

The Kingdom Meditation

1. After I have accepted God's loving gaze upon me, I offer my whole self to God.
2. Then I recall Jesus accepting God's loving gaze on himself, as he moved around his homeland, walking and preaching and healing and eating and sleeping.
3. Now I ask God for what I want. Here, I want to be the kind of person who will hear when Jesus calls, not holding back, but full of the desire to follow him and persevere at his side.

A meditation in two parts:

Part One

Imagine our present world with all its problems and needs and hopes. Perhaps one area of need stands out to you particularly.

Now, imagine that someone emerges with a hope, a plan, a way of putting things right. They have all the qualities needed to make this work. They have the vision and the realism to see it through. Use your imagination to see this person... what they look like, their clothes, their demeanour... See them as they go about their life... What is their plan...? What is their project...? How are they going to go about it...?

They demonstrate everything that inspires you to follow them. Can you say what those gifts are? Can you imagine following them, working with them, even though the situation will lead to hardship? You wonder what kind of person could reject this inspiring leader, and who will join you in following them.

Part Two

If that leader could attract me so, how much more could Jesus attract me?

I let my imagination take me into the towns and villages Jesus moved through, the synagogues, the roads he walked. Now I imagine him seated with his disciples.

They sit on a hill. Look at them. What do THEY see in Jesus, that inspires them to follow him? Then look at Jesus himself. Take in how he looks, how he holds himself, the look in his eyes, the tone of his voice. Could you be drawn to this man? What qualities would Jesus need to have for you to be inspired? What would his project have to be to catch your imagination? What does he dream that has the power to ignite your soul?

Listen to him now. What would he say that could inspire you to want to give him your loyalty? What would make you decide to go with him and share his burdens and joys, his triumphs and failures? What would make you stand with him no matter what?

Spiritual Exercises [97], David Fleming SJ's paraphrase

“Those who are of great heart and are set on fire with zeal to follow Jesus, eternal King and Lord of all, will not only offer themselves entirely to labour for such a mission, but will act against anything which would make their response less total”.

Colloquy

The Kingdom

By R. S. Thomas

It's a long way off but inside it
There are quite different things going on:
Festivals at which a poor man
Is king and the consumptive is
Healed; mirrors in which the blind look
At themselves and love looks at them
Back; and industry is for mending
The bent bones and the minds fractured
By life. It's a long way off, but to get
There takes no time and admission
Is free, if you will purge yourself
Of desire, and present yourself with
Your need only and the simple offering
Of your faith, green as a leaf.