

## EXERCISE

# Praying with God

The Gospel of Mark describes one aspect of Jesus' practice of prayer: "rising very early in the morning, while it was still dark, he departed and went out to a desolate place, and there he prayed."

Our days are full of noise and distractions, pulling us away from conversation and real relationship with our Father. In order to hear God's voice, we must have the space and time to listen. This week, find a time and place where it is possible to be completely alone and silent: no phone, no music, no people, no distractions at all. You can do it!

Like any important activity, a consistent prayer life requires preparation. Here are some helpful guidelines as you begin this essential aspect of a life of prayer this week.

1. Choose a time, just for 5 minutes, without your phone, with no one else around, and no distractions. It can be the very first thing you do in the morning, or the last thing you do before bed. Make it the same time every day. When doesn't matter, as long as it is consistent.
2. Choose a consistent place where you are comfortable and able to be alone and intentional with God.
3. Pray something simple and invitational. Make a short list of what is happening in your life and use it as a starting point. Then, simply ask God to meet you and prepare your heart to hear his voice.
4. Be still and be silent.
5. Don't be discouraged if your mind wanders, just speak to God about what is in your heart and mind.
6. At the end of your five minutes, write down reflections on your time of prayer.