

Spiritual Practices in the life and calling of Every Follower of Jesus:

Me and Jesus; Me and His Bride; Me and Her Mission

Personal Practices: Me and Jesus	
Prayer	Prayer is the central discipline by which we commune and communicate with God. To pray is to petition God, to make requests of God, to invite God in, and to hope in God to meet your needs. It is a constant lifeline by which and through which we walk and talk with God.
Meditation	Meditation is the device that God has given us not only to dive in to the depths of His Word, but also to be filled with the peace of Christ that comes through the gospel. It is simply dwelling on, internalizing and being filled with God's presence.
Study	If you examine your life closely, you will notice that our thoughts really govern our freedom. An ignorance of the truth of Scripture leaves us believing lies and enslaved to false teachings, human philosophies, and empty deceit (Col2). What you set your mind upon is what everything in your life conforms to. Therefore, study allows us to know, believe and practice the truth of God's word.
Fasting	The main purpose of fasting is to focus our hearts on God and His will. Fasting makes us aware of our own inadequacies and, subsequently, makes us aware of God's adequacy. Fasting can also make us aware of our idolatry of food. Often food acts as self-medication when we are confused, bored, tired, stressed, or angry. Fasting helps to remove that self-medication and helps us listen to God's voice.

Communal Practices: Me and His Bride	
Love One Another	All of the major writers of the New Testament, including Jesus Himself, repeat this command to "love one another." Jesus tells us that the love a Christian should have for another Christian should imitate the love a Christian has received from Christ Himself - "Love as I have loved you."

We often say: "Imagine what the church would look like if Christians would actually do these things!?"

What if we asked: "What would others start to look like if I actually did these things?"

Greet One Another	Each culture has different norms for what is deemed "acceptable" on how to greet each other. Certainly, this goes on in every circle, but biblical writers, especially Paul, often emphasized the intimacy and affection with which we are to greet one another. We are to be welcoming and embracing to one another. Our words and actions can produce in others a level of comfort and welcome that invites conversation and depth. This is not how we greet everyone, this is how we welcome and greet those we love.
Encourage One Another	To encourage someone in their imago dei is to not allow them to think too highly nor too lowly of themselves. When we are reminded and encouraged that we matter to God, it produces a proper sense of value and worth. When we are further reminded that in Christ we are acceptable to God, it begins to remove the pressure of having to prove ourselves. Our fallen nature tells us that we must obey or achieve to become acceptable. The completed work of Christ on our behalf tells us that we are already acceptable in Him, therefore we can obey and achieve from a position of acceptance. Our encouragements to each other for our value and worth are rooted in these truths.

Communal Practices: Me and His Bride (cont)

Live in Harmony With One Another	Jesus is adamant that the ability even to disagree with harmony, respect and love for one another is to be not only a trademark of true Christians, but also an invitation, a "drawing" to unbelievers. Jesus is not divided, therefore the body of Christ, the Church, should not be divided. Living in harmony is NOT a command to agree on everything, it is a command to agree in the most important thing: "in the Lord." When we agree in the essentials, we can live in harmony and unity and speak the truth in love, in the secondary issues.
Bear With One Another	Throughout Scripture we see God being patient with his people. One of the most appropriate terms for this is "longsuffering" (showing patience in spite of troubles, esp. those caused by other people). God bears with His people. He walks with them and never leaves them. We are called to image God to one another and to love as we have been loved. This not only encourages the sufferer toward trust and rest in God's goodness and sovereignty, but it also grows the faith of the one bearing alongside to gain a deeper understanding of God's patience with His children.
Serve One Another	Outwardly, this practice of serving one another is a great testimony and witness of a person who has been loved and served. It shows selflessness, grace and humility as well as a security and identity that have been placed in something beyond ourselves. Inwardly, serving each other sacrificially compels us (or should compel us) to depend wholly on Christ for our supply and our strength and our fulfillment. It reminds us that the mission of the gospel is not ultimately about us, but that we have been invited to be an amazing part of laboring alongside our Savior
Teach and Instruct One Another	One of Jesus' most famous passages of instruction comes in the Sermon on the Mount when he tells us to "deal with the log in our own eye so that we can see clearly to take the speck out of our brother's eye." The full circle of this illustration is to invite others to look into our eyes to search for specks. We need people to teach, instruct, admonish, look into, exhort and rebuke us. We need to grow and learn about who God is, how He has and is acting in history and how we are responding in faithful obedience.

Practices of Mission: Me and Her Mission

Gathered Worship	The public gathering of the saints has always been a time of worship for followers of Jesus and a time of declaration of the God of the Resurrection to the world around her
Engaging in Public Faith	Followers of Jesus are called to proclaim through word and deed, the reality of forgiveness, the resurrection, hope, reconciliation and eventual restoration!
Work and Faith	Our labor, whether paid or unpaid, is part of God's creation mandate for mankind: Bringing order out of chaos, blessing and bearing fruit.
Hospitality	The very origins of the people of God was to be a welcoming people: To the stranger and the outsider, we are called to welcome, feed and befriend.
Ministries of Mercy, Compassion and Justice	Followers of Jesus are called to work together care for and advocate for the widows and orphans, the immigrant and the poor, and those on the margins of society.