

It is important to ensure fellowship with God before the study of the Word.
If we confess our sins, He is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness (**1 John 1:9**).

Standing on the Promises of God - -

Deuteronomy 31:8

8 "The LORD is the one who goes ahead of you; He will be with you. He will not fail you or forsake you. Do not fear or be dismayed."

The four disciples were following the Lord and His ministry which was comprised of the following:

Matthew 4:23

23 Jesus was going throughout all Galilee,

... **teaching** in their synagogues

- 1st διδάσκω – "To teach"

... and **proclaiming** the gospel [the message] of the kingdom,

- 2nd κηρῦσσω – "To communicate with authority and conviction"

... and **healing** every kind of disease and every kind of sickness among the people.

- 3rd θεραπεύω – "To heal, restore or cure"

The healing of these incurable diseases was a demonstration of His authority and a testimony to the fact that He was their Messiah.



As a result of these things, the ministry was gaining popularity by leaps and bounds.

The Lord executes authority over sickness, disease, and the angelic realm.

24 The news about Him spread throughout all Syria (north of Galilee); and they brought to Him all who were ill, those suffering with various diseases and pains, demoniacs, epileptics, paralytics; and He healed them.

25 Large crowds followed Him from Galilee and the Decapolis and Jerusalem and Judea and from beyond the Jordan.

This was the time in which He healed the leper in one of the cities of Galilee.

After He healed the leper, according to Matthew, something changed. His ministry took on a new characteristic.

Mark 1:41-45

41 Moved with compassion. . .

- Aorist passive participle σπλαγχνίζομαι – "To feel sympathy"

This brings to light the emotion that Jesus Christ felt for one who was suffering.

This one who is suffering knew that Jesus was the only one who had authority to cleanse him from his unclean status as a leper.

His only hope was in Jesus Christ. That's why the leper approached the Lord in faith and said,

“If you are willing, You are able to cleanse me. . . .”

Jesus was moved with compassion.

He was feeling sympathy for the leper's helpless and desperate condition.

Our Savior felt these emotions in His humanity and He had the desire to alleviate the adverse conditions.

41 Moved with compassion, Jesus stretched out His hand and touched him, and said to him, “I am willing; be cleansed.”

It is not whether He is willing to help you in your time of need, but whether you are willing to approach Him in faith and ask for that help.

42 Immediately the leprosy left him and he was cleansed.

43 And He sternly warned him and immediately sent him away, **44** and He said to him, “See that you say nothing to anyone; but go, show yourself to the priest and offer for your cleansing what Moses commanded, as a testimony to them.”

Preposition **ε** **ς** plus accusative **μαρτύριον** – “For the objective of proof to them” - proof to the priests in Jerusalem that Messiah had come!

45 But he went out and began to proclaim it freely and to spread the news around, to such an extent that **Jesus could no longer publicly enter a city**, but stayed out in unpopulated areas; and they were coming to Him from everywhere.

So His ministry changed after the first year because of His popularity.

“Jesus could no longer publicly enter a city”

“ . . . but stayed out in unpopulated areas. . . ”

The issue is NEVER with the communicator but always with the hearer.

This is one of the many reasons Luke states that the Lord would withdraw to pray.

Luke 5:16

16 But Jesus Himself would *often* slip away to the wilderness and pray.

The habitual action of Jesus Christ slipping away to pray is portrayed by the imperfect tense **ε** **μι** plus the present participle **ποχωρέω**

Corrected translation - *But Jesus Himself was withdrawing*

He made a habit of withdrawing to the wilderness.

... To a secluded place where the Lord could find privacy to communicate with the Father.

“But Jesus Himself was withdrawing to the wilderness and praying Himself.”

- The Lord Jesus Christ had a phenomenal prayer life because of His relationship with the Father.
- He retired to pray in order to seek the Father’s will, guidance, and wisdom in all that He did.

POD - The Christian’s prayer life is a reflection of the intimacy he has in his relationship with the Father.

- When you really begin to know the Lord, you are not praying to Him as a genie in a bottle.
- When you have a handle on the protocol of prayer and a reality of to Whom it is you are praying, you’re not going to ask Him to do something ***if it’s His will***. In other words, “Lord, please heal my brother if it’s your will.”
- If it’s His will, He’s going to heal him and if it’s not His will, then He will not - so why in the world are you wasting time praying?

Isn’t it time you made prayer a reflection of your faith?

POD - The Christian who withdraws on a habitual basis to ask his Father for wisdom, guidance, and direction is truly dependent upon the Lord and therefore, following the example of his Savior, Jesus Christ.

- You have an invitation in James to ask Him for wisdom – take advantage of that!
- Seek the Lord for guidance and direction in accomplishing His plan for your life.
- These prayers for wisdom, guidance, direction, and help are a testimony to the fact that you are a humble believer.

Become dependent upon God to provide, to guide, and to help – Christ was!

“But Jesus Himself was withdrawing to the wilderness and praying Himself.”

Follow the lead of your Savior!

Excerpt from - *Who’s Afraid of the Holy Spirit*. The complete text of which can be found at http://www.bible.org/series.asp?series_id=183

All Scriptures quoted are from New American Standard unless otherwise noted.