

Walking in the *Foot Prints* of Jesus

A Discipleship Journey



Discipleship Habit #1: Pray Every Day

Week 12

Grow into Jesus AND Each Other

This weekly material is offered to support our Discipleship Journey as we walk in the foot prints of Jesus.

We encourage you to use this material as a part of your daily prayer practice as follows:

- ❖ Begin with the Opening Prayer.
- ❖ Reflect on Prayer.
- ❖ Pray with Scripture.
- ❖ Pray with Lectio Divina.
- ❖ Close with the Closing Prayer.

Let us pray for each other that we are transformed, as individuals and as community, by this Discipleship Journey.

Opening Prayer

Lord Jesus, we praise You for You are patient! You lovingly wait for us to come to You and long to listen to us. Forgive us for the times in our lives when we have not drawn close to You in prayer. In Your Scripture You tell us, "Have no anxiety at all, but in everything, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, make your requests known to God. Then the peace of God that surpasses all understanding will guard your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus." (Philippians 4:6 - 7) We claim this promise. Thank You for being so available to us. Help us to know that You long to meet with us in prayer.

Lord, teach us how to pray. Give us the desire to get to know You in prayer every day and the discipline to guard our prayer time when busyness tempts us away from You. Jesus, we trust in You. We make this prayer in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

AMEN

Reflection

As turning to Jesus in prayer becomes a habit in your life, you will not only grow in friendship with Him, you will also grow into deeper friendship with His people, both near and far. We grow into Jesus and each other at the same time. But the only way for any of this to start happening is for us to start praying. We need to start making prayer a habit if it isn't already. Like the mustard seed, we need to start small so Jesus can help our prayer grow into something big. So, practice taking at least 10 minutes a day to have a conversation with the Lord. Speak to Him from your heart and listen to Him dwelling in your soul. Foster the habit of personal prayer to encounter Christ!

This month, we explore how Jesus prayed to His Father. He had to find time amidst all the needs of others. He had to find a quiet place, to go away. He had to carve out time for God in both his schedule and in his heart. Jesus faced some of the same challenges in prayer as we do today.

Jesus invites you, here and now, to a life of deeper prayer and a life of deeper discipleship. If you ask, you will receive. If you seek, you will find. If you knock, the door will be opened for you.

What small 10 minute activity can you put aside to make room for your conversation with Jesus each day?

Praying with Scripture

Mark 1:32 - 39

When it was evening, after sunset, they brought to Jesus all who were ill or possessed by demons. The whole town was gathered at the door. He cured many who were sick with various diseases, and He drove out many demons, not permitting them to speak because they knew Him.

Rising very early before dawn, Jesus left and went off to a deserted place, where He prayed. Simon and those who were with Him pursued Him and on finding Him said, "Everyone is looking for You." He told them, "Let us go on to the nearby villages that I may preach there also. For this purpose, have I come." So, He went into their synagogues, preaching and driving out demons throughout the whole of Galilee.

Reflection

At the beginning of this passage, what time is it? Based on the text, what kind of a day has it been for Jesus? How do you think he was feeling at the end of it?

What obstacles did Jesus have to overcome to be able to spend time in prayer? What obstacles in your life make it difficult for you to spend time in prayer?

In this passage, what time did Jesus choose to pray? What time of day works best for you to pray?

In this passage, where did Jesus choose to pray? What physical space or place in your home or community can you go to pray daily? What might you need to do to make that place an easier place for you to pray?

How do you think Jesus is calling you right now through this passage? How are you going to respond?

Praying with Lectio Divina

The Scriptures are God's Word revealed to his people. He continues to speak to us through them today. Learning to listen to God speak through Scripture is like learning any new language. It takes practice.

One way the Church has taught us to listen to God speaking through the Scripture is *Lectio Divina*. Begin by selecting a passage from Sacred Scripture with which you may wish to pray. Some suggestions might be:

John 10:1 – 21: *Jesus is the Good Shepherd, and He knows me by name.*

Luke 5:27 – 32: *Jesus comes to people just like me.*

Luke 15:1-7: *Jesus comes after us, even when we're lost.*

Mark 9:14 – 29: *Sometimes I don't have enough faith; help me have more, O Lord.*

Matthew 14:13 – 21: *Jesus heals and feeds all hungry people.*

Isaiah 43:1 – 7: *You are precious in my eyes, and I love You.*

Lectio Divina can also be used to reflect on a spiritual writing:

The task of taking God to others is not that of handing somebody a Bible or some religious literature, but of transubstantiating God the way we do with the food we eat. We have to digest something and turn it, physically, into the flesh of our own bodies so it becomes part of what we look like. If we would do this with the word of God, others would not have to read the Bible to see what God is like, they would need only to look at our faces and our lives to see God. (*The Holy Longing*, p. 102)

Lectio Divina method:

1. Open in prayer – that the Holy Spirit will be present and speak through the Scripture: *"Holy Spirit, please come and speak to me through this scripture passage. Show me how to pray."*
2. Read the scripture slowly. "Listen" prayerfully in your heart for what word, phrase, or verse "jumps out" at you: *"What word or phrase are you drawing me to?"*
3. Read the scripture a second time and meditate on what this word might mean for your life right now: *"God, what do You want to say to me through this word right now?"*
4. Read the scripture a third time and talk with God about what He wants you to do with or about that word: *"God, what do You want me to do with this?"*
5. Spend some time sitting with God and let that word "sink in." Talk with God about it and perhaps journal about what you think He may want to say to you and what He's calling you to do.
6. Express your gratitude to God for all He did in this time of prayer: *"God, thank You for this time and for what You're showing me. Help me to respond to this word today."*

Closing Prayer

*Show me, O Lord, Your mercy,
and delight my heart with it.
Let me find You whom I so longingly seek.*

*See, here is the man/woman
whom the robbers seized, mishandled,
and left half dead on the road to Jericho.*

*O kindhearted Samaritan come to my aid!
I am the sheep who wandered into the wilderness –
seek after me and bring me home again to Your fold.*

*Do with me what You will,
that I may stay by You all the days of my life
and praise You with all those
who are with You in heaven for all eternity.*

St. Jerome