

Week 6 Participant: The Gardens of God

Session 6: Week of April 13, 2025

The Garden of Prayer – *Matthew 26:36-46*

Brewster Baptist Church

Connecting

Where do you pray most frequently, and why (for example: in a chair, at a table, in your car, on a walk)?

Introduction: Jesus' sorrowful time of prayer, and subsequent betrayal and arrest in Gethsemane, is described in all four Gospels. This heart-rending experience has much to teach us about surrender, prayer, obedience, and grace.

Matthew 26:36-46

36 Then Jesus went with them to a place called Gethsemane; and he said to his disciples, *“Sit here while I go over there and pray.”* 37 He took with him Peter and the two sons of Zebedee, and began to be grieved and agitated. 38 Then he said to them, *“I am deeply grieved, even to death; remain here, and stay awake with me.”* 39 And going a little farther, he threw himself on the ground and prayed, *“My Father, if it is possible, let this cup pass from me; yet not what I want but what you want.”* 40 Then he came to the disciples and found them sleeping; and he said to Peter, *“So, could you not stay awake with me one hour? 41 Stay awake and pray that you may not come into the time of trial; the spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak.”* 42 Again he went away for the second time and prayed, *“My Father, if this cannot pass unless I drink it, your will be done.”* 43 Again he came and found them sleeping, for their eyes were heavy. 44 So leaving them again, he went away and prayed for the third time, saying the same words. 45 Then he came to the disciples and said to them, *“Are you still sleeping and taking your rest? See, the hour is at hand, and the Son of Man is betrayed into the hands of sinners. 46 Get up, let us be going. See, my betrayer is at hand.”*

Questions

- 1. What does Jesus' prayer in Gethsemane teach us about surrendering to God's will, especially in times of personal agony? How can we apply this lesson in our own lives?**
- 2. Why do you think the disciples struggled to stay awake and pray with Jesus? Have you ever felt spiritually "weak" despite having good intentions? How can we overcome such moments?**
- 3. In what ways do the choices made in Eden ("My will be done") and Gethsemane ("Thy will be done") reflect different approaches to temptation and obedience? Which garden resonates more with your current spiritual journey?**
- 4. Jesus prayed fervently three times, seeking strength to face His suffering. How does this passage challenge your perspective on the importance of prayer during trials?**

5. **Jesus chose obedience even when it was costly. Are there areas in your life where you struggle to say, "Not my will, but Yours be done"? What steps can you take to align your will with God's?**

6. **Compare the consequences of Adam and Eve's disobedience in Eden with Jesus' obedience in Gethsemane. How does this contrast encourage us to choose God's will over our own desires?**

7. **Have you ever felt like you let Jesus down, like when the disciples fell asleep? What truths about God's grace help you move forward and learn from such failures?**

Praying for Each Other

Are there any joys to celebrate, any burdens we can share?

Closing Prayer: Dear Heavenly Father, as we reflect on Jesus' prayer in Gethsemane, we are reminded of the importance of surrendering to Your will, even in times of great personal struggle. Help us to trust in Your plan and to say with Jesus, *"Not my will, but Yours be done."* We acknowledge our own weaknesses and failures, like the disciples who fell asleep, and we ask for Your grace to forgive and restore us. May we learn from their mistakes and cultivate spiritual discipline through consistent prayer and study of the Word. As we compare the disobedience in Eden with Jesus' obedience, remind us of the transformative power of choosing Your will. Give us the courage to align our desires with Yours, knowing that Your ways are higher and lead to redemption and eternal life. Thank You for Your unending love and mercy that guides us forward even when we stumble. Amen.