

# PRACTICING THE WAY

## Key Scriptures

John 14:6	John 14:15–17	John 15:4–5	Matthew 11:28–30	Matthew 7:24	John 13:35
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## We Are All Being Formed

- Every person is being formed—whether we realise it or not
- Formation happens spiritually, emotionally, relationally, neurologically, and morally
- Our habits, pace, anxieties, phones, and life experiences are shaping us

### Key Question:

Not “*Am I being transformed?*” But “*Who—or what—is forming me?*”

- We admire Jesus, sing about Jesus, believe in Jesus
- But are our lives being **formed by Jesus?**

## Jesus Is “The Way”

### John 14:6 (NLT)

“I am the way, the truth, and the life...

- Before the word *Christian*, believers were called **followers of the Way**
- Jesus is not just a guide to God — He is **God in the flesh**
- God created humanity as **Imago Dei** (image-bearers)
- Humanity is flawed, broken, selfish — and yet there is no “Plan B”

### Jesus fulfills what we could not

- The Law was good, but could not transform hearts
- Jesus comes to fulfill the Law and **write it on our hearts** (Jeremiah)
- He offers a new way to be human — formed by love, compassion, justice, and inclusion

## Jesus Offers an Extraordinary Life

### John 10:10

“I have come that they may have life, and life abundant.”

- The word *abundant* (Greek: *perissos*) means:
  - Exceeding the usual
  - Extraordinary
  - Remarkable

### Jesus doesn't offer just survival — He offers flourishing



## Transformation Comes Through the Spirit, Not Striving

### John 14:15–17

- Obedience still matters — but now it flows from relationship
- The Holy Spirit empowers us to live this life
- Shift from external rules → internal transformation

### This is not perfectionism

- It's connection
- It's participation
- It's becoming more like Christ through the Spirit

## Abiding Is the Source of Fruit

### John 15:4–5

- We are branches, Jesus is the vine, He provides the nutrients we need to produce healthy fruit
- Fruit comes from **remaining**, not striving
- We are producing fruit right now — the question is *what kind?*

### Fruit can look like:

- Peace
- Healthy relationships
- Love for others
- Sharing good news
- A life that blesses others

## Jesus Invites Us to Apprenticeship, Not Just Belief

### Matthew 11:28–30

- Jesus invites the weary and burdened
- “Take my yoke... learn from me”
- *Learn* = apprentice

### In the first century:

- Following a Rabbi meant:
  - Be with them
  - Become like them
  - Do what they do

Jesus didn't say:

- “Agree with me”
- “Say a prayer and wait for heaven”

He said:

**“Come, follow me.”**

## Following the Way Requires Intention, Not Just Inspiration

- We live in an age of endless spiritual content
- Inspiration is good — but inspiration alone does not transform

### Matthew 7:24

“Anyone who listens to my teaching and follows it is wise...”

- Practice is the bridge between belief and becoming
- Grace is not opposed to effort — it is opposed to earning
- We cooperate with grace through intentional practices

## The Practices of Jesus Shape a Life Like His

Jesus practiced:

- Prayer
- Solitude
- Sabbath
- Fasting
- Community
- Alignment with God’s will

### These practices are not legalistic rules

- They are relational habits
- They keep us connected to God
- They slow us down enough to notice God
- They shape us into Christlikeness

## Transformation Is Slow, Hidden, and Often Unimpressive

- We expect instant results
- Jesus describes the Kingdom as a process
  - Seeds growing underground
  - Yeast working through dough

### Practices work over time

- Peace through God’s presence is immediate and becomes more tangible over time
- Long-term rewiring of desires and loves
- One day we look back and realize — our life has shifted

## Hurry Is the Enemy of Spiritual Life

- Hurry destroys love, listening, and presence
- Jesus was never rushed
- He embraced interruptions and obscurity

## Slowing down is spiritual wisdom

- Time with God multiplies peace
- God's time restores and energizes us

## Community Is Essential to Practicing the Way

- Jesus never practiced alone
- He lived, travelled, and ate with others

### Community provides:

- Encouragement
- Accountability
- Grace
- Growth

Isolation leads to stagnation but transformation happens in community and connection

## The Goal Is Love, Not Perfection

- Practices are not about earning God's love
- They make space to **receive** God's love
- The goal is not to be impressive — but connected

### John 13:35

"By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another."

## The Invitation

Jesus' invitation still stands:

"Follow me."

Questions to reflect on:

- Are our habits aligned with our hopes?
- Is our pace aligned with love?
- Is our schedule aligned with our values?

This is not about trying harder — but training wisely  
Not about more activity — but deeper connection

### Invitation:

- Slow down
- Abide
- Practice
- Become