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Biblical Stories for Children

Matthew 26:36–56

Jesus Prays in the Garden



Jesus Prays in the Garden

Jesus had an important night ahead of him, and his heart was very heavy. He walked with his twelve closest friends, called disciples, to a quiet garden called Gethsemane. Jesus knew that difficult times were coming, and he needed to pray to God his Father. He told most of his friends to wait nearby while he went to pray with three special disciples: Peter and the two brothers James and John.

As they walked deeper into the garden, Jesus felt so sad and worried that he could barely speak. "My heart is breaking with sadness," he told Peter, James, and John. "Please stay here with me and keep watch while I pray. Don't fall asleep!" Jesus's friends promised they would stay awake and watch with him.

Jesus Prays Three Times

Jesus walked a little farther and fell on his face to pray. "My Father," he said, "if there's any other way, please take this cup of suffering from me. But I want what you want, not what I want." Jesus trusted God completely, even though he was scared.

When Jesus came back, what did he find? His three friends were sleeping! Peter, James, and John had fallen asleep even though they promised to stay awake. "Couldn't you even watch with me for one hour?" Jesus asked Peter gently. "Please stay awake and pray so you won't be tempted to do wrong things. Your hearts want to do right, but your bodies are tired." Have you ever wanted to do something good but felt too sleepy or tired? That's how the disciples felt!

Jesus went away again and prayed the same prayer a second time. When he returned, his friends were still sleeping—their eyes were so very heavy! Jesus went away once more and prayed his third prayer with the same words. When he came back the final time, he said, "Wake up! The time has come. Someone is going to betray me and hand me over to sinners."



The Betrayer Arrives

Suddenly, Judas—one of Jesus's own twelve disciples—arrived with a large crowd carrying swords and clubs. The chief priests and elders had sent them to arrest Jesus. Judas had made a secret plan: "The one I kiss is the man you want," he told them. Judas walked straight to Jesus and said, "Hello, Teacher!" and kissed him as a greeting.

Jesus didn't run away or fight back. "Do what you came to do," he said calmly to Judas.

The soldiers grabbed Jesus and arrested him. One of Jesus's friends got so angry that he pulled out his sword and cut off the servant's ear! But Jesus stopped him immediately. "Put your sword away," Jesus said. "If you live by fighting, you will die by fighting. Don't you know my Father could send me more than twelve armies of angels? But the Scriptures must come true the way God planned."

Jesus looked at the angry crowd with swords and clubs. "Why did you come after me like I'm a dangerous criminal?" he asked. "I was in the temple every day teaching, and you didn't arrest me then. But all of this had to happen so God's promises would come true."

Then all of Jesus's disciples became so frightened that they ran away and left him alone.

Trusting God Even When Scared

- Jesus prayed three times because he trusted God with his worries
- Sometimes doing the right thing feels scary and hard
- God helps us when we pray and ask for strength



Final Question

Would you pray in a difficult moment as Jesus did?



Story Completed! 🎉

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