

Pray More

'Patience, prayer and silence---these are what give strength to the soul.' St. Faustina

If we want to be more like Jesus, we must be with Him more. And do less of everything else. Our roots must sink and stay deep in the Source if we want to bear fruit that remains.

I do badly when first thoughts of the day revolve around unsolved problems. I start striving, and my words and actions become cutting. I know right away that I am not in Christ; I am worldly, and thus unable reveal Him to the world.

I used to wake up each morning and see if the little red light was flashing on my phone. My first thought of the day revolved around which text or email or phone message needed me. One morning, weary and anxious after a fitful sleep, I bawled out a colleague who had left a disturbing message during the night.

So the next morning I bypassed the phone; I vowed to pray for a good while before anything else.

I cannot live like a Christian unless I am founded in Christ. That means opening my heart and hands to Him in quiet before saying anything to anybody. My loved ones deserve better.

And Jesus expects more of me, and of all who claim to know Him. He said that 'unless our righteousness surpasses that of the Pharisees, we won't enter His Kingdom.' (Matt. 5:20) Contrary to popular opinion, the Pharisees were good, conscientious people. But Jesus raises the bar for everyone when He equates murder with bawling out a colleague and adultery with thinking lustfully of another. He then broadens 'loved ones' to those who hate us and treat us cruelly.

How can we love like that--purely, gently, non-defensively--without more of Him? We need to go deeper in Christ if our love is to exceed the Pharisees'.

Pray more. Do and say less. Let what you say and do arise out of increasing times of silence before Him. Judge the fruit yourself. Do we manifest love, peace, joy and self-control? Or anger,

lust, and self-vindication?

‘Let those who are singularly active, who think they can win the world with their preaching and exterior works, observe here that they would profit the church and please God much more...if they were to spend at least half of this time with God in prayer...They would certainly accomplish more, and with less labor, by one work than they otherwise would by a thousand...Without prayer they would do a great deal of hammering but accomplish little, and sometimes nothing, and even at times cause harm.’ St. John of the Cross