

Lent 2010

# Praying with Luke's Gospel

WEEK ONE

PRAYING

WHAT IS PRAYER?



# Prayer is:

being attentive to the presence of God

the place where pride is abandoned,  
hope is lifted, and supplication is made.

our conscious relationship with God.

talking and listening to God.

Prayer can be:

spontaneous

formal

meditative

and often difficult





Prayer should be:

personal

# HOW TO PRAY



There is no right or wrong way.

Different opportunities to pray

Different places to pray

Different ways to pray

There is no right or wrong way

# Spontaneous Prayer

In moments of need

When someone springs to mind

A nagging worry or concern

Moments of fear or terror!

O God !

Jesus Christ !





“There is a point where prayer is indistinguishable from blasphemy. There is also a point where blasphemy is indistinguishable from prayer.”

*Wilfred Owen 1883 - 1918*

‘Oh! Jesus Christ! I’m hit,’ he said; and died.  
Whether he vainly cursed or prayed indeed,  
The Bullets chirped - In vain, vain, vain!  
Machine-guns chuckled - Tut-tut! Tut-tut!  
And the Big Gun guffawed.

and at the other extreme....





St Ignatius of Loyola 1491 - 1556

Wrote a work that has become known as:

The Spiritual Exercises of St Ignatius of Loyola.

A programme of intensive prayer, meditation and self examination, designed to take no less than twenty-eight days to complete.



Ignatian-style Retreats are popular:

Retreat Centres

Retreat in daily life

Spiritual Director

Meditative reading of the Gospels

# PRAYERS OF JESUS IN LUKE'S GOSPEL

# In Luke's Gospel

Jesus joins in worship and prayer in the synagogue

Chapter 4 .16, Chapter 4 .33, Chapter 4 .44, Chapter 13 .10

Jesus prays with others at meal time

Chapter 9 .16, Chapter 22 .17 & 19, Chapter 24 .30

However Luke shows us that, on most occasions, Jesus prays alone...



At daybreak he went into a deserted place

Chapter 4 verse 42

Jesus would withdraw to deserted places to pray

Chapter 5 verse 16

He went out to the mountain to pray.

Chapter 6 verse 12

Once, when Jesus was praying alone ...

Chapter 9 verse 18

At night he would go and spend the night  
on the Mount of Olives

Chapter 21 verse 31

*Luke 9 .28*

Jesus took with him Peter and James and John, and went up onto the mountain to pray.



Jesus tells the disciples that prayer shouldn't be showy or self-righteous.

“Beware of the scribes .... for the sake of appearances they say long prayers.”

*Chapter 20 .46 - 47*

The Parable of the Pharisee  
and the Tax Collector

*Chapter 18 .9 - 14*



When Jesus mentions prayer it is:

personal

private

in addition to worship in  
the synagogue and temple

# A COMMON QUESTION

WHY DID JESUS PRAY?



As Christians believe that Jesus is God:

Who does Jesus pray too?

Christians believe in God as:

A Trinity

One God

*but*

Three Persons

The Father

*The Creator, Source of all being and life.*

The Son

*Human and yet Divine*

The Holy Spirit

*The essence and presence of God in his people*



# The Trinity

is the Church's way of trying to understand  
the relationship of  
Jesus to God and God's Spirit

So who does Jesus pray too?

Jesus is fully human and fully divine

In miracles we see his divine nature

In prayer we see his human nature



He often feels as weak and helpless as we do

He has as many questions

He prays like anyone else would

But in a new way

Jesus' prayers are....

personal

intimate

heartfelt

and he addresses God as “Abba”  
the name a child calls a father, literally

Daddy!



Jesus transforms the Fatherhood of God  
from a theological doctrine  
into an intense and intimate experience;  
  
and he teaches his disciples to pray  
with the same family intimacy.

*G.B.Caird in his commentary "St Luke"*

Another frequent question?



DOES GOD  
ANSWER PRAYER?

What do the great  
theologians say?



Dear Lord,  
You have been good to me and I am thankful.

If you freeze everything as it is  
I won't ask for anything more.

If that is OK, please give me absolutely no sign.

(Silence)                      OK, deal.

In gratitude, I present you this offering of  
cookies and milk.

If you want me to eat them for you,  
please give me no sign.

(Silence)                      Thy will be done."

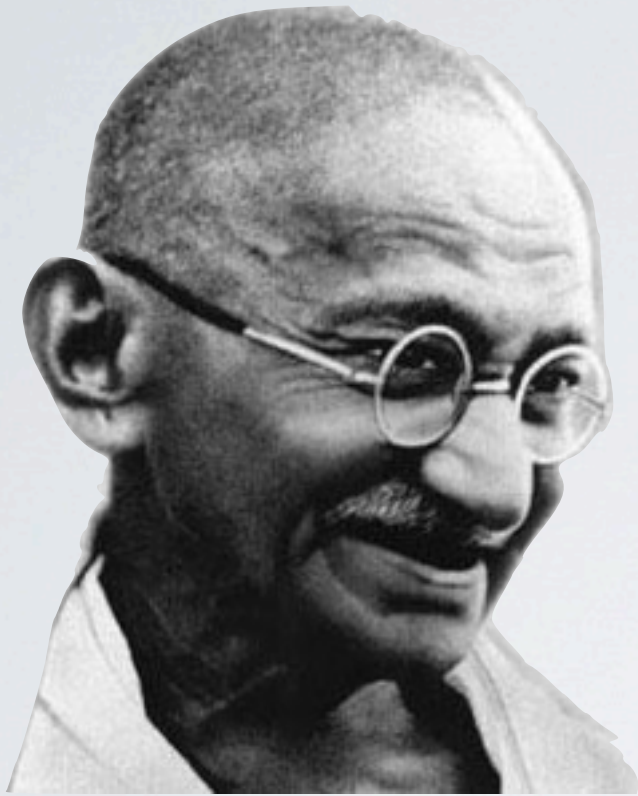




The function of prayer  
is not to influence God,  
but rather to change the nature  
of the one who prays.

*Soren Kierkegaard 1813 - 1855*





Prayer is not asking.  
It is a longing of the soul.  
It is daily admission  
of one's weakness.  
It is better in prayer  
to have a heart without words  
than words without a heart.

*Mahatma Gandhi 1869 - 1948*



Meditation

Ignation Retreat

Arrow Prayers

Rosary Beads

Lighting Candles

Daily Prayer Offices

Grace at Meals

Prayer Plaits

Sensory Prayer

Intercessory Prayer

Lord's Prayer

Prayer Nets

Silent Prayer

Praying in Tongues

Praying to the Saints

Private Prayer

Corporate Prayer

Prayer Groups

Prayer Guides

Prayer Cards



It can all seem overwhelming

HOW CAN WE PRAY?

As Jesus was praying  
in a certain place,  
and after he had finished,  
one of his disciples said to him,  
“Lord, teach us to pray  
as John taught his disciples”

*Luke 11.1*



Jesus said to them,

“When you pray, say:

“Father, hallowed be your name.

Your kingdom come.

Give us each day our daily bread.

And forgive us our sins,

as we also have forgiven everyone

indebted to us.

And do not bring us to the time of trial”.

*Luke 11 .2 - 4*

Next Week:

# The Lord's Prayer

in Luke's Gospel