

# Jesus' Strength Through Solitude and Prayer Lesson 5

## Introduction

Jesus' public ministry began with obedience to God in baptism. (Matthew 3:15) At that time, the source of Jesus' strength was revealed. It was when JESUS WAS IN PRAYER that God's voice spoke from heaven and affirmed Him saying, "*You are My Son, whom I love, with You I am well pleased.*" (Luke 3:21, 22) Following His baptism, Jesus was lead by the Spirit (God's Spirit) into the wilderness. The wilderness was an intimidating place where one was completely dependent upon God. Throughout the Bible we find people went into the wilderness for the purpose of meeting with God. For Jesus, it was also a time of testing as Satan tempted Jesus with short cuts to fulfilling God's purpose. Although Jesus was tempted, He did not act on those temptations and sin. (Hebrews 4:15)

## Jesus' Prayer Life

1. What do the following verses reveal about the importance of prayer in Jesus' life?
  - Matthew 14:23:
  - Mark 1:35:
  - Luke 5:16:
2. From those verses, what words would you use to summarize Jesus' prayer life?
3. Early in His ministry Jesus was very popular, drawing huge crowds. He had many followers and many disciples, but God's plan was for Jesus to pour His life into only a few who would carry on His ministry as His apostles (sent ones). How did Jesus make that important decision of which twelve to choose? (Luke 6:12-16)
4. Throughout Jesus' ministry, He performed many miracles that authenticated He was sent from God. One of those miracles was feeding 5,000 men. (That number does not include all the women and children present!) This story is recorded in all the gospels but we will look at the story as recorded in Luke 9:10-17. Using Luke 9:16:
  - When did Jesus pray?

- Why do you think it was important for Jesus to pray publicly?
5. After this miraculous feeding, the people began to say, "Surely this is the Prophet who is to come into the world." (John 6:14)
- What did Jesus understand the crowd intended to do? (John 6:15a)
  - How did Jesus deal with this new temptation? (John 6:15b; Matthew 14:23; Mark 6:45, 46)
6. Eight days later, another event in Jesus' prayer life was highlighted.
- Who was with Jesus at the time? (Luke 9:28a)
  - Where did Jesus take them? (Luke 9:28b)
  - What was the physical condition of Jesus' companions? (Luke 9:32a)
  - What changed that condition? (Luke 9:32b)
  - What was Jesus doing when this event took place? (Luke 9:29)
7. What had been the answer to Jesus' prayer just prior to this event? (Luke 9:18-20)
8. After spending time with Jesus, The Twelve recognized the importance of prayer in His life and ministry. What prompted the disciples to ask Jesus to teach them to pray like He did? (Luke 11:1)

### **Jesus' Teaching on Prayer**

9. What was Jesus' expectation regarding His disciples and prayer? (Luke 11:2a)
10. What radical new way did Jesus say they were to address God? (Luke 11:2b)

11. What was Jesus' first and primary request of God? (Luke 11:2c, Matt. 6:10)
12. Jesus also included personal requests. How would you summarize those requests? (Luke 11:3, 4 and Matthew 6:11-13)

**Reflect**

13. From this lesson, what have you learned about the role and importance of prayer in Jesus' life and ministry?
14. In John 5:16-30, Jesus gave insight into why seeking the Father through prayer was crucial to His life. What stands out to you from John 5:19, 20 and 30?
15. Matthew 6:5, 6 records Jesus' strong warning about attitude when coming before the Father in prayer. Why do you think Jesus' emphasized this?

### **Putting Feet to the Life of Prayer**

This week I would encourage you to begin to exercise and build up your prayer muscles by adding solitude during your time of prayer. Start with five minutes a day and work up to 30 or more, as the Spirit leads you.

#### **Helpful tips:**

- Set a regular time each day, when you are at your best, and put it on your calendar.
- Find a comfortable, quiet location as your "prayer closet." Make sure it is free from distractions.
- Bring your Bible, journal (notebook) and pen.
- Sit quietly, this make take a while for your mind to settle down.
- Read Psalm 46:10, Isaiah 40:31 or other Scripture to help you focus.
- Reflect on the fact that you have been invited to come directly into the presence of the Almighty God and He wants you to call Him, Father!
- As you focus on who God is, and listen for His voice, you will have thoughts pop into your mind. That is what to write in your journal.

Concerns that need to be brought before the Lord.

New insights from the Lord as to who He is and how He works in your life.

A sin that requires you to repent (turn from), confess and act in obedience.

The need for wisdom from the Lord.

The list could go on. But as these thoughts come, don't deny them, rather bring them before the Lord, then wait quietly to hear what He says.

- End by thanking and praising God.

I love that the Bible tells us God's desire is to be in relationship with us. That is a two- way relationship. Life with God is referred to as "walking in faith." To walk with God requires us to slow down, to take time to be alone and talk, listen and grow in our relationship. This can happen only as we spend time "walking" and listening to Him.

It is my prayer that as you add a time of quiet solitude to your prayer life, that your spirit will be refreshed and your strength renewed in the Lord. Marci