

Have you ever spent the night worrying about the next day, and not be able to relax and sleep because your heart was pounding so much? Fifty or so years ago, I suffered from this so much that I swore to myself that I would never get in front of a crowd to speak ever again! But here I am, for better or worse!

We often concentrate on Christ's anxiety of the night before His arrest. He spent that night praying, being "sorrowful, even unto death"¹. He had some angel help, and He tried to engage His friends in His struggle, but He endured the pain of it for long hours. There was no sleep for Jesus during this dark night, and He had experienced a very long day prior to that.

But when the time came for the confrontation with those who wanted to eliminate him, He was ready to go! Hear His emphatic words:

Enough! Look, the hour has come, and the Son of Man is delivered into the hands of sinners. Rise! Let us go! Here comes my betrayer!²"

Like David, Christ ran to the battle line³. Christ apparently "lost" the battle with Satan and died, but ultimately won the victory through His resurrection and the power of His love for us. We celebrate this great victory in this communion⁴.

Included in the prayer for the bread: consider the effects on the body prior to the crucifixion, especially pain and sweat; also the effect on Jesus' body during the night and day of His preparation and trial.

Included in the prayer for the blood: consider the loss of blood prior to the crucifixion. He sweated like blood during His prayers, He bled over a long period of time throughout the day after His scourging; but the pouring out came after death when they pierced his side with a spear.

1. Matthew 26:38, KJV
2. Matthew 26:46, NIV
3. 1 Sam 17:48
4. "Just as the destruction of the temple seemed like the darkest moment for God's people, so did the death of God's Son. ... The darkness of the crucifixion, though, would soon give way to the light of the resurrection. What seemed like defeat would ultimately be victory." Landon Dowden