

## Lord, Teach Us to Pray

As we look to 2024, I feel compelled to call us to consider the spiritual discipline of prayer. Let's think about the prayer life of Jesus and see how that prayer pattern should shape our own.

### Opening Illustration

Love Letters—a love letter communicates hopes, dreams, they communicate a desire to be with the one we love. Prayer, in a sense, is us communicating our desire to be in the presence of the Father.

Luk 11:1 (ESV) Now Jesus was praying in a certain place, and when he finished, one of his disciples said to him, "Lord, teach us to pray, as John taught his disciples."

### Group 1 (Jesus' Pattern)

- Mrk 1:35 (ESV) And rising very early in the morning, while it was still dark, he departed and went out to a desolate place, and there he prayed.
- Luk 6:12-13 (ESV) In these days he went out to the mountain to pray, and all night he continued in prayer to God. [13] And when day came, he called his disciples and chose from them twelve, whom he named apostles:
- Luk 5:16 (ESV) But he would withdraw to desolate places and pray. (**NASB often**)
- Mat 14:22-23 (ESV) Immediately he made the disciples get into the boat and go before him to the other side, while he dismissed the crowds. [23] And after he had dismissed the crowds, he went up on the mountain by himself to pray. When evening came, he was there alone...
- This is an incredibly difficult and painful day in the life of Jesus. He has just received word that his cousin, John, has been beheaded by Herod. His goal was to get alone and it is implied from the wording that all he wanted to do was to be alone with his Father and have a conversation with him. Instead the crowd followed him, so he taught them, healed the sick, then fed 5,000 men, not counting women and children. Finally, at the end of the long day he sent the crowds and the disciples away and he went up on a mountain top to cry out to his Father. Scripture tells us it's not till the fourth watch of the night (3 AM to 6 AM) that he went out to the disciples, walking on the Sea of Galilee.

- **Mt. 26; Mk. 14; Lk. 22—describe the prayers of Jesus in the Garden of Gethsemane. Jesus spent time praying in three separate periods that the Father would remove the cup of suffering he was about to endure and bring salvation through other means, but ultimately Jesus desired to submit to the Father’s will. Jesus was in great anguish and sorrow. He prayed in such earnestness and intensity that Luke described sweat drops of blood coming from the face of Christ (hematidrosis).**
- **Next to the cross, this is probably the most gut-wrenching scene in the life of Jesus. The anguish and intensity with which he pours out his heart in the Garden of Gethsemane. In this prayer, we see the perfect submission and obedience of Jesus to the Father. This is one of the most important goals of prayer—how do we align the humanity of our heart with the purposes of our loving Father?**
- Heb 5:7 (ESV) In the days of his flesh, **Jesus offered up prayers and supplications, with loud cries and tears**, to him who was able to save him from death, and he was heard because of his reverence.
- **Psa 105:4 (ESV) Seek the LORD and his strength; seek his presence continually!**
- **This is the prayer pattern of Jesus—Long prayers, short prayers, prayer for himself, other believers, and the lost. Prayer for loved ones and prayer for enemies. Praying in silence and out loud. Praying with others and praying alone. Prayer for the sick. Prayer for food. Prayer for wisdom and protection and provision. Praying continuously. Pursuing the presence of the Lord through prayer. Pursuing his peace and his power. Pursuing God’s will and not his own.**

## **Group 2 (Jesus The Priest)**

- Heb 7:25 (ESV) Consequently, he is able to save to the uttermost those who draw near to God through him, **since he always lives to make intercession for them.**
- Rom 8:34 (ESV) Who is to condemn? Christ Jesus is the one who died—more than that, who was raised—**who is at the right hand of God, who indeed is interceding for us.**
- Isa 53:12 (ESV) Therefore I will divide him a portion with the many, and he shall divide the spoil with the strong, because he poured out his soul to death and was numbered with the transgressors; **yet he bore the sin of many, and makes intercession for the transgressors.**

- Luk 23:34 (ESV) And Jesus said, “**Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do.**” And they cast lots to divide his garments.
- 1Jn 2:1 (ESV) My little children, I am writing these things to you so that you may not sin. But if anyone does sin, **we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous.**
- **Jesus is alive forever to intervene on our behalf before the Father. The writer of Hebrews describes this as the continual fulfilling of the role of a priest. Jesus is seated at the right hand of God pleading to the Father for us. Praying for our sanctification. Praying for our help. Praying for God to give us his wisdom. Praying for the Father to give our lives direction. Praying God’s mercy over our sin.**

### **Group 3 (Our Priesthood)**

- 1Pe 2:4-5 (ESV) As you come to him, a living stone rejected by men but in the sight of God chosen and precious, [5] you yourselves like living stones are being built up as a spiritual house, **to be a holy priesthood, to offer spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ.**
- **Jesus is the model of the life we were made to live. And one of the most significant patterns of life that Jesus models for us is the pattern of prayer. In his incarnation, he needed the Father for every move that he made and so what do we see Jesus doing— He is praying.**
- **We are being built up as a spiritual house for a very specific purpose—to be a holy priesthood. We have been sanctified and set apart to go before the Father on behalf of the people around us.**
- **Jesus Christ offered the perfect sacrifice of himself to pay for our sins. So what is the spiritual sacrifice the Lord calls us to make? We can’t atone for anyone, but we can pray for them. We can go before the Father and join together with Jesus in prayer. We can plead the presence and the power of the Father in the lives of those we love and in the lives of those that have wronged us. We can pray for the sanctification of the believer. We can pray for the salvation of the lost. We can earnestly seek God’s face and pray for the provision and protection of the Father.**
- **In the Old Testament, the high priest would go behind the veil of the Holy of Holies, once a year and offer a sacrifice for the people. Jesus, our great High Priest, offered the sacrifice of himself once and for all for our sins, and in doing so, the veil of the temple was torn in two. Now, for us, those of us who**

**are in Christ have been appointed as priests. We have full access to the presence of the Father through the means of prayer. Let us enter the Holy of Holies, not just once a year, but often. Let us come before the Father and join with the Son as we intercede in prayer for the sanctification of the believer and the salvation of the lost. Let us long to be with the Father, to seek his face, to enter into his joy and his peace, to grab a hold of enough of his strength for each day. Let us ask our questions and acquire his wisdom for each and every step of our journey while we await his return. Let us pray in belief, trusting his word. Let us seek the one who moves mountains, who stops the wind and the waves, who feeds thousands with a few loaves of bread, and who raises the dead to life. Let us cry out with earnest prayers for our family and our friends. Let us pray for those that have hurt us and wronged us and let us forgive them, just as Christ prayed for and forgave those who crucified him. Let us pray and persist in prayer until the Lord answers. Let us seek his face continually. Let us pray.**