

## Becoming Like Jesus | Week 1 - Jesus Slowed Down

### Message Big Idea

To be deeply formed into the image of Christ, we must slow down to enter a place of solitude and stillness before God.

### Scripture

Luke 5:15-16, Mark 1:35, Luke 22:42-44

### Points to Keep In Mind

1. This series is a call to a transformed way of being in the world...to become like Jesus...because here is the truth: God is not interested in transforming some parts of you and leaving the rest untouched. He desires to transform every part of you until, as the Apostle Paul puts it: "...Christ is formed in you!" -Galatians 4:19
2. The prospect of slowing down and spending time in solitude might seem daunting or frustrating. Here is some helpful advice adapted from Rich Villodas' book "Deeply Formed Life" that can help us practice solitude well.
3. We can connect with God in a place of solitude through silent prayer by creating space to be with God and hear from God.
  - a. Focus on Relationship. Don't get hung up in doing it right. Silent prayer is not a technique to master but a relationship to enter into. Just fix your heart and mind on the presence of God.
  - b. Normalize Boredom. Silent prayer can feel uneventful, even dull. However, boredom can be the space in which God works in us with all of our distractions stripped away.
  - c. Reframe Distractions. Sometimes we feel defeated because when we try to enter into times of being present to God, we find our minds wandering in a million directions. But Thomas Keating reminds us, "If your mind gets distracted ten thousand times in twenty minutes of prayer, It's ten thousand opportunities to return to God."
4. Make sure to check out the website with your small groups to generate discussion around the practice of fasting and to encourage people to take practical action steps.

### Additional Quotes

*"Jesus will not permit himself to be defined by the people or be so occupied as to be cut off from the source of his power." -R. T. France, Luke*

*"Sometimes we get so busy rowing the boat, we don't take time to stop and see where we're going...or what we're becoming." Wayne Cordeiro, Leading on Empty*

*Solitude's primary function is to settle us into ourselves in God's presence...The chaos of the human soul will settle if it sits still long enough." -Ruth Haley Barton*