

EPIC PRAYERS: A 5-WEEK VIRTUAL STUDY

SUMMER

Women's Bible Study

MATTHEW

26:36-46

Lord, Spare Us or Prepare Us

Matthew 26: 31-35

³¹Then Jesus told them,

“This very night you will all fall away on account of me, for it is written:

‘I will strike the shepherd, and the sheep of the flock will be scattered.’

³²But after I have risen, I will go ahead of you into Galilee.”

³³Peter replied, “Even if all fall away on account of you, I never will.”

³⁴“I tell you the truth,” Jesus answered, “This very night, before the rooster crows, you will disown me three times.”

³⁵But Peter declared, “Even if I have to die with you, I will never disown you.” And all the other disciples said the same.

Matthew 26: 36-41

³⁶Then Jesus went with his disciples to a place called Gethsemane, and he said to them, “Sit here while I go over there and pray.” ³⁷He took Peter and the two sons of Zebedee along with him, and he began to be sorrowful and troubled. ³⁸Then he said to them, “My soul is overwhelmed with sorrow to the point of death. Stay here and keep watch with me.”

³⁹Going a little farther, he fell with his face to the ground and prayed, “My Father, if it is possible, may this cup be taken from me. Yet not as I will, but as you will.”

⁴⁰Then he returned to his disciples and found them sleeping. “Could you men not keep watch with me for one hour?” he asked Peter. ⁴¹“Watch and pray so that you will not fall into temptation. The spirit is willing, but the body is weak.”

Matthew 26: 42-46

⁴²He went away a second time and prayed, “My Father, if it is not possible for this cup to be taken away unless I drink it, may your will be done.”

⁴³When he came back, he again found them sleeping, because their eyes were heavy. ⁴⁴So he left them and went away once more and prayed the third time, saying the same thing.

⁴⁵Then he returned to the disciples and said to them, “Are you still sleeping and resting? Look, the hour is near, and the Son of Man is betrayed into the hands of sinners.

⁴⁶Rise, let us go! Here comes my betrayer!”

KEEP WATCH

- Be vigilant
- Be on the alert
- Be aware

GOD'S ATTRIBUTES

- **PERFECTION**
 - Our God is perfect in every way
 - No flaws, no mistakes, no regrets

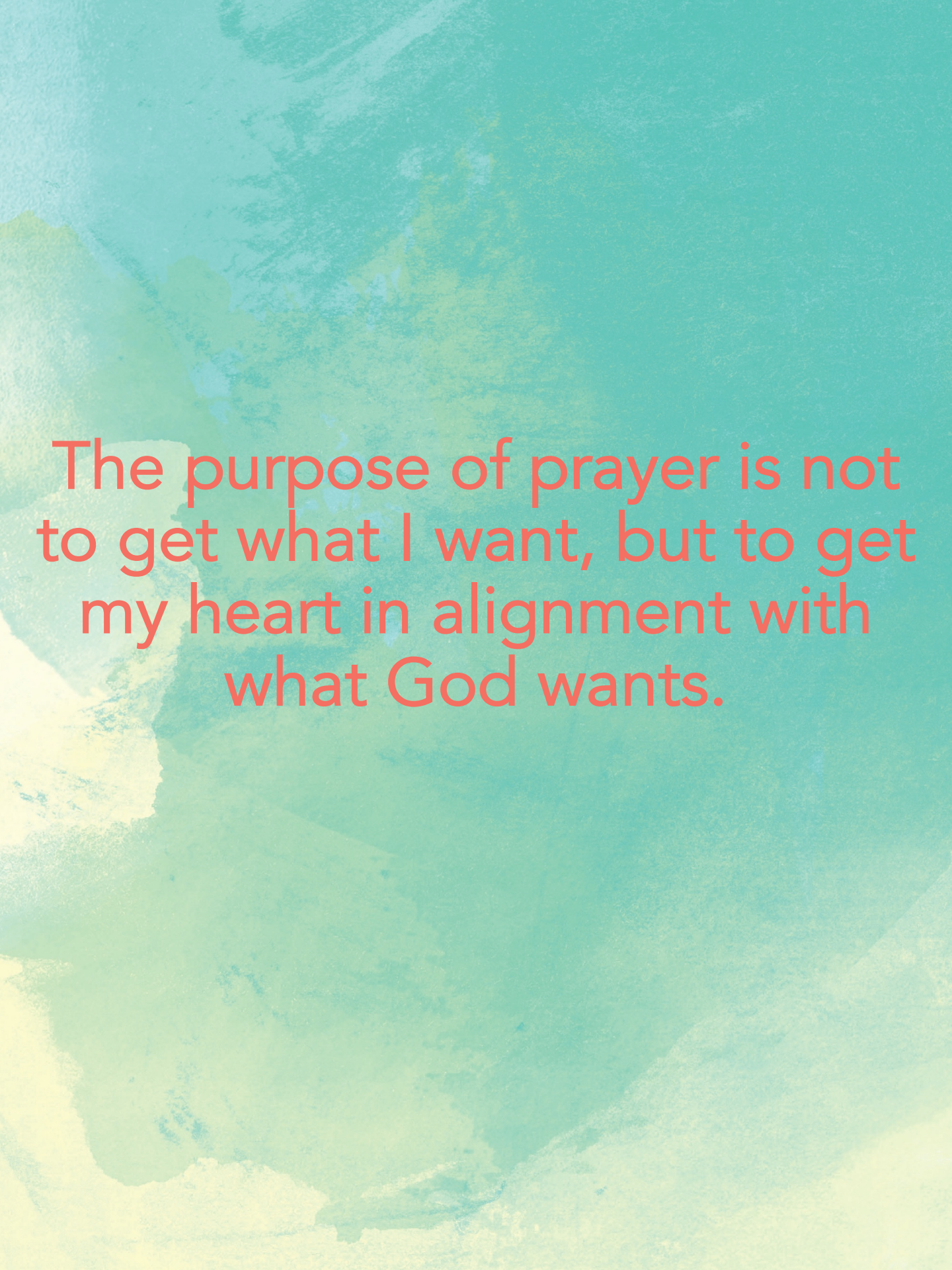
God has a perfect *eternal plan*. There's nothing left out. He will not think of something later that He forgot to include.

Because His plan is perfect, every alteration to the plan will diminish it in some way. It's already perfect! For this reason God says *no* to Jesus when He asks Him to alter His plan.

The Father's eternal plan for Jesus is not just to die on a cross as huge as that is. After the cross, Jesus becomes our *High Priest*, interceding for us and coming to our aid when we're tempted. Jesus understands the temptation to quit. He felt it too.

IF JESUS KNEW THAT HIS FATHER WOULD SAY NO, THEN WHY DID HE BOTHER TO PRAY?

- So that He would not give in to the temptation to quit.
- His prayer did not *spare Him* but it *prepared Him*.
- He kept praying until He found that sweet surrender.



The purpose of prayer is not
to get what I want, but to get
my heart in alignment with
what God wants.

IN THIS STORY WE ARE THE DISCIPLES

- Have you ever failed to pray about something and then fell into temptation?
- Have you had days when you quit on Jesus because you weren't prepared for an opportunity to be His representative?

SPARE US

Sometimes we ask God to spare us from some hardship we're facing. The request is neither sinful nor inappropriate. Jesus modeled the freedom we have to ask for a way out. Sometimes the answer is yes, sometimes no.

PREPARE US

When we pray "Lord spare me this trial", we need to follow up with "if your answer is no, then prepare me to do Your will, and not give in to the temptation to pursue mine".

TYPES OF TEMPTATIONS

- That come with difficult assignments
- To resist God's will instead of surrendering to it
- To let our emotions dictate our attitude and actions
- To detach ourselves from Jesus and His mission

FRIENDS NEEDED

- Jesus included His friends, unfaithful as they were, to watch and pray with Him.
- We need to invite our friends into our trials and temptations and ask them to watch and pray with us.