

# The Five Marks of Jesus Action

A VFC Resource: #3  
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## Seeing All Things Redemptively

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**Our Question:** “How long do I have to put up with this situation?”

**God’s Answer:** “Until you learn what it’s like for Me to put up with you!”

**Our Reaction:** “Good night! One more thing! I don’t need this!”

**God’s Rebuke** “Yes, you do! You need to have one more thing hit you so you can learn one more time that I can handle one more thing! If you resent your problems because you can’t handle them on your own, you will ever seek My Presence.”

Is not every person who claims the name Christian aware of the first fundamental of their faith? Every self-professed Disciple appears to acknowledge it but few will pay the “cross price” to achieve it. I speak of the highest and all encompassing intention and objective for the Savior’s life, death, resurrection and His promise to return. The Lord’s divine purpose and His human plan to achieve it is this: His followers are to spend their years on earth eagerly, enthusiastically and earnestly learning how to become like Christ Jesus! This means thinking with His Mind and acting with His Heart!

This is more than seeking to do what He did. It is a striving, not in the strength of the flesh, but in yielding to the energy of His Spirit, to be what the Lord Jesus was/is in His Heart. Nothing else will satisfy the human beings who have been created and re-created in His image. Unless this life altering eternal connection with Christ happens “within you” then nothing else will ever happen “around you” that really matters of lasting significance or is even worth mentioning. Tragically, the meanings of “Let Us create man in Our image” and “anyone in Christ is a new creation” are lost on those who are unconscious and unawakened to the Christ Who offers to be their Light and Life! (Gen. 1:26-2:3; II Cor. 5:17, II Cor. 4:4; John 8:12)

Those of us who are awake ... who possess a growing consciousness of all the Lord Jesus desires for us ... are enabled to explore the capacity given to us by our Triune God. This is our creation image mandate! We are also free to seek and discover the enablement of our Holy Spirit genes. This is our new creation mandate! We must use our days to grow ourselves up as He has ordained. (I Cor. 3:1-3, 13; Gal. 2:20-21; Col. 1:10; II Thess. 1:3; I Peter 2:1-3) All three stages of this growth ... the child’s A-Life, the adult O-Life and the father’s Z-Life (Footnote 1) ... have one single growth principle in common. This principle trumps all others, can never be put aside, should be in constant use and is absolutely essential to master if you are to learn fully how to deny your weaker self and to follow Jesus in His strength! (Luke 9:57-62; II Cor. 12:7-10) Self-denial of your negatives must begin with truth in your mind before it will result in self-affirmation positives in your life! “I am crucified (self-denial) with Christ, nevertheless I live (self-affirmation) ....” (Gal. 2:20)

Before I share “the Five Marks principle,” let me ask one more question. Don’t you agree that to follow Jesus and to become like Him on earth demands the following heart attitudes and ambitions? For instance, you must learn to see things His way; you must think and react to all circumstances with His wisdom and compassion; you must be prepared to adjust to His timing; and, finally, you must “grace strive” to make His Life of Messiah Love a reality to all those you know and love. (John 14:21) If you admit that these characteristics fairly well summarize following Christ, and that no one can ever reflect His glory without these qualities dominating their own life, then you are a “Five Marks” candidate. I confidently to share with you my key principle for “cross following Jesus.” The concept has energized my discipleship! Too many of us follow the Master from afar, like Peter after His arrest. (Matt. 26:58; Mark 14:54; Luke 22:54) We must learn how to follow Him “up close.” To do so we must determine: 1) I will drink my cups, 2) I will carry my cross and 3) I will share His commission in all situations!

I call this process of following Christ “up close” “the Five Marks.” This is my term to define and summarize what it means to live the Christ Life! These five (V) principles (Marks) are absolutely essential to practice and to master! We must conform to them continuously if we are to manifest the great reality of “Christ in you” in our daily living. The process starts and continues with our mind. It should become a habit of first response/ rapid response thinking toward every life circumstance or situation we encounter. “Five Marks thinking is critical. I contend it is the

Biblical process of “being transformed (into Christ’s Image) by the renewing of your mind.” (Rom. 12:2; Col. 1:27)

With this background stated I offer you “The Five Marks.” This is not my man made, clever formula to casually recite, but the bedrock core of what Jesus demands of those who aspire and claim to represent Him. Please! If a person doesn’t start “thinking like Jesus about everything” there will be no discipleship and no delight. (Ps. 37:3-6) Without something like the Cross measuring Five Marks those who claim to be “Jesus Followers” are but self deceived pretenders! (James 1:22)

### **The Five Marks**

The FIVE MARKS PROCESS (or five steps, actions, questions, duties, responses or reactions) is critical for understanding the Christ Life and dealing with reality. Using the Five Marks should be our number one daily habit in confronting every experience and issue of life. I seek to practice them constantly! I have gained a new and exciting way of interpreting reality on a daily, hourly or even minute by minute basis. You should apply the Five Marks toward everything that touches your world or thought life. Our goal should be to process the culture and our personal existence through this five-fold “Christ Filter.” If you practice them diligently and continuously they will become automatic and rapid. When challenged, unsure, blessed or hurt, etc., use the Five Marks. When someone cuts ahead of you in traffic, use the Five Marks. When diagnosed with an illness or the loss of a loved one, use the Five Marks. When pressured by a business or moral decision, use the Five Marks. When frustrated to the point of despair or depression, use the Five Marks. When in family, financial, social or spiritual crisis, use the Five Marks.

To grasp Christ’s mind and express His heart in the midst of all things we must develop the Five Marks “skill habit.” This discipline, or one like it, is non-negotiable if we are to refocus our blurred and self-centered perceptions of reality. We must evaluate every issue from our Lord’s point of view. Anything less will miss the mark of pleasing the Father and becoming His agent of Messiah Love.

As an Air Force pilot I had to memorize certain “emergency procedures” in case of critical flight conditions in order to prevent accidents, injury, crashing or death. (I’ll spare you my scary stories!) The Five Marks are the five procedures ... both normal and emergency ... that will refine your life and minimize injuring your witness for Christ. Practicing them will also protect you from spiritual boredom. They will replace “despair and depression thinking” with “discovery and delight thinking.” The Five Marks will insure that you bring the fragrance of Jesus into all of your relationships. They will save you from wrong conclusions and minimize negative consequences. When confronted with a decision, an option, an evaluation, a desire, an ambition or a response our fivefold goal should be to powerfully apply these following steps into the reality of the moment. The Five Marks keep you focused on the Presence of Christ in you. I urge you to memorize these five goals of our cross/resurrection calling:

- I. First, to see through everything with the Eyes of Christ.**
- II. Second, to think about everything with the Mind of Christ.**
- III. Thirdly, to respond to everything with the Heart of Christ.**
- IV. Fourth, to wait on everything with the Patience of Christ.**
- V. Fifth, to become one in everything with the Messiah Love of Christ.**

I gratefully and humbly offer to my readers this path of the Five Marks. The Lord gave me this procedure/discipline in order to more precisely pursue His “oneness” with Himself and with His own. I in Him and He in me ... Messiah Love to all! “Let this mind be in you ... the Mind Jesus had ... who ... made Himself nothing ...etc.” (Phil. 2:5-11) Please finish reading these verses slowly and prayerfully. They define Messiah Love. To live in the fullness of this “grace and truth” is to truly live indeed! Increasingly we will receive this fullness and it is ours to discover, appreciate and appropriate. (John 1:16) Let us make ourselves “nothing” as we think so that the Father can make us “everything” as He thinks! To commit to using the Five Marks is to carry your cup, your cross and your commission into every relationship and circumstance. It is to face life with the expectations of watching our Lord’s purposes unfold ... in you, to others, for Him and throughout the world! Hallelujah! This gift of the Five Marks is ours to unwrap and thrillingly use. All that we lack is to become serious and passionate life long students (learners, Disciples) of our Lord’s Eyes, Mind, Heart, Patience and Messiah Love for His world! It is then you live a redeeming life increasingly knowing the love of the Redeemer in the midst of people who need to be redeemed! This is life for us just as He lived His! Such joy and significance are unsurpassed as we live out the Five Marks.

**Footnote 1:** See *Victory Visual #16: Picturing the U-A-O-Z-Life*.