

Jesus Prays at Gethsemane

Teacher Pep Talk: One of the most poignant and powerful stories in the Bible is the story of Jesus in the Garden of Gethsemane. It is there that Jesus prayed on the night before His death, asking His Father, "...if it is possible, may this cup be taken from me." However, Jesus finished His prayer with these words, "...yet not as I will, but as you will."

Jesus went through untold agony in the Garden, even to the point of sweating blood. But despite this He stayed true to the Father's will. It was important that the Savior (Jesus) be a willing sacrifice. It would not have been alright for God the Father to have somehow forced His Son, Jesus, to die on the cross. But Jesus, though He in His humanity dreaded all that it meant to die on the cross, was willing to do what His Father asked, even if it meant His death.

When Peter fought back as Jesus was arrested, Jesus stopped him and asked *"Do you think I cannot call on my Father, and he will at once put at my disposal more than twelve legions of angels? But how then would the Scriptures be fulfilled that say it must happen in this way?"* (Matthew 26:53-54)

Jesus was not forced to die on the cross. As He told Peter, He could have called on His Father and received the immediate help of more than 12 legions of angels (more than enough!) But He wanted to do the Father's will, to fulfill the scriptures, and to set mankind free from sin and death.

Jesus went to the cross willingly for you and for me.

You will need: A copy of the Activity Sheet for each child, and colored pencils or crayons

Major Points: Jesus prayed on the Mount of Olives at a place called Gethsemane
Jesus said "Father, if you are willing, take this cup from me;"
Then Jesus said, "...yet not my will, but yours be done."
Jesus went to the cross willingly for you and me.
Jesus is alive now forever!

Scripture Ref: Luke 22:39-46

Memory Verse: Luke 22:42 *"... not my will, but yours be done."*

Lesson:

Jesus prayed at a place called Gethsemane

- How many of you pray? (*Wait for responses.*) Good! I'm glad that you pray!
- When do you pray? (*Wait for responses; some may have been given already.*)
- We often pray together before we eat, or just before bedtime. We pray together at church or even in Sunday School!
- Did you know that Jesus prayed? He did. He prayed a lot. The Bible talks about Him praying at night, early in the morning, in front of big groups, with His Disciples, and even all by Himself. He always prayed to His Father in Heaven (God the Father.)
- The Bible also tells us that He prayed on the night before His death on the cross.
- On that night He prayed on the Mount of Olives at a place called Gethsemane.

Jesus said “Father, if you are willing, take this cup from me;”

- Jesus knew He was about to go to His death.
- He prayed “Father, if you are willing, take this cup from me;”
- Cup, what cup? What cup is Jesus talking about?
- He is talking about His upcoming death
- Jesus did not look forward to dying on the cross. He asked His Father, if He was willing, to take this cup from Him, or to let Him not have to die on the cross, if it was in God's will.

Then Jesus said, “...yet not my will, but yours be done.”

- What does it mean to be willing? What if I ask you “who will eat this ice cream cone for me?” I imagine that some of you would be willing to eat some ice cream for me.
- Or what if I asked “Who will go with me to the zoo?” I imagine that some of you might be willing to go to the zoo with me.
- When you say you **WILL** do something that means that you are **WILLING** to do it. It means that you choose to do it.
- It can work the other way too. What if I asked, “Who will take out the garbage for me?” Maybe not as many people would be willing to do that.
- Or what if I asked “Who will work hard in my yard for me every day for a week?” Probably not many people would be willing to do that... even if I paid them! ☺
- But what if I asked the almost impossible. What if I asked, “Who will die for me?” Then almost everyone's hand goes down. Only very few people would be willing to die for me.
- Jesus said “...not my will, but yours be done.” Jesus chose to do His Father's will!

Jesus went to the cross willingly for you and me.

- Jesus went to the cross willingly.
- Nobody made Him go!
- He chose to lay down His life for His friends (you and me!)

Jesus is alive now forever!

- But the Good News is that Jesus is NOT dead now!
- On the third day, God raised Jesus from the dead!
- Now Jesus lives forever!
- Because of what Jesus did, we can live forever with Him too!

Let's pray together and thank Him that Jesus His Son was willing to do His Father's will!

Prayer: Dear God,
Thank you that Jesus was willing to do Your will!
Thank you that He died on the cross for us!
Thank you that now Jesus is alive forever!
Amen!

Suggested Activities:

Olive Branch Coloring Page

Distribute a copy of the attached Gethsemane Activity Sheet to each child. Allow the children to color the olive branch pictured, with leaves and two olives. Encourage them to draw a picture of Jesus praying to His Father on the Mount of Olives.

While they are drawing, you may want to read them this short story. (It's true.)

"The lady who drew this picture of the olive branch, (although she admits that she is not much of an artist) has actually been to the Mount of Olives and seen the olive trees, which are still there. It is a lonely and quiet place, full of sunshine and wind during the day. It is actually a nice high hill and from the top of it you can see all around for miles. The City of Jerusalem sits right across from it, on another hill, and you can easily see it.

The Olive trees there are very old. Their bark is coarse and hard and it is almost shiny it is so gray. Their leaves are long and skinny, and grayish-green in color. The olives on the trees are green when they are new and purplish-black when they are ripe.

The lady wants you to know that when she was a little girl it was hard for her to imagine that the places in the Bible were real places that you could actually go to and visit. They seemed so very far away and so very long ago. But when she got bigger God allowed her to go to the Mount of Olives and see the place called Gethsemane. While she was there, she remembered how Jesus had been right there too (and she cried a little.) She drew this picture for you so you could know that the places in the Bible are really there."

An Olive Branch



Suggested Activities (continued):

The Lord's Prayer

In this activity the children will learn the meaning of the first part of the Lord's Prayer.

Say this to the children:

In Gethsemane, Jesus prayed "...yet not my will, but yours be done." We have talked a lot today about what "will" means. Let's learn part of a prayer that Jesus taught His Disciples when they asked Him "How should we pray?" Do you think Jesus did the things He taught His disciples when He prayed? Did He choose the Father's will? (Yes)

The Lord's Prayer (or Part of the Prayer Jesus taught His Disciples)

*Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name.
Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven.
(Matthew 6:9-10 KJV)*

NOTE: Depending on the age of the children in your group, go through the following explanations with them. Do at least "**Thy will be done**" and "**In earth, as it is in heaven.**"

Our Father

- means that we are talking to God the Father

Which art in heaven

- means that God the Father is in heaven

Hallowed be thy name

- Means that we set God's name is very special to us and we praise Him

Thy Kingdom come

- means that we want God to bring His Kingdom here now and later (when Jesus returns to earth again)

Thy will be done

- means that we want God's will to be done in all things
- even if it might not be exactly the same as our will
 - Just like Jesus prayed "...not my will, but yours be done."

In earth, as it is in heaven

- means that we want God's will to be done here on the earth
- just like it already is done up in heaven

Have older children memorize some of the words, or copy them down on paper.