

Jesus the Preacher

Grace: Ask for the grace to better know and understand Jesus so that your love for Jesus will grow and your desire to imitate him will increase.

Introduction:

Jesus was a very charismatic communicator. When Jesus spoke, He tended to draw a crowd. You continue to grow in your knowledge of Jesus. You have experienced Jesus' healing power, you have journeyed with Jesus in the desert and gradually become Jesus' friend. As you listen to Jesus preach, continue to listen to the sound of Jesus' voice and to look into His eyes. Listen for the deeper message that Jesus is trying to communicate to you by allowing Jesus to speak to your heart (as well as your mind).

Listen not only to what Jesus says with His words but also with His expressions, tone of voice, and gestures. How much attention does Jesus give to you? As Jesus preaches, does He periodically look at you to see how you are responding to Him?

Jesus proclaimed God's word to those who would listen. How do you feel when you listen to Jesus? Are there any words that you do not fully understand what Jesus means by them? If so, ask Jesus to explain those words to you. What lessons might Jesus be teaching you? What do you learn about Jesus from His preaching style? What does Jesus want you to do with what you have heard? To whom might you be called to share Jesus' teachings with? What happens when Jesus finishes preaching? Do you congratulate Jesus, critique Him, ask questions or share observations that you had of the crowd? How do Jesus' words challenge you? How do Jesus' words transform you and help you to become more like Him?



Lord, your humanity flows out from the gospel, which shows you as noble, amiable, exemplary and sublime, with a perfect harmony between your life and your doctrine. The gospel shows your virile manner, hard on yourself in privations and wearing work, but for others full of kindness, with a consuming longing to serve.

I would like to meet you as you really are, since your image changes those with whom you come into contact. I would like to hear and be impressed by your manner of speaking...

Give me that grace, that *sensus Christi*, your very heartbeat... Teach us your way so that it becomes our way today...

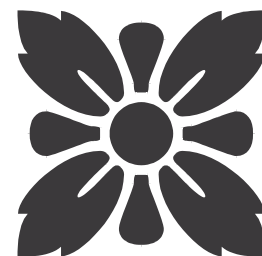
--Pedro Arrupe, S.J.

Matthew 5:1-12 The Beatitudes - Now when he saw the crowds, he went up on a mountainside and sat down. His disciples came to him, and he began to teach them saying: "Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are those who mourn, for they will be comforted. Blessed are the meek, for they will inherit the earth. Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be filled. Blessed are the merciful, for they will be shown mercy. Blessed are the pure in heart, for they will see God. Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called sons of God. Blessed are those who are persecuted because of righteousness, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. "Blessed are you when people insult you, persecute you and falsely say all kinds of evil against you because of me. Rejoice and be glad, because great is your reward in heaven, for in the same way they persecuted the prophets who were before you."

Luke 6:27-35 Love of enemies - "But I tell you who hear me: Love your enemies, do good to those who hate you, bless those who curse you, pray for those who mistreat you. If someone strikes you on one cheek, turn to him the other also. If someone takes your cloak, do not stop him from taking your tunic. Give to everyone who asks you, and if anyone takes what belongs to you, do not demand it back. Do to others as you would have them do to you. "If you love those who love you, what credit is that to you? Even 'sinners' love those who love them. And if you do good to those who are good to you, what credit is that to you? Even 'sinners' do that. And if you lend to those from whom you expect repayment, what credit is that to you? Even 'sinners' lend to 'sinners,' expecting to be repaid in full. But love your enemies, do good to them, and lend to them without expecting to get anything back. Then your reward will be great, and you will be sons of the Most High, because he is kind to the ungrateful and wicked.

John 6:30-40 Bread of life discourse

- So they asked him, "What miraculous sign then will you give that we may see it and believe you? What will you do? Our forefathers ate the manna in the desert; as it is written: 'He gave them bread from heaven to eat.'" Jesus said to them, "I tell you the truth, it is not Moses who has given you the bread from heaven, but it is my Father who gives you the true bread from heaven. For the bread of God is he who comes down from heaven and gives life to the world." "Sir," they said, "from now on give us this bread." Then Jesus declared, "I am the bread of life. He who comes to me will never go hungry, and he who believes in me will never be thirsty. But as I told you, you have seen me and still you do not believe. All that the Father gives me will come to me, and whoever comes to me I will never drive away. For I have come down from heaven not to do my will but to do the will of him who sent me. And this is the will of him who sent me, that I shall lose none of all that he has given me, but raise them up at the last day. For my Father's will is that everyone who looks to the Son and believes in him shall have eternal life, and I will raise him up at the last day."



John 10:1-8 Good Shepherd – “I tell you the truth, the man who does not enter the sheep pen by the gate, but climbs in by some other way, is a thief and a robber. The man who enters by the gate is the shepherd of his sheep. The watchman opens the gate for him, and the sheep listen to his voice. He calls his own sheep by name and leads them out. When he has brought out all his own, he goes on ahead of them, and his sheep follow him because they know his voice. But they will never follow a stranger; in fact, they will run away from him because they do not recognize a stranger's voice.” Jesus used this figure of speech, but they did not understand what he was telling them. Therefore Jesus said again, “I tell you the truth, I am the gate for the sheep. All who ever came before me were thieves and robbers, but the sheep did not listen to them.”

Matthew 18: 1-14 Lost Sheep - At that time the disciples came to Jesus and asked, "Who is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven?" He called a little child and had him stand among them. And he said: "I tell you the truth, unless you change and become like little children, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven. Therefore, whoever humbles himself like this child is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven. "And whoever welcomes a little child like this in my name welcomes me. But if anyone causes one of these little ones who believe in me to sin, it would be better for him to have a large millstone hung around his neck and to be drowned in the depths of the sea. "Woe to the world because of the things that cause people to sin! Such things must come, but woe to the man through whom they come! If your hand or your foot causes you to sin, cut it off and throw it away. It is better for you to enter life maimed or crippled than to have two hands or two feet and be thrown into eternal fire. And if your eye causes you to sin, gouge it out and throw it away. It is better for you to enter life with one eye than to have two eyes and be thrown into the fire of hell. "See that you do not look down on one of these little ones. For I tell you that their angels in heaven always see the face of my Father in heaven. "What do you think? If a man owns a hundred sheep, and one of them wanders away, will he not leave the ninety-nine on the hills and go to look for the one that wandered off? And if he finds it, I tell you the truth, he is happier about that one sheep than about the ninety-nine that did not wander off. In the same way your Father in heaven is not willing that any of these little ones should be lost.

Matthew 20:1-16 The parable of the workers in the vineyard - "For the kingdom of heaven is like a landowner who went out early in the morning to hire men to work in his vineyard. He agreed to pay them a denarius for the day and sent them into his vineyard. "About the third hour he went out and saw others standing in the marketplace doing nothing. He told them, 'You also go and work in my vineyard, and I will pay you whatever is right.' So they went. "He went out again about the sixth hour and the ninth hour and did the same thing. About the eleventh hour he went out and found still others standing around. He asked them, 'Why have you been standing here all day long doing nothing?' " 'Because no one has hired us,' they answered. "He said to them, 'You also go and work in my vineyard.' "When evening came, the owner of the vineyard said to his foreman, 'Call the workers and pay them their wages, beginning with the last ones hired and going on to the first.' "The workers who were hired about the eleventh hour came and each received a denarius. So when those came who were hired first, they expected to receive more. But each one of them also received a denarius. When they received it, they began to grumble against the landowner. 'These men who were hired last worked only one hour,' they said, 'and you have made them equal to us who have borne the burden of the work and the heat of the day.' "But he answered one of them, 'Friend, I am not being unfair to you. Didn't you agree to work for a denarius? Take your pay and go. I want to give the man who was hired last the same as I gave you. Don't I have the right to do what I want with my own money? Or are you envious because I am generous?' "So the last will be first, and the first will be last."



In these or similar words ... I see Jesus talking in a group on the mountain side, and I quickly run to join Him. When I arrive Jesus is speaking on the topic of divorce, and I quickly leave because of the topic's sensitivity in my life. As I am walking away Jesus scurries over and asks me what is wrong my son? I talk with Jesus about my parents and how they are always fighting. He tells me that sometimes love can bring anger and if you just believe in the Lord then everything will end up how it is meant to be. I say to Jesus that I am very confused about everything ending up right if my parents end up getting divorced, that doesn't sound like it ended up right at all? Listen my son, says Jesus, trust in me and I promise you everything will be alright. Jesus and I walk back with our hands wrapped around each other like we've been friends our whole life (because we have.) Jesus begins to preach to the crowd, saying "Blessed are you when people insult you, persecute you and falsely say all kinds of evil against you because of me." I tell Jesus I am confused by this because I have always wondered why would Jesus want people to be persecuted? I have been faced with this many times when my friends want to go to a party on a Saturday night, but I tell them I can't because I am going to Saturday night Church. I always have been made fun of in a friendly way and been called "Church Boy" many times. Jesus tells me that those people who persecute you just don't understand the ways of God, and if you follow me "great is your reward in heaven."



Practicing What Your Preach ... To better understand and appreciate the gift of hearing God's word proclaimed, consider imitating Jesus' example of sharing God's Word by volunteering to be a lector. To further understand that which you proclaim, you may wish to attend a Bible Study or faith sharing group. During the deaconate ordination, the deacon being ordained is charged to: "Receive the Gospel of Christ, whose herald you now are. Believe what you read, teach what you believe, and practice what you preach." You too are called to spread the Good News!