EMPHASIS: PRAYER · CLOSING MESSAGE · NOVEMBER 2026

Why. Not. Now.

Everything needed for transformation into Christlikeness is right in front of us. Why not now?

> *23 And he said to all, "If anyone would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross daily and follow me. 24 For whoever would save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for my sake will save it. 25 For what does it profit a man if he gains the whole world and loses or forfeits himself? 26 For whoever is ashamed of me and of my words, of him will the Son of Man be ashamed when he comes in his glory and the glory of the Father and of the holy angels. 27 But I tell you truly, there are some standing here who will not taste death until they see the kingdom of God."*
>
> LUKE 9:23-27 · ESV

The Perfect Plate of Mac & Cheese

In *Home Alone*, Kevin McAllister booby-traps the whole house, then makes himself a perfect plate of Kraft Mac & Cheese. Creamy, cheesy, perfect. He lights two candles, pours a glass of milk, and sits down in the dining room. Then the Wet Bandits arrive. He blows out the candles and walks away. **No one ever eats that mac and cheese.**

NOTES

The Untouched Plate

As we close this prayer emphasis, we're also closing the year. Advent is close, and we'll blink and be in the new year. In almost 15 years of ministry, one issue keeps repeating: **everything needed for transformation into Christlikeness is right in front of us, but we never really consume it.** It's a perfect plate of mac and cheese, and we simply walk away.

WHAT MAKES US WALK AWAY

DISTRACTION · NOISE · CARES · SLEEP · YOU NAME IT

> **We live loving Jesus, but never knowing him deeply or walking with him intimately.**

What if tonight you planted your flag in the ground? What if you threw all your chips in the middle and said, *"I won't be halfway into this. I'll go all the way."*

I

Why.

Why a Rule of Life? Why spiritual disciplines?

II

Not.

If not this, what is your plan to be with Jesus?

III

Now.

Jesus is more interested in your today.

NOTES

I Why.

> [17] *Now the Lord is the Spirit, and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom.* [18] *And we all, with unveiled face, beholding the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from one degree of glory to another. For this comes from the Lord who is the Spirit.*
>
> 2 CORINTHIANS 3:17-18 · ESV

Why a Rule of Life? Why spiritual disciplines? Maybe the most important question: *how will this help me be with Jesus and become like Jesus?* The simple answer: **the goal is to look like, celebrate and worship Jesus.** We are transformed by beholding him.

I won't naturally be with Christ each day → My chances of beholding him are slim → My transformation sits at about 1%

So I have to create a life where everything is centered on the life, presence and practices of Jesus. At Be Love we don't reinvent the wheel. **We do what the church has done for 2,000 years**, making its routines, practices and structure a priority.

01
RULE OF LIFE PRACTICES

02
WE CENTER OUR YEAR AROUND JESUS

03
LITURGY TO WORSHIP, ENCOUNTER AND BEHOLD HIM

"The Christian ideal has not been tried and found wanting. It has been found difficult; and left untried."

— G. K. CHESTERTON

II Not.

[1] My little children, I am writing these things to you so that you may not sin. But if anyone does sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous. [2] He is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only but also for the sins of the whole world. [3] And by this we know that we have come to know him, if we keep his commandments. [4] Whoever says "I know him" but does not keep his commandments is a liar, and the truth is not in him, [5] but whoever keeps his word, in him truly the love of God is perfected. By this we may know that we are in him: [6] whoever says he abides in him ought to walk in the same way in which he walked.

1 JOHN 2:1-6 · ESV

A QUESTION TO PONDER

Do I use God's grace as enablement for who I currently am, or to empower who he created me to be?

There's a world where people simply say no: no to discipline, no to structure, no to a plan. Often it comes with the belief that one thing will change everything. **Once revival comes, once this one move of God happens, everything will click.** But look at the remnants of the last dozen revivals. Did lasting, lifelong change come?

"A spiritual life without discipline is impossible. Discipline is the other side of discipleship."

— HENRI NOUWEN, MAKING ALL THINGS NEW

Experience or Apprenticeship?

> *"There is a great market for religious experience in our world; there is little enthusiasm for the patient acquisition of virtue, little inclination to sign up for a long apprenticeship in what earlier generations of Christians called holiness."*
>
> — EUGENE PETERSON, A LONG OBEDIENCE IN THE SAME DIRECTION

We're all dying for religious experience: the one service that turns into a night at the altar, the one sermon that wakes us up, the one emotional pull that feeds us for another week. **What we reject is the quiet and calm of every day: seeking, learning and knowing more about Jesus.**

"A Rule of Life is an intentional, conscious plan to keep God at the center of everything we do."

— PETER SCAZZERO, EMOTIONALLY HEALTHY SPIRITUALITY

IF NOT THIS · ASK YOURSELF

- [ ] What is my actual plan to be with Jesus? What is the blueprint?
- [ ] Is what I'm currently doing actually working?
- [ ] Am I exponentially more a person of love, or is it more of the same: grow a little, slip back into old habits, start over?

I don't believe in a Rule of Life because it's cool. In the last eight years I've become more like Jesus than I thought I could, and he is showing me how much more like him I can still become.

NOTES

III Now.

As humans, we create future dates for success. But church, understand this: **Jesus is more interested in your today than your tomorrow.** The greatest method for becoming like Jesus is starting today.

I'll wait till my kids get older · *...till I overcome this* · *...till I'm more financially secure* · *...till I'm married* · *...till I see more proof*

> 34 *"Therefore do not be anxious about tomorrow, for tomorrow will be anxious for itself. Sufficient for the day is its own trouble."*
>
> MATTHEW 6:34 · ESV

"The great thing, if one can, is to stop regarding all the unpleasant things as interruptions of one's 'own,' or 'real' life. The truth is, of course, that what one calls the interruptions are precisely one's real life—the life God is sending one day by day."

— C. S. LEWIS

The life, struggles, hours, minutes and seconds you have today are exactly what the Holy Spirit wants to get into.

WHERE WE LAND

I am starting today.

I choose not simply to be a Christian, but a disciple of Jesus, taking his teachings and his ways seriously. Today I choose his call to all: deny myself, take up my cross daily and follow him.

FOR THE WEEK · REFLECT & DISCUSS

01 What "future date" have I set for finally going all the way with Jesus?

02 Do I use grace to stay as I am, or to become who God created me to be?

03 What is one practice from our Rule of Life I will start today?