

ENCOUNTERING THE LORD JESUS IN THE PLACE OF PRAYER

This is your Friend and Minister, dr. Joshua Uhiara, bringing you Healing Word from the Master, a program of the Master's Vessel Ministry which lets you know that Jesus loves you as you are, but loves you so much that He will not leave you as you are.

Greetings, friends. Let's turn to Saint Luke's Gospel Chapter 11, verses 1 to 4.

Luke 11:1-4

¹*Now it came to pass, as He [that's Jesus] was praying in a certain place, when He ceased, that one of His disciples said to Him, "Lord, teach us to pray, as John also taught his disciples."*

²*So He said to them, "When you pray, say:*

*Our Father in heaven,
Hallowed be Your name.*

Your kingdom come.

Your will be done

On earth as it is in heaven.

³*Give us day by day our daily bread.*

⁴*And forgive us our sins,*

For we also forgive everyone who is indebted to us.

And do not lead us into temptation,

But deliver us from the evil one."

I'm speaking on, Encountering the Lord Jesus Christ in the Place of Prayer.

PRAYER:

Father, we are praying now that as we reason together today with You and with one another around Your Word, that You would speak to our hearts. Grant us understanding, especially in this crucial area of prayer...In Jesus' Name. Amen!

The word, Encounter, means to experience something hostile or difficult. It also means to meet; that is, to meet someone, especially unexpectedly. In our context, the word means, to experience the Lord Jesus, and to experience Him in the place of prayer.

In the passage we read, one of His disciples prayed a prayer that was the best prayer that they had ever prayed up to that point. And the fact I would say the best prayer any disciple of Jesus Christ would ever pray. And that is: *Lord, Teach us to pray.*

The place of prayer is a very important place to encounter the Lord Jesus Christ, considering the important place prayer played in His life. Nobody ever prayed like Jesus. And if He gave such high priority to prayer, it would be the height of irresponsibility for us to do otherwise.

In the interest of time, I would limit us to only three places of prayer we will encounter the Lord Jesus Christ.

The first one is at His baptism. In Luke 3:21-22. The second is at His transfiguration, in Luke 9:28-30. And then the third one is at the Garden of Gethsemane, Luke 22:39-46.

We hope to draw relevant lessons from meeting the Lord Jesus in these places of prayer. I want you to note that all the references are from Saint Luke's Gospel, the Gospel that gives more space and time to the prayer life of Jesus Christ than any other.

Let's start with, Encountering the Lord Jesus Christ in the place of prayer, at His baptism.

In Luke 3:21-22,

²¹ *When all the people were baptized, it came to pass that Jesus also was baptized; and while He prayed, the heaven was opened.* ²² *And the Holy Spirit descended in bodily form like a dove upon Him, and a voice came from heaven which said, "You are My beloved Son; in You I am well pleased."*

Notice that Jesus was not the only person baptized. Verse 21 says, *When all the people were baptized.* He was not the only person baptized. He was not the only baptismal candidate. But of all the numerous baptismal candidates He was the only one reported to have prayed. That's the exceptional and exemplary Jesus.

Notice also that He experienced something remarkable while He prayed. He experienced an open heaven – access without restriction. In verse 21, it says, *while He prayed, the heaven was opened.* Notice also that He was filled with the Holy Spirit, verse 22; and the Holy Spirit descended in bodily form, like a dove upon Him. And no wonder we read, after this experience, in Luke 4:1, it says, *Then Jesus, being filled with the Holy Spirit, returned from the Jordan.*

You see? He's going from the baptism now in Jordan and was led by the Spirit into the wilderness. If you drop down in that Luke 4:18, it says, *The Spirit of the LORD is upon Me* – Jesus speaking now. That is the experience of the fullness of the Holy Spirit He received or He had in River Jordan.

Luke 4:18

*“The Spirit of the LORD is upon Me,
Because He has anointed Me
To preach the gospel to the poor;
He has sent Me to heal the brokenhearted,
To proclaim liberty to the captives
And recovery of sight to the blind,
To set at liberty those who are oppressed;*

And that is why also we read in Acts 10:38, how God anointed Jesus with the Holy Spirit and with power, who went about doing good and healing all who were oppressed by the devil; for God was with Him.

The third thing, we noticed what He experienced, that is, at this place of prayer when He was baptized; He heard a voice of commendation from heaven.

In verse 22 also, You are My beloveth Son. In you, I am well pleased. Don't forget these things. We are going to draw lessons from them before we conclude. At His transfiguration, Luke 9:28-33

²⁸ *Now it came to pass, about eight days after these sayings, that He took Peter, John, and James and went up on the mountain to pray.* ²⁹ *As He prayed, [notice that] the appearance of His face was altered, and His robe became white and glistening.* ³⁰ *And behold, two men talked with Him, who were Moses and Elijah,* ³¹ *who appeared in glory and spoke of His decease which He was about to accomplish at Jerusalem [that's, His death].* ³² *But Peter and those with him were heavy with sleep; and when they were fully awake, they saw His glory and the two men who stood with Him.* ³³ *Then it happened, as they were parting from Him, that Peter said to Jesus, "Master, it is good for us to be here; and let us make three tabernacles: one for You, one for Moses, and one for Elijah"—not knowing what he said.*

In the place of prayer, the Lord Jesus, in this experience now, was transfigured. He experienced a remarkable change that was visible to the human eye. And this word, transfigured, is the same word that we find in 2 Corinthians 3:18. There it says,

¹⁸ *But we all, with unveiled face, beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, are being transformed...*

Transformed! It's the same word that is translated transfigured in the case of Jesus. We are transformed into the same image from glory to glory just as by the Spirit of the Lord. He was transfigured; He was transformed. He experienced a remarkable change that was visible, externally.

Secondly, He experienced heavenly visitations. Two men came to Him. Two men appeared to Him: Moses and Elijah – the representatives of the law and the prophets.

Thirdly, He heard a voice of authentication from heaven. Previously, the voice from heaven was not that of authentication but of commendation. But the Father is speaking now, and He says, a voice came out of the cloud saying: This is my beloveth Son. Hear Him. Because He is my beloveth Son, you need to listen to Him. Because He is my beloveth Son, you must listen to Him. It was a voice of authentication.

Thirdly, at the Garden of Gethsemane, the bible says,

Luke 22:39-46

³⁹ Coming out, He went to the Mount of Olives, as He was accustomed, and His disciples also followed Him. ⁴⁰ When He came to the place, He said to them, “Pray that you may not enter into temptation.”

⁴¹ And He was withdrawn from them about a stone’s throw, and He knelt down and prayed, ⁴² saying, “Father, if it is Your will, take this cup away from Me; nevertheless not My will, but Yours, be done.” ⁴³ Then an angel appeared to Him from heaven, strengthening Him. ⁴⁴ And being in agony, He prayed more earnestly. Then His sweat became like great drops of blood falling down to the ground.

⁴⁵ When He rose up from prayer, and had come to His disciples, He found them sleeping from sorrow. ⁴⁶ Then He said to them, “Why do you sleep? Rise and pray, lest you enter into temptation.”

The Lord Jesus identified prayer as a means of overcoming temptation. That’s in verse 40. He prayed reverently, both in posture as well as in content. He received a needed heavenly visitation – verse 43. He agonized; and in earnest prayer, He cried to the Father.

Then of course, finally, He encouraged His disciples to pray in spite of their circumstance. So, why do we learn from encountering the Lord Jesus in the Place of Prayer? When we encounter the Lord Jesus in the place of prayer we are bound to:

- i. Be changed in terms of our attitude towards prayer and the content of our inner being.
- ii. We experience open heaven. God no longer seems far away as answered prayers become more normal and common than rare.
- iii. And then we have indispensable experience of the fullness of the Holy Spirit.

Not only would we be encouraged to pray, but we would learn to pray both in form, content and practice. We would learn to pray reverently, constantly,

honestly, and with tangible results, when we encounter the Lord Jesus in the place of prayer.

PRAYER:

Father, may You help us to desire to pray. May You help us to encounter the Lord Jesus in the place of prayer, so that we would be transformed inside out, so that we would get the kind of results that Jesus got in the place of prayer, in His Name I have prayed. Amen!