

Why Did Jesus Pray?

By Joyce Rhoads

The thought of Jesus praying is not foreign to a Christian. He prayed often in Scripture. But, **why** did He pray?

Both the *Prayer Warrior* class on Wednesday nights plus the schedule for completing the reading of the Bible in a year has shed more light on prayer for me. The examples of Jesus praying in the Gospels was something I merely read over and did not consider His method.

He was perfect, so He did not pray for forgiveness. ***“For we do not have a high priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses, but One who has been tempted in all things as we are, yet without sin.”*** Hebrews 4:15

He was omnipotent, so He did not pray for help in dealing with the Pharisees or the King. Before, during and after His time on earth, Jesus was Deity. John 1:1 tells us ***“In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.”***

He was omniscient, so He did not pray for answers. Mark 6:2 says, ***“Jesus taught in the synagogue on the Sabbath. Many were astonished when they heard him. They asked: Where did this man get these things? What is the wisdom given to this man and how did He perform these mighty works by His hands?”***

He prayed because it was an important part of His life. And, because of its importance He made it a priority. He spent long periods of time in prayer. ***“It was at this time that He went off to the mountain to pray, and He spent the whole night in prayer to God.”*** Luke 6:12

He prayed because of His relationship with His Father. His life and ministry was centered on God. Hebrews 1:3 tells us that ***“The Son is the radiance of God's glory and the exact representation – or reflection – of His being.”*** He was obedient to God's every command. And it was through this obedience that salvation came to mankind.

Jesus prayed as an example to His followers, as we learn in what is known as ‘The Lord's Prayer’. Matthew 6:9-15 tells us, ***“Our Father in heaven, may your name be honored, may your kingdom come, may your will be done on earth***

as it is in heaven. Give us today our daily bread, and forgive us our debts, as we ourselves have forgiven our debtors. And do not lead us into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one. For if you forgive others their sins, your heavenly Father will also forgive you. But if you do not forgive others, your Father will not forgive you your sins.”

Jesus prayed on mankind's behalf. ***“There is one God and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus.”*** 1 Timothy 2:5 Jesus is our High Priest, our intercessor and the only Mediator between man and God. Hebrews 5:8-10 says, ***“Although He was a son, He learned obedience from what He suffered and, once made perfect, He became the source of eternal salvation for all who obey Him and was designated by God to be high priest in the order of Melchizedek.”***

As I discovered when I studied more about Jesus' method of praying, He set many examples for us. He still prayed ***“Not My will, but Yours”***, Luke 22:42, showing his complete trust and obedience to the Father.

Our prayers should not always be for what we want or need. We should pray for God to open our hearts to the hurting; to open our eyes to those in need. We are His hands and feet here on earth and are commanded to serve others, as Jesus did.