

Prayer is one of the most crucial, graceful, life-giving activities that we are allowed to participate in as believers in Jesus. For some, it is done with the same ease as talking with a friend. Some are very comfortable in prayer and petitioning God with their requests. That is not the case for everyone as there are some who struggle with prayer. It does not come as natural or as comfortable to them, and that is okay and not unheard of.

Jesus often taught with questions to allow for the discovery of the answer. He did not spoon-feed the disciples on how to live, instead He would lead with a question to have them discover the answer. Prayer is not one of those things. Jesus directly taught how we should pray and what it should look like when asked by the disciples (Luke 11:1-13, Matthew 6:5-15). This is comforting that they requested this because it relieves the pressure for us to know exactly how to pray on our own. If they had to ask, it is okay for us to ask as well.

I believe that Jesus taught directly on how to pray because He did not want there to be any question on this topic. He wanted people to be clear in how they should pray so that those who followed Him could have access to God in Heaven in that same way that He did.

During this year with all of its chaos and struggle, God has been calling us to prayer. He has been bringing us to our knees in worship of Him, in reverence and fear of Him, in love for Him, and in dependence upon Him. This call to prayer has been seen and accepted by some but not all.

I write to you today petitioning you to increase your prayer life. Jesus is coming soon, and we must be ready. The way to get ready is through prayer which leads to evangelism which leads to revival of the Church and renewal of our city.

Each day that we live should follow the model of Jesus' life as He has called us to follow that way of life. The way of Jesus brings life and salvation. It brings peace and joy. Hope and healing.

"Very 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." Mark 1:35

"But when you pray, go into your room, close the door and pray to your Father, who is unseen. Then your Father, who sees what is done in secret, will reward you." Matthew 6:6

These two verses give us specific instructions on when, where, and how we should pray:

1. We should begin early in the morning before doing anything else.
2. We should go into one of the inner rooms of our house. (Many use a closet or office space where you can close the door and be alone with God.)
3. We should pray in secret. It is not something that we publicize to the world. It is intimate alone time with God. The verses following in Matthew 6 and Luke 11 mentioned above are the prayer that Jesus taught us to pray. This prayer was specific and focused. It gave a specific formula for prayer. If we would follow this formula, we would see our prayer life increase drastically.

I recently came across this wheel of prayer. It gives specific areas and ways to pray for 1 hour following the same model that Jesus gave. I want to encourage and challenge you to try this wheel of prayer early in the morning before doing anything else for just one week. It will take discipline and sacrifice but you can do it! I have found the easiest way to do it is to cut off the TV and cellphone one hour earlier the night before so it is easier to wake up earlier.

If you will do this for one week, I promise you it will change your life! I promise you that you will begin to encounter Jesus in new ways.

If you plan to accept this challenge, reach out and let me know. I will be praying for you as you do. And I would love to hear the testimony following your one week! And I would wager that you will continue doing it beyond the one week!

May God add His blessings,  
Amen

Josh Echols

