

Adoration
Resting
Confessing
Fasting
Prayer

2021 Handout/
Exercise V-2

Growing in Obedience

Introduction

"I've laid down a pattern for you.
What I've done, you do."

The Message
John 13: 15

When we speak of ... better **Becoming More Like Jesus**, it's not a difficult concept to grasp. Rather, for the minister, it is a matter of obedience.

*"Only he who believes is obedient;
only he who is obedient believes.*

Bonhoeffer

But then obedience isn't simply a matter of either *having it ... or not having it*. Instead, obedience is something we first agree about and only then sign-on for ... and thereafter, over time, and with the help of the Holy Spirit, we grow into it. Hence, obedience is a quality to be grown into!

Each of the 5 spiritual activities focused on during this retreat were, one could say, God-birthed, and each had great importance to Jesus.

So then ... wherever we find ourself lacking in any of the five, we must first take a step in obedience: *acknowledging and agreeing* that this is something God **expects** all of us to do ... and thereafter *signing-on* to do so (or rather, to *begin* to do so) ... to *begin* our growth in obedience.

Exercise

I've never liked the idea of making resolutions at the end of a retreat. So often the end result is a downer ... a negative when we find ourselves unable to keep them (which is so often the case). Rather for myself, I like to focus on the **desires** the retreat prompts within me going forward.

As we have considered each of the 5 spiritual activities during the course of this retreat, we have asked ourself this question:

"Lord Jesus, You know that I want to become more like You. What would you have me do following this retreat regarding:

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Utilizing the worksheet on the following pages, and looking at a time period of say one year (until next year's silent retreat) write out your **desires** in each of these areas. Seek the Holy Spirit such that you might be ever practical in determining what might be reasonable to accomplish in a one year period of time ... noting that:

" ... He will give you the desires of your heart."

Psalm 37:4

A Worksheet of My Desires

(for the next 12 months)

Adoration [just “being” with Him ... the quiet side of worship ... “beholding” the Lord ... an *unproductively* productive act ... a willingness to waste time with Him]

Confessing [the type of confessing “ought” lead to enhanced awareness of sin and more productive/effective repentance ... replacing “easy” confessing with ??? ... being accountable ... James 5:16]

Resting [“above all” else ... God’s formula = work 6 days, rest 1 day ... our rest day to be “the sign” ... a “Commandment” ... resting re-energizes ... the rest day = a “relief” to be looked forward to]

Fasting [as a regular “personal” practice ... Jesus took it for granted for His followers ... accepting/relishing suffering ... some form of bread and water = the standard ... a fasting life synonymous with a prayer life ... for everyone]

Prayer [as a regular “personal” practice ... Jesus took it for granted for His followers ... helps snuff out sin ... raises dignity ... enhances marriages ... can lead to near-constant connectivity with God]