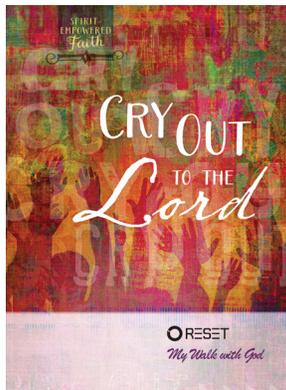




Teach Us to Pray

This article is from *Cry Out to the Lord*. It is an excerpt from *The Praying Church Handbook, Volume 2* by **Mark Williams**, Senior Pastor of North Cleveland Church of God.



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Prayer is our simple but amazing privilege to communicate with the Lord, experiencing unhindered intimacy and fellowship with Him. Through prayer, we boldly go into the throne room of the Almighty, the very dwelling place of the Most High. God loves our prayers—He loves to hear us talk to Him, and He loves to show Himself mighty in answering what we ask of Him. In fact, the book of Revelation tells us that our prayers are like sweet perfume to the Lord—the fragrance of our worshipful hearts sweetens the presence of God (see Revelation 5:8). How amazing would it be and how pleased would God be if every Christ-follower became a person of intimate prayer?

REMEMBER

The one quality that seems to most characterize the life of Jesus Christ and makes the deepest impact upon His disciples was His prayer life. Jesus Christ was a man of prayer. Sure, He raised the dead. Sure, He brought sight to the blind. Sure, He made the lame to walk and the blind to see—but none of this was accomplished without prayer. Prayer was the driving force of His ministry. It was the energizing force of His life. Prayer was the passion of His very existence. When He walked into the temple and found those who were buying and selling oxen, sheep, and doves, and others who were making merchandise of the gospel, He became enraged and overthrew the tables of the money changers and the seats of them that sold doves, took a chord and drove them out of the temple, and said, *“It is written, ‘My house shall be called the house of prayer; but ye have made it a den of thieves’”* (Matthew 21:13).





He believed in prayer so strongly that He *“spoke a parable unto them to this end, that men ought always to pray, and not to faint”* (Luke 18:1).

Jesus practiced what He preached. Time and again the Scripture reveals Jesus making prayer a priority. At all times, and in all ways, Jesus prayed. Jesus prayed for Himself. Jesus prayed for His disciples! Jesus prayed for all who would believe on Him! Jesus prayed frequently! Jesus prayed faithfully! Jesus prayed fervently! Jesus prayed fruitfully!

Most importantly, right now, Jesus is praying for you! He is the great High Priest, and He ever lives to make intercession for us!



- L1. Practicing thanksgiving in all things

PRAY and Experience Scripture

“Give thanks to the Lord and proclaim his greatness”
(1 Chronicles 16:8).

Jesus was a model for us because He prayed for specific people. In fact, when Jesus told Peter that he was going to experience persecution, Jesus actually told him that he made the Savior’s prayer list. Luke reminds us, *“Jesus said to Peter, ‘But I have prayed for you’”* (Luke 22:32). What’s more amazing is that Christ doesn’t just pray for Peter or for people who lived in the first century; He prays for you too. Isn’t it amazing to know that we have a historical Jesus, but we also have a contemporary Jesus? This is why the writer of Hebrews says that He is the *“same yesterday, today, and forever”* (Hebrews 13:8).

Pause quietly to picture Jesus bowed in prayer. When Christ finishes His prayer, He lifts His head and says the same to you: *“Dear one, I have prayed for you.”* He then begins to tell you about the prayers of protection that He is praying for your life, the prayers of provision and the divine intervention He has asked for on your behalf. Jesus explains all that He is sharing with the Father because He deeply cares for you. Now respond to Him in gratitude. Give Him thanks and declare His greatness.

*Thank You, Lord, for being a present-tense, right-now Jesus. I’m grateful that You are praying for me because_____ .
You are great because_____ .*



Secondly, for prayer to be effective, Jesus says that we must remember that prayer is based on relationship. That intimate union between a believer and his Lord, whereby we see God, not as some sovereign dictator of heaven that is void of love and compassion, not as the *unmoved mover*, but we come to understand that God is, *"Our Father which art in heaven."* We must come to recognize that God is transcendent, but He is also immanent. He is the high and lofty One who inhabits eternity, but He is also a very present help in the time of need. Jesus, the One who prays for us, is both fully God and fully human. We have the opportunity to relate to someone who is as real and human as our next door neighbor and, at the same time, a sovereign and omnipotent King. Just as scripture notes, Abraham was a "friend of God," we can rejoice that we also are a friend of God. He reveals Himself to you and involves you in prayerful intimacy!



L8. Disciplined, bold, and believing prayer

[Click here for the entire article](#)

LEARN and Encounter Jesus

Reflect on Christ's final moments in the garden of Gethsemane. The divinity of our Savior knew His sacrifice was going to be offered for our redemption. However, at the same time, the humanity of our Savior knew the pain He faced at Calvary would be unlike any pain He had ever known. Out of that mixture of emotion, Jesus asked His disciples for support: "[Jesus] told them, *'My soul is crushed with grief to the point of death. Stay here and keep watch with me'*" (Matthew 26:38).

Remarkably, at the saddest hour of Christ's earthly ministry, the time when the disciples were supposed to be awake and supportive of Jesus' upcoming sufferings, the disciples fell asleep. Even after Jesus repeatedly pled for them to join Him in prayer, His closest friends failed to pray. Remember Christ's pain-filled words at this point: *"My soul is crushed with grief to the point of death. Stay here and keep watch with me.... Couldn't you watch with me even one hour?"* (Matthew 26:38, 40).

Reflect on this scene for a moment. How might you have responded to Jesus' request to watch with Him? Is there something within you that longs to make up for what the disciples missed? Listen as the Holy Spirit speaks these same words to your heart: *"Can you come pray with Me for just one hour?"*

Respond to Jesus now.

As I sense Your invitation for me to join You in prayer, my heart is moved to _____.

