the agony of this moment. In those terrible hours... Jesus had to choose between obedience and self-preservation. Because of His human nature... Jesus was genuinely tempted. His suffering and His temptation were both real. ... The mental, emotional, and spiritual anguish completely drained Him.

Matthew... Mark... and Luke (all three) emphasize the enormous emotional strain felt by Jesus during His temptation. According to Matthew... Jesus prayed at least ***three hours*** (Matt. 26:37–46)... and Matthew describes His mental state as “*deeply grieved - to the point of death.*” Mark’s account presents a similar portrayal of Jesus’ distress and agony (Mark 14:32–42). ... Luke is the only one (however) to describe Jesus as sweating with sweat that became like great drops of blood.

His use of the word ***like*** may suggest that the sweat merely fell to the ground like clots of blood... instead of just adhering to the surface of the skin. Blood often spurts out. (Perhaps this is only saying that Jesus was sweating in a manner of blood from a main artery that gushes and spurts.) But there is a rare physical phenomenon known as *hematidrosis*... in which... under great emotional stress... the tiny blood vessels rupture in the sweat glands and produce a mixture of blood and sweat. (I don’t know. But I accept that Jesus was in agony as He prayed.)

Jesus honestly displays his innermost thoughts and asks if the cup of wrath might pass by Him... but the heart of His prayer shows a commitment to

follow the Father's will. Jesus... the model disciple and martyr... will be faithful to the Heavenly Father. The major lesson of this passage is openness in sharing one's heart with God... and accountability in recognizing His sovereignty.

This passage also shows how heaven responds to Jesus' request. We see how God responds to honest prayer. He hears and sends His aid. (Here... He sent an angel to strengthen Him.)

As Jesus turns to face the cross... He knows that He is doing the Father's will (painful as it might be to endure the suffering and shame.) ... Those for whom He suffered are to take note of His example and His instruction for how we can best face extremely difficult times... when emotions tend to sweep[ us off our feet.

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Sometimes in our own hour of decision – it may seem like the same choice.  
We see it as SELF-PRESERVATION – or – OBEDIENCE to God. But  
obedience is self preservation!