

## Wednesday Devotional

June 18, 2025

Matthew 26: 36 - 46

### The Suffering God

Jesus asked in Gethsemane, "Could you not watch with me one hour?" That is a reversal of what the religious person expects from God. We are summoned to share in God's sufferings at the hands of a godless world. We must therefore really live in the godless world, without attempting to gloss over or explain its ungodliness in some religious way or other. We must live a "secular" life, and thereby share in God's sufferings. We may live a "secular" life (as one who has been freed from false religious obligations and inhibitions). To be a Christian does not mean to be religious in a particular way, to make something of oneself (a sinner, a penitent, or a saint) on the basis of some method or other, but to be a person – not a type of person, but the person that Christ creates in us. It is not the religious act that makes the Christian, but participation in the sufferings of God in the secular life. That is metanoia (Greek meaning: changing one's mind): not in the first place thinking about one's own needs, problems, sins, and fears, but allowing oneself to be caught up into the way of Jesus Christ, into the messianic event.

- From *A Testament to Freedom 508-509* by Dietrich Bonhoeffer