

**THE PRAYER OF JESUS**  
**Personal Prayer Life**  
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As we began this series on prayer our first three Sunday evenings are going to focus on prayer as first of all exemplified by the Lord, then as taught by the Lord and then as prayed by the Lord. We'll look at the instances in Jesus' life when he is recorded as praying. We will take lessons that are appropriate to our own prayers out of that. Then next Sunday night we will look specifically at the theme of Jesus' teaching on prayers. He had a lot to say about praying. We'll examine his instructions for our prayer life. Then the third night in regard to the Lord's teaching on prayer we will examine his prayers, the prayers which he himself prayed while he was in the flesh.

Tonight we look at the theme, Watching Jesus Pray. There are really two ways of receiving instructions. One is being told and the other is by watching someone else. Here is where modern spiritual teaching so much falls short because we tend to be people who do not live closely connected to one another and a great deal of our learning comes by hearing someone speak.

But we all know the most effective way to learn is by watching an example. We do that as we watch Jesus pray. That's where I begin. It is our goal in life to not simply hear his words but to be an imitator of him. He himself prayed when he was on earth surrounded by the same circumstances and temptations as us and even greater circumstances and temptations. Hebrews 5:7 gives us hint of his prayer life when the writer of Hebrews tells us that during the days of Jesus' life on earth... "He offered up prayers and petitions with loud cries and tears to the one who could save him from death and he was heard because of his reverent submission." Perhaps here the writer of Hebrews is referring to those moments as Christ approached the cross. Certainly we get an idea of the prayer life of the Lord as being very verbal and articulated and even sounding strong emotional cords and was not a quiet mental prayer on these occasions. But it came with a great deal of agony from within him.

Although Jesus loved to pray and prayer must have been as second nature to him as breathing we only have in the gospels two full prayers recorded that he prayed. This may be surprising to us. The two recorded full prayers which he gave are what we call the Lord's Prayer which is actually more accurately called the Disciples' Prayer. And then the high priestly prayer of John 17. A prayer that we will look at on the third night when we examine the subject of prayer.

In addition to these two full prayers we have several fragments of recorded prayers during his 33 years on earth. But if we group together all the recorded prayers of Jesus we can repeat them all inside of ten minutes. Yet we know that he spent whole nights in prayer. So the ten-minute sampling we have of his prayers in the gospels are indeed a fragment of what he himself prayed while on earth. Each of the gospel writers show us moments when Jesus was at prayer. Matthew shows us nine such occasions, Mark eight. Luke shows us thirteen and John five. It's not surprising that Luke would have the most since Luke is also the author of Acts and his concern is to show the church as a worshipping community modeling its Lord in prayer.

All of these total of 35 references in all four of the gospels there are 23 separate occasions which they represent. Since some of the incidents mentioned in Matthew are also repeated in Luke or

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in Mark we take the 35 and some of them are parallel references so they actually boil down to 23 separate occasions in Jesus' life when the curtain is pulled back on his prayer life by the gospel writers. We recognize that there obviously more times than that that Jesus prayed. We only have these 23 occasions however.

I want to walk through them for just a moment because they tell us so much about what he was praying and when he was praying and how he was praying.

The first incidence that is recorded that he prayed is at his baptism. Luke 3:21. The first three gospels all note Jesus' baptism as does the gospel of John but it is only Luke that notes that he was praying when he was baptized. It might surprise us all to note that the gospel writers do not record that Jesus prayed during his temptation. This is not of course to say that he didn't pray in those 40 days. I think it's simply that the gospel writers don't tell us a lot of what the Lord did. John says that if all the things written about him were in a book the world itself couldn't contain. So his prayers in the wilderness are not given to us. We're simply told that in the wilderness he fasted.

But when he has come to his baptism Luke 3:21 says, "When all the people were being baptized Jesus was baptized too. And as he was praying heaven was opened."

We never saw in the flesh Jesus pray. Go with me for a moment to the Jordan river and to Jesus being baptized and of course he was not kneeling on that occasion. He was standing in the water. He is lean and gaunt because he has just spent 40 days fasting. His skin is deeply burned with the Judean sun. The look of a person who is lean and of whom the phrase could be said, "Zeal for thy house has consumed me," because certainly a person whose prevailed in that of fasting has an earnestness to prevail with God. He has come with John to the Jordan to be baptized. When he is baptized it's obvious his focus is on the Father. What in those moments would he have been praying? Would he have been saying things like, "Father, you have been with me always. I thank you for the life you've given me. Now the ministry has begun. With this act I take upon myself the role of being the burden bearer of the world. I begin here to go to the cross. As you have always been with me, Father, be with me now. Thank you for the years in Nazareth. I leave all now. I leave the private world behind. Henceforth I have come to do your will. Father, strengthen me that I might complete the task you have given me on earth."

We don't know if that's what he prayed. But we immediately can enter in and realize that in that moment his focus would have been on pleasing the Father, beginning his ministry, saying thanks to the Father and realizing as well the words of John which are going to echo in his ears, "Behold the lamb of God which takes away the sin of the world." In that baptism he is identifying as the savior for sinners. It had to be a heavy moment as well as a thankful moment in his life. In that key moment he is praying.

The next time we find him praying in the gospels is in Mark 1:35. What I've done is fit all the gospels in chronological order. The Lord is praying after a very busy day. In fact the day had begun with Jesus preaching in the synagogue at Caparneau. In the middle of his sermon a demoniac had cried out and said, "I know who you are. The holy one of God." And Jesus had bid the demon to come out of him and he had come out. Casting the man down on the synagogue floor. Then Jesus had gone home. There Peter's mother in law was ill with a high fever. Jesus healed her and then there gathered about him the whole town and his first mass

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healings began as at sundown they brought to him all manner of people who were sick and also the demon possessed came to him and were continually crying out “I know who you are. The Holy one of God.” It must have been an exhausting day. I can identify with exhausting worship days. Preaching 3 times Sunday morning and once again Sunday evening. Here is Jesus, exhausted after a day of ministry. Yet we find him very early in the morning while it was still dark Jesus got up and left the house and went off to a solitary place where he prayed.

What in those moments do you think he was praying to the Father? Was he saying things like, “The demons know that I am here. The devil knows I am here. He has already spoken against me. But I have power over him. I thank you that you are with me. I thank you that you have called me to heal the sick, to bind up the broken hearted. I thank you that you have called me to bring good news. Keep me Father. Keep those whom you have given me.”

What do you think he was praying as he began his ministry? I think it was a prayer of thanksgiving. I think it was a prayer of recognizing that he had authority over evil spirits. It was a prayer that went out to cement his relationship to the father and replenish his strength. In ministry to others and in the business of a day our strength is depleted. Where did Jesus get his strength and his energy? It came out of those times with the Father, which he could not afford to miss. That’s why he would get up while it was still dark. He needed that uninterrupted place. He needed those moments to gather his strength again so that in the new day when all men are searching for him, as the disciples come to him and he might say, Let us go to the other towns of Galilee and preach the good news of the kingdom there as well. In those hours in the morning before the sun had risen he was found in his place of prayer.

The same thing occurs again the third reference to his prayer life. Luke 5:15-16. He’s been intensely active in going through Galilee and a leper has just come and he has healed him and the man has gone out and spread the news contrary to Jesus’ wishes. Spread the news that Jesus had indeed healed his leprosy. It was a phenomenal healing and Jesus was set about by people from all quarters so the he could no longer even openly enter a town as he did at Capernaum but was out in the country. Luke 5:15-16 says “The news about him spread all the more so that the crowds of people came to hear him and to be healed of their sicknesses. But Jesus often withdrew to lonely places and prayed.” He more he was sought, the more energy flowed out of his life, the more frequently he went to that protected place.

The fourth mention of his prayer life is when he leads the disciples in a prayer. Matthew 6:9-13. This time it is a formal and a public setting with many people in attendance. He is giving the sermon on the mount. In the course of that sermon he teaches them to pray, “Our Father who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name.”

The fifth occasion that he prays is prior to the selection of the twelve to be his apostles. One of those days Jesus went out into the hills to pray and spent the night praying to God.” Luke 6:12. By that time Jesus had already been involved in his ministry for perhaps as much as a year. His ministry in Galilee had taken hold and drawn great crowds. He was followed by many. We know that he had a company of 500. We know that he had a company within that of 120. We know that he had a group of 70. And we know that he chose in this moment after a night in prayer a group of 12.

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What made the final cut? I think Matthew 9:35 tells us why the final cut was made. He told his disciples, "Pray that the Lord of the harvest would send laborers into the harvest." Then he himself went up in the hills and prayed all night to God, Luke 6. I believe that Jesus looked around and found out of the 70 or out of the 120 or out of the 500 those who took his word seriously, who were concerned about the harvest. The need of the kingdom of God will never be a lack of people to come to Christ. It will always be a lack of workers to bring them. The workers that will be the effective workers will be the workers that pray and volunteer through prayer to be used of God. So he spends a night in prayer.

I wonder as he was praying if he didn't think ahead of the tremendous cost that he was asking of these men to follow him. He knew the end from the beginning. Was he already praying that Peter would be faithful to him even unto death? Was he envisioning the work that the Father would do in the disciple's life as he called a fisherman from the shores of Galilee who would die on a cross years later upside down in Rome. Was he thinking that when he called these men to him there would be an enormous cost for them which they themselves were not aware of at the time. Was he praying that the Father would keep them from all harm. Keep them from spiritual danger and would give them victory in adversity. Was he praying for the right choices? How was he praying for Judas? Was he praying that even though Judas had this terrible flaw in his character yet through love he might yet reach him so that he not be the son of perdition. Was he praying for their families? Was he praying for his church? Was he praying in that moment for faith? For faith to believe that although there were only twelve these twelve would be used by the Holy Spirit to change the world.

If I were beginning a mass movement, a church, a religion, I wouldn't have chosen these twelve people to undertake that task. It was a monumental step of faith. He spent that night making sure that he was choosing the right people and praying for them through the long night so that when he called them in the morning he had no doubt but what these were the ones who should be named to be apostles and to follow him most closely.

The sixth occasion which he prays is following reversals. Luke 11:25-26. Corizin, Bethsaida and Capernaum\* where he had done his greatest works of all rejected him. This time for the first time of the six prayers we're told specifically in the gospels a summary of what Jesus prayed. At that time Jesus said, "I praise you Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because you have hidden these things from the wise and the learned and revealed them to little children. Yes, Father, for this was your good pleasure." What Jesus is saying is the people who thought they knew God were to really knowing God and therefore Jesus was thanking the Father that he had not smashed through their own free will but had honored their freedom of choice to reject him since he had come to give an offer freely therefore thank you Father that you have hidden these things from those who would not know. That you would not bend violently their freedom. But thank you that these little ones, these disciples of mine who know so little, thank you that you are revealing these truths to them.

The seventh occasion when Jesus prays is found in a food incident. It's recorded in all the gospels – Mark 6, Luke 9, John 6. I especially read from Matthew 14:19 "Taking the five loaves and the two fish looking up into heaven he gave thanks and broke the loaves." There are several occasions of the 23 times when the gospels notes Jesus praying that he prays in regard to the taking of food. This is where we get our prayer at mealtime. We'll talk a little bit about investing those times with meaning as we pray.

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An eighth time he prays recorded in Mathew 14:23 is amid a time of great demand in his life. After he had dismissed them – the 5000 – he went up into the hills to pray. When evening came he was there alone.” By the time we come to this passage it’s hard to believe just going through a few moments together, Jesus is already two years into his ministry. The moment has just passed of his greatest popularity. The largest crowd that he ever spoke to. 5000 men plus women and children. John 6 tells us that on that occasion the criticism against him rose to a crescendo because he said this is my body and you must eat it and this is my blood and you must drink it and if you do not eat it and you do not drink it you have no part in me. Of course he was speaking about his death. There were those who were following him for the miracles and following him for the teaching but could not understand nor would they accept the role that he was going to play as the lamb of God who took away the sins of the world. So he’s faced on that same day with his greatest triumph and his greatest reversal and pressing ministry. He’s sending the disciples over in a boat and he’s wanting to test them to see if they will be faithful to him in the midst of storm because in a previous storm they had not had faith and now he’s going to let a second storm be visited upon them.

So he’s up in the hills and in Matthew or Luke tells us that he was there until the fourth watch of the night. That is after having fed the crowds he went up in the late afternoon to the hills and he didn’t come walking across the water till between three and six in the morning. Again a long period of time in prayer.

Was he recouping from the hurt of rejection? Have you been rejected in your own life? Do you know the sting of that feeling when people walk away from you? When people that you had hoped to reach are no longer reachable by you. Jesus in those moments had to be again drawing his strength from the Father. He knew what it was like and he was tasting it already in his life what it was to be rejected. What it was to have his best intentions misread and misunderstood and praying for those disciples in their frail little boat who didn’t really yet realize that he was truly the Lord of the storm. Who would not let their frail life be extinguished until that time when in his will their mission on earth would have been accomplished. He had to be praying for himself, for them, for his church which lay exposed to the terrible storms of Galilee that evening.

Then he prays again at another food and feeding incident. The ninth time he prays found also in Matthew 15:36 and Mark 8:6 when he fed the four thousand and again took the loaves, this time 7 loaves and an unspecified number of fish. When he had given thanks he broke them and gave them to his disciples and they in turn to the people.

Then in Luke 9:18 we find a tenth occasion when he prayed. This is prior to a great breakthrough. The breakthrough is that Jesus has now been with his disciples two and a half years. Another six months have gone by and he’s only six months from the cross. He has gone up to the north of Galilee near the Lebanese border to the foot of Mt. Herman. He is ready to ask the disciples, Do you really know now who I am? When you begin to follow me you confessed me as the Christ. Nathaniel, you said I was the Messiah. Andrew you said the same thing. But you had an idea when you said that that I was a political ruler. Now after being with me two and half years you have seen how I am the Messiah but in a far different way than you expected. Are you ready now to confess me? To lay aside your earlier ideas and embrace me who I really am? It was a time of discovery because Jesus going to the cross would be in vain unless his own had

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already begun to embrace him. So Luke 9:18 tells us that while Jesus was praying in private and his disciples were with him he asked them, Who do the crowds say that I am?

Maybe it would be well to look at our own lives and say when we've got an important question to ask in life is that question asked out of a framework of prayer?

Then there is an eleventh occasion for prayer. That is the week after this great breakthrough. That's found again in the gospel of Luke, chapter 9:28-29. "After 8 days that Jesus said this he took Peter and James and John with him and went up onto a mountain to pray. As he was praying the appearance of his face changed and his clothes became bright as a flash of lightning." The only time in the Lord's prayer life when his divinity is showing through and it comes at a time again when he is affirming his mission to be the savior and to go to the cross. Right after that prayer he will begin to talk to Moses and Elijah who appear to him about his exodus which he will accomplish at Jerusalem.

The twelfth time that he prays is after success. It is found in Luke 10:21. The seventy who had been sent out by Jesus return and report with joy that even the demons had been subject to him. At that time Jesus full of joy through the Holy Spirit said "I praise you Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because you have hidden these things from the wise and learned and revealed them to little children. Yes, Father, that was your good pleasure." Here he is once again exuberant in the mission, which the 70 had accomplished and saying thank you, Lord. Thank you with joy that the Father has not violated the free will of human beings but rather let those who would come in enter.

The thirteenth occasion of prayer is Luke 11:1 when we see Jesus praying again as a habit. "One day Jesus was praying in a certain place. When he finished and noticed his disciples being courteous to let him finish, one of his disciples said to him, 'Lord, teach us to pray just as John taught his disciples.'" He had taught them to pray at the beginning of his ministry in Matthew 6. But they evidently had not caught on. So he graciously teaches them the Lord's Prayer a second time, within months of his passion.

Then we have a touching incident of prayer in Matthew 19:13 and Mark 10:16 where he prays for children. A fourteen incidence of prayer. "Then little children were brought to Jesus for him to place his hands on them and pray for them. He took the children in his arms and put his hands on them and blessed them." Now this time he is probably not kneeling but he's sitting and children are coming to him. What must have been going through his mind? I sort of thought it would be something like this: "Father, when this baby grows up it will be a terrible time in this land. The Romans will have come. The siege will have started. It will be a terrible time of desolation. The people from this land will be removed. This child will not grow up to know peace, will not grow up to know a normal lifetime. There will come a day when this child's mother and father will tell him that there was a moment when I the Lord of life laid my hands on him. When the time comes when my people will be scattered to the ends of the world because of the persecution and holocaust coming here would you send him out as a child of mine to bear witness to me in the world?"

I wish we could all enter into the pathos Christ must have felt as he prayed for those children. It seems like such a quick moment. Just laying his hands on children. But there's more to it. He knows that the time of terrible danger and stress and trial is coming. And that while that child

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has grown up in Galilee most likely he will not end his days in Galilee. Most likely he'll be put to death by Romans or be forced into exile in the world and certainly there will come a moment when someone tells him that he has been prayed for by Jesus. Jesus when he is praying for the little children is conscious that now he is praying for people who are the second generation of his followers. They will not be like the moms and dads who have seen him directly with their eyes. But the child will have to depend upon another's word and in a sense we can all place ourselves there. Jesus is praying into the next generation. An example for us to be praying into the next generation.

The fifteenth occasion of his prayer is at a graveside. That specific prayer is told to us in John 11:41-42. "They took away the stone [the stone over Lazarus' tomb]. Then Jesus looked up and said, 'Father, I thank you that you have heard me. I know that you always hear me but I said this for the benefit of the people standing here that they may believe you sent me.'" It's almost like Jesus' private humor with the Father: "I thank you that you hear me. Not that I ever doubted, father. You hear me always. I just said this for the people listening in." He never prays for Lazarus in the grave. In fact Jesus never prays for the sick, although he tells us to pray for the sick. He simply is in such a communion with the Father that he draws his strength there. When the time comes to speak to the sick or to the dead he does it directly and not through the medium of prayer as we use in our own life.

Fifteen prayers that Jesus prays in his earthly ministry. There are yet another eight prayers to be prayed they will all occur in the last week of Jesus' life.

A third of his pray in is reported as from the last week.

There is the prayer of anguish in John 12:27-28. When Andrew and Philip have brought Greeks to Jesus and Jesus is very conscious that the world through them is coming to him but he knows that there is the cross ahead before the world will know. He says, "Now my heart is troubled and what shall I say, 'Father, save me from this hour.' No. It was for this very reason I came to this hour. Father, glorify your name." Jesus in that moment is saying there are two prayers I can pray in life. Father, save me from this hour. Or "Father, glorify thy name."

I submit to you that there are still basically two kinds of praying. Praying where we ask God to change our circumstances and save us from adversity. Or a prayer of humility and dependence where we say "God, what best glorifies your name, give me to that! Let me do that!"

Jesus here demonstrates a prayer that will be repeated on the cross. What we say in our days of crisis is a reflection of what we have said in our days of calm. If in our days of calm we've been praying, Father, glorify your name in our days of great stress we'll have that same consistency in our prayer life as well.

Then there is a seventeenth prayer, a prayer while there were at table. Matthew 26 and also Mark 14 and Luke 22 "While they were eating Jesus took bread gave thanks and broke it." This now is the third time he is seen as giving thanks for food. And giving thanks the first time for the cup. In light of the fact that the bread and the cup represent his death, his giving thanks for it means that he is embracing the suffering and viewing it not as something to be ungrateful for or to resist or to be unsubmitive to but rather he received it with joy and gave thanks.

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There is then an eighteen the occasion of prayer. All this now is occurring in the upper room. He prays for a backsliding disciple – “Simon, Simon. Satan has asked to sift you as wheat. But I have prayed for you Simon that your faith may not fail. And when you have turned back strengthen your brothers.” Luke 22:31-32.

Then in John 14:16-17 he promises his disciples that he will pray for them. We’ve all done this, said to a person, “I’ll pray for you.” Have you ever, like me, said that then forgotten to do it. We know this prayer was prayed by the Lord because it is so tremendously answered as we see in Acts. “I will ask the Father and he will give you another counselor to be with you forever. The Spirit of truth.”

Then there is the longest recorded prayer that Jesus ever prayed. The upper room. The twentieth occasion in the gospels he is seen as praying. It is his high priestly prayer. John 17. We’ll look at this more in detail a couple of Sunday nights from now. But the prayer breaks into three parts. Where he first prays for himself and then for his disciples and then for us who are in this room this evening.

Then we find him going to the Gethsemane and the gospel writers again, Luke 22, Matthew 26, Mark 14 record him as kneeling down and praying. “Father, if you are willing take this cup from me. Yet not my will but yours be done.” An angel from heaven appeared to him and strengthened him and being in anguish he prayed more earnestly and his sweat was like great drops of blood falling to the ground.”

Then he goes to the cross. He is seen the 22<sup>nd</sup> time praying. Out of his seven utterances from the cross three times those utterances are prayers. His beginning word from the cross is prayer “Father, forgive them for they do not know what they are doing.” Luke 23:34. His middle word from the cross, his fourth word is from Psalm 22. “Eloi! Eloi! Lema sabachthani” which he cries with a loud voice, Matthew 27:46 and Mark 15:34. And his final word from the cross, likewise a quotation from Psalm 31:5 – Luke 23:46 records it, “Jesus called out with a loud voice, “Father, into your hands I commit my Spirit.” He had strength to endure the cross for all through his experience on the cross he was praying. His beginning word, his middle word, his ending word.

Then the last prayer we see Jesus praying is again a table prayer, Luke 24:30. The two disciples, who had walked with him on the day of his resurrection on the road of Emmaus, he was at table with them he took bread, gave thanks, broke it and began to give it to them.

Again, here had to be many other occasions when Jesus prayed. But it pleased the Holy Spirit to give us through the gospels only these occasions. What are the lessons therefore we can learn in watching the Lord pray. As we see him pray what are these occasion saying to us?

I phrase them in a series of questions which I ask myself and which I ask you to ask yourself.

One question that immediately surfaces as you go through the prayer life of Jesus, Are we praying in the great high moments of life? Jesus prayed at the high moment of his baptism, at the high moment of his transfiguration, at the high moment of his betrayal, at the high moment of the cross, at the high moment of appearing to disciples after he had walked with them. He prayed in those high moments. Are our great moments in life marked by our prayer to the Lord?

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At our own Christian baptism are we praying? At our graduations from high school or college can we be found praying and thanking the Lord that this marks the completion of one phase of our life and an entering into another. Or is it simply a celebration that involves family and friends and the business of that moment crowds out the experience of concentrated moments alone with the Lord. When we are engaged to be married, are we praying? Are we praying in our marriage? Are we praying at the birth of a child? Are we praying over our employment? At the purchase of something major? At the selection of a home church? At the great intersections of life? Jesus prayed in those moments.

The second question is Do we pray when it is physically inconvenient? I'd suspect that great praying begins when it is physically inconvenient. We never know the true meaning of prayer if we pray only when it is comfortable for us to pray or easy on our schedule. If you look at the Lord's prayer life and the consistent references to it, you will find him arising at dark, praying all night, praying into the night. He seems to be most at prayer when he's the most busy. When the schedule of life has surrounded him. In those times when he could find no stretch of prayer to be uninterrupted in the daytime, he made it his business to do without sleep and comfort and go into a quiet place at a time when it was inconvenient. A time out of his schedule when he could be alone. He found what all true prayers always find and that is when you pray when you're tired, when you pray when it is physically inconvenient, when you pray and wonder if I spend this time in prayer I won't have enough energy for the next day, you will find as did Jesus that praying will give you more strength than sleeping. So Jesus would arise and pray.

A third question which we face as we look at the prayer life of the Lord. Do we often withdraw to pray? Jesus used times of withdrawal to pray. He used times when he was least likely to be interrupted.

A fourth question, Can we be found praying in the draining and the stressful seasons of life? He was praying after a difficult day, Mark 1:35. He was praying after days of exhaustion in ministry, Luke 5:5-16. He was praying after intensive activity. He was praying in sorrow and in pain at Gethsemane and Calvary. Those draining and stressful seasons where it would be more convenient to simply go to sleep or rest or turn on a television, retreat into some mental fantasy, Jesus could be found praying. His strength is owed to praying in those seasons of life.

A fifth question, Are we intensely praying prior to making major decisions? Before the Lord called the twelve he spent the night in prayer. Our decisions will be greatly shaped by intensive praying. Before we make those decisions, lest having made we realize we made them carelessly and rushed into them foolishly.

A sixth question rising out of the Lord's prayer life is, Do our common table prayers give thanks to God? In the four occasions in the gospels where Jesus is seen at table and praying, he never blesses food. I've always blessed food. What Jesus did rather than blessing bread he blessed God. He gave thanks to God.

The seventh question, Are we praying for others? Jesus prayed for children. He prayed for his disciples to receive the disciples. He prayed that his disciples' faith fail not. What children do we know that we are to be praying for? What disciples do we know that really need the ministry of the Holy Spirit in their life? Whose faith is being severely tested and we need to stand with

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them in intercessory prayer in the time when everything in their life is being shaken. Are we praying for others?

Then an eighth, Do we employ the psalms in our prayers? The psalms were really Jesus' prayer book. We as Pentecostals are used to free form praying. We don't think we ought to read a read prayer or pray somebody else's prayer. Just pray and let the Holy Spirit come upon us either in English or in another language and pray free form. The psalms are a prayer book for us and they're designed that we might have psalms to fit the seasons of life. And that the psalms might strengthen us and show us how to pray as we pray them. I think it could be taken for granted that Jesus knowing the scripture as he did know all the psalms and knew how to use them. When he appeared to the disciples he explained how all the scriptures – the law, the prophets, the prophets of things concerning himself. We know from the cross when he had some moments when he was focusing on the psalms and the psalms helped him to pray as he was on the cross. The psalms gave him nourishment in his soul as he suffered on the cross.

Know the psalter. They will be great strength in moments of life. Great psalms to give us hope in all the seasons of life.

One last thing we need to notice about the prayer life of Jesus is Are we committed to pray over the long haul? Jesus never took a vacation from prayer. He never took early retirement. His ministry begins with prayer and his earthly physical life closes with prayer on the cross.

Christ tells us our prayer life is to be right to the end. Death is frightening for many people. It need not be a frightening thing for the child of God. We know what happens to us when we die we can even take our dying breath praying for others and committing ourselves and them to the care of God. Jesus prayed to the end. He never gave up praying.

Lord, teach us to pray as you have prayed. Teach us to pray always and not to faint. Teach us to pray in the difficult seasons of life. Teach us to pray in the great decisions of life. Teach us to pray in the greatest moments of life. Teach us to pray in the commonness and ordinariness of everyday life. Teach us to pray when we are pressed. Teach us to pray when it is difficult for us to pray. Teach us to pray when we are tired. Teach us to pray when it is inconvenient. Teach us to pray so that in every moment of our waking and of our lying down we may be conscious of your presence and wrapped in your love and kept in relationship with you. Give us power in prayer.

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