

As followers | disciples | apprentices | learners of Jesus we are to know somethings and to live out somethings. We often call what we are to know doctrine | beliefs. What we are to live out we often call spiritual formation | disciplines | practices. It is not one or the other, but both-and. We are to know the good news and we are to live out the good news.

To help us do that, we are going to begin 2020 with a focus on what we can call The Jesus Creed. We will use this, the prayer that Jesus taught his followers and, the letter that Paul wrote to the church at Ephesus to help us be rooted and grounded in both the content of the good news and living it the good news.

The Jesus Creed

Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God, the Lord is one.

Love the Lord your God with all your heart,

with all your soul,

with all your mind,

and with all your strength.

The second is this:

Love your neighbour as yourself

There is no commandment greater than these.

The Lord's Prayer

*Our Father in heaven,
holy is your name,
your kingdom come,
your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us today our daily bread.
And forgive us our debts,
as we also have forgiven our debtors.
And lead us not into temptation,
but deliver us from the evil one.
for yours is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever.
Amen.*

spiritual formation | disciplines | practices

- Spiritual formation (being shaped by the Spirit) is about being loved by God, loving God and loving others (neighbour) like God loves them.
- The *Lord's Prayer* (Matthew 6:9-13) is a prayer that shapes our love for God and for others.
- God loves us – this is the premise and the promise of spiritual formation.
- What God thinks of us (our identity) is far more important than what others like of us (our reputation).
- Conversion, no matter how sudden or gradual it begins, is the life-long process of the soul's surrender to God.
- The *Jesus Creed* calls us to love. But love takes time and effort and choice and is often messy.
- The kingdom of God is where the *Jesus Creed* transforms life. The kingdom has arrived in Jesus.
- Jesus' illustration of the kingdom is the mustard seed: a seed that grows among the unlikely, from person to person, and among the peaceful and the patient.

- The kingdom of God is a society that pursues justice because it loves God and others.
- The *Jesus Creed* calls us to and empowers us to restore people to community.
- Living the *Jesus Creed* means having a perspective on life in light of the fullness of the kingdom – a kingdom marked by fellowship with God and his people.
- The “*one thing*” needed for spiritual formation is constantly attending to Jesus – heart, soul, mind, and strength.
- We love God by following Jesus. We love others (neighbour) when we give ourselves to God and serve and bless others.
- Failure to live out the *Jesus Creed* is real. Restoration can also be real.
- Those who live out the *Jesus Creed* forgive others.
- Living the *Jesus Creed* means reaching out with the mission of Jesus to others.

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