

Formed in the Hidden Place

Mark 1:35-39

Pastor Jeremy Peters

Mark 1:35-39 NLT

Before daybreak the next morning, Jesus got up and went out to an isolated place to pray. Later Simon and the others went out to find him. When they found him, they said, "Everyone is looking for you."

But Jesus replied, "We must go on to other towns as well, and I will preach to them, too. That is why I came. So he traveled throughout the region of Galilee, preaching in the synagogues and casting out demons."

The secret to living in the now accessible Kingdom of God here on earth is to adopt Jesus' _____.

"Following 'in his steps' cannot be equated with behaving as he did when he was 'on the spot.' To live as Christ lived is to live as he did all his life... Our mistake is to think that following Jesus consists in loving our enemies, going the 'second mile,' turning the other cheek, suffering patiently and hopefully—while living the rest of our lives just as everyone around us does."

~ Dallas Willard

What did Jesus do when the spotlight wasn't on?

Mark 1:35 - *Before daybreak the next morning, Jesus got up and went out to an isolated place to pray.*

Why is the Hidden Place (solitude and silence) so powerful?

1. It helps to free us from that which _____ us.

THE KINGDOM IN ACTION

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2. It helps us to be _____ to God's whisper.

Mother Teresa was once asked by an interviewer what she said to God when she prayed. "I don't say much," replied Mother Teresa, "mostly I just listen." "And what does God say to you?" asked the interviewer. "He doesn't say much," she replied. "Mostly He just listens. And if you don't understand that, I can't explain it to you."

3. It helps to revitalize vision and our _____ calling.

"In Jesus Christ we see virtues combined that never anywhere else are combined. We see tenderness without weakness, strength without a milligram of harshness, humility without one ounce of uncertainty. You see unbending convictions and yet complete and utter approachability, You see power without the slightest insensitivity. You see passion without the slightest prejudice. You see total integrity without any rigidity. Never unthinking, never a false word, never a mis-step. What is that? It is absolute beauty. In Jesus Christ you are looking at God through a human nature. But Paul has the audacity to say that that can be formed in you and me."

~ author unknown

An Accessible Discipline: The Daily Office

The word *Office* comes from the latin word *opus* which means _____.

For the early church, the Daily Office meant 'the _____ of God.'

4 Elements:

i. _____

ii. _____

iii. _____

iv. _____

SMALL GROUP DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

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Mark 1:35-39

- 1) What from this passage and Sunday's teaching stood out to you?
- 2) Read the quote from Dallas Willard on the outline. On Sunday Pastor Jeremy spoke about our tendency to live life in the kingdom with one foot in, one foot out without seeking to live the 'overall lifestyle' of Jesus. He used the illustration of an athlete whose preparation behind the scenes enables them to perform at the highest levels 'in the spotlight.'

Do you find this illustration helpful? Pastor Jeremy suggested that we understand the need for preparation in most areas of life but don't always make the connection to our apprenticeship journeys. Do you agree or disagree?

Why don't we engage formation behind the scenes more intentionally than we do? Take some time to discuss as a group how we can intentionally engage in spiritual formation when the spotlight isn't "on" so to speak.

- 3) On Sunday Jeremy said, "It is noteworthy that the busier Jesus gets, the more he prays. Our reaction tends to be the opposite... The more pressure we feel, the more the crowds are pressing in, the more our inner circle exhorts us, the more we feel that we *don't have time* for the Hidden Place, we don't have time for prayer. And for the vast majority of people in our Western society, the level of activity in our life greatly supersedes our ability to sustain them while experiencing a deep and fulfilling life with God where we are as a regular matter of course, accessing the Kingdom of God."

Is this true of you? Is the time you spend alone with the Lord sufficient to sustain the level of activity you experience in your life? By what might you measure this?

- 4) Pastor Jeremy mentioned that the nuance behind the disciples 'looking for' Jesus (Everyone is looking for you!) was actually one of control – they had an agenda for him. As such, Jesus' mission is endangered by those closest to Him because of expectations as to what Jesus should be doing. Where do you have a tendency to try and set the agenda for Jesus regarding things in your life? Have you ever recognized this as endangering the plans Jesus has for your life and ministry?
- 5) There is a lot of varied opinion on what constitutes success in ministry (both in Jesus' day and in ours). The disciples and the crowds had certain assumptions regarding what successful ministry for Jesus would look like and tried to force their agenda. Clearly Jesus thought differently.

What do you believe ministry "success" looks like for us at St. Albert Alliance Church?

How might retreating to the hidden place reorient our priorities to God's priorities?

- 6) Read Mother Theresa's quote from the sermon outline. What do you think she meant? Have you ever experienced "deep calling to deep" in your relationship with God where your encounter was so intimate that conversation wasn't necessary? Do you believe this is possible for the "average" person?
- 7) Pastor Jeremy spoke on Sunday about the discipline of the Daily Office where 3 times a day we take a mini retreat for a few minutes to be with God. Given your day to day routine what might it look like to stop morning, mid-day and evening for a few minutes be with God? Do you see enough potential value to try this out this week?
- 8) Be sure to spend time praying for one another that the Holy Spirit will fill you and empower you to fully embrace the overall lifestyle of Jesus so that you can more fully enter into the Kingdom of God that is now available to us.