

PROPER METHOD IN PRAYER
[When, Where, and How?]

I. INTRODUCTION:

Emphasis was given in a previous lesson to the fact that prayer involves definite principles of procedure. Many of the failures we experience in regard to prayer are the results of not giving steadfast attention to the proper manner or method of prayer. It will be of importance to each of us then to consider the proper method in prayer from the standpoints of when, where, and how.

II. DISCUSSION:

A. WHEN?

1. As to frequency:
 - a) "Day and night" -- Luke 2:37; 2 Tim.1:3; I Tim.5:5; I Thes.3:10.
 - b) "All night" -- Luke 6:12.
 - c) "Continue stedfastly, cease not", etc. -- Rom.12:12; Col.4:3; Eph.1:16; Col.1:9; I Thes.5:17; Acts 2:42.
 - d) "Always" -- Luke 21:36 (KJV); Acts 10:2; I Thes.4:11; Col.1:3; Luke 18:1 ("faint not").
 - e) "At all seasons" -- Luke 21:36 (ASV); Eph.6:10.
2. As to regularity -- Note the expressions "hour of prayer", etc., Acts 9:30; 10:9.
3. As to appropriate times:
 - a) Jesus:
 - 1) At beginning of His ministry -- Luke 3:21.
 - 2) In choosing His disciples -- Luke 6:12-13.
 - 3) In expressing joy at the way the common people heard His message -- Matt.11:25-26.
 - 4) After feeding the 5,000 -- Matt.14:13-33.
 - 5) Before day -- Mark 1:35.
 - 6) In behalf of Peter -- Luke 22:31-32.
 - 7) In the wilderness -- Luke 5:16.
 - 8) At conclusion of His parting message to the apostles -- John 17.
 - 9) At transfiguration -- Luke 9:28.
 - 10) At institution of Lord's Supper -- Mark 14:22-23.
 - 11) In Gethsemene before His crucifixion -- Matt.25:36-46.
 - 12) On the cross -- Matt.27:46, 50; Luke 23:34, 46; John 19:30.
 - b) Apostles and early Christians:
 - 1) First missionary journey -- Acts 13:1-3.
 - 2) Before bidding farewell -- Acts 21:5.
 - 3) Appointment to office -- Acts 1:24; Acts 6:6; Acts 14:23.
 - 4) In sickness -- Acts 28:8; James 5:13ff.
 - 5) In imprisonment -- Acts 16:25; 12:5.
 - c) Best summary = "ALWAYS"!

B. WHERE?

1. Jesus taught in John 4:24 that our worship is not restricted by any physical boundary.
2. In private ... without distraction
 - a) Matt.6:6.
 - b) Examples: Matt.14:23; Mark 6:46; Luke 6:12; 9:18, 28; 22:39, 41; 5:16; Mark 1:35; Matt.26:36-39; Acts 10:9. [In the mountains, apart, alone, in the desert, in a garden, on a housetop, etc.]

(2)

3. With others:
 - a) The church -- Acts 12:5; I Cor.14:14-15.
 - b) Paul with Ephesians elders -- Acts 20:36-38.
 - c) Paul and Silas -- Acts 16:25.
 - d) Companions of Peter and John -- Acts 4:24-31.
 - e) Also see examples of Apostles and early Christians above.

C. **HOW?**

1. **As to posture** -- without implying that there is a particular position demanded by God, we note the following:
 - a) "*Fell on face*" -- Matt.26:39; Mark 14:35.
 - b) "*Lift up holy hands*" -- I Timothy 2:8.
 - c) "*Unlifted eyes*" -- Luke 18:13.
 - d) "*Smote his breast*" -- Luke 18:13.
 - e) "*Kneeled down*" -- Luke 22:41; Acts 7:60; 9:40; 20:36; 21:5; Eph.3:14.
2. **As to voice** -- aloud or silent? We need to speak aloud with our Father [most of the examples are of this nature ... see Heb.5:7.]; but silent prayers are certainly not ruled out! See I Sam.1:9-11.
3. **As to manner:**
 - a) "*Exceedingly*" -- 2 Thes.3:10.
 - b) "*Earnestly*" -- Luke 22:44.
 - c) "*Fervently*" -- Jas.5:17.
 - d) "*Striving*" -- Col.4:12.
 - e) *With persistency* -- Luke 11:5-8; 18:1-11.
4. **In association with:**
 - a) "*Watching*" -- Col.4:3.
 - b) "*Fasting*" -- Acts 14:23; 13:3.
 - c) "*Singing*" -- Acts 16:25.

III. CONCLUSION:

This study is by no means exhausted; but perhaps this will serve as a basis for further study on your part. We need to give more emphasis and attention to this aspect of prayer.