

Gethsemane
Mark 14:27-52

"In ancient Israel the process of sifting the wheat was the last stage in preparing the harvest. The sifting occurred once the wheat had been gathered in and winnowed (tossed in the air to remove the chaff). The wheat was gathered up off the floor or ground and shaken in a sieve to remove the rocks, dirt and other debris that may have been gathered in with the kernels of wheat. When the Lord tells his disciples that Satan desires to sift them as wheat, they have already been identified as "wheat." They are not the chaff that has been blown away in the whirlwind, a term used by the Lord to describe the condition of those who are disobedient and do not hearken to the voice of the prophets.

Sifting occurs later. The wheat is shaken and falls to the ground and what is left in the sieve is rubble, dirt and trash. I would assume that the sifting process, according to how we respond to it, can either purify us that we may be gathered into the garner cleansed from the rubble of the natural man, or we lose our faith and the debris of the world is what remains with us. Peter was sifted and came out stronger for it. He triumphed over Satan. We will each be "sifted." We will each decide the end result of that sifting." Hall

- I. Jesus allows our faith to be tested to build in us a perseverance toward our trust in him. He helps us through prayer, and he shields us with his power in the process. One of the reasons he tests our faith is because spiritual forces of darkness are constantly working to get believers to abandon their faith. Satan's goal is to shake up our faith in ways that get us to take our eyes off Jesus, the author and perfecter of our faith (Heb. 12:2-3), through sinful compromise, apathy, disillusionment, discouragement, and fear.

Mark 14:27-31

Luke 22:31-34

James 1:2-4

Rom. 3:24; 8:34

Gal. 3:11

Heb. 11:6

1 Peter 1:5-7 *5 who by God's power are being guarded through faith for a salvation ready to be revealed in the last time. 6 In this you rejoice, though now for a little while, if necessary, you have been grieved by various trials, 7 so that the tested genuineness of your faith—more precious than gold that perishes though it is tested by fire—may be found to result in praise and glory and honor at the revelation of Jesus Christ.*

"Take away faith, therefore, and the devil will destroy us... Take away faith, therefore, and you take away life itself, for the believer is nothing without his faith." Ryken

- II. Jesus prepared himself to take on the sins of the world through prayer and total surrender to the will of the Father. He was preparing himself who had no sin to be sin for us, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God (2 Cor. 5:21). Willful obedience to the will of the Father can only fully be done through prayer and a dying to self. Jesus' example of what that means was unique to him. It surpasses anything we will ever have to go through. The sacrifices he expects us to make is also unique to each one of us. It begins by offering our bodies as a living sacrifice, what follows hugely depends on whether we are willing to do as he asks.

Mark 14:32-42

Isa. 51:17

Rom. 3:23

Jn. 10:17-18

Hebrews 5:7-8

"Jesus became, as it were, an enemy of God, who was judged and forced to drink from the cup of the Father's fury, so that we would not have to drink from that cup. Taking this figurative cup was the source of Jesus' greatest agony on the cross."

John 12:24 *Very truly I tell you, unless a kernel of wheat falls to the ground and dies, it remains only a single seed. But if it dies, it produces many seeds.*

- III. Jesus had no one to depend on but God the Father. In fact, there was no one who fully understood what he was going through, and there was no one able to give him what he needed to endure the shame of the cross except the Father. What we've been given that Jesus didn't have, is the support of the body of Christ. We should never feel alone in whatever we are struggling with. Ultimately, we have the love and understanding of the Father. We also have one another to love on, pray for, encourage, carry our burdens, and come along side in our time of need. Jesus understood what it meant to be alone, that is why he gave us his body to minister to us through the power of the Spirit and his gifts (1 Cor. 12).

Mark 14:43-52

Romans 15:1-4 *We who are strong have an obligation to bear with the failings of the weak, and not to please ourselves. 2 Let each of us please his neighbor for his good, to build him up. 3 For Christ did not please himself, but as it is written, "The reproaches of those who reproached you fell on me." 4 For whatever was written in former days was written for our instruction, that through endurance and through the encouragement of the Scriptures we might have hope.*