

NATIONAL FAST 2024

THE JOURNEY CONTINUES
DAY 5 & 6



The Journey Continues: Day 5 & 6

1. The Invitation

Responding: Wonder and Renewed Recognition

Spiritual Direction Exercise

Silence

Take a few moments to become still, settling into this time and space of prayer

Silence

Awareness

Become aware of the loving presence of the Trinity here, now.

The Father, Son, and Holy Spirit are with, around, and within you.

Silence

Reflection

Matthew 16:13-15 When Jesus came to the region of Caesarea Philippi, he asked his disciples, "Who do people say the Son of Man is?" They replied, "Some say John the Baptist; others say Elijah; and still others, Jeremiah or one of the prophets." "But what about you?" he asked. "Who do you say I am?"

Imagine Jesus asking you "Who do you say I am?"

What would you say or do in response?

Silence

May God bless you to know and respond to Jesus' invitations.

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Posturing Liturgy

Leader:

Strength is often measured by how long we can hang on without losing our grip. The world tells us to cling and grasp tightly. But sometimes it takes greater strength to just let go.

“Have the same mindset as Christ Jesus: Who, being in the form and nature of God, did not consider equality with God something to grasp and hold tightly; rather, he made himself nothing by taking the very nature of a servant...”

Response:

Lord, you willingly let go and gave up your entitled position because you loved us. Show us what we are grasping at. Give us the strength to loosen our grip and let go of the things that are not of you, so that we may love you more.

Leader:

Here is a mystery; the more we let go of, the more we can lay hold of. The more that we empty ourselves the more we can be filled. When we come to the end of ourselves, the Lord always offers us new beginnings.

Response:

You are the Lord of new beginnings. You never give up on us and we are never alone. Renew us to begin again. We embrace the new.

Moments of Silence.

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2. Anchoring Reflection: “Learn from Me”

Focus

The power of invitation. We see this is the heart of discipleship, to respond to the invitation of Jesus and to extend that invitation to others. To experience the rest that is so important in these frantic times. And now to respond to his invitation to ‘learn’. John Wimber said often “be lifelong learners.”

We enter into this key idea from the passage of taking on his yoke, a well-known agrarian picture, essential for all farming with a team of animals. Jesus being a carpenter, and a son of a carpenter would have known a lot about yokes. It seems like Jesus is saying that this is what his relationship with the Father is like, and he invites us into a similar relationship with him, friendship, learning, and submission. Often the younger less experienced ox was yoked to the older wiser animal to learn the right way of pulling a heavy plow or weight.

Different commentators mention that the rabbis talked about the yoke of the kingdom, the yoke of the law, the yoke of the command, the yoke of repentance, the yoke of faith, and the general yoke of God. In this context, it is easy to see Jesus simplifying and saying, “Forget about all those other yokes. Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me.” This is the beautiful expansive invitation of Jesus, who invites one who may have little or no education and another with a PhD to both come into His company to learn of his love and wisdom.

Scripture

Matthew 11:28-30 (Amplified)

“Come to Me, all who are weary and heavily burdened [by religious rituals that provide no peace], and I will give you rest [refreshing your souls with salvation]. Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me [following Me as My disciple], for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest (renewal, blessed quiet) for your souls. For My yoke is easy [to bear] and My burden is light.”

Reflection

What area in your life do you sense the greatest need to learn from Jesus?

Quote

“How should we respond when we find the Word perplexing or dry or boring or unappealing? We keep eating. We receive nourishment. We keep listening and learning and taking our daily bread. We wait on God to give us what we need to sustain us one more day. We acknowledge that there is far more wonder in this life of worship than we yet have eyes to see or stomachs to digest. We receive what has been set before us today as a gift.”

Tish Harrison Warren, *Liturgy of the Ordinary- Sacred Practices in Everyday Life*

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3. Common Prayer: Ephesians 3

Magnificent Father
Creator of everything on heaven and on earth
We fall to our knees and pray

Strengthen us by your Holy Spirit
Not with a brute strength, but a glorious inner strength
That Christ might live in us as we open the door to our hearts and invite You in

Christ, make a home in our hearts as we trust You

Plant our feet firmly on love that we would be able to receive, together, the extravagant dimensions of Christ's love.

Empower us to reach out and meet you in your love.
Empower us to experience the height and breadth and depth of Your love for us,
that surpasses knowledge, that we may be filled with all the fullness of God.

We believe you are able to work within us and are able to accomplish within us abundantly far more than we could ever ask or imagine.

Thank you, that you do this not by pushing us around but by Your Spirit working, deeply and gently within us.

Glory be to God in the Church!
Glory be to God in Jesus, the Messiah!
Glory be to God through all the generations!
Amen

Please Note: Throughout the fast we encourage you to send into the VC team what you are hearing and sensing the Holy Spirit may be speaking to us as a family. Please send your contributions to the listeningteam@vineyard.ca

During the live call please submit "in the moment" brief contributions on the chat wall and any longer submissions in email form to the above address. Thank you for leaning in and listening. Our team is regularly reviewing & considering what is coming in as well as comprising summaries that are woven into our daily zoom gathering. Bless you as you continue to lean into Jesus during these days!