

## Christ the Model: A Praying Man- Gleanings from EGW

Because the life of Jesus was a life of constant trust, sustained by continual communion, His service for heaven was without failure or faltering. Daily beset by temptation, constantly opposed by the leaders of the people, Christ knew that He must strengthen His humanity by prayer. In order to be a blessing to men, He must commune with God, from Him obtaining energy, perseverance, steadfastness. {GW 255.4}

*Note: Continual communion led to constant trust led to perfect service for others.*

*Note: By-products of the time spent in communion with God were energy for the day, perseverance. His Father filled Him with a passion to do His will and the energy to do it no matter what He had to confront that day.*

The Saviour loved the solitude of the mountain in which to hold communion with His Father. Through the day He labored earnestly to save men from destruction. He healed the sick, comforted the mourning, called the dead to life, and brought hope and cheer to the despairing. After His work for the day was finished, He went forth, evening after evening, away from the confusion of the city, and bowed in prayer to His Father. Frequently He continued His petitions through the entire night; but He came from these seasons of communion invigorated and refreshed, braced for duty and for trial. {GW 256.1}

*Note: After spending the entire night in prayer, Christ came out of the experience as if He had just gotten a full nights sleep. He was refreshed and full of passion for His work.*

*Note: The best part of every day for Christ was His alone time with His Father.*

Nothing is more needed in our work than the practical results of communion with God. We should show by our daily lives that we have peace and rest in the Saviour. His peace in the heart will shine forth in the countenance. It will give to the voice a persuasive power. Communion with God will ennoble the character and the life. Men will take knowledge of us, as of the first disciples, that we have been with Jesus. This will impart to the worker a power that nothing else can give. Of this power he must not allow himself to be deprived. {GW 510.1}

We must live a twofold life,--a life of thought and action, of silent prayer and earnest work. The strength received through communion with God, united with earnest effort in training the mind to thoughtfulness and care-taking, prepares one for daily duties, and keeps the spirit in peace under all circumstances, however trying.  
--"Ministry of Healing," page 512.

To the consecrated worker there is wonderful consolation in the knowledge that even Christ during His life on earth sought His Father daily for fresh supplies of needed grace; and from this communion with God He went forth to strengthen and bless others. {GW 510.2}

*Note: Here is the key to Christ's power and passion for others.*

Behold the Son of God bowed in prayer to His Father! Though He is the Son of God, He strengthens His faith by prayer, and by communion with Heaven gathers to Himself power to: (1) resist evil and to (2) minister to the needs of men.

*Note: Christ received power from His Father every morning for 2 purposes: (1) for power to resist evil, and (2) for power to minister to men. I need that same power each day for the same two reasons. If I am going to be Christ's ambassador for the day, only a full measure of the power of His Spirit in me will make it happen.*

As the Elder Brother of our race, He knows the necessities of those who, compassed with infirmity and living in a world of sin and temptation, still desire to serve Him. He knows that the messengers whom He sees fit to send are weak, erring men; but to all who give themselves wholly to His service He promises divine aid. His own example is an assurance that earnest, persevering supplication to God in faith--faith that leads to entire dependence upon God, and unreserved consecration to His work --will avail to bring to men the Holy Spirit's aid in the battle against sin. {GW 511.1}

Every worker who follows the example of Christ will be prepared to receive and use the power that God has promised to His church for the ripening of earth's harvest. Morning by morning, as the heralds of the gospel kneel before the Lord and renew their vows of consecration to Him, He will grant them the presence of His Spirit, with its reviving, sanctifying power.

*Note: Every morning when my devotional time is finished I should leave for work feeling (1) spiritually revived, and (2) sanctified = spiritually cleaned up.*

As they go forth to the day's duties, they have the assurance that the unseen agency of the Holy Spirit enables them to be "laborers together with God." [1 COR. 3:9.]--"The Acts of the Apostles," page 56.

The disciples who were associated with Him in His work, Jesus often released for a season, that they might visit their homes and rest; but in vain were their efforts to draw Him away from His labors. All day He ministered to the throngs that came to Him, and at eventide, or in the early morning, He went away to the sanctuary of the mountains for communion with His Father. {MH 55.1}

*Note: Jesus knew why He was here and what His Father wanted Him to do. He never gave into the temptation to be side-tracked from His mission.*

Often His incessant labor and the conflict with the enmity and false teaching of the rabbis left Him so utterly wearied that His mother and brothers, and even His disciples, feared that His life would be sacrificed. But as He returned from the hours of prayer that closed the toilsome day, they marked the look of peace upon His face, the freshness and life and power that seemed to pervade His whole being. (Note: When Jesus was worn out physically, He always turned to alone time with His Father to be refreshed. This was more important to Him than even sleep.) From hours spent alone with God He came forth, morning by morning, to bring the light of heaven to men. {MH 55.2}

It was just after the return from their first missionary tour that Jesus bade His disciples, Come apart, and rest awhile. The disciples had returned, filled with the joy of their success as heralds of the gospel, when the tidings reached them of the death of John the Baptist at the hand of Herod. It was a bitter sorrow and disappointment. Jesus knew that in leaving the Baptist to die in prison He had severely tested the disciples' faith. With pitying tenderness He looked upon their sorrowful, tear-stained faces. Tears were in His own eyes and voice as He said, "Come ye yourselves apart into a desert place, and rest awhile." Mark 6:31. {MH 56.1}

*Note: Jesus got away every day to spend time with His Father. Now He decides that the group need to get away for a vacation. What did they do while on vacation? They spent the time growing closer to their Father.*

*Note: When we take vacation we often look at it as a time to get away from everything. When Jesus took the disciples on vacation, it was a time to get away from everything except God. That is why they came back from vacation spiritually connected.*

Here they could rest, apart from the confusion of the multitude. Here the disciples could listen to the words of Christ, undisturbed by the retorts and accusations of the Pharisees. Here they hoped to enjoy a short season of fellowship in the society of their Lord. {MH 56.2}

Only a short time did Jesus have alone with His beloved ones, but how precious to them were those few moments. They talked together regarding the work of the gospel and the possibility of making their labor more effective in reaching the people. As Jesus opened to them the treasures of truth, they were vitalized by divine power and inspired with hope and courage {MH 56}

*Note: Their vacation was a spiritual retreat. Time alone with Christ to learn about their mission and how to do it.*

It was in hours of solitary prayer that Jesus in His earth life received wisdom and power. Let the youth follow His example in finding at dawn and twilight a quiet season for communion with their Father in heaven. And throughout the day let them lift up their hearts to God. At every step of our way He says, "I the Lord thy God will hold thy right hand, . . . Fear not; I will help thee." Isaiah 41:13. {Ed 259.

*Note: Prayer time is as important as time to eat each day. I must get to the point that I hunger for prayer as I do food if I miss a meal. This to be my source for wisdom and power as it was for Christ.*

*Note: No where is it recorded that Jesus carried any spiritual books or even the Torah for His daily devotionals. There were no books and personal copies of the Bible (Torah) were not available. As a young boy, Jesus was an ardent student of the scriptures. He had a passion to find out who His Father was and what He was to do for Him. But as a man, Jesus did not have access to daily reading materials. All He had was time alone with His Father to commune, meditate and contemplate. While reading religious authors is ok, it can take the place of me meditating and contemplating. Rather than in-depth communion with God, I satisfy myself with surface thoughts from well-known authors.*

As the human was upon Him, He felt His need of strength from His Father. He had select places of prayer. He loved to hold communion with His Father in the solitude of the mountain. In this exercise His holy, human soul was strengthened for the duties and trials of the day. Our Saviour identifies Himself with our needs and weaknesses, in that He became a suppliant, a nightly petitioner, seeking from His Father fresh supplies of strength, to come forth invigorated and refreshed, braced for duty and trial. He is our example in all things. He is a brother in our infirmities, but not in possessing like passions. As the sinless One, His nature recoiled from evil. He endured struggles and torture of soul in a world of sin. His humanity made prayer a necessity and privilege. He required all the stronger divine support and comfort which His Father was ready to impart to Him, to Him who had, for the benefit of man, left the joys of heaven and chosen His home in a cold and thankless world. Christ found comfort and joy in communion with His Father. Here He could unburden His heart of the sorrows that were crushing Him. He was a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief. {2T 201.2}

Through the day He labored earnestly to do good to others, to save men from destruction. He healed the sick, comforted the mourning, and brought cheerfulness and hope to the despairing. He brought the dead to life. After His work was finished for the day, He went forth, evening after evening, away from the confusion of the city, and His form was bowed in some retired grove in supplication to His Father. At times the bright beams of the moon shone upon His bowed form. And then again the clouds and darkness shut away all light. The dew and frost of night rested upon His head and beard while in the attitude of a suppliant. He frequently continued His petitions through the entire night. He is our example. If we could remember this, and imitate Him, we would be much stronger in God. {2T 202.1}

Man can shape circumstances, but circumstances should not be allowed to shape the man. We should seize upon circumstances as instruments by which to work. We are to master them, but should not permit them to master us. {MH 500.2}

Christ gave no stinted service. He did not measure His work by hours. His time, His heart, His soul and strength, were given to labor for the benefit of humanity. Through weary days He toiled, and through long nights He bent in prayer for grace and endurance

that He might do a larger work. With strong crying and tears He sent His petitions to heaven, that His human nature might be strengthened, that He might be braced to meet the wily foe in all his deceptive workings, and fortified to fulfill His missions of uplifting humanity. To His workers He says, "I have given you an example, that ye should do as I have done." John 13:15. {MH 500.4}

*Note: Christ did not work on an 8 hr a day work schedule. His work was His mission and He continually poured everything into it. The passion for His mission came from spending hours and hours with His Father. For me to have a same passion I must also spend hours a day communing with my Father and follow through on what He places in my heart.*

He was Himself a source of blessing and strength. He commanded even the tempests, and they obeyed Him. He was unsullied with corruption, a stranger to sin; yet He prayed, and that often with strong crying and tears. He prayed for His disciples and for Himself, thus identifying Himself with our needs, our weaknesses, and our failings, which are so common with humanity. He was a mighty petitioner, not possessing the passions of our human, fallen natures, but compassed with like infirmities, tempted in all points even as we are. Jesus endured agony which required help and support from His Father. {2T 508.2}

*Note: "He prayed, and that often with strong crying and tears." Where did Christ get His high level of intensity and passion while praying. When I pray, it is so passive and weak. I find it hard to stay on track and get sidetracked so easily. My prayer attention span is like that of a 2 year old child.*

The Majesty of heaven, while engaged in His earthly ministry, prayed much to His Father. He was frequently bowed all night in prayer. His spirit was often sorrowful as He felt the powers of the darkness of this world, and He left the busy city and the noisy throng, to seek a retired place to make His intercessions. (2T 508)

*Note: When Christ was feeling sorrowful, He went back to His Father for relief.`*

\*\*With Him love was life, and life was service. "Freely ye have received," He said, "freely give." Matthew 10:8. {Ed 80.2}

It was not on the cross only that Christ sacrificed Himself for humanity. As He "went about doing good" (Acts 10:38), every day's experience was an outpouring of His life. In one way only could such a life be sustained. Jesus lived in dependence upon God and communion with Him. To the secret place of the Most High, under the shadow of the Almighty, men now and then repair; they abide for a season, and the result is manifest in noble deeds; then their faith fails, the communion is interrupted, and the lifework marred. But the life of Jesus was a life of constant trust, sustained by continual communion; and His service for heaven and earth was without failure or faltering. {Ed 80.3}

The Saviour's life on earth was a life of communion with nature and with God. In this communion He revealed for us the secret of a life of power. {MH 51.1}

Jesus was an earnest, constant worker. Never lived there among men another so weighted with responsibilities. Never another carried so heavy a burden of the world's sorrow and sin. Never another toiled with such self-consuming zeal for the good of men. Yet His was a life of health. Physically as well as spiritually He was represented by the sacrificial lamb, "without blemish and without spot." 1 Peter 1:19. In body as in soul He was an example of what God designed all humanity to be through obedience to His laws. {MH 51.2}

*Note: Just as Christ's body was kept "without spot or wrinkle" I am to keep my body the same. The reason for doing so is based on the fact that the better I treat my body, the stronger will be my ability for my mind to commune with God, the longer I will live with fewer health problems thus making my service to God better.*

As the people looked upon Jesus, they saw a face in which divine compassion was blended with conscious power. He seemed to be surrounded with an atmosphere of spiritual life. While His manners were gentle and unassuming, He impressed men with a sense of power that was hidden, yet could not be wholly concealed. {MH 51.3}

During His ministry He was continually pursued by crafty and hypocritical men who were seeking His life. Spies were on His track, watching His words, to find some occasion against Him. The keenest and most highly cultured minds of the nation sought to defeat Him in controversy. But never could they gain an advantage. They had to retire from the field, confounded and put to shame by the lowly Teacher from Galilee. Christ's teaching had a freshness and a power such as men had never before known. Even His enemies were forced to confess, "Never man spake like this Man." John 7:46. {MH 51.4}

The Lord's Prayer was twice given by our Saviour, first to the multitude in the Sermon on the Mount, and again, some months later, to the disciples alone. The disciples had been for a short time absent from their Lord, when on their return they found Him absorbed in communion with God. Seeming unconscious of their presence, He continued praying aloud. The Saviour's face was irradiated with a celestial brightness. He seemed to be in the very presence of the Unseen, and there was a living power in His words as of one who spoke with God. {MB 102.1}

The hearts of the listening disciples were deeply moved. They had marked how often He spent long hours in solitude in communion with His Father. {MB 102}

We are taught to come to God with: 1) our tribute of thanksgiving, 2) to make known our wants (needs), 3) to confess our sins, and to 4) claim His mercy in accordance with His promise. {MB 103.2}

"When ye pray, say Our Father." Luke 11:2. Jesus teaches us to call His Father our Father. He is not ashamed to call us brethren. Hebrews 2:11. So ready, so eager, is the Saviour's heart to welcome us as members of the family of God, that in the very first words we are to use in approaching God He places the assurance of our divine relationship, "Our Father."

*Note: With the highest degree of respect, I can call Jesus my "Big Brother."*

Christ applied Himself diligently to a study of the Scriptures; for He knew them to be full of precious instruction to all who will make it the man of their counsel. ...early morning hours, instead of being wasted in bed, often found Him in a retired place, meditating and searching the Scriptures and in prayer. Every prophecy concerning His work and mediation was familiar to Him, especially those having reference to His humiliation, atonement, and intercession. In childhood and youth the object of His life was ever before Him, an inducement for His undertaking the work of mediating in behalf of fallen man. {FE 402.3}

When the cities were hushed in midnight slumber, when every man had gone to his own house, Christ, our Example, would repair to the Mount of Olives, and there, amid the overshadowing trees, would spend the entire night in prayer. He who was Himself without the taint of sin,--a treasure house of blessing; whose voice was heard in the fourth watch of the night by the terrified disciples upon the stormy sea, in heavenly benediction; and whose word could summon the dead from their graves,--He it was who made supplication with strong crying and tears. He prayed not for Himself, but for those whom He came to save. As He became a suppliant, seeking at the hand of His Father fresh supplies of strength, and coming forth refreshed and invigorated as man's substitute, He identified Himself with suffering humanity and gave them an example of the necessity of prayer. {4T 528.1}

His nature was without the taint of sin. As the Son of man, He prayed to the Father, showing that human nature requires all the divine support which man can obtain that he may be braced for duty and prepared for trial. As the Prince of life He had power with God and prevailed for His people. This Saviour, who prayed for those that felt no need of prayer, and wept for those that felt no need of tears, is now before the throne, to receive and present to His Father the petitions of those for whom He prayed on earth. The example of Christ is for us to follow. Prayer is a necessity in our labor for the salvation of souls. God alone can give the increase of the seed we sow. {4T 528.2}

Our heavenly Father waits to bestow upon us the fullness of His blessing. It is our privilege to drink largely at the fountain of boundless love. What a wonder it is that we pray so little! God is ready and willing to hear the sincere prayer of the humblest of His children, and yet there is much manifest reluctance on our part to make known our wants to God...The angels love to bow before God; they love to be near Him. They regard communion with God as their highest joy; and yet the children of earth, who need so much the help that God only can give, seem satisfied to walk without the light of His Spirit, the companionship of His presence. {SC 94.1}

Why should the sons and daughters of God be reluctant to pray, when prayer is the key in the hand of faith to unlock heaven's storehouse, where are treasured the boundless resources of Omnipotence? Without unceasing prayer and diligent watching we are in danger of growing careless and of deviating from the right path. The adversary seeks continually to obstruct the way to the mercy seat, that we may not by earnest supplication and faith obtain grace and power to resist temptation. {SC 94.2}

There are certain conditions upon which we may expect that God will hear and answer our prayers. One of the first of these is that we feel our need of help from Him. He has promised, "I will pour water upon him that is thirsty, and floods upon the dry ground." Isaiah 44:3. Those who hunger and thirst after righteousness, who long after God, may be sure that they will be filled. The heart must be open to the Spirit's influence, or God's blessing cannot be received. {SC 95.1}

We need to look constantly to Jesus, realizing that it is His power which does the work. While we are to labor earnestly for the salvation of the lost, we must also take time for meditation, for prayer, and for the study of the word of God. Only the work accomplished with much prayer, and sanctified by the merit of Christ, will in the end prove to have been efficient for good. {DA 362.2}

No other life was ever so crowded with labor and responsibility as was that of Jesus; yet how often He was found in prayer! How constant was His communion with God! Again and again in the history of His earthly life are found records such as these: "Rising up a great while before day, He went out, and departed into a solitary place, and there prayed." "Great multitudes came together to hear, and to be healed by Him of their infirmities. And He withdrew Himself into the wilderness, and prayed." "And it came to pass in those days, that He went out into a mountain to pray, and continued all night in prayer to God." Mark 1:35; Luke 5:15, 16; 6:12. {DA 362.3}

In a life wholly devoted to the good of others, the Saviour found it necessary to withdraw from the thoroughfares of travel and from the throng that followed Him day after day. He must turn aside from a life of ceaseless activity and contact with human needs, to seek retirement and unbroken communion with His Father. As one with us, a sharer in our needs and weaknesses, He was wholly dependent upon God, and in the secret place of prayer He sought divine strength, that He might go forth braced for duty and trial. In a world of sin Jesus endured struggles and torture of soul. In communion with God He could unburden the sorrows that were crushing Him. Here He found comfort and joy. {DA 362.4}