

The Practices of Jesus: practicing resurrection The Good Way

I) *Read and reflect:*

Read and reflect on Jeremiah 6:16

“Stand at the crossroads and look;
ask for the ancient paths,
ask where the good way is, and walk in it,
and you will find rest for your souls.

Read and reflect on Matthew 11:28-30

“Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened,
and I will give you rest.
Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart,
and you will find rest for your souls.
For my yoke is easy and my burden is light.”

It’s interesting that both Jeremiah and Jesus offer the same promise. How do you understand Jesus to be the good way Jeremiah is speaking of?

II) *Consider this:*

A) Think about the word obedience - it describes what God seeks in us. The word “obedience” comes from the Latin *obaudire*, which is related to listening (*audire*). Listening and doing are inextricably linked. To not act on what we’ve heard means we have not actually listened.

“Obedience is a deep listening ... a hearing with your heart and with your arms and legs.”
Adam McHugh, *The Listening Life*

B) The practices of Jesus:

“We believe that Jesus offered not hard sayings or high ideals but concrete ways to practice God’s will and be delivered from the bondage to sin. In other words, he taught his followers how to participate in God’s reign. He taught what the kingdom is like, what its characteristics are, and therefore what kinds of practices are done by those who participate in it and are ready for it.” *Kingdom Ethics* (Gushee and Stassen)

III) Exercise: a practice audit

“Christian discipleship that is going to be intentional and formative needs to be attentive to all the rival formations we are immersed in.” (James K.A. Smith)

This exercise involves two steps:

A) Observe and inventory: we’re simply observing and taking note of the regular actions and habits in our daily and weekly life. So in a journal or on a document simply keep an inventory of what you do during the day:

- What do you do with the first 2 hours of your day? How do you start your day, what do you do when you get out of bed? Do you check your phone or emails while lying in bed?
- where and how do you engage with people in your day?
- what do you regularly do when you are commuting?
- what regular habits or practices are part of your work or job?
- what meal-time or family practices are there in your life?
- how do you end your day? What do you do with the last 2 hours of your day?
- what happens on weekends? Sundays?
- what activity do you feel incomplete without (however mundane...could be getting coffee or going on a walk)? How does this activity shape your daily routine? How does it shape you?
- are there habits you go to when you feel sad, angry, lonely, or hurt? How do those habits shape you?
- are there regular actions/practices in your day that encourage your anxiety, impatience, or distraction?

Take time to do an inventory all the **actual** routines and practices that fill your daily life.

B) Reflect and evaluate: after a week of observing and noting, reflect on the effects of these practices and habits on your life. We’re not judging the practices but simply asking, “what are they forming in me? What sort of life is taking shape through these habits?”

Ask yourself:

- how do the practices of the first two hours shape the rest of your day? How does this routine shape you?
- what do the media practices/habits of your day shape in you?
- who told you to do these practices?
- to what end are these routines and practices moving me? Are they bringing me life?
- how do I experience God within these practices? Do they help me move toward God?
- how does my work and the rhythms of my work life shape me? Do I like what it’s doing in me? In my relationships?
- how do you see hints of Christian worship in your day? What practices help you embrace God’s work in your day?
- how do these activities, practices and habits shape your daily routine? How are they shaping you?