

BE WITH JESUS

Ps 16:8-9; John 15:4-5



SYNOPSIS

Practicing the Way involves 1) being with Jesus, 2) becoming like Jesus, and 3) doing what Jesus did.

Be With Jesus: Slow down your life and live at the pace and in the presence of Jesus. Practice his presence. Abide in deep, intimate communion with God.

We often conflate performance with significance/acceptance. This association damages our souls and relationships and leads to spiritual deformation. Example: You serve at church to the point of burnout, and judgment and resentment are byproducts.

Remaining/abiding feels passive to us. But we've missed the fact that a "with-God life" is a major narrative thread in the Bible.

- Adam, Enoch, and Noah all walked WITH God.
- God was WITH Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.
- God was explicitly said to be WITH Joseph in the hardest times of his life.
- The Tabernacle was a physical representation of God's desire to be WITH his people, specifically designed to carry reminders of Eden.
- One of Jesus's names was Emmanuel (God WITH us).
- John writes that the Word became flesh and "tabernacled" among us.
- Jesus chose disciples who would be WITH him.

We think right beliefs/thoughts are key, but Jesus taught that it's the branch that remains in the vine that bears much fruit. (John 15:4-5)

Learn to live a with-God life so that you bear the fruit of the Spirit.



STUDY: 3 CHARACTERS

1

CHARACTER 1: RICH YOUNG RULER

(Mark 10:17-27) Despite being rich, young, and a ruler, this accomplished man asked what he must do inherit eternal life. He wasn't asking about the afterlife (quantity); he was asking about eternal/abundant life (quality). He knew he didn't have it despite keeping "all these commands". Jesus diagnosed his idolatry. The with-God life was secondary to him.

2

CHARACTER 2: MARTHA

(Luke 10:38-42) The hostess with the mostest was frazzled and understandably peeved by her sister's lack of involvement. Jesus addressed Martha's skewed priorities. He said, "Martha...you are worried and upset about many things, but few things are needed—or indeed only one. Mary has chosen what is better..." Mary had chosen to sit at Jesus's feet and be with him.

3

CHARACTER 3: BROTHER LAWRENCE

This man filled his mind continually with meditation on the presence of a loving God. He worked in the kitchens, but he wrote that he felt a similar tranquility in his times of busyness and in his times of prayer. He lived in 2 spheres, both in and not of this world. *The Practice of the Presence of God* has become a seminal book on spiritual formation.



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DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1

Where do you measure your identity/significance by your performance? Do you ever feel guilty for "doing nothing"?

2

When was the last time you experienced burnout? When was the last time you "did nothing" and rested?

3

What would it look like for you to fill moments of your life with a conscious awareness of the presence of a loving God?

4

How have you experienced the truth of Rom 8:6 in your life?

5

When was the last time you sat in silence before God? How did it feel? What made it easy/difficult?



BIG IDEA

Be With Jesus. Abide/remain in him. We have a bad habit of dwelling on lesser things. Forming a new grace-filled habit takes practice.

1. Set aside a little time each day for silence & solitude.
2. Quiet your mind & body (deep breaths).
3. Take a short passage & meditate on the words.
4. Remember that while prayer can be for communication, silence & solitude are necessary for communion.