

COMMUNICATION: Knocking on Heaven's Door

Lesson for Sunday, March 8, 2026

INTRODUCTION:

- ⇒ We are learning what it means to be a disciple. Last week we discussed the need for spiritual discipline (spiritual sweat) if we are going to become a disciple.
- ⇒ We identified six basic disciplines that will lead us to godliness. Can you remember any of them?
 - Communicate, Learn, Obey, Store, Evangelize, Renew (*list on the board*)
 - The first letters spell out: CLOSER.
 - Today we will look at Communicate – the discipline of prayer.
- ⇒ What do you think of this quote? (*Have it already on the board.*) “You can do more than pray after you have prayed; but you can never do more than pray until you have prayed.”

BIBLE STUDY:

1. A **Man** of Prayer (Luke 11:1)
 - a. It's interesting that the disciples came to Jesus and asked, "Lord, teach us to pray." Nowhere in the Bible did they ever say, "Lord, teach us to preach or teach or heal."
 - b. Jesus was a marvelous preacher, a tremendous teacher, and He was indeed the great physician. But it was the prayer life of the Lord Jesus that captured the attention of the disciples.
 - c. With Jesus, prayer was not a nicety, it was a **necessity**. With Jesus, prayer was not merely an opportunity, it was an **obligation**.
 - d. Think about it! Jesus was the perfect Son of God, the perfect God-Man. He had a ministry of three years. How much do you think Jesus accomplished apart from prayer in those three years? Jesus tells us in John 5:19.
 - i. The answer is nothing. Jesus said, "I can do nothing apart from the Father."
 - ii. Consider John 14:10. Jesus did absolutely nothing apart from the anointing, the leadership, the power that comes by answered prayer.
 - iii. Jesus' life was a life that prayed constantly and continuously.
 - e. It was His **business** to pray. More than 40 times Scripture tells us that Jesus prayed.
 - i. Martin Luther said, "As it is the business of tailors to make clothes, and as it is the business of cobblers to mend shoes, it is the business of Christians to pray."
 - ii. Hooker, the Puritan said, "Prayer is my chief work, and it is the means by which I do the rest of my work."
 - f. When you study the prayer life of Jesus, you become convinced that there is absolutely no **substitute** for prayer: not energy, not enthusiasm, not intellect, not eloquence, not organization. No substitute for prayer.
2. The Prayer Life of Jesus
 - a. There are three simple things we want to recognize about the prayer life of Jesus.
 - b. First, Jesus's ministry **commenced** with prayer (Luke 3:21).
 - i. This was the inauguration of the public ministry of our Lord.
 - ii. At His baptism, Jesus was anointed with the Holy Spirit. The anointing is a special touch for a specific task. Read the text and emphasize “and praying.” That touch comes because the Bible says that Jesus was praying!
 - iii. Why would we attempt to step out to do anything that we don't begin with prayer? It's foolish to try to do God's work apart from prayer.
 - c. Second, Jesus's ministry **counted** on prayer.
 - i. Jesus found **direction** in prayer.
 1. Read Mark 1:34-38. Jesus is ministering everywhere. He is teaching, healing, casting out demons, etc.

2. Notice, Jesus has had a tremendous day! The next morning, He gets up early to be with His Father. Peter finds Him and says to Him, "Come on! Let's get to work! Here's the crowd! Everything's ready!"
3. Jesus said, "No. We're leaving here. We're going to another town. I'm on schedule. I have a job to do."
4. Jesus knew how to get a sense of direction from God. Jesus refused to be manipulated by men.
5. Jesus knew God had a plan for Him and He got direction from God. Jesus refused to be intimidated by the tyranny of the urgent!
- ii. Jesus found answers to **decisions** He needed to make.
 1. Read Luke 6:12-13. Jesus was facing a great decision – the choosing of the twelve disciples. And so, the Lord Jesus goes to a mountain to pray.
 2. You should never make a great decision that you don't first soak that decision in prayer and let the Lord lead you! In the time of decision, we need to pray!
- d. Third, Jesus prayed when He needed **consolation**.
 - i. Matthew 26:36-37 – point out the last phrase of verse 37.
 - ii. This is Dark Gethsemane. This is before the cross. This is when Jesus' heart was about to break. He was so sorrowful that He was at the point of death. That means He was in a state of discouragement, disconsolation, akin to despair and depression.
 - iii. As Jesus prayed, His will was surrendered to God's will (see vs. 39 & 42).
 - iv. And the victory was won! Jesus made it through Dark Gethsemane! Jesus made it to Calvary and through the empty tomb and up to glory!
 - v. We may be tempted to think, "Well, that was Jesus! He had to go to Calvary!" So do we! Jesus said, "Take up your cross!"
 - vi. If you've not had a dark night of the soul, you'll have one. Remember this: You'll never survive your Calvary unless you have a Gethsemane. You must have a time where you say, "Not my will, but Thine be done."
 - vii. In a time of deep sorrow, Jesus knew how to pray.

APPLICATION:

- ⇒ Jesus lived His life by prayer; and if He did, don't you think we ought to? That's the lesson.
- ⇒ Jesus lived His life by prayer, and if the very Son of God, Who was the perfect God and perfect man, if He had to pray, do I think that I can live my life without prayer?
- ⇒ Discuss: What keeps us from praying? What are the challenges? Are we willing to ask the Lord, "Teach me to pray?"
- ⇒ Disciples are praying people. Paul wrote in 1 Thessalonians 5:17 that we are to "pray without ceasing."
 - The fruit-bearing disciple is in constant contact with their Heavenly Father and Lord.
- ⇒ What do you need to do this week that would improve your prayer life?