

# Luke 5:16

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And he withdrew himself into the wilderness, and prayed.

## Analysis

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Luke records Jesus' pattern: 'And he withdrew himself into the wilderness, and prayed.' The imperfect tense indicates continuous, repeated action—Jesus habitually withdrew for prayer. The 'wilderness' (Greek 'erēmos,' ἔρημος) provided solitude away from crowds. Prayer sustained Jesus' ministry—He sought the Father's presence regularly, not just during crises. This challenges activist ministry that neglects contemplation. Jesus' power in public ministry flowed from private communion with God. Withdrawing to pray wasn't escaping responsibility but recharging for greater effectiveness.

## Historical Context

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This verse follows accounts of Jesus' growing fame and increasing crowds (v. 15). The more His ministry expanded, the more He withdrew to pray—success increased His need for communion with the Father, not decreased it. Luke emphasizes Jesus' prayer life more than other gospels, recording Jesus praying at key moments: baptism (3:21), choosing apostles (6:12), before Peter's confession (9:18), at transfiguration (9:28-29), in Gethsemane (22:41-44), on the cross (23:34, 46). Jesus models priorities—prayer sustains ministry, relationship with God enables service for God.

## Related Passages

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**Romans 10:9** — Confession and belief for salvation

**John 3:16** — God's love and salvation

**Psalms 19:1** — Heavens declare God's glory

**Genesis 1:1** — Creation of heavens and earth

## Study Questions

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1. How does Jesus' pattern of withdrawing to pray challenge modern ministry activism that neglects contemplation and solitude?
2. What does Jesus' increased prayer during increased ministry demands teach about the relationship between power and communion with God?

## Interlinear Text

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αὐτὸς	δὲ	ἦν	ὑποχωρῶν	ἐν	ταῖς	ἐρήμοις	καὶ
<b>himself</b>	<b>And</b>	<b>he withdrew</b>		<b>into</b>		<b>the wilderness</b>	<b>and</b>
G846	G1161	G2258	G5298	G1722	G3588	G2048	G2532

προσευχόμενος

**prayed**

G4336

## Additional Cross-References

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**Luke 6:12** (Prayer): And it came to pass in those days, that he went out into a mountain to pray, and continued all night in prayer to God.

**Matthew 14:23** (Prayer): And when he had sent the multitudes away, he went up into a mountain apart to pray: and when the evening was come, he was there alone.

**Mark 6:46** (Prayer): And when he had sent them away, he departed into a mountain to pray.

**John 6:15** (Parallel theme): When Jesus therefore perceived that they would come and take him by force, to make him a king, he departed again into a mountain himself alone.

