

7 Key Moments When Jesus Prayed

“They came to a place which was named Gethsemane. And He said to His disciples, ‘Sit here while I pray’” (Mark 14:32).

If your life is marked by prayer, then prayer will be your constant companion in crucial moments. If you’re grateful in ordinary times, you’ll be grateful in times of loss and stress. If you grumble all the time, you won’t react well when you face great adversity.

We find Jesus praying as He enters the most crucial hours of His life. But He didn’t wait until Gethsemane to pray. All through His ministry He prayed. Look at these key moments in His ministry when Jesus prayed:

At His baptism. Luke notes, “ ... when Jesus also had been baptized and was praying, the heavens were opened” (Luke 3:21). Jesus was praying as He began His ministry with His baptism by John. Heaven is likewise open when we pray. The skies aren’t made of brass. Our prayers don’t bounce off the ceiling. When we pray, God listens.

Prior to the selection of the Twelve Disciples. Luke tells us that Jesus spent the night in the hills praying before He selected the disciples in the morning (Luke 6:12). We do well to imitate Jesus when we face key decisions. Do we make such choices with prayer? There has never been an effective servant of Jesus who led a prayerless life.

After rejection. Jesus did mighty works in Korazin, Bethsaida and Capernaum, but was rejected by the people in those towns (Matt. 11:25–26). The rejection had to sting. What did Jesus do? He said, “I thank you, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth” (v. 25).

How do we respond when others turn against us, when a spouse walks out on us, a child rebels or a friend betrays? We must do what Jesus did—repair through prayer. We get refocused when our heart turns toward Him.

Prior to a breakthrough. A turning point came when Jesus asked His disciples, “Who do you say that I am?” That question arose as Jesus finished a time spent in private prayer (Luke 9:18–20). If we want others to come to Jesus, then let us follow His example. People aren’t birthed into the kingdom unless someone prays. Who are you praying for that they, too, will confess Jesus as the Christ?

At a high moment of revelation. The transfiguration of Jesus occurred as a result of Jesus going away with Peter, James and John to a high mountain so they could pray privately (Matt. 17:2; Luke 9:28–29). We can also experience times of great joy and intense exhilaration in prayer, just as the disciples were filled with Spirit and with joy (Acts 2:4, 46).

In others’ moments of need. Mary and Martha were overwhelmed at the death of their brother, Lazarus. Jesus ordered the stone removed from Lazarus’ grave and then prayed (John 11:41–42). In moments of great sorrow, we can affirm our faith by praying as Jesus did, “Father ... I know that you always hear me.”

Now we find Jesus praying in Gethsemane. Escape was possible. It was just a quick walk up the slope of the Mount of Olives and He could have disappeared into the Judean desert. But He stayed and prayed—for us! There are moments when no miracle happens, when we must not run away but must stick to our post of duty. What stabilizes and gives us the fortitude to remain is prayer.

A Prayer: *Lord Jesus, may I follow Your example and pray in the key moments of my life, even as I do day by day. {eo}*

Excerpted from Dr. Wood’s forthcoming book, Fearless: How

Jesus Changes Everything, available in September from Vital Resources. Dr. George O. Wood is the general superintendent of the Assemblies of God. For the original article, visit .