



new life fellowship

**Sermon Title: Good and Beautiful and Kind, A Life of Prayer**

**Speaker: Jacqueline Snape, Executive Pastor**

**Scripture: John 1:19-28**

<sup>19</sup> Now this was John's testimony when the Jewish leaders<sup>[a]</sup> in Jerusalem sent priests and Levites to ask him who he was. <sup>20</sup> He did not fail to confess, but confessed freely, "I am not the Messiah."

<sup>21</sup> They asked him, "Then who are you? Are you Elijah?"

He said, "I am not."

"Are you the Prophet?"

He answered, "No."

<sup>22</sup> Finally they said, "Who are you? Give us an answer to take back to those who sent us. What do you say about yourself?"

<sup>23</sup> John replied in the words of Isaiah the prophet, "I am the voice of one calling in the wilderness, 'Make straight the way for the Lord.'"<sup>[a]</sup>

<sup>24</sup> Now the Pharisees who had been sent <sup>25</sup> questioned him, "Why then do you baptize if you are not the Messiah, nor Elijah, nor the Prophet?"

<sup>26</sup> "I baptize with<sup>[a]</sup> water," John replied, "but among you stands one you do not know. <sup>27</sup> He is the one who comes after me, the straps of whose sandals I am not worthy to untie."

<sup>28</sup> This all happened at Bethany on the other side of the Jordan, where John was baptizing.  
(NIV)

#### **Sermon Outline:**

**It is impossible for us to live the Christian life, be people of true beauty, people of true kindness and beauty, without a life of prayer.**

We cannot claim to have life of beauty and kindness when the back of our house is a mess and not guided by a hidden life of prayer. In times of high anxiety and stress when others experience you, are they getting a you that is consistent with a hidden life of prayer or not? It is in these times that your foundation will reveal itself.

John the Baptist stays focused on his mission and shows this when we see him being attacked by the religious leaders and the questions they throw at him. John's time in the wilderness was a time of transformation for him, so much so that John knew where his identity stood. His identity was in Christ and not in those around him. In John's responses to the religious leaders, we see him being himself only and not trying to be anyone else other than that.

In silence and solitude is where God begins to develop and nurture goodness, kindness, and beauty even in the worst circumstances we might encounter.

The reasons we don't pray:

1. Disappointment
2. Busyness

The Christian life is one of silence and solitude, where we don't have to perform. Practicing silence and solitude has nothing to do with anything, but it is only the grace of God inside of us. The only place we will find true rest and peace for our souls is in a life with God.

The Christian life is one of sacrifice, where we will experience different types of deaths taking place throughout our lives.

God's focus on us never changes. His compassion never shifts, and his love for us never waivers.

It is never impossible for God to do new things in your life.

**Sermon Summary:**

This Sunday, Jacqueline Snape, Executive Pastor, continues our series entitled *Good and Beautiful and Kind*. Today Pastor Jackie focuses on Prayer and explores the obstacles and beauty of a life devoted to the spiritual practice of prayer.

**Sermon Questions:**

1. Do you feel an invitation from Christ in today's scripture passage? Do any of the words resonate with you? If so, why?
2. Being honest with yourself, what are the areas in your life where messiness is taking place – maybe it is in your finances, your relationships with family or friends, or maybe it is in the way you treat and view your neighbor? When you experience these moments of anxiety, what happens and how do you react?
3. How is your prayer life? Are you cultivating a life of silence and solitude to be with God or are you not doing so because of disappointments you have experienced in your life, so much so that you no longer have a desire for intimacy with God? Maybe you feel that you are too busy, living in an illusion of being in control while masking deep fear of sitting and waiting on God?