

Nevertheless

Matthew 26:36-39 "Then Jesus came with them to a place called Gethsemane, and said to the disciples, "Sit here while I go and pray over there." And He took with Him Peter and the two sons of Zebedee, and He began to be sorrowful and deeply distressed. Then He said to them, "My soul is exceedingly sorrowful, even to death. Stay here and watch with Me." He went a little farther and fell on His face, and prayed, saying, "O My Father, if it is possible, let this cup pass from Me; nevertheless, not as I will, but as You *will*."

I would like to focus on the word "**nevertheless**" that Jesus used during His prayer.

Usually, this word appears between two
opposite and equally valid circumstances.
For instance---a farmer might wake up in the
morning with a sore throat and an aching
head.

Probably he spent too much time out in the
cold, and it finally caught up with him.
The most sensible thing to do would be to
stay in bed, or at least to stay in the
house.

Nevertheless, the cows need to be milked,
and so, out he goes.

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So then, in V 39 we find the Lord Jesus
saying---"**if it is possible, let this cup
pass from Me.**"

Coming from Jesus, this might seem a little
unusual, but, in fact, it really isn't.
When we look at the contents of this *cup*,
which, by the way, all of us have helped

fill, and when we consider Jesus' intrinsic nature, which Hebrews describes as "**holy, harmless**" and "**undefiled,**" such a request would only be normal.

And yet, even in these devastating circumstances, Jesus qualified His request with the words---"**nevertheless, not as I will, but as You will.**"

And by so doing, He set aside His own legitimate desires in favour of His Father's will.

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And this attitude of surrender was ongoing. That night in the garden, when Peter tried to defend Him, Jesus revealed a startling piece of information.

No, Peter.

Jesus doesn't need your help.

*At this very moment, there are **"more than twelve legions of angels"** just waiting to swing into action.*

I can almost see them, with their nerves taut and their swords drawn, waiting for the command that never came.

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And when He was falsely accused before the high priest and Pilate, Jesus spoke not a word in His own defence.

Yes, **"He was oppressed and He was afflicted, Yet He opened not His mouth; He was led as a lamb to the slaughter, And as a sheep before its shearers is silent, So He opened not His mouth."** Isaiah 53:7

And when the chief priests, along with the elders, mocked Him as He hung on the cross, saying---**"He saved others; Himself He cannot save,"** there was no response.

Yes, He had saved others, but He would
steadfastly refuse to save Himself.

Even with the physical agony He was
presently enduring, and the even greater
agony of God's judgment ahead of Him, He
would stay on the cross until His work
was finished.

Salvation was His work.

Not even the smallest part of it could be
entrusted into our feeble hands.

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In Genesis 22, we read about Abraham's
willingness to offer his son as a
sacrifice.

And twice in that chapter, we come across
the words---"**the two of them went
together.**"

And as they walked up the path to the place
of sacrifice, they pictured another
Father and Son.

First of all, we see Isaac, labouring up the mountain with a load of wood on his shoulders.

It had been placed there by his father, and its burden was pressing down upon him even before he reached the place of sacrifice.

What a picture that was of that night in the garden, when **"being in agony,"** Jesus **"prayed more earnestly."**

However, in that prayer, not only do we hear the voice of agony, but also the voice of submission---**"nevertheless, not as I will, but as You will."**

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And as we return to Genesis, and once again behold Abraham walking beside his son, our minds are drawn to the Heavenly Father.

In one hand He carries the fire of His righteous judgment, in the other, the knife that will soon cut off the life of His own dear Son.

And really there's no other way to save sinners.

No, **"the wages of sin is death"** and **"without shedding of blood there is no remission."**

And so, **"the two of them"** draw ever nearer to the place of sacrifice, walking side by side in complete agreement.

Yes, *together*, making their way to the place of the Father's will.