

# The Garden of Gethsemane

## Matthew 26:36-46

*“Then He said to them, “My soul is swallowed up in sorrow —to the point of death. Remain here and stay awake with Me.” Going a little farther, He fell facedown and prayed, “My Father! If it is possible, let this cup pass from Me. Yet not as I will, but as You will.”” - Matt. 26:38-39*

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**Main Point:** The beginning of Jesus’ road to the resurrection took place in the Garden of Gethsemane. It is in the Garden where we see Jesus’ emotions surrounding his ultimate mission and the resolve he displayed in completing it.

**Introduction:** Use the following questions to introduce the topic of discussion -

*What family traditions do you have on Easter? What is your favorite part and why?*

*What is one of the most difficult decisions you have ever had to make? What priorities or factors did you consider most heavily as you made your decision?*

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Jesus knew the time had come for his mission on earth to be complete. This meant suffering one of the most agonizing deaths and before that, being beaten within an inch of his life. But it was a decision he could have abstained from. After all, he is the Son of God and had the power to do so. It is this framework from which we see His emotions and the intensity with which He struggled in doing the Father’s will. But in the Garden of Gethsemane Jesus resolved to bring the peace and perfection of the Garden of Eden back to mankind through the blood he would shed on the cross.

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1) The first emotion Jesus experienced in the Garden was **AGONY** Read together in **Matt. 26:36-38**.

What “cup” was Jesus referring to in verse 39? (See Jeremiah 25.) What insight does this shed on the Lord’s Supper, which Jesus and His disciples had just left?

Knowing the name Gethsemane means “olive press,” what can we surmise when reading this passage and in **Luke 22:44** about the agony Jesus was enduring?

Where is life pressing down on you right now? Just as Jesus brought his closest friends to support him, who can you call on to support you?

As the road becomes difficult, what is the easy road tempting you away from your calling in Christ? How can you refocus on God’s will instead of yours?

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2) The second emotion Jesus experienced was **INTENSITY**. Read together **Matt. 26:39-44**.

What did Jesus choose to do in this time of enormous pressure? When you're under intense pressure what do you look to for relief?

Why do you think Matthew included the detail that Jesus fell facedown to pray? What does that indicate about the nature of prayer and the inward sentiment of Jesus that night?

When have you prayed with that much intensity in your life? How did it prepare you for the difficult journeys in life?

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3) The final emotion Jesus experienced in the Garden was **RESOLVE**. Read together **Matt. 26:39, 45-46**.

What's the worst thing you ever knew you would have to endure in life? How did you feel leading up to that moment? If you could have backed out, would you?

Jesus was committed to doing God's will and that determination is seen in these verses. Read a couple verses later in **Matt. 26:53**. What does it mean to you that Jesus abandoned his power and chose to continue on the road to the cross?

Read Paul's words in **Philippians 3:12-14**. What is his advice? How can these words help us stay determined when facing disappointment in life or past experiences?

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**Pray:**

*As you close your time in prayer consider the road you are on now. Is it one of disappointment? Pray for God to bring contentment to your life. Is it anger? Ask the Holy Spirit to bring peace to your situation. Maybe you are struggling with unforgiveness. Pray the Lord would give you strength and soften your heart to forgive those who have wronged you. Jesus had the resolve to go the distance for your sake. There may be agony in this life, but pray with intensity and resolve to run the race with endurance!*

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**Connect:**

*Find the movie "The Passion of the Christ" and watch the first scene in the Garden. Let it sink in the depth of pain and conflict Jesus was dealing with when facing the greatest test and temptation of His life. Do you feel the same conflict within you when dealing with sin in your life? Why or why not?*