



Transforming Love

Easter 2025

Devotion 2: The Journey to Transformation: Holy Week

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"...Take This Cup From Me.." (Mark 14:36)

The whole week hinged on this moment. Life is like that sometimes. Hinging on one moment or another.

The final week of Jesus's life was moving in a particular direction. We read in Luke 9:51 that Jesus "set his face toward Jerusalem." There was purpose and determination in his journey, a divine appointment that had been prophesied for centuries. From the moment he entered Jerusalem on what we now call Palm Sunday, the clock was ticking toward this pivotal moment in the Garden of Gethsemane.

Jesus pleaded with the Father. This is why I like Mark's version of this moment. It's straightforward, simple, and direct. In the NIV, it even gets its own sentence! "Take this cup from me."

And then you can almost hear the pause in the text. Just like you are sitting there beside Jesus (unlike Peter, James, and John who were dozing in the corner!). The weight of what was to come pressing down upon his shoulders. The full knowledge of what awaited him—the betrayal, the mockery, the scourging, the crown of thorns, and the cross itself. The cup represented not just physical suffering but bearing the weight of the world. All of it held in the pause.

YET...not my will but yours be done.

In this profound moment of anguish, we witness Jesus's full humanity and divinity intertwined. His humanity recoils from the suffering that he knows awaits, while his divinity remains in perfect submission to God the Father. This tension reveals something beautiful about prayer—in prayer we are allowing our desires to be transformed in God's presence.

Jesus prays for God to transform his will—perhaps the hardest of all of the parts of us to transform. Our wills are the core of who we are, the seat of our decisions and desires. To surrender one's will is the ultimate act of trust and love.

Yet not MY will but YOURS be done.

This prayer becomes the model for all Christian surrender to transformation. Jesus doesn't begrudgingly resign himself to the God the Father's plan; he actively aligns himself with it. The "yet" marks the transition from human desire to divine submission—not as defeat, but as the highest form of trust.

I readily acknowledge that I was a stubborn child—the kind who when they decided they weren't going to walk any further would just stop on the spot and refuse to move. As my parents still remind me, the stubbornness of my own children is merely payback! Many of us carry that same stubbornness into our spiritual lives. We plant our feet and refuse to budge when God calls us to difficult paths or to submit our will to God's transforming work.

But in the garden at Gethsemane, Jesus shows us another way. His surrender didn't diminish him—quite the opposite, in fact. It fulfilled his purpose. His moment of greatest vulnerability became the hinge upon which all of human history would turn.

When we face our own moments of pleading with God —those painful crossroads where our will and God's will seem to diverge—we return to the place of sitting beside Jesus and hear the pause. And in the pause, may we surrender to the transforming work of God in us. Yet not my will, but yours be done. Our whole life might just hinge on it.

1. "The whole week hinged on this moment." What are some "hinge moments" in your own life where everything changed? How did you experience God's presence in those moments?
2. We talk about "the pause" between Jesus's plea and his surrender. Why is this pause significant? What might have been happening in that moment of silence?
3. Can you think of a time when you allowed God to transform your will in ways that you didn't expect? What was the outcome?
4. Conversely, can you think of a time when you chose the stubborn path? Why is surrendering our will so difficult?