

THE UNIVERSITY HEIGHTS MESSENGER

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Praying Like Jesus Prayed

By Donnie Rader

When I think of the prayers that our Lord offered, two passages come to mind: Mark 1:35 and Luke 6:12. The reason being--these two verses are full of practical principles about prayer. **“Now in the morning, having risen a long while before daylight, He went out and departed to a solitary place; and there He prayed”** (Mark 1:35). **“Now it came to pass in those days that He went out to the mountain to pray, and continued all night in prayer to God”** (Luke 6:12).

One’s spiritual life and maturity is measured by his or her praying. Prayer is the “dipstick” to measure the level of our spirituality. When you pull the dipstick out of the engine of your car to check the oil, you will see one of two things. The oil level will be on the full mark or below it. Seldom will you find that you have too much oil. The same is true as we examine our praying. We may find that we are as spiritual and prayerful as we ought to be. It is also possible that we are lacking in prayer do to a lack of spirituality. I doubt that anyone will find that they are overflowing to the point that they need to “drain” a little. Let’s look at our own praying in view of the prayers of Jesus.

Mark tells us that Jesus went to a “solitary place” to pray. Luke tells us that He went to the mountain to pray. Both texts suggest a *quiet* place that was free from distractions where He could concentrate on the words spoken to His Father. He well understood that prayer must be from the heart and not just a recital of words or phrases.

While in a context of showing a contrast between an outward display of prayer and prayer offered in sincerity, Matthew 6:6 may also give us some insight to praying in a place that is conducive for praying. Jesus said, **“But you, when you pray, go into your room, and when you have shut the door, pray to your Father...”**

Prayer was important enough for Jesus to *go to a place* to pray. It wasn’t that He just happened to be in a solitary place or in the mountains when He decided to pray. He went there for the purpose of praying. In a busy, noisy, and crowded place it is easy to let our minds wonder or rush through a prayer. With the TV blaring, the telephone ringing, the doorbell chiming, and the children playing, it is difficult to think about praying.

So where do you pray? Is it the kind of place where Jesus would attempt to talk to His Father? Is it one that is helpful to your praying? Find a place that is solitary and conducive for praying. For one, it may be in the bedroom at night or in the early morning hours. For another, it may be in the shower. For some, it may be in the quietness of the office, and yet another may find somewhere else is best. Wherever it is, prayer is worth finding a place to pray.

We also learn from Jesus that there is a difference in praying as one has the time and in *making time to pray*. There is also a difference in praying because one has the time on his hands

and in *making the time to pray*. Jesus got up early, rising before daylight, just so He could pray. He did this in the midst of a very busy schedule.

Sometimes we are so busy in the morning getting showers, eating breakfast, getting the kids off to school, and getting ourselves to work that little or no time is left to pray. Our days and evenings are packed full of work and family activities. When night comes we fall sleep while trying to pray. Thus, another day passes without praying as we should. Let us understand that prayer is important enough for us to *lose some sleep or get up early to make the time*. Make time in your schedule for prayer when you are most alert and your mind is clear and spend some time talking to your God.

I have wondered about the statement “and continued all night in prayer to God.” Does this mean that Jesus offered one continual prayer or were there several broken up by moments of rest and meditation? Did He ever repeat a thought, thanksgiving, or request or did the night consist of prayer for different things? Any of these possibilities harmonize with the text and however you interpret it, Jesus did a lot of praying. This doesn’t mean that our prayers must be long but it does suggest that we also have a lot to pray about. Truly the list is endless. We enjoy a wealth of spiritual blessings, an abundance of material blessings, friends, brethren, and family. If we were to specify just *some* of these blessings we would be praying a lot and this is just our blessings, not our prayers for aid and for people.

Jesus left an example of prayer to follow (1 Peter 2:21). We should try our best to imitate what we see in Him. Our first efforts may seem a little feeble, much like a first grader trying to make his ABC’s just like the example on the board. Yet, with practice, our own efforts take on a form that looks more like the Master’s.

In Need of Prayers	Information
<p>Jim Edwards is struggling physically and spiritually. Let’s encourage him and let him know that we are here for him.</p> <p>Rob Miller’s mother has recovered well enough to return to work.</p> <p>Michelle Oxendine (friend of Jim Edwards) is dealing with some health problems.</p> <p>David Day and his wife have been deployed to Iraq.</p> <p>After tests performed on the placenta, it has been determined that Carter Knollman <i>does not</i> have melanoma!</p> <p>Remember Ron Catchen, Chuck McDavitt, and David Blakeman.</p>	<p>Rachel Crawford’s aunt, Gail Stein, has been diagnosed with breast cancer. She is going to do chemo and radiation before surgery.</p> <p>Please continue to reach out and pray for Esmeralda Agustin. She has ceased attending completely and has expressed satisfaction with the way things stand in her life. A soul is at stake.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">University Height Church of Christ 445 Columbia Avenue Lexington, Ky 40508 859-255-6257 www.uheightschurch.com</p>