

Online Bible Study
Summer Shorts, Number One
Luke 6:12,13

12. Now during those days [Jesus] went out to the mountain to pray; and he spent the night in prayer to God.

13. And when day came, he called his disciples and chose twelve of them, whom he also named apostles:

God, I'm so busy. My list of things to do is long, and when I take time to pray, talking to you about my life makes me think of more things I have to do. Then I have to interrupt my own prayers to jot down those new things to do before I forget them. Sorry.

Jesus spent the night in prayer to God. I can't pray much at night unless I'm really troubled about something. Was he troubled? On normal nights, I'd fall asleep if I tried to pray for very long. Or else praying would make me think of something else I had to do, and then I'd be up for a while instead of getting the rest I need.

We are busy people. And sometimes talking or just thinking about how busy we are does nothing better than add guilt to pressure. Am I too busy for God? No, I'm too busy for me. I'm the one who needs to pray. To reflect on life. To think. To read just for the sake of reading and not merely to find out information I need immediately, as though I were Googling my way through life. But also to loosen my grip on life a little. To trust God more.

Jesus prays before choosing his closest disciples (students, followers), those he would also name apostles (people he would send to represent him to others). Did he expect God to indicate exactly which ones to pick? Some visible sign or mental "ding" to tell him, "Yes, pick that one"? I doubt it. Prayer doesn't work that way for me. Of course, I'm not Jesus, but I don't think God made it that easy for him, either. Besides, if it were that easy, why would he have to pray all night?

Praying does help me clarify choices. *How do I look at this choice in faith, on faith's terms, on God's terms? Where does Jesus' way of looking at life lead me? Am I just seeking the easy way, the selfish way? Is the easier way, maybe, also the faithful way in this case? Am I taking too much responsibility upon myself, more than I have a right to take? Is there an opportunity here for some sort of redemption for someone? Can God do something with this situation? Yes, God can do something, of course, but do I need to understand? Do I need to want God to help this situation? Do I need to see it differently and then respond differently? Is it about that other person, too, and not just about me?*

Jesus spent the night praying to God. I pray better in the morning or the afternoon, but that's not really the issue, is it?