



Our Approach in Prayer

Chapter 5

Lesson 5

Read Mark 1:35 and then Mark 6:46. Reflect on Jesus' pattern of morning and evening prayer. Both these instances were surrounded by great activity. Yet, all the activity did not keep Him from that direct communion with the Father. Jesus was so busy he had to pray!

1. Record your initial thoughts concerning these Scriptures. How is God challenging you in your prayer life? Does your busy schedule keep you from seeking God's presence in time and space?

In *A Basket of Fragments* Robert Murray McCheyne writes:

"I ought to pray before seeing anyone. Often when I sleep long, or meet others early, it is eleven or twelve o'clock before I begin secret prayer. This is a wretched system. It is unscriptural. Christ arose before day and went into a solitary place. David says, 'Early will I seek Thee...Thou shalt hear my voice.' I feel it is far better to begin with God—to see His face first, to get my soul near Him before it is near another."

John Baillie in *A Diary of Private Prayer* prays an evening prayer:

"Almighty God, in this quiet hour I seek communion with Thee. From fret and fever of the day's business, from the world's discordant noises, from the praise and blame of men, from the confused thoughts and vain imaginations of my own heart, I would now turn aside and seek the quietness of Thy presence. All day long I have toiled and striven; but now, in the stillness of heart and the clear light of Thine eternity, I would ponder the pattern my life is weaving."

2. Other saints have followed Jesus' pattern of prayer. How about you? Have you established a pattern of prayer? Do you see any importance in doing so? Why or why not? In your group discuss any patterns that has helped you.

Read chapter five in *Experiencing Prayer with Jesus*, and then consider the following questions.

3. Do people close to you know of your routines in prayer?

4. How would you describe the intensity of your prayer life? What occasions in prayer brings out strong emotions?

5. Do you have companions around you who can help you carry the burdens of your heart to the Lord?

6. When was the last time you quietly entered the presence of God and there came over you such a sense of awe that you could hardly open your mouth?

Beyond the Book:

In this week's reading, the Blackaby's write about "other characteristics" of Jesus' prayer life. They list five: a regular time of prayer, a regular place for prayer, intensity of prayer, the support of others during times of difficulty, and honoring God. Outside of honoring God, while we see Jesus' example, there are no commandments to enforce the others. Why do you think there are no commands corresponding to most of these "other characteristics"?

One variety of legalism in the church occurs when Christians create extra Biblical commands and regard other Christians who do not keep their "level of holiness" with contempt. How could this happen with these "other characteristics"? How can we encourage these "other characteristics" without being legalistic?