

## **Week Five: The Way of Jesus & Personal Relationship with God**

### **Introduction**

As we go deeper into the way of Jesus, we must take significant time to understand that at the center of the way of Jesus is a deep relationship with the Father. One thing that's easily missed by many trying to follow the way of Jesus is that His way was empowered by His relationship with the Father. As followers of Jesus, we must not make the mistake of trying to follow His way without also tapping into the Source that empowered it. In this week's session, we'll dive deeper into the life of Jesus and how He shared a personal relationship with the Father.

### **Into the Wilderness**

When you think about the story of Jesus, what are the stories that stand out to you the most? Perhaps it was Jesus turning water into wine at the wedding of Cana or perhaps driving out unclean spirits from the oppressed. Perhaps it was His simple faithfulness preaching the Word with authority in the synagogues. Or perhaps it was his perseverance in going to the cross.

All of these things share something in common. Something that's often overlooked.

Jesus' life and ministry were empowered by regular alone time with His Father. It didn't matter what was going on in Jesus' life. When you look at the stories found in Matthew, Mark, Luke and John Jesus was always making time to get away from the crowds, and even His disciples, to sneak out into the wilderness to be with the Father. Luke 22:39 actually makes it a point to say that it was Jesus' custom to come and go.

What would Jesus do out there alone with God? Well, we know that He prayed. But, He also made time just to *be* with God, to be silent, to meditate, and to meditate on His Word.

This custom wasn't just something Jesus made up. It's something that He learned from others. Moses went up on the mountain for forty days and forty nights to be in God's presence before receiving the Ten Commandments (Ex. 24:18). Daniel would go alone in his house three times a day to bow on his knees to praise and pray to God (Dan. 6:10). Even the Jewish people and certain church traditions to this day still pray three times a day every morning, midday, and evening.

### **Fighting The Distractions**

As followers of Jesus, what makes us think that we don't need time alone with God as well? If Jesus, who is the second person of the Trinity in the flesh, needed to make time for silence, solitude, prayer, meditation, and listening to the direction of the Father, what makes us think that we don't need it in our lives? If Jesus needed it, we need it all the more.

We especially need it in the world we're living in. A world that is constantly going 24/7, that never shuts down. It's good to take time to not answer messages for a few days, or to respond to emails, or to not take the phone call while you're off the clock, or to respond to the comments on social media. All of these things shout to us "do, do, do." But, the way of Jesus is telling us "be, be, be."

We have to fight against the distractions and make time to be alone with God because that union is what we were created for. So, with that in mind, let's take some time to reflect on this week's session and to have some conversation.

### **Discussion Questions**

1. Where are you at in your relationship with God?
2. Do you have a regular practice of being alone with God? Having a communal relationship with God that is shared with your family is great and it's something we're called to. But, what we're looking for here is the one on one relationship. Do you have a regular practice of being alone with God like Jesus did?
3. If so, what does that look like for you? If not, what is keeping you from having a practice of being alone with God like Jesus?
4. What is something you could do starting today to begin integrating in rhythms of being with God? Keep in mind, everyone is wired differently.
5. Does anyone have any stories about their relationship with God that they'd like to share?