

'Could You Not Watch One Hour?'

by J.R. Miller

Jesus' disappointment in His disciples during the Gethsemane experience teaches us the importance of showing love and sympathy in times of need.

Scripture: Matthew 26:40

Topics: "Compassion for Others", "Vigilance in Prayer"

Description

J.R. Miller reflects on the disappointment Jesus felt in Gethsemane when His closest disciples failed to stay awake and support Him during His time of agony. Despite His request for just one hour of their companionship and prayer, they succumbed to sleep, missing the opportunity to provide Him with the strength of their love. Miller emphasizes the significance of this moment, illustrating how the disciples' lack of vigilance not only saddened Jesus but also made His struggle more difficult. He draws a parallel to the story of the robin, which symbolizes the importance of compassion and support in times of suffering. Ultimately, Miller urges believers to remain vigilant and supportive of Jesus' cause and His people, ensuring they do not disappoint Him as the disciples did.

Transcript

One of the saddest elements in the Gethsemane experience, was our Lord's disappointment in His disciples. He chose the three best loved of them all, and asked them to be near Him during His great agony. He hoped to get strength from their sympathy. While He went through His mysterious struggle, He supposed that they were praying near by. But when He returned to them to be helped by their love, they were asleep! This happened three times. His friends failed Him in His hour of sorest need.

One of the legends of the Brittany peasants, tells how the robin got his red breast. The day of the Crucifixion, as Jesus was being led out to Calvary, a bird, pitying Him as He went on His way of sorrows, flew down and plucked one thorn from the crown of thorns He was wearing. The blood spurted from the wound and splashed the bird's breast. Ever since, the peasants say, the robin has had a spot of red upon its breast, in remembrance of its pity for the Master that day of sorrows.

The disciples had it in their power that night, not literally to pluck thorns from their Master's brow--but to strengthen Him by their sympathy, and to make His victory a little easier. But they missed their opportunity, and made the Gethsemane experience harder for Him.

There was something inexpressibly sad in our Lord's question, "What, could you not watch with Me one hour?" It showed the bitterness of His disappointment. His request of them was a most reasonable one--it was only for one hour that He had asked them to watch. An hour is not long to keep awake. Then it was a service of love that He requested of them, and love should count nothing hard, especially love for such a Friend as Jesus was to His disciples.

Then it was of Peter, personally, that Jesus asked the question. Peter had professed undying loyalty and devotion but an hour before. Others might be untrue to Jesus--but he could not be. Yet Peter was one of those who wearied in watching before one little hour had passed.

The Master no longer needs us to watch with Him personally in hours of anguish--but He is represented by His cause and by His people, and there is continual call for the watching of love and sympathy. Let us not disappoint our Master.

Source: <https://sermonindex.net/speakers/jr-miller/could-you-not-watch-one-hour/>

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