

Praying Like Jesus

(From Our Daily Bread)

Luke 22:39-44 (NLT)

39Then, accompanied by the disciples, Jesus left the upstairs room and went as usual to the Mount of Olives. 40There he told them, "Pray that you will not give in to temptation." 41He walked away, about a stone's throw, and knelt down and prayed, 42"Father, if you are willing, please take this cup of suffering away from me. Yet I want your will to be done, not mine." 43Then an angel from heaven appeared and strengthened him. 44He prayed more fervently, and he was in such agony of spirit that his sweat fell to the ground like great drops of blood.

Every coin has two sides. The front is called “heads” and, from early Roman times, usually depicts a country’s head of state. The back is called “tails,” a term possibly originating from the British ten pence depicting the raised tail of a heraldic lion.

Like a coin, Christ’s prayer in the garden of Gethsemane possesses two sides. In the deepest hours of His life, on the night before He died on a cross, Jesus prayed, “Father, if you are willing, take this cup from me; yet not my will, but yours be done” (Luke 22:42). When Christ says, “take this cup,” that’s the raw honesty of prayer. He reveals His personal desire, “This is what *I* want.”

Then Jesus turns the coin, praying “not my will.” That’s the side of abandon. Abandoning ourselves to God begins when we simply say, “But what do *You* want, God?”

This two-sided prayer is also included in Matthew 26 and Mark 14 and is mentioned in John 18. Jesus prayed both sides of prayer: take this cup (what I want, God), yet not My will (what do You want, God?), pivoting between them.

Two sides of Jesus. Two sides of prayer.

Reflect & Pray

What might we learn if we prayed honestly and with complete abandon, as Jesus did? What situation are you facing right now where you can pray honestly yet with abandon to God?

Father, help me follow the example of Your Son, who spent everything so that I might possess real life that includes experiencing intimate prayer with You.