

## **“First Watch” Touch Points for Evangel’s Prayer Vigil team**

**For the week of January 25, 2015**

### **Developing a Praying Life – part 4**

#### **INSIGHTS from A Praying Life by Paul E. Miller**

*from Part 1: Learning to Pray Like a Child / Chapter 5: Spending Time with the Father*

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*In this chapter, Miller suggests that we can learn much by seeing how Jesus needed prayer to relate to his Heavenly Father. He begins by describing Jesus’ first day of public ministry, teaching in the synagogue and performing miracles (see Mark 1:21-39), after which he got up early and went to pray. Miller ends the section with an allusion to C.S. Lewis, one of his favorite storytellers.*

It is a remarkable day—the evening and morning of the first day of a new creation. The new Adam rolls back the curse and cuts through evil. Demons and sickness flee the presence of Life. Aslan is on the move.

**Why Jesus Needed to Pray...**Whenever Jesus starts talking about his relationship with his heavenly Father, Jesus becomes childlike, very dependent. [See John 5:19; 8:28; 12:49].

When Jesus tells us to be like little children, he isn’t telling us to do something he isn’t already doing. Jesus is, without question, the most dependent human being who ever lived. Because he can’t do life on his own, he prays. And he prays. And he prays. Luke tells us that Jesus “would withdraw to desolate places and pray.” (John 5:16) ...That’s why contemplating the terror of the cross at Gethsamane was such an agony for Jesus. He had never experienced a moment when he wasn’t in communion with his Father....

[Jesus’] prayer time is an expression of his relationship with his Father. He wants to be alone with the person he loves.

**No Substitute for Spending Time...**Any relationship, if it is going to grow, needs private space, time together without an agenda, where you get to know each other....You don’t create intimacy, you make room for it....Efficiency, multitasking and busyness all kill intimacy. In short, you can’t get to know God on the fly....If Jesus had to pull away from people and noise to pray, then it makes sense that we need to as well.

**Praying Like Jesus Prayed...**[it isn’t proscribed, but] Jesus followed the Psalmist’s pattern of morning prayer [see Psalms 5:3; 59:16; 88:13; 143:8....and he prayed out loud]... not a New Testament rule; it is just another way of being real in prayer. Everyone is different...

**Overcoming Objections...**One objection to a daily prayer time is “I pray all the time.”...this is no substitute for focused times of prayer. For example, a husband a wife who only talk in snippets to one another throughout the day would have a shallow relationship. You’d be business partners, not lovers. You can’t build a relationship by sound bites.

**Take Baby Steps...**[Miller suggests starting with five minutes a day, establishing a pattern of behavior and location that can help make regular, personal prayer a habit, which will grow richer and longer over time.]

Regardless of how and when you pray, if you give God the space, he will touch your soul. God knows you are exhausted, but at the same time he longs to be part of your life. A feast awaits.

From [A Praying Life](#), Paul E. Miller, [NavPress](#) (2009), pages 43-51 (chapter 5)

#### **PRAYER PROMPTS**

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- Whether you are trying to start a regular prayer time, or you have established one and wish to mentor others, read through the Scriptures referred to above and ask the Lord to invite you to the feast.
- Reflect on this week’s worship service, the music, Scriptures, and Pastor Dave’s sermon from Exodus 13, “Let My People Go—I Will Guide Them.” Pray that the Lord will lead you to ways to apply the lessons learned in your own walk with Christ and as you connect with different people this week.
- Continue to remember one family from your circle of influence for intercession. They could be a neighbor, coworker or relative. Pray for their struggles to be resolved, their health improved and their relationships strengthened. Ask the Lord to bring them to a fuller, closer relationship with Himself in faith and obedience.
- Continue to pray for opportunities to invite people to our services or become engaged in spiritual discovery with the people of Evangel in other ways as well. Ask the Lord to open doors of conversation, connection or compassion with others to enable that engagement this week.

\* A podcast of the sermon and other materials are normally posted on the website by Monday.

Touch Points is e-mailed every Friday, posted on the website ([www.evbapt.org](http://www.evbapt.org)), with printed copies available in the lobby.