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## Back to the Altar — Ending the Day with God

### DAY 6 — THE ALL-NIGHT PRAYER WARRIOR

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“Now it came to pass in those days that He went out to the mountain to pray, and continued all night in prayer to God” (Luke 6:12).

#### **An Example for Us**

Jesus was known to spend whole nights in prayer, as He did on the night before selecting a team of 12 disciples who would one day take the gospel to the world (Luke 6:12, 13). You might be inclined to stay awake all night too if you had a world to save with the help of 12 unqualified sinners. The responsibility was so heavy. Here is how Ellen White describes Jesus, the all-night Prayer Warrior:

The Majesty of heaven, while engaged in His earthly ministry, prayed much to His Father. He was frequently bowed all night in prayer. His spirit was often sorrowful as He felt the powers of the darkness of this world, and He left the busy city and the noisy throng, to seek a retired place to make His intercessions. The Mount of Olives was the favorite resort of the Son of God for His devotions. Frequently after the multitude had left Him for the retirement of the night, He rested not, though weary with the labors of the day. . . . While the city was hushed in silence, and the disciples had returned to their homes to obtain refreshment in sleep, Jesus slept not. His divine pleadings were ascending to His Father from the Mount of Olives that His disciples might be kept from the evil influences which they would daily encounter in the world, and that His own soul might be strengthened and braced for the duties and trials of the coming day. All night, while His followers were sleeping, was their divine Teacher praying. . . . His example is left for His followers. (*Homeward Bound*, p. 169)

#### **Understanding the Stakes**

While some Christians start their day with God, due in part to the fear of what awaits them once they leave their home, many rarely end it in His presence. Having received what they needed to get them through the day, they barely pause to thank God for His provision and protection over their lives. Tired and worn, they drop into bed with little thought of seeking Him for power to face tomorrow's trials. They rarely even thank Him.

Jesus understood the high-stakes spiritual reality that greeted Him each day. He had a keen awareness of the spiritual danger that His disciples faced, even when they had not a clue (Luke 22:32). Today—and every day—let us never miss the opportunity to end our day with hearts lifted to God in prayer and praise. Let us pray earnestly for each other that God might keep us faithful as we near the return of Jesus Christ.

Let's talk to our God.

## Prayer Time (30–45 Minutes)

### Praying God's Word — Luke 6:12

"Now it came to pass in those days that He went out to the mountain to pray, and continued all night in prayer to God."

#### "He Went Out to the Mountain to Pray"

*Jesus, we are so thankful for Your example to us. Your life is the great pattern we follow, and we pray that You will live out Your life within us. Lord, we recognize our need for private time with You. Help us today to carve out special quiet times for prayer. Show us the "mountain" that is available to us—a place where we can commune with You and learn to hear Your voice more clearly. Amen.*

#### "And Continued All Night"

*God, most of us have never prayed an entire night. Some of us struggle to pray more than 30 seconds. And while the length of prayer does not determine whether You hear us, we do realize that more time with You would result in so many more blessings for us. It is in communion with You that we are strengthened, helped, led, convicted, guided, and blessed. God, please teach us to pray and to make this holy time with You a priority, both individually and as a church body. May we come to the point where our time in prayer is longer than the time we spend on our phones, in front of our TVs, or focused on other distractions. Make us prayer warriors. Amen.*

#### "In Prayer to God"

*Our loving God, with shame we must admit that for many challenges we do not turn first to You but to other sources which are not from You. Often we don't even realize that we have turned so many things or experiences into idols. Please forgive us. Show us where we have sought the things of this world instead of seeking You. You are the all-powerful, almighty God of the universe. We want to seek You only. To You only we pray. Amen.*

## More Prayer Suggestions

**Thanks and Praise:** Give thanks for specific blessings and praise God for His goodness.

**Confession:** Take a few minutes for private confession and thank God for His forgiveness.

**Guidance:** Ask God to grant wisdom for current challenges and decisions.

**Our Church:** Pray for regional and world church needs (see separate sheet with requests).

**Local Requests:** Pray for current needs of church members, family, and neighbors.

**Listen and Respond:** Take time to listen for God's voice and respond in praise or song.

## Song Suggestions

*SDA Hymnal:* Abide With Me (#50); Leaning on the Everlasting Arms (#469); Be Still, My Soul (#461); It Is Well With My Soul (#530)

*Other Songs:* His Sheep Am I; In Moments Like These; My Peace I Give Unto You