

Position Matthew 26:36 – 46

I. Intro

A. **READ Matthew 26:36 – 46**

B. Graduating big transition in our lives – from high school or college or other program of study; great thought goes into what we want to do in life

C. Many people spend a lot of time thinking about position in life – in their workplace, in community, in church; 100+ years ago this was very important to people – upper, social class vs. working class

D. Hebrews 11 – faith hall of fame; Hebrews 11:13 (ESV)

13 These all died in faith, not having received the things promised, but having seen them and greeted them from afar, and having acknowledged that they were strangers and exiles on the earth.

E. **Question:** Why spend so much time concerned about our position in this life, which is only temporary and we're here only temporary, when what really counts is our position in relation to Lord, Jesus Christ which has eternal ramifications?

F. Order of events before this

i. Jesus with disciples in upper room observing Passover meal

ii. After meal, according to John's Gospel, Jesus wraps a towel (cloth) around Himself, takes a bowl of water and washes the disciples' feet – His lesson: *What I do for you, you should also do for others* – it's about servant-hood

iii. After foot washing, they have communion

iv. Jesus takes bread, dips it into the wine, and gives it to Judas identifying him as the one who would betray Jesus telling him ... *what you are about to do, do quickly*

v. Then Jesus and disciples leave the upper room, leave the city through the eastern gate toward the garden of Gethsemane

G. Judas is gone, only 11 of disciples are with Jesus at this point

H. **v. 36:** Upon reaching Gethsemane, Jesus tells eight (know because of **v. 37**) of the disciples to remain on the outer edge and pray; Wonder why? Could be they're not as mature spiritually as others

I. **v. 37:** Jesus takes Peter, James, and John (sons of Zebedee) with Him

J. **v. 38:** Tells three disciples to stay at a point that will be closer to where Jesus will be, tells them to keep watch; **Later in v. 41** tells them to watch and pray after He finds Peter sleeping, questions him about not being able to stay awake

K. So, three different groups of disciples in different positions in relation to Christ: **1)** Judas – fled the scene; **2)** the eight on the edge of the garden; **3)** the three closest to Jesus

L. Look at today, 3 different relational positions

II. Position in Relation to Christ

A. Know Judas left to betray Jesus

B. The eight on the edge of garden:

i. Not against Jesus – Don't speak against Him

ii. But, just a few more steps they could've been closer to Jesus

iii. Also, just a few more steps in the other direction and they would've been farther from Jesus

iv. **Question:** Wonder why did they not ask, insist on being closer?

C. **POINT:** As believers, we all need to draw as close to Jesus as we possibly can – should be our greatest desire in life; not only draw as close as possible but stay as long as we can

D. James 4:7-8 (NIV)

⁷ Submit yourselves, then, to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you.

⁸ Come near to God and he will come near to you. (**How?!**) Wash your hands (**what we're involved in – external change**), you sinners, and purify your hearts (**internal change**), you double-minded.

i. Submitting to God, resisting the devil, coming near to God, washing and purifying are all required together in order to be as positionally close in our relationship with Christ as we can

III. Position in Relation to People and World

A. Notice number in different groups

i. One, Judas completely fled from Jesus, but know from scripture there were many who rejected (fled from) Jesus – see that at the cross

ii. Eight, on the outer edge

iii. Three, closest of all – make a point, give you a truth

B. **POINT:** The closer a person gets to Jesus, the smaller the number of people there are – may even feel at times that we're the only ones; Other hand, the closer a person is to the world, the larger the number of people there are

C. **TRUTH:** We need to understand – more and more people as time goes by, including those who profess to be Christian are ...

i. Sitting on the “edge” not really growing in their relationship with Christ, really doing absolutely nothing for God

ii. Sitting at home watching TV instead of doing as God's Word tells us we should be preparing and watching for the return of Jesus

iii. Sitting in their comfortable recliners instead of getting out of their comfort zones going into their community sharing Christ, inviting people to church

- D. **Quote:** *Those who come to church on Sunday mornings love the church; those who come back to church on Sunday mornings and Sunday nights love the Pastor and the church; those who come back on Wednesday nights love the Lord!*
- E. **Fact** is there's greater amount of people who are just on outer edge of Christian life and their relationship with Christ and who are closer to the world

IV. Position in Relation to Service (Responsibility)

- A. **Look at three groups represented**
 - i. **1)** Those who have completely abandoned Christ – who have distanced themselves as far away from God/Christ as they can
 - ii. **2)** Those on the outer edge who mainly just sit and do nothing: God can't depend on them
 - iii. **3)** Those who watch, pray, serve and who desire to be as close to Jesus as they can
- B. **Don't know** if you realize but the closer a person is to Jesus, the greater the responsibility
- C. **Illustration:** Man went to join the military. The recruiter for the Air Force said, "You can join the Air Force and travel by air." The Navy recruiter said, "Yes, but you can join the Navy and travel all over the world by sea." The Army recruiter said, "You can join the Army and stay on the ground." The man wanting to join made his decision and said, "I think I'll join the Coast Guard and just coast!" (He absolutely had wrong idea of what serving in military meant)
- D. **Too many people today in the church have the wrong idea of what it means to be a member of the body of Christ; too many in church today are just coasting; at times, we all get too comfortable in our faith, we get complacent, we become apathetic**
- E. **But we all should do all that we humanly, and spiritually, can to be as close to Jesus as we can – it requires devotion, commitment, and surrender each and every single day**
- F. **Question:** What is your position in life?