



WATCH AND PRAY HOUR

BY BARRY SHAFER

1 Quick Backdrop

This devo is being written days before observing the close of Daylight Savings Time, the weekend we “fall back” by turning our clocks back one hour. In essence, we are given an extra hour. This brings up a question: Why not do something special with that extra hour? And if you are reading this devo and it’s nowhere near “fall back” weekend, simply use this as a jump start to spending time with Jesus.

Here’s an idea: In Matthew’s and Mark’s accounts of Jesus praying in Gethsemane just prior to His arrest, Jesus chastised His disciples for not “keeping watch” with Him for one hour. He then exhorted them to “watch and pray” so that they would not fall into temptation. So, take Jesus up on this exhortation by spending an hour watching and praying with Him. Below are some things you can do to “watch and pray” for an hour. We’ve added some time cues, but don’t let those distract or restrict you.

1 Digging In (God, Show Me!)

WATCH

(15 minutes)

Three gospel writers wrote about Jesus’ experience in Gethsemane. Choose one below and read through Jesus’ Gethsemane experience. As you read, look for the following bits of info and journal your thoughts on what you find.

Matthew 26:36-46; Mark 14:32-42; Luke 22:40-46

What did Jesus specifically pray for?

What do you learn about Jesus’ heart and attitude?

What do you learn about the disciples?

What do you think was going through the minds of the disciples throughout this scene?

(10 minutes)

“Watch” with Jesus as He accepts the cup He prayed might be removed. Read through one of the gospel writer’s account (choose one below) of Jesus’ crucifixion and death. Meditate on the verses and let yourself feel what Jesus felt.

Matthew 17; Mark 15; Luke 23; John 19

(10 minutes)

Pray Jesus’ Gethsemane prayer. What issues do you have in your life that would benefit by your saying to God “...not as I will, but as you will”?

(10 minutes)

Pray the prayer Jesus taught us to pray in Matthew 6:9-13. Meditate on each phrase and pray it in your own words.

2 Taking It Inward (God, Teach Me!)

(10 minutes)

Jesus said to His disciples that by “watching and praying” they would not fall to temptation. How does watching and praying keep you from falling to temptation? Write out a couple of thoughts.

What do you need to do to remind yourself to watch and pray when you are tempted? Would it help you to keep some Scripture handy (such as on a card, or on your phone) that you could get to quickly? Here are some verses you might find helpful:

1 Corinthians 10:13

Hebrews 2:18

2 Timothy 2:22

Hebrews 4:15

3 Putting Into Practice (God, Change Me!)

(5 minutes)

Congrats on watching and praying for one hour (or somewhere thereabouts). Now do this: make your next appointment to watch and pray with Jesus for one hour. You’ll soon find that you don’t need to be given an extra hour through a time change, but you’ll take the hour on your own.

Fold or Cut