

An Attempt To Listen To God

Meditations on
When He Prayed

By

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The Holy Spirit desires us to not only take notice that the Lord prayed, but he also wants us to learn from when He prayed. It was Dr. Luke who was given the privilege of recording the written account of the life of Christ the perfect man, and that particular perfection is manifested in His life of dependence on God. Consequently, His prayers are spoken of.

- 1) Dr. Luke will record that:
 - a) When He was being baptized He prayed.
 - i) “Now when all the people were baptized, it came to pass, that Jesus also being baptized, and praying, the heaven was opened.” (Lk. 3:21)
 - ii) How well he knew the solemnity of this occasion, a pledge of loyalty to God. Just as the children of Israel were “all baptized unto Moses” signifying their loyalty ultimately to God, so Christ did the same. (1 Cor. 10:2)
 - iii) How well He knew that which this signified.
 - b) When great conflict was being waged by Satan and thousands were being released, He prayed.
 - i) “And he withdrew himself into the wilderness, and prayed.” (Lk. 5:16)
 - c) Before sending out the disciples he spent the night in prayer
 - i) “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.” (Lk. 6:12)
 - d) Before His first announcement of His impending rejection and death to the disciples, he prayed.
 - i) “And it came to pass, as he was alone praying, his disciples were with him: and he asked them, saying, Whom say the people that I am?” (Lk. 9:18)
 - e) At His transfiguration he prayed.
 - i) “And as he prayed, the fashion of his countenance was altered, and his raiment [was] white [and] glistering.” (Lk. 9:29)
 - f) As a normal way of life he prayed.
 - i) “And it came to pass, that, as he was praying in a certain place, when he ceased, one of his disciples said unto him, Lord, teach us to pray, as John also taught his disciples.” (Lk. 11:1)
 - g) Knowing that which lay ahead of Peter, he prayed
 - i) “But I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not: and when thou art converted, strengthen thy brethren.” (Lk. 22:32)
 - h) In Gethsemane He prayed.
 - i) “And he was withdrawn from them about a stone's cast, and kneeled down, and prayed.” (Lk. 22:41)
 - ii) “And being in an agony he prayed more earnestly: and his sweat was as it were great drops of blood falling down to the ground.” (Lk. 22:44)
 - i) On the cross, He prays.
 - i) “Father forgive them” (Lk. 23:34). He commits the people to God for His blessing on them.
 - ii) “Father into thy hands I commend my spirit” (Lk. 23:46). He commits His spirit to God, for His reception.

He continues this theme in the sequel to his gospel, for in the Acts the apostles were at prayer before Pentecost (Acts 2:1); he informs us of the first recorded prayer of the church (Acts 4:24-30); the opening door to the Gentiles began with prayer (Acts 10:9).

2) The Lord prayed:

a) Before great events in His life:

- i) Before and at His entry into the world. (Heb. 10:5-7)
- ii) Before choosing the twelve disciples we read: He “continued all night in prayer”. (Lk. 6:12-13)
- iii) Before His transfiguration. (Lk. 9:29)
- iv) When He was about to ask the disciples who the people said He was. (Lk. 9:18)
- v) Before instructing the disciples on how to pray. (Lk. 11:1)
- vi) Before walking on the water. (Jn. 6:19)
- vii) Before raising Lazarus. (Jn. 11:41)
- viii) Before feeding the 5000. (Mk. 6:41)
- ix) Before setting out on a missionary trip. (Mk. 1:35)
- x) In the darkness of Gethsemane, when the hour of crisis was approaching (Matt. 26:39-46; Mk. 14:32-42)
- xi) “I sanctify myself.” (Jn. 17:19)
- xii) “Not as I will, but as Thou wilt.” (Matt. 26:39)

b) During the great events in His life:

- i) His baptism. (Lk. 3:21)
- ii) Healing the deaf mute. (Mk. 7:34)
- iii) Before teaching. (Lk. 11:1)
- iv) Before the partaking of food: “Jesus . . . when He had given thanks”. (Jn. 6:11)
- v) After a time of spiritually giving out. (Lk. 5:16) Cp. verse 15
- vi) He was transfigured, “As He prayed”. (Lk. 9:29)
- vii) At the declaring of the cross and suffering’s loomed before him. (Jn. 12:27)
- viii) When surrounded by those who hated Him and mocked Him. (Lk. 23:34; 1 Pet. 2:23)
- ix) God was silent during the hours of His deep aloneness, the hour of His desolation. (Matt. 27:46; Mk. 15:34)

c) After the great events of His life

- i) After the healing of the leprous man and healing many. (Lk. 5:16)
- ii) After the Greeks came to Him. (Jn. 12:20-27)
- iii) After the feeding of the 5000. (Mk. 6:46)
- iv) “My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken me?” (Matt. 27:46)
- v) “Father, into Thy hands I commend my spirit.” (Lk. 23:46)

3) When He prayed relative to time:

a) God causes us to take particular notice of when the Lord prayed, noting that:

- i) He prayed in the early morning:
 1. “In the morning, rising up a great while before day, he went out, and departed into a solitary place, and there prayed.” (Mk. 1:35)
 2. In the scriptures there is the law in which the scripture records a prophecy or experience of an individual, then lifting it to a higher level it can be applied to the Lord. Such are the following:
 - (a) “He wakeneth morning by morning, He wakeneth mine ear to hear”. (Isa. 50:4)
 - (b) “My voice shalt thou hear in the morning, all; in the morning when I direct my prayer onto the and will.” (Psa. 5:3)

- ii) He prayed in the evening. (Matt. 14:23)
 - 1. At even, He departed and prayed. (Paraphrase)
- iii) He prayed all night.
 - 1. "In those days, that He went out into a mountain to pray, and continued all night, in prayer to God" (Lk. 6:12). Note that he did not just stay all night on the mountain, but continued all night in prayer!

One cannot help but wonder what He prayed when being baptized and about to launch into His life's work (Lk. 3:21). This was a very holy moment for when He approached this sacred point in time, He knew it not only had a retrospect aspect, but also a prospect view. It looked back to the Old Testament type of the inauguration of the priest, and looked onward to the work He had before Him of being qualified to be a High Priest, Advocate, and Sacrifice. It looked onward to His baptism of judgment for sin at the cross (Matt. 20:22; Mk. 10:38; Lk. 12:50). Added to this was the opening of Heaven and the Father's statement: "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased" (Matt. 3:17). On His shoulders lay the responsibility for "declaring God" (Jn. 1:18); showing the Father (Jn. 14:9); declaring His name (Jn. 17:26); and offering Himself a sacrifice for sin (Heb. 7:27).

That approaching moment was when He would "announce" to all humanity, the demonic, and angelic world, that His loyalty to God is unreserved. The "war" had begun on Satan's earth, the strong man's house was about to be entered into (Matt. 12:29), and this was the time for prayer.

What a lesson for us to learn. Before any activity or commitment made for God, time spent in prayer and knowing all, depends on His enabling power. The emphasis on the Lord praying is only found in Luke, and he mentions:

- 4) During His sojourn in this vale of tears the references to the Lord praying, or parables having to do with prayer, can be subdivided under five headings:
 - a) His prayers at major junctions in His life:
 - i) When He was being baptised and about to launch into His life's work. (Lk. 3:21)
 - ii) The choice of the twelve. (Lk. 6:12)
 - iii) When He was about to probe the disciples who the people said He was. (Lk. 9:18)
 - iv) His transfiguration. (Lk. 9:29)
 - v) When in the darkness of Gethsemane, when the hour of crisis was approaching. (Matt. 26:39-44)
 - b) His prayers for Himself:
 - i) "Father . . . glorify thy Son". (Jn. 17:1)
 - ii) "Father, glorify Thou me with thine own self with the glory which I had with thee before the world was." (Jn. 17:5)
 - iii) For His resurrection. (Heb. 5:7)
 - c) His prayers of declaration:
 - i) "I have glorified Thee on the earth: I have finished the work which Thou gavest me to do" (Jn. 17:4). *(Paul could say I have run the race, and finished my course, but this is away beyond that. This was not a boasting, but an honest reflection.)*
 - d) His prayers at miracles:
 - i) He prayed before the presentation of food. "Jesus . . . when He had given thanks". (Jn. 6:11)
 - ii) The healing of multitudes. (Mk. 1:35)
 - iii) Healing the deaf mute. (Mk. 7:34)
 - iv) At the raising of Lazarus. (Jn. 11:41)

- e) His teaching of prayer in parables:
 - i) The parable of the importunate friend. (Lk. 11:5-10)
 - ii) The publican and the Pharisee. (Lk. 18:9-14)
 - iii) The requests of the son to the father. (Matt. 7:7-11)
 - iv) The widow and unjust judge. (Lk. 18:1-8)
 - v) On the theme of forgiveness. (Mk. 11:25)

 - f) His prayers in dire situations:
 - i) He prayed when surrounded by those who hated Him. (Lk. 23:34)
 - ii) He prayed when surrounded by mockers: "Who, when he was reviled, reviled not again". (1 Pet. 2:23)
 - iii) When God was silent and He in deep aloneness, in His hour of desolation. (Matt. 27:46; Mk. 15:34)
 - iv) When He was about to enter death. (Lk. 23:46)

 - g) Praying for others:
 - i) The Lord's intercessory prayer over Jerusalem. (Matt. 23:37-39)
 - ii) For those who rejected and crucified Him. (Lk. 23:34)
- 5) His undisclosed prayers:
- a) At His baptism. (Lk. 3:21, 22)
 - b) Praying before His first preaching tour of Galilee. (Mk. 1:35-39)
 - c) Praying after the healing of a leper. (Lk. 5:12-16)
 - d) Praying before choosing the twelve disciples. (Lk. 6:12, 13)
 - e) Praying after being rejected by certain cities in Galilee. (Matt. 11:25)
 - f) Praying as He healed a deaf man. (Mk. 7:32-37)
 - g) Praying before Peter's great confession. (Lk. 9:18; Matt. 16:14-17)
 - h) Praying during His transfiguration. (Lk. 9:28-35)
 - i) Praying after hearing the report of the seventy. (Lk. 10:17-19, 20, 21)
 - j) Praying before teaching the Lord's Prayer. (Lk. 11:1; Matt. 6:9-13)
 - k) Praying over little children. (Mk. 10:13-16)
 - l) Praying in the temple on Palm Sunday. (Jn. 12:20-28)
 - m) Praying in the upper room before His death. (Matt. 26:26-28)

**May God grant us good understanding as He, by His Holy Spirit, deigns to guide us into all truth.
John 16:13**

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