

Consider Jesus– In Communion with God

By Octavius Winslow

"Now in the morning, having risen a long while before daylight, He went out and departed to a solitary place; and there He prayed." (Mark 1:35)

To whom can this impressive picture of high devotion properly apply but to Him whose life was one continuous act of prayer; whose vital and all-pervading atmosphere was communion with God? Jesus literally "walked with God." As man, He was deeply conscious of the spiritual necessities of man; and as the God-man Mediator, He felt the need of looking up to the Strong One for strength, to the Wise One for wisdom, to the Loving One for sympathy—in a word, to His Father in Heaven for the constant replenishing of His daily need from the boundless resources of His own Infinite Being, for the great work His Father had given Him to do.

Wise will it be for us to consider Jesus touching the article of *prayer*. If He, the sinless One, He the mighty One, He the divine One felt, deeply and momentarily felt, the need of drawing from above by the breath of prayer those supplies needful for the accomplishment of His work and for the glorifying of His Father, oh, how much more have we need that prayer should precede, accompany, and follow every step we take; that communion with God should prompt, aid, and sanctify every act of our lives; that, in a word, in imitation of our blessed Lord, we should often rise up a great while before day, and depart into a solitary place, and, before secular and worldly things took possession of our minds, *give ourselves to prayer*.

My soul! consider this precious privilege! Is there a holier, sweeter, or more needful one? Consider Jesus in this matter, and form your prayerful life upon the model of His. **He always approached God in prayer as His Father.** His spirit, His language, His approach was *filial*. "Holy Father." "My Father." Equally is this your privilege. God stands to you in the close, the endeared relation of a *Father* by adopting grace, and it were a dishonor done to

His name, and an ignoring of His Fatherhood, to approach Him in prayer in any other relation and character than this. Oh, feel that, when you pour out your sinful heart, your sorrowful heart, your broken heart before Him, you are pouring it all into a *Father's* ear, a *Father's* bosom.

The prayer of Jesus was REAL COMMUNION with God. So let yours be, O my soul! Rest not content with the form of prayer, the duty of prayer, the act of prayer. Be not satisfied unless conscious of the listening ear of God, the responding heart of Jesus, the vital breathing of the Spirit. Oh, let your communion with heaven be a blessed *reality*. Do not leave the Mercy-Seat without some evidence that you have been in solemn, holy, precious audience with the Invisible One. It may be the evidence of contrition, of humiliation, of confession; or, of simple faith, of child-like love, of filial trust--but leave it not until God in Christ has spoken to you face to face. Oh, whatever your sin, or sorrow, or need may be, rise amid the twilight shadows which drape your soul, and give yourself to prayer!

By this example of Jesus, we are taught **the necessity and the blessedness of secret prayer.** "He departed into a *solitary place*, and there prayed." My soul! enter into your closet, and shut the door behind you, and pray to your Father in secret. You have secret declensions to confess, secret sorrows to unveil, secret wants to present, secret blessings to crave. Away, then, to your chamber. Take with you the blood of Jesus, and with your hand of faith upon His Word, *open all your heart* in filial, loving confidence, to God, and, in paternal love, He will open all the treasures of His heart to you. Let nothing keep you from secret communion with God. Business, family, friends must all give place to this, if you want soul prosperity. Five minutes alone with Jesus will carry you through five hours of toil and trial. "Come, my people, enter into your chamber." Lord! I come!

(Taken from "Consider Jesus", 1870)