

Prayer Time

“And it came to pass in those days, that he went out into a mountain to pray, and continued all night in prayer to God” (Luke 6:12).

Jesus’s time was limited; He had a full docket and sleep was precious (Matthew 8:24). Consider the press of crowds everywhere He went (Mark 2:4; 5:27; Luke 19:3), the demands of His retinue (John 12:21) and the constant challenges He answered (Matthew 12:38; cf. chapter 22); it is surprising that He got anything done. Yet, still... He had time to pray.

How fast-paced our society has become! Immediate information access and instant gratification has produced an impatient society. Juggling life invites skewed priorities and that which demands the greater part of our time are those issues least important to our eternity. How can we unburden ourselves from the constant press of panicked purpose and restructure our life? It must include prayer.

We must take time to pray. The speedy “Thanks-for-the-meat-let’s-eat” prayers do not constitute a quality prayer life. If we are not willing to invest the time in a trade, we will remain an amateur at best or lose the skill-set altogether. We must commit to the time necessary to express and verbalize those things on our heart to a Father with a ready ear. A hurried prayer connotes misplaced priorities.

We must find a place to pray. An often-overlooked factor in Jesus’s prayers, from the Temptation to the Garden of Gethsemane, is the fact that Jesus found a place suited to address His Father. An atmosphere of solitude, silence and sobriety contribute to the clarity of mind necessary to coherently and consistently connect with God. Meditation often accompanied Old Testament prayer and would enhance the depth of our prayers today.

Finally, we must pray to God the Father. Whereas the Spirit helps our infirmities (Romans 8:26) and the Son is Mediator between God and humanity (1 Timothy 2:5), it is God the Father to Whom all prayers should be addressed (Matthew 6:9; Ephesians 3:14). To assume that any approach to God will be pleasing to Him is to miss the majority of Bible teaching. Where God has specified a means of pleasing Him, it is through that means that God will be pleased. Praying to Jesus, the Spirit, Mary, or the “saints” might be fashionable, but it is unacceptable.

In so many areas of our life, we hustle and bustle from one distraction to another forgetting the things that are really important. Talking with God is one of those things that seems to fall by the wayside. It is not until tragedy strikes or danger is eminent that we find our connection with Deity, and then it is a panicked series of requests (sometimes demands) with very little gratitude and even less praise.

This week, take some time off, find a secluded knoll or corner, close out the world, and present yourself humbly before the Father in quiet meditation and prayer. Some of the best moments of your short life will be prayer time.

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