

The Christian Life Meditation



Time: 3rd meditation on Rise Day

Length: 25-30 minutes

Speaker: adult

Purpose: This meditation is designed to spell out in clear terms what living a life graced by Christ entails. It also removes some of the false images of what is called for in being a Christian. The meditation is primarily a witness to the way in which the individual who gives this talk is working out their own Christhood. It ends in their spontaneous prayer which should reveal the depth of their union with Christ.

Setting: The candidates, having said their YES to be part of the Mystery of Christ in the Family of God, the Church, wish now to know what this life entails. The focus of this meditation is different from the God Experience Meditation. That meditation was designed to lay before the candidates the faith journey of a person seeking contact with God; its purpose was to show that faith is possible by introducing them to a person of faith. This meditation is focused on the growing relationship with Christ as it is sketched in the life experience of a committed Christian. It is, ultimately, the Paschal Mystery as it unfolds in the life of a person who is making a determined effort to respond to Christ's challenge to love as he loved. It is a growing, an unfolding, a becoming, a flowering of the image of God in us. Each of us is an ideal in the mind and heart of God.

The Christian life is the transforming process in our own mind and heart as we live out our commitment to Christ in the midst of our love circle, and within the larger family, the Family of God. All three dimensions are essential to our growth and development in walking in companionship with Christ. The Christian Life does not come ready made, it is a romance and a love relationship that continues to grow in depth and development as we grow and mature as individuals. The Christian life is a life-long experience. In this sense, it is a perfect fulfillment of our heart wishes.

It is important to stress that one cannot live this "Christ-life" except in the midst of the new found family. Holiness is the by-product of a full life in God's Family; it is worked out with concrete people with whom we live and work. As we grow in the midst of that family, we have to be nurtured and we need to be taught by those who love us; we also need to feel responsibility for a portion of this family. Hence, the signs and symbols, and the family celebrations, are all important parts of this realization.

As a family of high quality, we need to keep in close contact with the Lord and with our brothers and sisters in the Lord. We must become a source of comfort, affirmation and joy to all with whom we live. The Christian life is one in which the word love can be substituted in every place the word prayer appears in the Gospels. Prayer is a love exchange between Christ and our self and the other members of the family. To love is to pray, and to pray is to love.

Like every family, the family of God also has its own rules which make them persons of value. We call these rules the commandments of God. The commandments of Christ are just two: to love the Lord our

God with our whole heart, mind and being; and to love our neighbor as ourselves. Love is the fulfillment of the law.

Our “Christ life” brings a special dimension to any vocation we might choose in life, that particular way in which we bind our self to one another to be of service and share our talents.

St. Augustine said those who pray well become their prayer. That could be paraphrased to say, those who love well become their love. The end, and goal, of our Christian Life is to reproduce within us a perfect reflection of Jesus, His life and love.

Outline:

Scripture: (Col. 3:12-17; 1 Cor. 13:1-13; Matt. 5:3-12; Luke 9:23-27)

1) Sketch faith memories

- a Relationships with persons and experiences the speaker had as a child which had an impact on their image of God, their relationship with Jesus. Family faith attitudes. (Experienced Faith)
- b how the attitudes of their circle of friends affected their relationship with Jesus. (Affiliative Faith)
- c Sketch how the speaker grew in faith at the same time he/she challenged the faith upon entering young adulthood. (Searching Faith)
- d Finally, show how the speaker experienced faith as the full expression of who they are. Sketch how he/she came to the personal conviction that a relationship with Christ is what gives ultimate meaning to life. (Owned Faith). Share how the speaker came to that conviction, whether by some extraordinary experience or through gradual realization. (Rings in the tree as it grows.)
- e Create a list of people that have modeled the Christian Life for you. These individuals can be people you know personally or whom you know well from other sources. Briefly sketch why you feel they are good examples of what it means to be a Christian.

2) What the Christian Life IS:

- a Our journey with others is a reflection on our journey with our Creator, Christ and the Spirit.
- b The Christian Life is revealed in who we are in our actions, our relationships and our faith life.
- c Celebrating the joy, facing the challenges and struggles, accepting the ordinary, and taking time to listen to God’s call in all aspects of our life.
- d What is Christian Life: A prayer life including communal prayer within the context of the Eucharist, frequently encountering Christ in the Sacraments and through personal prayer. Checking (discerning) our heart’s alignment with the demands of Christ’s love.

3) **Characteristics of a Christian Life:**

- a God's will, not our will.
- b Ongoing commitment of time and energy.
- c Loving God and loving others (vulnerability)
- d Challenging us to be honest, generous and faithful.
- e Ultimately every love leads to the cross—it means daily dying to self for the sake of the other.
The Christian Life offers intimacy, offers love, challenges us to holiness, to wholeness, to greatness.

4) **In our relationship with God, we must strive to be balanced:**

- a Fully human, practical and sincerely engaged.
- b The Christian Life is NOT:
 - i) The Law and Order Christian: They know all the rules and regulations but have never had the experience of being personally and intimately loved by God.
 - ii) The Soap Box Christian: Those who mouth the words but do not put them into action.
 - iii) The Busy Bee Christian: They are so busy with other interests they have no time for the Lord.
 - iv) The Jesus Freak: Those who go to the top of the mountain and keep on going.
- c These are roadblocks we must carefully avoid.

Thomas Keating in sketching the unfolding of the Christian Life said: "In our relationship with God and one another we move from acquaintance, to friendship, to commitment, to union."

* Immediately following this meditation the speaker invites the candidates to come with him/her to the chapel for a visit to the Blessed Sacrament.