

Matthew 14:22-23 Alone with God in Prayer

Introduction: Upon hearing of the death of John the Baptist, Jesus took His disciples and crossed over to the east side of the Sea of Galilee. However the crowd ran around the shoreline and beat Him to the other side. Jesus had compassion on the multitudes. He healed their sick, preached the gospel and taught spiritual truths. It was on this occasion that He fed the multitude with only five loaves of bread and two fishes.

I. Sending the others away.

- A. Jesus first sent His disciples away, verse 22.
 - 1. He sent them away by boat. They came by boat; they left by boat.
 - 2. John said that the disciples went toward Capernaum, John 6:17.
 - 3. Mark said that Jesus instructed them to wait for Him at Bethsaida, Mark 6:45.
 - 4. Thus Capernaum was their ultimate destination, but they were to wait for Jesus at Bethsaida.
- B. Matthew said that He told them to go to the other side of the lake.
- C. Then Jesus sent the multitudes away, verse 22b, 23a.
 - 1. John said that the multitudes wanted to make Him king.
 - 2. But Jesus refused and sent them away.

II. Jesus alone with God the Father.

- A. Jesus then went up into a mountain to be alone with God the Father.
 - 1. Sending the others away left Him alone.
 - 2. Going up into a mountain insured that He would remain alone.
 - 3. He wanted to be alone to pray to God the Father.
- B. Keep in mind that Jesus is Deity, the second person of the Trinity, one of the Godhead.
 - 1. As Deity He is almighty and all wise. (He needed no one to strengthen Him or comfort Him or lead Him.)
 - 2. But as man He needed the comfort, strength and guidance which God the Father could give. (He was grieved at the death of John the Baptist.)
- C. He spent considerable time there alone with God. (It was apparently well past midnight when He left to rejoin His disciples.)

III. Our need to spend time alone with God in prayer.

- A. Since Jesus needed time alone with God, how much more we need to do the same.
 - 1. I speak not of family prayer. (Certainly we need that.)
 - 2. I speak not of coming together as a church in prayer. (We most certainly need to do that.)
 - 3. I am talking about getting away from everyone and everything that would distract.
- B. We all seem to resist being alone.
 - 1. With good reason, for God has said that it is not good for man to be alone, at least not on a prolonged basis.
 - 2. When we are alone we compensate for it by turning on the television, radio, hi-fi, or make a telephone call. (If nothing else we will read a book.)
 - 3. Being in solitaire is one of the most severe punishments for a prisoner.
- C. But it is good for every man to spend some time alone with God. (Totally alone.)
 - 1. Man needs comfort in all the sorrows that befall him.
 - 2. He needs encouragement and strength in all the trials that come.
 - 3. He needs wisdom and guidance in all the decisions that he faces.

IV. What to say when alone with God.

- A. We get by pretty well in a crowd because we rely on others to keep the conversation going.
 - 1. But we have difficulty when we are alone with but one other person.
 - 2. It is much more difficult being alone with God.
 - 3. The conversation is all one sided and we find it difficult to know what to say – at least for very long.
- B. Perhaps we would do well to consider what Jesus might have had to say to God the Father.
 - 1. No doubt He praised God for what He had done that day. (For the healing of the sick, for saving the lost, for the opportunity to preach to so many unsaved people, for the miracle of feeding the multitude.)
 - 2. He must have prayed for the need of others. (For the bereaved disciples of John, for His own disciples who would soon face a similar crisis, for the new converts, for those still unsaved.
 - 3. He may have prayed for Himself. (His one main desire was to do the Father's will in all things. As He drew closer to the cross He needed strength.)
- C. In this we see some things we need to talk to God about.
 - 1. Let us praise God for what He has done. (I speak not of the words, “Praise the Lord”, but “Thank you Lord.”)
 - 2. If we have legitimate needs, while we are alone with Him is a good time to mention them.
 - 3. Let us not forget to pray for others.
 - a. I once asked a friend to help another friend get a job. He did. I felt I had a part because I asked him to help.
 - b. A lot of people have needs that we cannot fill, but we can speak to God on their behalf.
 - 4. Let us not forget to pray for this church, our family, our community, our nation, and our world.
 - 5. One thing that Jesus did not pray for is forgiveness of His sins, but we need to pray for forgiveness.

Conclusion:

- 1. I do call upon you to follow the example set by Jesus and spend time alone with God. Get away from family, television, and everything. Do it on a regular basis. It will turn your life around.
- 2. You are not alone now, but you are with God. Talk to Him right now. If you know that you are a lost sinner trust Jesus Christ to save you.
- 3. If you are saved, surrender your life to God right now.

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