

## OPEN

Describe a follower of Jesus you know that has demonstrated a great measure of transformation in their life. What were they like before meeting Jesus? What differences do you see now?

## STUDY

As we pursue Jesus, as we follow after him, he promised that he would always be with us and he imparted the Holy Spirit to empower us, to be our guide, teacher, and intimate friend. So, it is important to state that without the Spirit's empowerment and presence, we cannot hope to become disciples of Jesus in any significant or lasting way! (There is no "fake it 'till you make it" strategy in the Kingdom) We yield to the power of the Spirit, we listen to what he says, we resonate with the truth he illuminates from the Scripture, and we order our desires around what he desires; to live like Jesus and to love like Jesus. This is a lifetime endeavor! Remember, grace is not opposed to effort, but to earning. And discipleship is not about trying but it is about training.

Take a moment and read the following passages:

- Matthew 7:24-29
- 1 Corinthians 9:24-27
- Hebrews 12:11

1. What is your initial reaction when you read these passages? Observations around these passages? How do these passages relate to your current life stage and patterns?

2. When we speak of effort or action in discipleship, we are not saying if you do then you will be accepted by Jesus. No, we are saying you are accepted by Jesus therefore you act with intention. The first strategy is legalism, the second strategy is based on truth and identity. Where do you most easily fall when it comes to legalism, striving, or earning God's favor or power or love?

Your willpower will never be enough to follow Jesus. That is why we need the Spirit, but your discipleship journey does not happen without your intentional training in the right direction, that is, towards the face and presence of Jesus. Willpower is involved in discipleship. Without him we can't, but often, without us He won't.

## APPLY

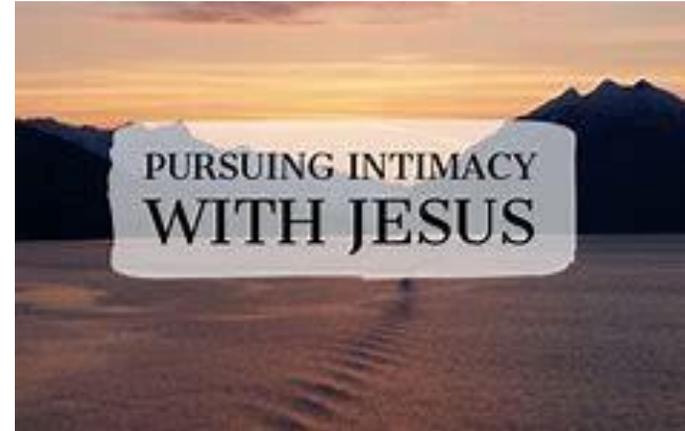
Before you get going on any particular practice, we want you to take a week to do an inventory of your habits and rhythms. It is kind of an audit of your routines. The goal of this exercise is to become more aware of the time you are spending (and not spending) intentionally or beneficially.

1. Reflect on your rhythms, routines, schedule, etc.

- Maybe write down your weekly routine from when you wake up to when you get to sleep. What do you fill a day with?
- You could also print a weekly calendar or something off of the internet and map out what a normal week looks like for you.
- Include everything from work, to picking up the kids, to entertainment.

2. Bring your rhythms before the Father in prayer. Ask him to make connections between the things you are doing, and what they may be doing to your heart. Are they helpful, hurtful, maybe neutral? Be honest and open as you begin this journey!

- Maybe you even decide to pick one of your habits or routines and minimize it or cut it out for a season. (If it is sin, maybe seek some help in eliminating it).



## MESSAGE GUIDE

January 19th, 2020  
Pastor Kurt Staeuble