

- I. IMITATION OF JESUS – Part 1 – The Divine Paradigm; Looking to Jesus the pioneer and perfecter of our faith (Hebrews 12:2). Thomas a Kempis – We must imitate Christ’s life and his ways if we are to be truly enlightened and set free from the darkness of our own hearts. Let it be the most important thing we do, then, to reflect on the life of Jesus Christ.**

INTRO

- 1. Based on the Book Streams of Living Water by Richard Foster and the Books of John, the disciple of Jesus AND the sermons of CJ and Mike!**

Notice the pictures of streams that Donna has found for us. What they represent not only in our own lives but down through the centuries in the life of the Church.

- 2. Why do we seek to imitate Christ and how does imitating Christ impact us?**

As CJ reminded us in the opening sermon from I John, John was the beloved disciple – young, leaned on Jesus’ breast, Jesus gave him his mother and gave his mother to him. After Jesus’ death, John the Apostle continued his ministry, eventually settling in Ephesus where he wrote his Gospel and Epistles. He was also exiled to the island of Patmos, where he is believed to have written the Book of Revelation. Tradition holds that he died of natural causes in Ephesus around 100 AD, making him the last of the original twelve apostles to die. (AI)

John also emphasizes that he was an eyewitness to Jesus in his life.

John 1:14 And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we have seen his glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth.

I John 1:3 that which we have seen and heard we proclaim also to you, so that you too may have fellowship with us; and indeed, our fellowship is with the Father and with his Son Jesus Christ. I John 1:7 If we walk in the light as he is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus, his Son, purifies us from all sin.

Mike: “So you are **anointed**. You are empowered, given knowledge, and can go directly to God in prayer.... We are not fruitful by ourselves unless we are connected to Him, on the vine, so to speak. This word **“abiding”** comes from the Greek word *menō*. It has a meaning of remaining in, to have a permanent home. And notice that abiding is a two-way street... Yes, we need to be in Him, but He also is in us. He, of course, is God, and we’re not – but it is still a joint relationship.”

Focus on Jesus not the elephant in the room!

A. Jesus’ Prayer-Filled Life; live of intimacy with the Father, Contemplative Tradition

1. HIS LIFESTYLE:

³⁵Very early in the morning, while it was still dark, Jesus got up, left the house and went off to a solitary place, where he prayed. Mark 1:35 – healing, teaching, decision to move out.

¹⁸ Once when Jesus was praying in private and his disciples were with him, he asked them, “Who do the crowds say I am?” ¹⁹ They replied, “Some say John the Baptist; others say Elijah; and still others, that one of the prophets of long ago has come back to life.” ²⁰ “But what about you?” he asked. “Who do you say I am?” Peter answered, “God’s Messiah.” Luke 9:18-20. His identity question.

One day Jesus was praying in a certain place. When he finished, one of his disciples said to him, “Lord, teach us to pray, just as John taught his disciples.” Luke 11:1

The Lord’s prayer comes from this time

¹² One of those days Jesus went out to a mountainside to pray, and spent the night praying to God. Luke 6:12. Chose the 12 intimate followers.

Then Jesus was led by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil. Matthew 4:1. Beginning of ministry, purification.

¹³ When Jesus heard what had happened, he withdrew by boat privately to a solitary place. Hearing of this, the crowds followed him on foot from the towns. Matthew 14:13. John the Baptist was murdered.

²³ After he had dismissed them, he went up on a mountainside by himself to pray. Later that night, he was there alone, Matthew 14:23. John the Baptist, walks on water.

¹⁶ But Jesus often withdrew to lonely places and prayed. Luke 5:16. Crowds, healing.

2. HIS TEACHING:

²⁹ He replied, “This kind can come out only by prayer.” Mark 9:29. Some things just won’t happen without prayer.

Then Jesus told his disciples a parable to show them that they should always pray and not give up. Luke 18:1. Widow – instruction on prayer

⁶ But when you pray, go into your room, close the door and pray to your Father, who is unseen. Then your Father, who sees what is done in secret, will reward you. Matthew 6:6 – place, private.

But I tell you, love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, Matthew 5:44. What to do when persecuted.

²⁵ And when you stand praying, if you hold anything against anyone, forgive them, so that your Father in heaven may forgive you your sins.” Mark 11:25. Forgiveness in prayer

3. HIS PRAYERS: CONTENT

²⁰ “My prayer is not for them alone. I pray also for those who will believe in me through their message, ²¹ that all of them may be one, Father, just as you are in me and I am in you. May they also be in us so that the world may believe that you have sent me. John 17:20-21. Intercessory.

⁴² “Father, if you are willing, take this cup from me; yet not my will, but yours be done.” Luke 22:42

Think of Jesus saying what we call “The Lord’s Prayer”. “My Father who is in heaven, I adore and honor your name. Your kingdom come and what you want may it be on earth as it is in heaven. Give my people and me, THIS day what we need for today. Lead me not into temptation but deliver me from evil. For it is your kingdom and your power, and your glory for ever!” Could this be what Jesus would pray also?

B. Jesus' Virtuous Life – His Purity of Heart – Holiness Stream

John, CJ and Mike

John 2:15 Do not love the world or the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him.

16 For all that is in the world—the desires of the flesh and the desires of the eyes and pride of life—is not from the Father but is from the world. See what kind of love the Father has given to us, that we should be called children of God; and so we are. The reason why the world does not know us is that it did not know him. Beloved, we are God's children now, and what we will be has not yet appeared; but we know that when he appears we shall be like him, because we shall see him as he is.”

CJ: John knows that followers of Christ will continue to sin (remember “human nature” from last week) Jesus Christ is our advocate.

Then John reminds his readers not to love the things of this world.

That the love of the father is not from this world.

He mentions the Desire of the flesh, the Desire of the eyes, and the Pride of Life (riches).

Mike: Anointing --For Christians since Pentecost, anointing speaks of the indwelling presence of the Holy Spirit that has taken up permanent residence within us. As I have spoken about in other messages, we are the permanent abode of the Holy Spirit. Paul says that “For I do not do the good I want, but the evil I do not want is what I keep on doing.” If you think about the sin that you want to avoid it only sets you up to fall into that sin....When Jesus was crucified, our flesh, our sin-struck part of our lives died with Him. Remember how we spoke last week about abiding in Christ. When we do, we participate in both His death and resurrection. The practice of righteousness is simply depending on Christ’s righteousness. That’s it! Let’s focus in on verse nine: “No one born of God makes a practice of sinning, for God's seed abides in him; and he cannot keep on sinning, because he has been born of God.” He cannot keep on sinning. It very simply comes down to this – you get to pick whether to live in purity or sin, simply by choosing to focus on Christ rather than trying to keep from sinning.

1. CONFRONTING TEMPTATION: If you want to not walk into temptation, know the Word.

⁴ Jesus answered, “It is written: ‘Man shall not live on bread alone, but on every word that comes from the mouth of God.’”⁷ Jesus answered him, “It is also written: ‘Do not put the Lord your God to the test.’”¹⁰ Jesus said to him, “Away from me, Satan! For it is written: ‘Worship the Lord your God, and serve him only.’” Matthew 4:4,7,10

2. HOW TO LIVE: Sermon on the Mount – teaching what he knew to be true.

Now when Jesus saw the crowds, he went up on a mountainside and sat down. His disciples came to him, ² and he began to teach them. ²⁸ When Jesus had finished saying these things, the crowds were amazed at his teaching, Matthew 5:1-2, 7:28

He gives us the way to live a holy life.

3. HOW TO DIE: Dignity –those who wronged him.

³² Two other men, both criminals, were also led out with him to be executed. ³³ When they came to the place called the Skull, they crucified him there, along with the criminals—one on his right, the

other on his left. ³⁴ Jesus said, “**Father, forgive them,** for they do not know what they are doing.”
And they divided up his clothes by casting lots. Luke 23:32-34

CONCLUSION: Two Powerful Invitations

Matthew 4:19 ¹⁹ Jesus called out to them, “**COME**, follow me, and I will show you how to fish for people!”

Mark 6:30-32

He told them, “**COME** away to a deserted place all by yourselves and rest for a while,” because so many people were coming and going that they didn't even have time to eat.
[32](#) So they went away in a boat to a deserted place by themselves.