

Reflections

On

A Common Rule for Monastics

~

Jesus and Us

(Chapter 2)

“... We respond (to God’s Great Love) by imitating Christ...”

Paragraph 5, Lines 6

Let’s begin with a few texts of Holy Scriptures with regard to this matter:

“Be imitators of God.” Ephesians 5:1

“But we have the mind of Christ.” 1 Corinthians 2:16

“Be imitators of me, as I am of Christ.” 1 Corinthians 11:1

What is sure, is that we are loved by God. We cannot be more loved or less loved by God by what we do or what we fail to do. God’s love is constant. How do we know God loves us? *“While we were still in our sin, Christ died for us.”* (Romans 5:8). That is how God proved His love to us. God loved us so much that He gave His Son to die in our place. (John 3:16)

So, it has been very well established that God loves us. The question we must now ask ourselves is, how to be respond to this love? We need not go too far to find an answer. The Common Rule tells us that we respond to this love by imitating Christ. In other words, in every situation, ask oneself, “What would Jesus Do?”

To know what Jesus would do, to be an imitator of Christ, we need to know Him intimately. This happens when we talk to Him and then listen to Him. We do this in prayer, in meditation and in reading His Word. We simply need to spend time with Him.

It seems like a tall order to be asked to see as Christ saw, to love as He loved, and to think as He thought. The Lord thought it was possible, that is why the command was given to *“be holy as I am Holy.”* (1 Peter 1:16). We cannot do this in our own strength. We allow Christ to be holy through us. Jesus also said, *“I and the Father Are One, He is in Me and I am in Him. May they also be in us.”* (John 17:21). This to a oneness, a connectedness! Therefore, the mandate to imitate Christ is very possible.

Jesus taught us to pray that, just as it is in Heaven, God’s Kingdom should be on earth. When we pray this several times a day, we are acknowledging that there is a oneness in mind and oneness in spirit, and a oneness in being, that can be achieved. We must be intentional in ensuring that this oneness is accomplished through us. How? By imitating Christ and permeating our environments with His love, compassion, patience, and wisdom. (See Rule, Chapter 2, Paragraph 6).

I will conclude where I began; pondering the scripture texts in Ephesians and 1 Corinthians (above). This is to remind to myself that this noble journey we’re on should be grounded in following His commands, the *Rule*, and my heart. To that end:

I resolve to imitate Christ; to put on the mind of Christ; and to seek the sage advice of those who also imitate Christ.

I further resolve to live holy, as He is Holy, and to welcome Kingdom thinking into my earthly existence.

Further, I will be intentional in getting to know Him more, love Him more and serve Him more, and by permeating my environments with this knowledge, love and service. The Lord being my Helper.

**Kenneth Mortimer
July 2019**