

PRAYER IN THE LIFE OF JESUS

Text: Luke 11:1

Intro: Jesus was a Man of prayer. Not that He spent a great deal of time arguing its effectiveness. Nor did He spend a great deal of time proving its logic or practicality. Rather, He spent a great deal of time praying. From the beginning of His public ministry to His death, a prayer was frequently on His lips. For the next few minutes, look with me at some of the characteristics of Prayer in the Life of Jesus.

I. HOW DID HE PERCEIVE THE GOD TO WHOM HE PRAYED?

A. He approached and addressed God as Father. Of course, He was the Son of God--God was His Father--in a unique sense. And Jesus never even for a moment lost sight of the personal Father/Son relationship He sustained with the heavenly Father. John 11:41; 17:1; Luke 22:42; 23:46.

B. He also taught His disciples to address God as Father. Model prayer on 2 occasions, Matt. 6:9; Luke 11:2. Our Father/child relationship is not identical with that of Jesus, but it is no less real and no less personal.

II. WHERE DID JESUS PRAY? Everywhere.

- A. To Him, the temple was a house of prayer, Mark 11:17.
- B. In a solitary place, Mark 1:35.
- C. Often in the wilderness, Luke 5:16.
- D. On the mountain where He was transfigured, Luke 9:28.
- E. Beside the Sea of Galilee.
- F. In the upper room.
- G. In the Garden of Gethsemane.
- H. On the cross of Calvary.
- I. Alone.
- J. In the presence of His disciples.
- K. In the midst of the multitudes.
- L. In the presence of His enemies, Luke 23:34.

III. WHEN DID HE PRAY? Constantly. Paul would say He prayed

without ceasing.

- A. Immediately after His baptism, Luke 3:21.
- B. In preparation for appointing the 12 apostles, He prayed all night, Luke 6:12.
- C. At the end of a day filled with preaching and healing and things going right, Matt. 14:23
- D. On a similar occasion. READ MARK 1:32-35.
- E. In the Garden of Gethsemane, while His friends slept their way to doubt and disappointment and despair, Jesus was praying His way to victory.
- F. As He died on the cross, He left this world with a prayer on His lips, LK 23:46.

IV. FOR WHAT AND FOR WHOM DID HE PRAY?

- A. He prayed for Himself. He placed the desires of His heart on the altar of prayer. John 17:1; Luke 22:42.
- B. He taught His disciples to pray for the necessities of life, for help in resisting temptation, for forgiveness of sins.
- C. He prayed for His disciples as a group--and He prayed for them individually, Luke 22:32. And He prayed for us, who believe on Him through what His apostles taught, John 17:20.
- D. He prayed for His enemies--and He taught us to do the same, Matt. 5:44.

V. WHAT IS THE EVIDENCE THAT PRAYER MADE A DIFFERENCE? The evidence is abundant. Hebrews 5:7.

- A. Jesus had given His apostles power over unclean spirits, to cast them out, but in Mark 9:18, they had tried and failed to cast the demon out of a young boy. Where they had failed, Jesus succeeded. When the disciples asked Him why... READ MARK 9:28-29.

- B. If we could have seen Jesus in Gethsemane, face to the ground, sweating and crying in agony as He poured out His heart to God, we might have thought, "If this Man is so shaken when alone with His friends, how complete will be His defeat when His enemies come upon Him. If He is so distraught at the mere prospect of the cross, how crushing will be His defeat when He meets it face to face."

Then in the distance, we hear the tramping of many feet, the sound of many voices. The soldiers and the mob have arrived. A strong voice asks, "Whom do you seek?" "Jesus of Nazareth," is the answer. "I am He," the calm reply. He maintains His composure before the Sanhedrin court, before Pilate, before Herod, before Pilate again. With dignity, He faces the agony and shame and pain of the cross, and at last, He calmly states, "It is finished." For, you see, He was already assured of the victory when He had taken His problem to the throne of God and found grace to help in time of need.

CONCLUSION: Don't short-change yourself by neglecting to pray. If ever there was a Man who would seem not to need to pray, it was Jesus. But obviously, Jesus needed to pray, frequently and fervently. Surely we cannot doubt that we need it more abundantly than He ever did. Don't neglect to pray.

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