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RHYTHMS OF HEAVEN

Week 2 | Prayer and Solitude

PRAYER

Father God, we come before You in this moment, choosing to pause and focus our hearts on You. You are worthy of our attention and affection. Thank You that we can talk to You anytime, anywhere. Thank You for the rhythm of prayer and solitude that helps us grow in friendship with You. Holy Spirit, help us hear Your voice today as we open up Scripture and share together. In Jesus' name, Amen.

OPENING QUESTION (OPTIONAL)

If you were sent on a 72-hour solo retreat without any technology, where would you go and what's one thing you'd definitely bring (apart from food and clothes)?

WORD

“And when you pray, you must not be like the hypocrites. For they love to stand and pray in the synagogues and at the street corners, that they may be seen by others... But when you pray, go into your room and shut the door and pray to your Father who is in secret... Pray then like this:

‘Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name.

Your kingdom come,

your will be done,

on earth as it is in heaven.

Give us this day our daily bread,

and forgive us our debts,

as we also have forgiven our debtors.

And lead us not into temptation,

but deliver us from evil.”

- Matthew 6:5–13

“But now even more the report about him went abroad, and great crowds gathered to hear him and to be healed of their infirmities. But he would withdraw to desolate places and pray.”

- Luke 5:15–16

When Jesus Withdrew to Pray

After healing and large crowds

Before choosing His 12 disciples

After feeding the 5,000

In the Garden of Gethsemane

What Happened

He reconnected with the Father

He prayed all night

He went up the mountain to pray alone

He wrestled in prayer

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Have you ever experienced a time of being alone with God? What was that like for you?
2. What distractions do you find most difficult to overcome when trying to pray or be still?
3. Why do you think Jesus made solitude and prayer a priority—even when life got busier?
4. What’s one small rhythm of prayer or solitude you could start this week to connect with God in a deeper way?
5. What part of the Lord’s Prayer stands out to you most and why?

REFLECTION

Jesus didn’t just teach about prayer—He lived it. In the Gospels, we repeatedly see Him withdrawing to solitary places to connect with the Father. This wasn’t escapism; it was intentional rhythm. In Luke 5, even as His popularity exploded and demands increased, Jesus made space to retreat. Why? Because power in public is sustained by connection in private. In Matthew 6, Jesus challenges empty, performative prayer and invites His followers into something real, raw, and relational. “Our Father” — these two words change everything. Prayer isn’t a formula. It’s family. Solitude and prayer allow us to re-center ourselves around God’s presence, especially in our distracted, fast-paced lives. Urban life in Brisbane (like most global cities in 2025) is full of digital noise, relentless work demands, and information overload. In this environment, solitude isn’t a luxury; it’s a survival rhythm for spiritual formation. Dallas Willard said, “Solitude well practiced will break the power of busyness, haste, and isolation.” And Henri Nouwen adds, “Without solitude, it is almost impossible to live a spiritual life.” Jesus practiced this in fields, mountainsides, gardens—places where He could be still and hear the Father. For us, it might look like walking around the Brisbane River, pausing in a quiet park, or setting aside morning time with no phone, just Scripture and silence. In a city like Brisbane, practicing solitude might mean turning off notifications, going on a “digital fast,” or walking through nature to pray out loud or journal. These practices form us into people who live with Heaven’s rhythms, not the world’s chaos.

What We Learn

Solitude keeps us grounded in purpose

Prayer invites divine direction

Solitude restores spiritual clarity

Prayer is where we surrender our will

Reference

Luke 5:15–16

Luke 6:12–13

Matthew 14:23

Matthew 26:36–44

Closing Prayer

Jesus, we declare today that You are Lord over our time, our minds, and our lives. You are not a faraway God—we can talk with You, know You, and walk with You daily. Help us to choose rhythms that make space for You in our busy world. Teach us to pray with open hearts, not fancy words. Teach us to be still, even when life gets loud. We respond in worship, offering You our lives again. And we ask, Holy Spirit, help us develop healthy habits of prayer and solitude so that we live more in tune with the rhythms of heaven. In Jesus’ name, Amen.