



PRACTICES OF JESUS



silence

When looking at our lives through the lens of what is Essential, we should always be considering the recorded life of Jesus Christ. As Christians, we believe that the most God-honoring way of life is to model after our Messiah, Jesus. With this comes a wide array of interactions, principles, and disciplines. Our goal is to point our students towards Jesus and encourage them to pursue a life centered around the ways of Jesus.

solitude



WEEK 1



The practice of silence and solitude was one that Jesus took part in on a regular basis. Whether it was retreating in preparation for an event yet to come or a time of grief and mourning, Jesus made it a part of His life rhythm. What would it look like for us to live this out in 2022 and beyond? Our world is full of noise and distraction that will pull us away from the space for intentional silence. Why should we want to? Why does it matter?

TEXT

Matthew 4:1-3; 1 Kings 19: 11-12; Mark 1:35-36;
Luke 5:15-16; Mark 6:31

THP (TAKE HOME POINT)

Silence and Solitude Strengthens the Soul



A GUIDE FOR CONVERSATION

1. GET PREPARED

- Read the overview for the week to get a basic grasp on what is being taught.
- Have the THP (Take Home Point) memorized so that you can bring it up with your student.
- For bonus points, read some/all of the Scriptures listed and do some research on what's being communicated!

2. GET CURIOUS

- Start slow and light. Maybe ask an icebreaker question such as: “Did you meet anyone new tonight?” “What was the highlight of the night?” “Was there any good food?”
- Ask a specific question regarding the THP (Take Home Point). “Hey, I know the THP for tonight was _____. What did you take away from that?”
- Pay attention to their answer! Use their answer to draw out follow up questions. “You mentioned it challenged you in the area of devotion. Where do you feel like you could be more devoted this week?”
- Ask them how the message can apply to their every day life THIS week: “In light of feeling challenged to be more devoted, what if you devoted yourself to homework before video games this week? Or your Bible before your phone?”
- Partner with them: “In light of being challenged to be devoted, what if we— together—devoted ourselves to eating dinner at the dinner table 3 times this week?”

3. GET BENEATH THE SURFACE

- This step—admittedly—will take time and will depend on the type of relationship you have with your student. However, consistency is key. The more you practice, the better you'll get!
- Notice their body language, tone of voice, and other non-verbal cues. What are they projecting? Stress? Anxiety? Anger? Sadness? Joy? Ask a specific question to draw that out: “How are you feeling after tonight?”
- Are they closed off to conversation or open to it? If closed off, ask them if there's anything they'd like to discuss. If they still don't budge, use your judgment on whether to press again or let the conversation be.
- Reaffirm your availability. “If there's anything more you'd like to talk about, I just want you to know that I'm here for you.”

4. GET VULNERABLE

- As you wade into deeper conversation, offer an appropriate amount of vulnerability.
- Begin to share your own experiences regarding the subject being discussed (i.e. “when I was in High School, I had a really difficult time not giving into peer pressure. Here’s how I got help to make better decisions.” Or, “here’s what I wish I would have done to avoid the consequences that naturally came as a result of my poor choices.”)
- Allow your student to see your humanity. Invite them in to a story of relationship that you can write together, in real time.

5. GET PRACTICAL

- At Northview, we always talk about moving people to their “NEXT.” So, for your student (and you!), what is going to be their NEXT after having this conversation?
- Do they need to apologize to someone? Do they need to confess something? Do they need to express gratitude for something? Help them determine what their NEXT is going to be.
- Finally, hold them accountable. Follow up! Make sure that they come through on what it is that they said they’d do.

CONVERSATION TIPS

IF/WHEN THEY DISAGREE

What do we do when there is pushback and rebuttals? How can we avoid letting this conversation become a wedge in the relationship?

What do we do when there is pushback and rebuttals? How can we avoid letting this conversation become a wedge in the relationship?

Be respectful, not dismissive.

We cannot act quickly to dismiss our students as ignorant or be too harsh when responding to their rebuttals. If we do, it will close them off and truth cannot walk through a closed door.

Keep your emotions in check (Don't freak out).

Refuse to get defensive. Don't allow your student to feel as if you're against them. Calmly, politely, wade through the conversation even if you feel them getting hyperemotional.

Find and mention common ground.

In her TED Talk on debate, Julia Dhar says, "...the way to reach people is by finding common ground." We have to intentionally find places to use the phrase "I agree that _____" or "I can see how _____ can make sense."

Where is it that you and your student can find common ground?

Finding common ground can look like: "I can see how you would see it that way." "I can tell you've thought about this." or "I can tell that you have been thinking about this."

Probe a disagreement with questions.

Questions are usually a better use of rebuttal than spitting out our thoughts. Ask them,

"Where did you learn that?"

"How do you see it differently?"

"What brought you to this conclusion?"



RESOURCES YOU CAN BUY:

Spiritual Disciplines for the Christian Life By Donald Whitney

Celebration of Discipline By Richard Foster

Invitation to Solitude and Silence By Ruth Haley Barton

congratulations

Congratulations on engaging in an intentional conversation with your student! Whether you made it through step 1 or all 5 steps, give yourself a pat on the back. Every conversation must start somewhere. Your relationship will be better for it in the long run! You're doing the hard work!

**WHEN FAMILIES WIN,
WE WIN!**