

The Life Jesus Lived

a sermon in the series
The Apprentice: An Analysis of What it Means to be a Disciple

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I John 2:6

He who says he abides in Him ought himself also to walk just as He walked.

The church of Jesus Christ does not need more money, buildings, training, programs, ministries, or even more people. *This church doesn't need more equities or better edifices or education or people. The church was never stronger than when it had none or little of these. What we need is something that man cannot buy. What it needs is the same kind of life Jesus demonstrated when He was here. When the church is full of the quality of Jesus' life it prospers. When the church has looked to wealth, property, education, and popularity it has suffered loss. It should be the goal of every believer here to pursue to live as Christ lived. This should be your number one priority with no other goal and no other end or purpose.*

The question we want to pursue is how did Jesus live and how was He able to live the kind of life He lived? It is here we can get into problems.

I. The Incarnation is a Mystery

“And without controversy great is the mystery of godliness: God was manifested in the flesh, Justified in the Spirit, Seen by angels, Preached among the Gentiles, Believed on in the world, Received up in glory.” (1 Timothy 3:16)

Here the Apostle Paul, that great apostle with that great intellect, has come to the conclusion that he doesn't understand how God could become a man. All he knows is that He did. He can't explain all the ramifications or implications and the radical dimensions of His humility and condescension, but he knows it happened. It's a great mystery that God could become a man. It's exactly here that we get tripped up when people like me start talking about living like Jesus. We automatically want to say, “Nobody can live like Jesus because He was God.” We allow the deity of Christ to become a stumbling block. We make it an excuse. We offer it every time someone starts to talk about Jesus' life and how we ought to model it as His disciples. Immediately it's erected as a barrier we can't climb over. “We can't live like that. None of us can live like that. He was God. He was unique and special.” Well, yes He was and is and it is a mystery beyond any of our intellects how God could be a man and how Jesus could have both deity and humanity without the two being mixed or confused.

Our problem is that we confuse the two. We struggle to get past His deity and see that He was truly a man. The problem with the disciples was just the opposite. They couldn't get over that He was a man and couldn't see His deity. I cannot explain to you how He was fully God and at the same time a man just like we are, subject to the same weaknesses of these bodies as we are, yet without sin. I can't explain that.

Then of course the question comes up, "If He was God He can't be tempted, can He?" Now we have the whole debate of whether Jesus could have truly sinned when He was tempted—which would mean he was peccable—or was He, as the theologians say, impeccable? This is a debate that's been going on for centuries. God cannot be tempted, nor can He tempt, says James; therefore, some say when He was tempted those 40 days it was a true test but there was no way Jesus could have ever given into Satan's temptation because He was God and God can't sin. How is that possible? And if that's the case then how can He be truly tempted as we are in every way, as the writer of Hebrews says? Which is it?

My answer: I don't know. Greater minds than mine have tried to resolve this issue and they've not come to any conclusive evidence either way. Who am I to suggest an answer? I don't know.

We don't fully understand His body either. Were His appetites like ours? We know He got tired and hungry, we know He could bleed and we know He died. But what about His desires and the appetites of the body and the mind? We call that the flesh, did He have that? Since He was a man He certainly had bodily appetites and desires of the mind. But were they grossly corrupted like ours? Absolutely not.

Well, there you see He really was special and didn't carry the sinful corruption we do, therefore we cannot be like Him. I may not be able to answer those questions or objections, but this I do know: His body and mind grew and thus in this case was changeable. When Adam was made, he wasn't made a baby. He didn't go through the stages of infancy, toddlerhood, and adolescence into manhood. Jesus did. When Adam was made he was already a full-grown man. Jesus came into the world as a baby and He had to go through all the stages. He was like any other boy going through puberty. The voice cracked; he was a little gangly and uncoordinated. Christ went through all of that because He had a human body.

The Bible says,

"And Jesus increased in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and men." (Luke 2:52)

There you have it. Jesus grew in knowledge. He learned things as a man and His body grew. He grew in stature and size and in favor with God and man. This we do know. We know that His body was subject to weakness and tiredness. He was sleeping in the middle of a storm He was so tired. For 40 days and 40 nights He fasted in the wilderness and the Bible says He was hungry.

We do know that He was tempted.

“Then Jesus was led up by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil.” (Matthew 4:1)

There was something going on during those 40 days. But whether He could or could not have sinned I will not debate, because it doesn't prove anything. This we do know—Jesus came to be your model and your example and if that's the case then it must be possible to live like Him. Perfectly? No. But we can live like Christ in the direction and bent of our lives. We can do some of the same things He said about the man who believes in Him, “The works that I do he will do also; and greater works than these he will do.” Jesus intended for you to live like He lived. And so, He was tempted. To the writer of Hebrews something significant happened in the temptations of Christ.

“For we do not have a High Priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses, but was in all points tempted as we are, yet without sin.” (Hebrews 4:15)

I cannot sympathize with someone if I don't know what he or she is going through. I can't know what that person is going through unless I've been through it. Somehow, somehow, Jesus knew the weaknesses you do, yet without sin. What a High Priest. What a Mediator. What an example. What a model!

I also know this: He lived a very disciplined life.

He presented His very body as a living sacrifice each day to the Father, as well as the day He offered Himself on the cross. Every day He practiced bringing His body before the Lord. That's Romans 12:1. He showed us how a Christian is to live. He offered His body to aid the Holy Spirit to fulfill the will of God.

In this same way we are to bring our bodies from opposition to God to assistance of the new life He gives. You are now to offer your body to God in exactly the same way you offered it to the devil. God can cause your body to be a holy instrument for Him.

He showed us how we are to develop our relationship to the Father. And what do we see? He developed relationship to the Father through the conduit of disciplines.

He tells us to study, learn, and imitate His life.

“Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls.” (Matthew 11:29)

“It is enough for a disciple that he be like his teacher, and a servant like his master.” (Matthew 10:25)

“A disciple is not above his teacher, but everyone who is perfectly trained will be like his teacher.” (Luke 6:40)

It is His responsibility to train you so you can be like Him. He told you to observe Him, to study Him and to learn His way of life, and then turn around and do it. Here is our problem—we don't do it because we don't believe we can be like Christ. You will never *do* until you *believe*, for doing is always the fruit of believing. Why would Jesus require His disciples to be with Him and observe His life if He did not intend for them to live as He did?

This we do know, in many respects, He was exactly like us, subject to the same weaknesses as we are, tested as we are, and yet was able to overcome because He lived a life of great discipline. He lived in total reliance upon God.

As you can tell, I'm talking about spiritual disciplines and Jesus practiced them. What are spiritual disciplines? They are nothing more than things we do to deprive our body's appetites and the desires of the mind so that we can control them. There are things that you abstain from on occasional basis in order to bring your body under submission. This is what Paul meant in I Corinthians 9 when he said, "I beat my body and bring it into submission, to make it my slave, so when I preach to others I don't myself become disqualified." Paul is teaching us, and so is Christ by example, that you cannot let your body rule and dominate your Spirit. You have to bring the bodily appetites and the desires of the mind into control and use them for the purposes of God rather than to be led astray by these desires and appetites.

How do you do that? Sometimes you do it by just saying "no" to those appetites. For example, fasting. Fasting is telling your body it cannot eat have food just anytime it wants but you're going to dictate when it will eat and when it will not eat. This is an example of bringing that bodily appetite into submission of the Spirit that is in you.

Then there are other spiritual disciplines that have nothing to do with abstention, that is denying yourself something, but by establishing habits, things you do on a routine basis that is godly. For example, prayer is a spiritual discipline and it should not just be done daily but all the time, *unceasing*, says the apostle. How do you do that? You start doing it and just like the word *practice* suggests, you practice praying until you develop a godly habit of praying routinely. Bible study is another spiritual discipline.

Jesus practiced these disciplines, as we will show you in just a few moments, and I suggest that because He did we ought to all the more.

Before we get to the spiritual disciplines Christ practiced it's important that we quickly address the bad press spiritual disciplines have received.

II. The Bad Press of Spiritual Disciplines

Through the centuries there have been those who have neglected or abused spiritual disciplines in such a way to make them unappealing.

A. The Monastic Movement.

In the third century the Monastic Movement began to rise in Christendom. People began to practice all sorts of physical abuse in order to “make themselves more holy.” Men would literally live on poles for months on a time, and someone once lived for years on a pole and had people bring him small amounts of food and water. There in front of the whole town he lived, trying to make himself godly.

Other men would go without any clothing running through briar patches trying to sanctify themselves.

Others went so far as to mutilate their bodies, making themselves eunuchs trying to suppress the appetite for sexual desire.

Others would invent contraptions of torture they would wear on their bodies. Some would wear a particular scratchy kind of cloth so they were constantly scratching and suffering, believing the more they suffered the holier they would be and it would drive out the sin and remaining corruption in their bodies.

No wonder spiritual disciplines have gotten a bad rap. I wouldn't want to practice those things either.

B. Grace vs. Legalism.

More importantly spiritual disciplines have been attacked and rejected wholesale by Christians because they were seen as being legalistic. So the debate between grace versus legalism enters when discussing spiritual disciplines. Some say, “If you're fasting and practicing solitude it may seem commendable, but it is nothing but works and is opposed to salvation by grace? You can't add anything to grace, it's either all works and no grace or all grace and no works.”

Therefore we have a grace versus legalism issue concerning spiritual disciplines. We will agree the severe abuses I just mentioned are not biblical. But what about prayer and fasting? What about neglecting your bodily appetites for a time in order to bring those appetites under control? Is that law or legalism? Is that opposed to grace?

When you think of being saved by grace, what is the first Scripture reference that comes to mind?

“For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, not of works, lest anyone should boast.” (Ephesians 2:8-9)

There it is. The Gospel of grace that we cherish and are willing to lay down our lives and say to the world that no man earns favor with God, but Christ has purchased it. Yes, the Gospel of grace is what we dearly love. It is the very motive of all we do. We hold up the goodness of God and His grace to sinners. We faithfully maintain that by His grace alone are we saved. Not by what we do can we save or sanctify ourselves.

But it is sad that the Christian church has stopped reading at the end of verse nine. Do you know why you've been saved? All you have to do is read verse 10 to find out why God saved you by grace and not works.

For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them.” (Ephesians 2:10)

God saved you so you could live holy. God has saved you by grace and did for you what you could not do for yourself and by that same grace He is still working in you to cause you to be able to do that which is not natural to these fleshly lives.

You see, saved by grace does not mean a grace without effort. Rather to be saved by grace creates effort. Do you remember a few weeks ago when I said that grace is not opposed to effort? It's never opposed to effort; it's opposed to earning grace. Grace is opposed to the idea that you can get something from God because of your goodness or behavior. That is contrary to the Gospel we believe. The Gospel we believe says God will not only give you what you cannot give yourself—salvation, but the desire and power to obey God.

“Therefore, my beloved, as you have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling.” (Philippians 2:12)

If you stop there, what does it sound like Paul is saying? What do you think Paul was suggesting? I cannot count how many sermons I've heard preached on verse twelve that were out of context, separated and ripped from verse 13. The preacher would rant and rave saying, “Now that you've been saved by grace you stay saved by your works!” Well, if my works couldn't save me, how can my works keep me saved? They can't. They won't. Work out your salvation, yes, there is responsibility, you have something to do, but keep reading. There is another verse, verse 13. There is one word, a conjunction, a bridge—*for*.

“...for it is God who works in you both to will and to do for His good pleasure.” (Philippians 2:13)

You're not alone in this thing. His yoke is easy and His burden is light. When you're yoked with Christ it is the grace of God that works in you. We cannot sanctify ourselves. Only God in His grace can do this. But I am to participate in His grace and submit to it by disciplining myself in body and mind.

Charles Spurgeon said, “I must take care above all that I cultivate communion with Christ, for though that can never be the basis of my peace—mark that—yet it will be the channel of it.”

You have to cultivate communion with God just as you would any other relationship. The problem is we view God in such awkward and unbiblical ways. We see Him as this mysterious figure as if He is not a person; but He is a person. You have a relationship with the Supreme Person in the entire universe. And you have to cultivate a relationship with Him as a person. He's already

started the relationship; He introduced Himself to you, making Himself known to you in the person of His Son. He wants to be involved in your life, but you have to cultivate that relationship too. Spurgeon is saying, "I have to cultivate communion with God but that work is not the basis of my peace, it's not the foundation or reason for it. My effort of communing with God is merely the channel of communion."

The way I say it is that it's the way I practice my communion with God. You cannot do anything to make God love you more than He already does. Praise God! Everybody ought to stand up and let out a glorious shout to the Lord for that. He will not love you any less or more than He already loves you. He does not love you less than any blessed saint that is in His presence right now. But you have responsibility to cultivate that relationship and you do that through these disciplines. The reason you do that is because the body and mind will work contrary to that cultivation of communion with God and they will do so until you bring them into submission.

The last thing I want to say about these bad practices and their abuses is this: you can fast, you can pray, you can practice solitude and meditation, and you can involve yourself in service to the Lord but none of these things are going to make you holy.

These spiritual disciplines do not make you holy, but rather they are the means God's grace uses to do so.

Practice without ability will not produce an athlete, musician, or craftsman. The same is true in the spiritual realm.

For years I wanted to play guitar. I was given my first guitar at the age of 12 at Christmas. I sat down and began to find chord structures on my own in a little book given to me by my uncle and in a short matter of time I could play any song. But I always wanted to play like a Chet Atkins or Merle Travis. Many of you may not know the name Merle Travis but you should because he's from Western Kentucky in Muhlenberg County. His style was thumb picking, and, oh, I love it! I have tried and tried and tried to learn to play the guitar like that. I have practiced and practiced and practiced but to this day I cannot play anything like Chet Atkins or Merle Travis. Why? Because I don't have the natural ability of a Chet Atkins or Merle Travis.

Listen closely. The same is true in the spiritual realm. Practicing these disciplines without the new life of God in a person will not produce a godly spirituality. You've got to have God and His grace in you, and if you do, the more you practice these disciplines the more godly you become because there is something there given to you by the grace of God to develop.

Well, let us proceed to our final heading. If we are to live the kind of life Jesus lived, then we must know what kind of life He lived and how He was able to do so.

III. The Disciplined Life of Jesus

A. Jesus Practiced Simplicity of Life.

For example, a man walked up to Jesus and said, “I would sure like to be one of Your disciples.” That’s the Durham translation, not the ESV or NIV, that was my rendering. “I would sure like to be one of Your disciples, can I follow You?”

“And Jesus said to him, ‘Foxes have holes and birds of the air have nests, but the Son of Man has nowhere to lay His head.’” (Matthew 8:20)

What was Jesus saying? We’ve already answered that in this series, have we not? He was not saying that if you’re really going to be a Christian you’ve got to sell your home, become homeless, and an itinerant preacher with 12 guys following you around. Thank God that is not salvation. That is not what is required to be a disciple. You cannot interpret Jesus to say a disciple must be homeless and an itinerant preacher traveling the world preaching the Gospel. What He is saying is that His life is very simple. “I do not allow My life to be encumbered and loaded down with unnecessary things. I have a purpose.”

“Do not lay up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy and where thieves break in and steal;” (Matthew 6:19)

“Therefore I say to you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat or what you will drink; nor about your body, what you will put on. Is not life more than food and the body more than clothing?” (Matthew 6:25)

Jesus is saying, “I live a simple life. I don’t allow these other things to crowd my vision of what my purpose is.”

“I’m just content to have food and clothing,” said the Apostle Paul to Timothy. Jesus wasn’t even concerned about having a roof over His head. He was that simple in His agenda. Why? Because He only had one agenda and that was to do the Father’s will.

Do you know that you too have only one will and it is the exact purpose Jesus had—to do the Father’s will?

Most of our lives are complicated and complex, not simple. *Oh no, pastor. You’re quite wrong there. I’m a very simple person. My life is pretty routine and normal, not complex at all.* Perhaps it isn’t in the way the world defines complexity but not the way the Bible defines it. I suggest I am right and your life is very complex because your life is so crowded by this and that you don’t know if you’re coming or going. Your life is so crammed with agendas and things that you’re cross-purposed. We have so many personal agendas we are often working against ourselves. This is not simplicity but complexity.

If you are a Christian you are a disciple and a disciple is someone who is on mission for Christ. You’re on mission and that’s why Jesus said if you are to follow Him you have to be single-

purposed, single-minded, with a single heart. You have one agenda only. How many of your lives are filled with anxiety and sometimes even depression? May I suggest that perhaps a very basic fundamental reason is that your life is too complex, you've got too much on your plate and your heart is divided and not single in its purpose?

You've heard me say many times that I'm simply a slave and I rejoice in my slavery to Christ because it makes life so much easier. A slave has only one thing to do—please his master. A slave doesn't get up and say, "What am I going to do today? What's on my agenda?" Not at all. He gets up when the master tells him and he goes to bed when the master tells him. He does exactly what the master tells him, exactly how he tells him. He has no concerns but one and that is to please the master.

That's the life God intends for us. He intends for our life to be that easy, that simple, that uncomplicated. I don't have any decisions to make as a slave, not one. My only decision was when I gave Him my life. From there on out my life has one aim—to follow every decision He makes for me. Friends, it will remove much of your anxiety and worry if you will live daily with a single purpose, recognizing you are on mission and the mission is to please your God.

If you're on mission you must think about how to simplify your life so you can fulfill your mission. If you were going to a foreign country to serve as a missionary you would have to change your life quite a bit, wouldn't you? You've seen this play out before your eyes. God has given this church an awesome example in the lives of Paul and Velda Rikel. Let's talk about it for a few minutes.

Paul and Velda felt the call to go to Zambia and what did they do? They started simplifying their lives. One of the first things they did was sell their home. Maybe two years before they went to Zambia they sold their house. They wanted to be ready at the very moment God opened the door and to be saddled with a house would have been a delay for who knows how long. So in obedience to Christ they put their home up for sale and did what had to have been difficult for a 50-year-old—go back and live with mom. That's what they did because they were on mission. They lived a simple life with a single purpose.

Then they began to sell other belongings until all they had on the day they boarded the plane was what their suitcases could hold. Not only that, but if you remember two months before they left in September of last year they quit their jobs with no source of income because they believed the time was at hand and they had to be that ready. They were divesting themselves as fast as they could. It was a marvel to watch. I remember they would come to me for counsel and all I could do was pick my jaw off the desk and say, "Keep going, brother. We're praying for you, sister. We're behind you." I was watching and learning what it means to be disciplined spiritually to live a simple life because you're on mission.

I suggest that some of you have confused your lives with too much and that's why you don't feel like you have a purpose for God and you're making no difference. However, you are as much on mission as Paul and Velda are in Africa. God has a purpose for you right here. When are you going to simplify your lives as Christ did?

B. Jesus Practiced Solitude.

“So He Himself often withdrew into the wilderness and prayed.” (Luke 5:16)

Jesus had to get alone and away from other people. Have you not read the text that says He had compassion on the crowds and He wept because they were like sheep without a shepherd? You’ve heard Him say, “I’ve not come to be ministered unto but to give My life as a ransom for many,” yet there were many times in His ministry where He just had to get away from people. Why? Because He needed to be alone where it’s quiet. There is something about everyday life and its noise that clutters your heart. Oh, how we need solitude. We need to get alone and away from the world.

We’re going to take each of these disciplines and devote a message to each one of them and explain how you can practice them, we’re just going through a few this morning.

C. Jesus Practiced Prayer.

The Gospels are all the time talking about His prayer life.

“However, this kind does not go out except by prayer and fasting.” (Matthew 17:21)

The Bible records He would rise early to pray and stay awake late into the night. One time we see He went up on the mountain and continued all night in prayer. Jesus practiced the spiritual discipline of prayer.

“Now it came to pass in those days that He went out to the mountain to pray, and continued all night in prayer to God.” (Luke 6:12)

D. Jesus Practiced Fasting.

“Then Jesus was led up by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil.² And when He had fasted forty days and forty nights, afterward He was hungry.” (Matthew 4:1-2)

After this we don’t see much of Jesus fasting, but He practiced it because He would not allow the bodily appetite of hunger to rule Him and must not let it rule us.

E. Jesus Practiced Meditation.

I have no verse for this discipline in the life of Jesus. I have no verse that said, “Jesus practiced meditation,” although I’m convinced He did. I’m convinced because of Psalm 1. In this psalm we have the pronouncement of the man who is blessed. Can you tell me a man more blessed than Jesus?

“Blessed is the man Who walks not in the counsel of the ungodly, Nor stands in the path of sinners, Nor sits in the seat of the scornful; ² But his delight is in the law of the LORD, And in His law he meditates day and night. ³ He shall be like a tree Planted by the rivers of water, That brings forth its fruit in its season, Whose leaf also shall not wither; And whatever he does shall prosper.” (Psalms 1:1-3)

Now tell me, can you find a man that better describes than Jesus? Jesus practiced meditation. What is meditation? It’s when you focus your powers of concentration on God, His commandments, and you muse, think, contemplate, and meditate on them.

I know I have probably wearied some of you with this message. It’s not one of those hoorah let’s fight the devil and take him and set him on fire messages, but rather it might feel like you’re the one being set on fire. It’s an unpleasant experience to be told you need to discipline yourself and do what you don’t like doing. But may I ask you this question, if Christ did not have the corruption of human nature that we do and yet He saw it necessary to practice the hard work of establishing godly habits, then don’t you think you and I in order to be an obedient disciple, must do the same?

The very argument that some would pose that we don’t have to do all this because we’re not like Jesus, we’re not like God, well even God in flesh practiced these disciplines and if God in the flesh had to do them, how much more must I?

“But reject profane and old wives’ fables, and exercise yourself toward godliness.” (1 Timothy 4:7)

John Wesley made the following observation: “It was a common saying among the Christians of the primitive church, ‘The soul and the body make a man; the spirit and discipline make a Christian:’ implying that none could be real Christians without the help of Christian discipline. But if this be so, is it any wonder that we find so few Christians; for where is Christian discipline?”

Think about this. The word *disciple* comes from the word *discipline*. You can’t be a disciple of Christ without discipline.

Discipline has to be integral to discipleship since one of the fruits of the Spirit is self control, which is nothing other than self-discipline. It is the last fruit mentioned. The evidence that you are Spirit-controlled is that you are self-controlled. That you can reign in your appetites and desires and bring them into submission is evidence that you are under the Spirit’s control.

You cannot advance as a Christian unless you live like Jesus did. He is our example. The very first prerequisite to being a disciple of Jesus is self-denial, “If anyone desires to come after Me, let him deny himself” (Matthew 16:24).

In the end the disciplines we have mentioned, which we’re going to learn more about when I get back from Africa, are nothing more than a hungry heart for God practicing that hunger. If you heard

“spiritual disciplines” and thought, *Uh-oh, this is not going to be fun.* Then you misunderstood everything I said. All we’re talking about is having a hunger for God and how you satisfy that hunger.

When you are hungry physically what are your common practices? You don’t start eating right away, unless you eat junk food all the time, and if you do then we’ll need another lesson on the spiritual discipline of not eating junk food. No, when you’re hungry you go to the kitchen and go through the process of preparing food, cooking it, and then finally eating it. How much time does it take for you to do all of that in comparison with the time it takes to eat it? A lot.

I only cook two special meals a year, Thanksgiving and Christmas, and I only do the meat, not the entire meal. I do the turkey for Thanksgiving and the standing rib roast for Christmas. Then of course I like to do a little barbecue throughout the year, but that’s just smoking the meat. But for example, at Thanksgiving, the time of preparation to time of eating is really imbalanced. Frankly, this bothers me.

It’s a process of many hours to make a turkey. Days before you have to thaw it out, then the night before we brine our turkey where I make a solution and then submerge the turkey. Then the next day I put the special spices on the outside and then begin the several hour process of roasting it with many basting. I try to baste my turkey every 20 to 30 minutes with real butter. Then, after the turkey is finished you put it on the table and carve it and within 20 minutes it’s all gone.

I’ve always thought, *This is not right. All this work and it’s already over?*

Have you ever noticed that it takes a long time to prepare the food but it takes no time to eat it? But the length of preparation does not stop you, does it? And why is that? It is because your hunger drives you to do the necessary preparation.

Are you really hungry for God? If you are you will be glad to prepare your heart to meet with God through these spiritual disciplines. They will be the channel of your communion with God and you will be glad for the time invested in them because they are preparation, body and mind, for communion and fellowship with God. Are you hungry for Him? Are you hungry to be alone with God and experience His presence?

The way you’re made as fallen beings requires appetites and desires to be brought into submission so you can use your body to help you to be godly. Spiritual disciplines help in this process. What will help you to do them is not the desire to do right and gain favor with the Lord, that is legalism. But rather, you must be fueled by this hunger that screams *I don’t know Him like I should know Him and I want to. God, where are You? When shall I come and appear before my God? I know You’ve promised to never leave or forsake me but I need You here. I want to talk with You. I need to hear You. I need Your grace.* You must discipline the body and the mind in order to bring them into submission. How hungry are you? Amen.