

WEDNESDAY The Secret of Jesus’ Ministry

Mark 1:35–39 ⁵Now in the morning, having **risen a long while before daylight**, He went out and departed to a solitary place; and there He prayed.

- Surely He had been exhausted by events of healing after the Sabbath late into night
- Possibly slept just a few hours = then arose “long while before daylight” = still dark = to go seek face-to-face talk w/His Father
- “got up / “went out” / “departed” = Didn’t hit snooze button
 - verb tense = completed action
- Focus of passage = praying = verb “to pray” in imperfect tense – continuous / ongoing action
- He **was** praying and **kept on** praying = extensive time of prayer
- Jesus often withdrew from others = to pray earnestly in private
- No secret = His success in ministry = came from communicating w/Heavenly Father /relying on power of Holy Spirit
- Said He came to do the Father’s will = seeking the Father’s will in prayer
- Humbled Himself to be made in our likeness
- Laid down His independent authority to totally yield to Holy Spirit’s leading—**only doing** what Father showed Him (John 5:19) only speaking what the Father told Him to say (John 12:49–50).
- Jesus = person of prayer = thanksgiving/praise / prayers when troubled / intercessory prayers for others

Mark 1:36–37 ³⁶And Simon and those who were with Him searched for Him [Greek = eagerly looking for Him]. ³⁷When they found Him, they said to Him, “Everyone is looking for You.”

- Expressing idea “everyone was looking for Him” suggests they wanted Him to capitalize on events of prior evening
 - follow up w/more healing/teaching

Mark 1:38–39 ³⁸But He said to them, “Let us go into the next towns, that I may preach there also, because for this purpose I have come forth.” ³⁹And He was preaching in their synagogues throughout all Galilee, and casting out demons.

- Jesus was clear about His purpose = didn’t get sidetracked from His primary mission
- Sometimes we can busy ourselves doing good works
 - while missing greater work
- Jesus clarified His mission to His disciples

Throughout the Gospels, we meet Jesus as a man of prayer (*see Matt. 14:23, Mark 6:46, John 17*). This appears to be one of the key secrets in the power of Jesus’ ministry.

Luke 6:12 ¹²Now it came to pass in those days that He went out to the mountain to pray, and **continued all night** in prayer to God.

- Jesus prayed often and long
 - particularly before major events in His ministry
- Context = about to choose 12 apostles from among His disciples
- Much prayer is needed before important decisions

If Jesus Himself needed to spend so much time in prayer, what about ourselves, and how much time should we spend in prayer? What does Jesus’ example say to us?

- How often have we uttered the excuse “too tired” to get up and pray?
- Get alone and pray = turn your phone off = declutter your mind = seek God
- “You will find Me when you seek Me with all your heart”
- When we feel exhausted by our responsibilities = depleted
 - go to God in prayer to get your cup refilled / reinvigorated = re-energized
- Seek Him early = first thing
- **Psalm 63:1** ¹O God, You are my God; Early will I seek You; My soul thirsts for You; My flesh longs for You In a dry and thirsty land Where there is no water.
- Start w/ thanksgiving/praise = enter His gates w/thanksgiving in your heart = Enter His courts w/praise (Psalm 100)
- Down-in-the-mouth attitude = changed thru thanksgiving
- Praise = action that reminds our hearts
 - of God’s goodness/love/power
- Pray of consecration each a.m. –
 - asked to be filled afresh w/Holy Spirit (A/S/K Luke 11:9,13)

Many Christians have set times for prayer. This practice is good and right, but it can also become a routine, almost something done by rote. One way to break out of a set mold is to change the time of prayer occasionally or to pray longer than usual at times. The point is not to lock yourself into some kind of formula that can never change.

- Learn to practice God’s presence = acknowledge Him / talk w/Him as you do daily activities
- Turn radio off = talk w/Him as you drive, etc.
- Communication is the relationship