

Prayer for Jesus' Apprentices

God,
may I love you,
and love any others,
and myself,
as you have,
and do.
Please embrace me as your apprentice,
so that in everything, and whatever happens,
I will always, and more and more:
embrace you as Master;
receive and give your un-earned love;
be centred on you, Dad;
be like you, Jesus;
be lead by you, Spirit;
use the Bible;
be alongside others,
including
outsiders,
those facing the biggest need, or wrong,
and even my enemies;
live in fair and simple ways
that the Earth could sustain
if everyone lived like I do;
check with others
that everything I, and they, think and do
is rooted in your love and will;
and so be perfectly loving,
as you are.
Amen!

From *Worship Resources For* GracefulSubversives.org.uk

Prayer and Discipleship Tree

Why did Jesus upset the authorities so much that they wanted to kill him? For me, it was the love of God that Jesus knew for himself, and that Jesus knew extended to *all*. Jesus says so himself: “ ‘Love the Lord your God with all your heart and soul and mind’. This is the first and greatest commandment. And the second is like it: ‘Love your neighbour as yourself.’ All the Law and the Prophets hang on these two commandments.” (Mathew 22.37-40). In other words, these are the two most important verses in the Bible! Everything else is built on them. So when Jesus invites us to be his disciples, to follow him and to obey his commands, he means we are to base *all* our lives, *all* our prayer and *all* our actions on these two commands. As he did.

So here is a “Prayer and Discipleship Tree” which encapsulates much of what seems to me to be foundational to becoming more like Christ. The roots of the tree are our attempts at prayer. If our lives are to become more Christ-like then our prayers, which shape our life, need to grow around God’s love, (the rocks). God’s love is for us, for one another, and for neighbours. And neighbours includes *everyone*: ill, impaired and healthy; poor and wealthy; excluded and influential; family, fellowship, friends, foreigners, & foes. It is vital that all these aspects of God’s love shape our prayer / roots, for “a bad tree cannot bear good fruit”. Hauling our selves away from being centred on Career, or Country, or Church, or Self, or Security, or what ever is in the place of God, back to God’s love for us *and all* is a never-ending task (like pulling up weeds!). There are many different ways of prayer because God’s love is infinitely broad and deep, as can be our love for God, self and others. But if we are to live by Grace (God’s unearned love for you and all, equally the same), God’s love must be the foundation of our prayer in order that our discipleship of “Worship, Learning and Caring, Service, and Evangelism” may be God-centred, Christ-like, Spirit-lead, Bible-resourced and others-oriented.

So may Christ dwell in our hearts through faith. And being rooted and grounded in love, may we have power, together with all the Lord's people, to grasp how wide and long and high and deep is the love of Christ, and to know this love that surpasses knowledge that we may be filled to the measure of all the fullness of God! Amen! (Ephesians 3:17-19)

FROM WORSHIP RESOURCES FOR GRACEFULSUBVERSIVES.ORG.UK