

## Prayer is Relationship

Tony

### Scriptures:

Luke 3:20-21

Luke 6:12-14

Luke 9:28-36

Luke 22:31-34

Matthew 6:9-13

Prayer is relationship, a shared life between Father and His child. I suspect that most of you pray regularly, and have heard and read a lot of teaching on prayer. I have recently been reading Luke's Gospel and thought it apt to look at Luke's recorded incidents of Jesus praying. These are connected with crucial steps in His life and ministry.

In Luke 3:21 Jesus comes to His baptism. It was usual for a Rabbi (Teacher) to begin his ministry at the age of 30, and Jesus used His baptism by John as an opportunity to enter the public arena. In baptism He demonstrated His submission to God as the people had done. As He rose up from the water, Heaven opened and Holy Spirit descended upon Him in the form a dove. A voice was heard saying, "You are My beloved Son. In You I am well pleased."

Prior to this, in verse 20, we read that John had been imprisoned by Herod, but in verse 21 we find John preaching and baptising. Clearly Luke wanted to complete his account of Herod's wickedness in verse 20, before going back to the account of Jesus' baptism in verse 21.

In Luke 6:12 Jesus prays alone for a whole night, following which he chose twelve apostles from a much greater number of disciples. Here Luke differs from the other gospels where these apostles are described as disciples. The list commences from Luke 6:14. Included amongst these apostles was Judas Iscariot. Do you think that Jesus knew then that Judas would betray him?

In Luke 9 we read about the feeding of the five thousand and Jesus' prediction of his own suffering and death. He explained that to follow Him meant to take up our cross daily. Eight days later he took Peter, James and John into the mountains to pray. As they prayed a vision appeared of Moses and Elijah. Jesus became glorified before them. The Jewish people believed Moses the Law Giver, and Elijah the Prophet would return before the end of time. Both of them had died in unusual ways and now they were talking to Jesus about His death and resurrection. They were confirming Jesus' words earlier. In verse 33 Luke implies that Peter misunderstood the meaning of the vision. The cloud of God's Presence and the hearing of God's voice were of primary importance, yet still the disciples did not grasp the nature of Jesus' sacrifice and divinity. How often do we not grasp what Jesus might be saying to us?

In Luke 22:31-34 Jesus tells the disciples that Satan has planned to "sift" them. Jesus' response was to pray that their faith would not fail. This prayer was for them all, not just Peter, because Jesus used the word "you" in the

plural form. When we feel that we are being "sifted", do we remember that Jesus is interceding for us still today?

In Luke 23:34 Jesus prays for those who are crucifying Him, pointing to their total ignorance about the importance of what was happening.

We all know that Jesus taught His disciples to pray, and that prayer remains a good pattern and prayer for every Christian today.

I hope that despite the strange days in which we are living, you may have been blessed again this Easter by the amazing thing God has done for us in Christ.

**PRAYER:** Father God, we thank You for the price Jesus paid to redeem us, and we thank You that He is now seated beside You in Heaven continually making intercession for us. Thank You Jesus for teaching us how to pray, and thank You for sending Holy Spirit to guide us in our prayers. Amen.