

**Shaping the Franciscan Footprint
Five Important Spiritual Thoughts from the Liturgy of the Word
...and follow up for the Secular Franciscan
May 18 – May 24**

1 -- "For the Father himself loves you, because you have loved me and have come to believe that I came from God." (Jn 16:27)
...You are loved with a divine love. What should that do for me?

2 -- "When they saw him, they worshiped, but they doubted." (Mt 28:17)
...Is my faith as strong as it should be?

3 -- He entered the synagogue, and for three months debated boldly with persuasive arguments about the Kingdom of God. (Acts 19:8)
...Paul had tremendous courage to do this. Do I have the courage to be a good Franciscan?

4 -- Now this is eternal life, that they should know you, the only true God, and the one whom you sent, Jesus Christ. (Jn17:3)
...This is my spiritual task. Am I following through?

5 -- "Holy Father, keep them in your name." (Jn 17:11)
...The Lord is praying for me. Have I responded well in my life?

Special meditation

BEING HERE

***"It is good that we are here."
(Matthew 17:4)***

A Christian should be able to say such a statement every moment of their lives, simply because they are Christian. First of all, God has given us life, and now God through Jesus has given us eternal life. Even right now before the bliss of eternal life, even in the worst of all scenarios, at least we have life and the Holy Spirit continues to work for us. The spirituality of Christianity is

thoroughly positive even as negatives happen. We can say the words that were found on one of the walls of the Dachau concentration camp: "I believe in the sun even when it isn't shining." It is with true conviction that we should be able to say, **"Lord, it is good for us to be here."**

But there are some things that block our acceptance of that statement. One of those major blocks is what may be named the *"IF ONLYS"*:

- if only I had been born into money, or in Southern California or Florida;
- if only I had more time;
- if only I had been a little smarter;
- if only I had just a couple more breaks;
- if only I could win the lottery;
- if only I could have a better job;
- if only things had not worked out the way they did;
- if only I were younger;
- if only I weren't as old as I am;
- if only my health could be a little better.

Many people keep saying "if only" and never see what they have right now, and therefore their approach to life becomes essentially negative.

If we truly believe in God, we believe that **it is good for us to be here**—right here: this place, this time, this life, this situation, these circumstances. Yes, we can try to make it better, and indeed we should, but we have LIFE and we can live it to the fullest.