

Christmas in the Wilderness! - Seeing Jesus in this Season

Jesus was in agony in the Garden. What was it that caused such agony? Why did He pray that, if possible, He might not drink of the cup (John 18:11)? What was in the cup that was so utterly distressing to Jesus as He contemplated drinking of it? We naturally associate Jesus' cup with the crucifixion and assume that He was praying that He might be spared the wretched and degrading death on the cross. The cup was indeed connected with the crucifixion, but we still have not answered the question: What was in the cup?

Wilderness: Jesus in the Garden. - Matthew 26:36-46.

Christmas in the Wilderness: The Agony of Jesus in the Wilderness.

1. _____ → The cup is often used as a metaphor for the wrath of God (Ps. 75:8; Isa. 51:17, 22; Jer. 25:15; Hab. 2:16; Rev. 14:9–10). The cup, then, that Jesus found so abhorrent to drink was a cup filled with the wrath of God. In the garden of Gethsemane, Jesus was staring intently into that cup — the one He would drink the very next day as He hung on the cross in excruciating agony.
2. _____ → We shy away from the expression “the wrath of God” because of the violent emotions and destructive behavior that is frequently associated with the term *wrath* when used of sinful human beings. We don't want to think of our nice, friendly, but unbelieving neighbors and relatives as subject to the wrath of God.
3. _____ → It was God's wrath toward our sin that Jesus saw in the cup that night and from which He recoiled in such agony. So Jesus drank the cup of the wrath of God in our place. Jesus did not soothe the wrath of God — He endured it. He did not suppress or extinguish it as we would extinguish a fire; rather, He absorbed in His own soul the full, unmitigated fury of God's wrath against sin. To continue with the metaphor, He drank the cup of God's wrath to its last bitter drop. So for us who believe, the cup of God's wrath is empty.

Christmas: God's Solution to Getting Home!

Diagram:

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Man's Problem:

1. All Sin – separated from God (Romans 3:23).
2. Result is Death – Physically, Spiritually, & Eternally (Romans 6:23).
3. Ultimately Judgment (Hebrews 9:27).

God's Plan:

1. God Loves You – you are created for relationships (John 3:16).
2. Abundant Life – full of love, peace, & purpose (John 10:10).
3. Eternal Life – which starts now (John 17:3).

Christmas: Jesus!

1. **Jesus** > Isaiah 59:2. Not YOU > Not works, religion, or philosophy. Who is He > God/Man (John 1:14). What He did > Romans 5:8; I Cor. 15:3-5.
2. Commitment Questions:
 1. Admit your spiritual need. "I am a sinner!"
 2. Repent and be willing to turn from your sin.
 3. Believe that Jesus Christ died for you on the cross.
 4. Receive—Trust, through prayer, Jesus Christ.
3. Clarification to Questions:
 1. Realize you are a sinner and cannot save yourself.
 2. Recognize who Jesus is and what He did.
 3. Repent and be willing to turn from your sin.
 4. Receive Jesus and invite Him to come into your heart.
 5. Respond through prayer to this Gift.

Christmas: Prayer of Commitment

Dear Lord Jesus,

I know that I'm a sinner and need your forgiveness. I believe that you died for my sins. I now invite you to come into my heart and life. I want to trust and follow you as Lord and Savior.

In Jesus name, Amen.

ACTION: Journal This!

1. If you died tonight and stood before God, would you be confident you would spend eternity in heaven?
2. If you died tonight and stood before God, and He asked, "Why should I allow you to enter my heaven?"—what would you say?
3. Who do you know that is in the Wilderness?



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Wilderness: Jesus in the Garden

Matthew 26:36-46

Christmas in the Wilderness: The Agony of Jesus in the Wilderness

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2. **Wrath of God** → We shy away from the expression “the wrath of God” because of the violent emotions and destructive behavior that is frequently associated with the term *wrath* when used of sinful human beings. We don’t want to think of our nice, friendly, but unbelieving neighbors and relatives as subject to the wrath of God.
3. **Absorbed** → It was God’s wrath toward our sin that Jesus saw in the cup that night and from which He recoiled in such agony. So Jesus drank the cup of the wrath of God in our place. Jesus did not soothe the wrath of God — He endured it. He did not suppress or extinguish it as we would extinguish a fire; rather, He absorbed in His own soul the full, unmitigated fury of God’s wrath against sin. To continue with the metaphor, He drank the cup of God’s wrath to its last bitter drop. So for us who believe, the cup of God’s wrath is empty.

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