

The Prayers of Jesus

Jesus' Early Ministry

Lesson 1

Prayer was an essential part of Jesus' life and ministry. We might even call it His lifeline as He talked with His Father in heaven. His life of prayer was an example to His disciples and the only recorded teaching request they made. They asked Jesus to teach them how to pray like He did. Luke 11:1

Jesus' Ministry – The First Year

As you go through the prayers of Jesus, imagine yourself as one of the twelve observing Jesus and being part of these events. Prayerfully and slowly read the following verses beginning with two accounts of Jesus' baptism.

Luke 3:21-23:

²¹When all the people were being baptized; Jesus was baptized too. And as He was praying, heaven was opened ²² and the Holy Spirit descended on Him in bodily form like a dove. And a voice came from heaven: "You are my Son, whom I love; with you I am well pleased." ²³Now Jesus Himself was about thirty years old when He began His ministry.

Mark 1:9-11

⁹At that time Jesus came from Nazareth in Galilee and was baptized by John in the Jordan. ¹⁰Just as Jesus was coming up out of the water, He saw heaven being torn open and the Spirit descending on Him like a dove. ¹¹And a voice came from heaven: "You are my Son, whom I love; with you I am well pleased."

1. What stood out to you in these verses?

2. What information is given about Jesus when His ministry began?

3. Although Jesus' prayer is not given, how did the Father answer the Son?

Immediately following His baptism, the Holy Spirit led Jesus into the wilderness for 40 days in preparation for His ministry. After His successful time in the wilderness, Jesus returned to Galilee in the strength of the Holy Spirit. As the Father authenticated the Son with signs and wonders, Jesus became well known throughout the surrounding area. (Luke 4:1-14)

The next time Jesus was in prayer is recorded in Luke and Mark. As you slowly read these passages in the context, focus on Jesus' time of prayer.

Luke 4:40-44

⁴⁰At sunset, the people brought to Jesus all who had various kinds of sickness, and laying His hands on each one, He healed them. ⁴¹Moreover, demons came out of many people, shouting, "You are the Son of God!" But He rebuked them and would not allow them to speak, because they knew He was the Messiah. ⁴²At daybreak, Jesus went out to a solitary place. The people were looking for Him and when they came to where He was, they tried to keep Him from leaving them. ⁴³But He said, "I must proclaim the good news of the kingdom of God to the other towns also, because that is why I was sent." ⁴⁴And He kept on preaching in the synagogues of Judea.

Mark 1:35-39

³⁵Very early in the morning, while it was still dark, Jesus got up, left the house, and went off to a solitary place, where He prayed. ³⁶Simon and his companions went to look for Him, ³⁷and when they found Him, they exclaimed: "Everyone is looking for You!" ³⁸Jesus replied, "Let us go somewhere else—to the nearby villages—so I can preach there also. That is why I have come." ³⁹So He traveled throughout Galilee, preaching in their synagogues and driving out demons.

4. What stood out to you in these verses?

5. What priority did Jesus place on prayer?

During the early days of ministry, on one Sabbath, Jesus healed a man with a deformed right hand. This healing “work” done on the Sabbath sent Jesus’ enemies into a wild rage.

Luke 6:11 – 16

¹¹But the Pharisees and the teachers of the law were furious and began to discuss with one another what they might do to Jesus. ¹²One of those days Jesus went out to a mountainside to pray, and spent the night praying to God. ¹³When morning came, He called His disciples to Him and chose twelve of them, whom He also designated apostles: ¹⁴Simon (whom He named Peter), his brother Andrew, James, John, Philip, Bartholomew, ¹⁵Matthew, Thomas, James son of Alphaeus, Simon who was called the Zealot, ¹⁶Judas son of James, and Judas Iscariot, who became a traitor.

6. What stood out to you in these verses?

7. Why do you think Jesus felt the need to seek God in prayer before choosing His disciples?