

CALL – Not My Will, But Yours

Text: Luke 22:39–46

Introduction

Good morning Church! Praise the Lord! It is a joy to gather together once again to worship our great God. Today we continue our sermon series "CALL TO ME." Our theme verse for this series is Jeremiah 33:3, where God says, *"Call to Me and I will answer you, and tell you great and mighty things, which you do not know."* Every week, God has been teaching us a different lesson about prayer. In our first message, through the life of Job, we learned that we must continue praying even when life is painful because God hears the cries of His children. Through Jabez, we learned that God delights in blessing those who trust Him and desire to honor His name. Through Moses, we learned that prayer is not only about ourselves but also about standing in the gap for others. Last week, through the Lord's Prayer, Jesus taught us how to pray and what should be our priorities in prayer. Today, we come to one of the most emotional and holy moments in the life of Jesus. We leave the crowds, the miracles, and the teachings, and we enter a quiet garden called Gethsemane. Here we see Jesus praying like never before. This is not a prayer for healing. It is not a prayer for provision. It is not a prayer for a miracle. It is a prayer of complete surrender.

Many believers have one question. If Jesus already knew why He came into this world, why did He pray, "Father, if You are willing, remove this cup from Me"? Was Jesus trying to avoid the cross? Was He afraid? Was He asking the Father to change His plan? These are important questions because they help us understand not only Jesus' prayer but also our own prayers. The answer is that Jesus was not trying to avoid the Father's plan. Throughout His ministry, He had already told His disciples that He would suffer, die, and rise again. As the Son of God, He knew the Father's eternal purpose. But Jesus is also fully man. In Gethsemane, we see His true humanity. He felt the full weight of the suffering that was before Him. More than the physical pain of the cross, He was about to bear the sins of the whole world and drink the cup of God's judgment that belonged to us. Therefore, Jesus prayed honestly before the Father, yet He completely surrendered Himself by saying, "Not My will, but Yours be done." He did not pray because He was uncertain about God's plan. He prayed because prayer is where complete surrender is expressed. Gethsemane teaches us that prayer is not about escaping God's will; it is about embracing God's perfect will.

Every one of us has faced moments when we prayed for God to change our circumstances. We have prayed, "Lord, heal my sickness." "Lord, save my marriage." "Lord, bring my children back." "Lord, remove this problem." Sometimes God answers immediately. Sometimes He asks us to wait. Sometimes His answer is different from what we hoped. What should we do when God's answer is not what we expected? Gethsemane gives us the answer.

The word Gethsemane means "oil press." In Bible times, olives were placed under a heavy press until oil came out. Before Jesus went to the cross, He entered the Garden of Gethsemane. In a beautiful picture, just as olives were pressed to produce oil, Jesus was pressed by deep sorrow before He accomplished our salvation. This reminds us that God often prepares His servants through pressure before He uses them for His greatest purposes. Sometimes we ask God to remove every difficult situation from our lives, but God may use those very situations to shape our character and prepare us for His plan.

As we study this passage today, we will discover something that can completely change our understanding of prayer. Many people think the main purpose of prayer is to change their circumstances. But Jesus shows us that before God changes our circumstances, He often changes our hearts. When Jesus entered the garden, He carried a heavy burden. When He left the garden, the burden of the cross was still there, but His heart was completely surrendered to the Father's will. The cross did not disappear. The suffering did not disappear. Judas still came. The soldiers still came. But Jesus walked out of the garden with peace because prayer had prepared Him to obey the Father's will. Church, that is the power of prayer. Prayer may not always remove our problems immediately, but it always prepares us to walk through them with faith.

Today, let us learn from Jesus what it means to pray when life is difficult. Let us learn what it means to trust God when we do not understand His plan. Let us learn what it means to say the hardest words a Christian can ever pray: "Not my will, but Yours be done."

1. Bring Your Burden to the Father

Luke tells us that after the Last Supper, Jesus went out as usual to the Mount of Olives, and His disciples followed Him. Notice the words "as usual." Prayer was not something Jesus practiced only during emergencies. Prayer was His daily habit. Before the greatest trial of His life, Jesus did what He had always done—He went to pray. This teaches us an important lesson. If we wait until trouble comes before we begin praying, we will struggle. A strong prayer life is built long before the storm arrives. Soldiers do not begin training after the battle starts. Athletes do not begin practicing on the day of the

competition. In the same way, Christians should not wait until life falls apart before seeking God. A daily relationship with God prepares us for the difficult days that will surely come.

Jesus then said to His disciples, "Pray that you may not enter into temptation." Before Jesus prayed for Himself, He thought about His disciples. He knew they were about to face fear, confusion, and temptation. Church, this reminds us that spiritual battles require spiritual preparation. Temptation is not overcome by human strength alone. It is overcome through dependence on God. Jesus understood that prayer is one of God's greatest gifts to help us stand firm. That is why He warned His disciples to pray before the temptation came, not after they had already fallen.

Luke tells us that Jesus withdrew about a stone's throw from them, knelt down, and began to pray. This is one of the few places where we see Jesus kneeling. Throughout Scripture people prayed in different ways—standing, sitting, lifting their hands, even lying face down. Here Jesus kneels, showing His humility before the Father. Although He is the eternal Son of God, He willingly humbles Himself in complete dependence upon the Father. This reminds us that prayer is an act of humility. Every time we pray, we admit that we cannot face life on our own. We need God's wisdom, God's strength, and God's grace.

Now we come to one of the deepest moments in all of Scripture. Jesus prays, "Father, if You are willing, remove this cup from Me." What is the cup? In the Old Testament, the cup often represents God's judgment against sin (Isaiah 51:17; Jeremiah 25:15). Jesus was not afraid of nails, thorns, or physical suffering alone. Thousands of people had died by crucifixion. What made this cup different was that Jesus, the perfectly sinless Son of God, was about to bear the sins of the whole world. Second Corinthians 5:21 says, "He made Him who knew no sin to be sin on our behalf." Jesus was preparing to carry our guilt, our shame, and our punishment. The One who had enjoyed perfect fellowship with the Father from eternity was about to experience the judgment that we deserved. That is the cup He was speaking about.

Notice something very important. Jesus does not pretend that the suffering is easy. He speaks honestly with the Father. He expresses His deepest pain. Church, this teaches us that God never asks us to hide our feelings from Him. Sometimes we think we must come to God pretending everything is fine. But Jesus shows us that real prayer is honest prayer. If your heart is broken, tell Him. If you are afraid, tell Him. If you are confused, tell Him. If you are disappointed, tell Him. God already knows what is in your heart. Prayer is not informing God; it is opening our hearts before our loving Father.

There is another beautiful truth here. Jesus begins His prayer with the word "Father." Even in the darkest moment of His earthly life, Jesus still trusted the Father's love. His

circumstances were painful, but His relationship with the Father remained secure. Church, when suffering comes into our lives, we must never allow our circumstances to change what we know about God. Pain may change our emotions, but it must never change our faith. Even when we do not understand God's plan, we can still trust God's heart because He remains our loving Father.

Application: What burden are you carrying today? Perhaps it is a family problem, a health issue, financial stress, disappointment, or uncertainty about the future. Jesus invites you to bring that burden to the Father. Do not carry it alone. Do not hide it inside your heart. Bring it honestly before God. He is not surprised by your pain. He is not offended by your tears. He is a compassionate Father who listens to His children. The first lesson from Gethsemane is this: God invites us to bring every burden to Him in prayer.

II. Surrender Your Will to the Father

Now we come to one of the greatest verses in the entire Bible. Jesus prayed, **"Father, if You are willing, remove this cup from Me; yet not My will, but Yours be done."** These words reveal the heart of true prayer. Notice carefully that Jesus did not pretend He had no desire. He honestly expressed what was in His heart. He said, "If You are willing, remove this cup from Me." Jesus teaches us that there is nothing wrong with bringing our deepest desires before God. Sometimes people think faith means never expressing our pain or never telling God what we truly feel. But Jesus did exactly that. He opened His heart completely before the Father. This teaches us that God welcomes honest prayers. We do not need to hide our fears, disappointments, or struggles from Him because He already knows them. The Father is never surprised by our tears. He invites us to come just as we are.

However, Jesus did not stop there. He continued with the most important words in His prayer: **"Yet not My will, but Yours be done."** This is the highest point of prayer. Prayer is not only presenting our requests before God; prayer is surrendering our lives to God's perfect will. Jesus was not refusing the Father's plan. Neither was He trying to escape His mission. He knew why He came into this world. From the beginning of His ministry, Jesus spoke about the cross. He knew He would die for the sins of the world. But in Gethsemane we see the true humanity of Jesus. He felt the full weight of what was about to happen. He was about to carry the sins of the whole world. He was about to experience the judgment that belonged to us. That burden caused deep sorrow, yet His love for the Father and His love for us remained greater than His desire to avoid suffering. Therefore, He surrendered Himself completely.

Church, these words challenge every one of us because our natural tendency is to pray, "Lord, please do my will." We often come to God with our own plans already prepared. We

tell Him exactly how we want Him to answer. We decide the timing, the method, and the outcome. But Jesus teaches us a different way to pray. He teaches us to place every request into the Father's hands and say, "Lord, I trust Your wisdom more than my understanding." That is genuine faith. Faith is not convincing God to agree with us. Faith is trusting God even when He chooses a different path.

Think about Abraham. God asked him to offer Isaac, the promised son. Abraham did not understand everything, but he trusted God's character. Think about Job. He lost everything, yet he declared, "Though He slay me, yet I will trust Him." Think about Paul. He pleaded three times for God to remove the thorn in his flesh, but God answered differently. Instead of removing the thorn, God gave sufficient grace. Throughout the Bible, we see faithful men and women who learned that God's will is always better than their own plans. Jesus now becomes the perfect example of complete surrender.

One of the greatest struggles for Christians is accepting God's answer when it is different from our expectation. We pray for healing, but sickness remains. We pray for a door to open, but it closes. We pray for restoration, but the waiting continues. During those moments we begin asking questions. "Lord, why are You silent?" "Lord, why didn't You answer?" Gethsemane reminds us that silence does not mean God has abandoned us. The Father answered by accomplishing His greater redemptive purpose. Through the suffering of Jesus came the salvation of the world. Sometimes we only see today's pain, but God already sees tomorrow's victory.

This teaches us an important truth. God is more interested in accomplishing His eternal purpose than simply making our lives comfortable. We often ask God to remove every difficulty, but God may use those very difficulties to shape our character, deepen our faith, and prepare us for greater ministry. If the Father had removed the cup from Jesus, there would have been no cross. Without the cross, there would have been no forgiveness. Without forgiveness, there would have been no salvation. What looked like the darkest moment in history became the greatest demonstration of God's love. Sometimes what we call disappointment becomes God's appointment for something far greater.

Church, notice that Jesus surrendered before the circumstances changed. The soldiers had not yet arrived. Judas had not yet kissed Him. The cross was still ahead. Yet the battle had already been won in prayer. Many victories are won long before we see them with our eyes. They are won when our hearts become fully surrendered to God. The greatest victory in Gethsemane was complete obedience to the Father's will. Before Jesus conquered sin and death on the cross, He perfectly demonstrated obedience in the garden. Every believer must also experience this victory. Before God

changes our circumstances, He often changes our hearts. Before He changes our situation, He teaches us to trust Him completely.

Church, let me ask you a personal question today. Is there something you are holding tightly that God is asking you to surrender? Perhaps it is your plans, your career, your future, your family, your dreams, or your fears. The hardest prayer a Christian will ever pray is not, "Lord, bless me." The hardest prayer is, **"Lord, not my will, but Yours be done."** But it is also the safest prayer because God's will is always wiser than our plans, His timing is always better than our timing, and His love for us is greater than we can ever imagine. When we surrender everything into His hands, we discover that His plans are always perfect.

III. Receive Strength from the Father

Immediately after Jesus surrendered Himself to the Father's will, something wonderful happened. Luke tells us, **"Now an angel from heaven appeared to Him, strengthening Him."** Notice carefully what God did. The Father did not remove the cup. He did not stop the cross. He did not cancel the suffering. Instead, He gave Jesus the strength He needed to continue. This is one of the greatest lessons about prayer. Sometimes God changes our circumstances, but many times He changes us. Sometimes He removes the mountain, but other times He gives us the strength to climb it. Sometimes He calms the storm, but often He calms His child in the middle of the storm.

This same truth appears throughout Scripture. The Apostle Paul prayed three times that his thorn in the flesh would be removed. God answered, **"My grace is sufficient for you, for power is perfected in weakness."** Paul wanted the problem removed, but God gave him greater grace. Jesus prayed for the cup to pass, but the Father gave Him supernatural strength. Church, we often pray, "Lord, take away this burden." Sometimes God's answer is, "My child, I will carry you through it." That answer is not a sign that God has forgotten us. It is evidence that He is walking beside us every step of the journey.

Luke continues by saying that Jesus, **"being in agony, was praying very fervently; and His sweat became like drops of blood falling down upon the ground."** The pressure became greater, but Jesus did not stop praying. Instead, He prayed even more earnestly. The more intense the battle became, the deeper His communion with the Father became. This teaches us that difficult seasons should never drive us away from God. They should drive us closer to Him. Trials are not invitations to stop praying; they are invitations to pray more deeply than ever before.

Dear Church family, because Jesus prayed, surrendered, obeyed, and drank the cup that we deserved, we can now come boldly before the Father. The One who

said, 'Not My will, but Yours be done,' made it possible for us to call God our Father. Gethsemane led to Calvary, Calvary led to the empty tomb, and because Jesus was faithful, we have forgiveness, hope, and eternal life. Therefore, whatever burden you carry today, bring it to the Father with confidence, knowing that His will is always good, His grace is always sufficient, and His love never fails.