

Jesus' Pattern

Scripture Reading — Matthew 26:36-44

Jesus went with his disciples to a place called Gethsem-ane, and he said to them, "Sit here while I go over there and pray."

—Matthew 26:36 —

Before Jesus began his earthly ministry, he spent forty days alone in the wilderness (Matthew 4:1-11). On the night of his arrest he also spent time in solitude. In the Garden of Gethsemane he withdrew from most of his disciples to pray, taking only three of them with him. Then he withdrew from those three to be completely alone in silence with his Father.

The beginning and end of Jesus' ministry were characteristic of everything in between. Seeking silence and solitude was Jesus' lifelong pattern.

Before he chose his disciples, Jesus spent an entire night alone in the hills (Luke 6:12). After Jesus heard the news that John the Baptist had been killed, "he withdrew by boat privately to a solitary place" (Matthew 14:13). Then, a bit later, after feeding more than five thousand people through a miracle, Jesus dismissed the crowd and "went up on a mountainside by himself to pray" (Matthew 14:23).

If the Son of God regularly withdrew to meet with his Father, then surely we may (and ought to) do the same. If Jesus needed silence and solitude, then how much more do we need to develop that same discipline!

Prayer

Father, you long to meet us in the stillness. Help each of us, like Jesus, to seek solitude with you. Thank you for desiring to share your love and grace with us. Amen.

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