

*TO TELL
THE STORY*



Even for the Weak

“My soul is overwhelmed with sorrow to the point of death. Stay here, and keep watch with me.” Jesus walked away, about a stone’s throw away, and knelt down. And then he fell on the ground and prayed.

And John watched. James and Peter settle down near him in the garden, leaning against one of the grove’s many trees. John sits on the inviting ground in the cool of the night. Jesus didn’t ask much – just stay awake with him. Watch! And John tried. Oh, he tried so hard. But it’d been a long day, you know? And the garden was so comfortable. And the ground so inviting.

He started awake as Jesus asked, “Are you asleep? Could you men not keep watch with me for one hour? Watch and pray so that you will not fall into temptation. The spirit is willing, but the body is weak.”

And Jesus walked away again.

And John forced himself to be awake. Body is weak? No joke! Couldn’t even stay up long enough to watch with Jesus? What was wrong with him? Why couldn’t he do what his Lord asked him to do? It shouldn’t be that hard! And so John watched!

And his eyes were heavy.

And he slept.

He started awake. There’s Jesus! Oh... Jesus.... Saw his weakness. Again.

John didn’t know what to say. He looked to his friends, Peter and James, and saw that they had the exact same reaction. They didn’t know what to say either. They had been sleeping too.

Jesus went away again.

And a third time... John was so weak.

“Are you still sleeping and resting? Look, the hour is near, and the Son of Man is betrayed into the hands of sinners. Rise, let us go! Here comes my betrayer!”

John fell asleep to shame, and wakes to a nightmare. A crowd – hundreds of soldiers being led by – by Judas? Judas... Judas, what are you doing?

They’re surrounded in the garden, torches everywhere, John has to shield his eyes, it’s so bright!

If only he’d stayed awake! If only he’d stayed awake, he’d have seen them coming from Jerusalem – it would have been impossible to miss them. He could have warned Jesus! They could have gotten away!

And now – and now the nightmare begins.

Judas kisses Jesus, greets him.

“Judas, do you betray the Son of Man with a kiss?”

And the soldiers move in to arrest – and all John can do –

--is run away.

Some follower. Some disciple. Someone who doesn't even have the strength to stay awake?

He's so weak.

But this is what Jesus told them would happen – that they would strike the Shepherd, and the sheep would scatter. Jesus knew, and still he stayed with them. Jesus knew how weak they would be, and he goes to Calvary for people like that.

Brothers and sisters,

Yes, we are so weak. We do not do what Jesus asks us to do. But know this: Jesus knew our weaknesses, and yet he took up our infirmities, and by his wounds we are healed.

And this story is true.

<http://www.breadforbeggars.com>



BREAD FOR BEGGARS