

## J.O.Y. Jesus, Others, Yourself

By Dr. Troy Hinkel

### ONE

There is a saying that expectations are premeditated resentments. The word Resentment means to 'Re-Feel,' or re-sense the emotion of the past in the present. Sometimes the source of our resentment comes from the things we *can* control and some that we *can't*, like the pain of loss, illness, or joblessness, etc. One of the causes of resentment that we *can* control are those flowing from our expectations. We expect a certain outcome regarding our feelings, relationships, and outcomes that end up disappointing us, resulting in resentments that can sometimes last a lifetime.

### TWO

Perhaps we have accepted a false belief about ourselves based on old wounds that reappear in certain situations or around certain people. Maybe we selfishly cling to wounds as proof that we are a victim of someone's injustice, giving us a perceived leverage or power over them, or a convenient way to excuse our own selfishness. Perhaps we simply get a devious pleasure out of throwing pity parties. Mother Theresa had stern words for her sisters if she notices them brooding or walking around with sad faces. "I insist you be joyful!" She would say. "And Joy should be understood this way: J—that stands for Jesus. Think first of Jesus. O—that stands for others. Then think of others. Lastly, Y—that stands for yourself. Think of Jesus and Others before Yourself, and you will have JOY!

### THREE

To think about Jesus means to spend time with Him in prayer, sacrament, and theological study. Jesus imparts His truth to us while spending intimate time with us in our hearts and minds. This helps us properly prioritize long-term and short-term goals. It also keeps our emotions in check, as we tend to elevate them to a level of importance they don't deserve. This can distort our perception of the world, as our emotions are blind forces that need to be tempered and guided by light of truth presented by our intellects. Otherwise, we become like a boat tossed about on a wild sea. When we allow ourselves to think about Jesus, he teaches us how to live! St. Thérèse of Lisieux wrote, "Our Master, instructs without sound of words, and though I have never heard Him speak, yet I know He is within me, always guiding and inspiring me; and just when I need them, lights, previously unseen, break in upon me!" (Divine Intimacy, p. 155).

## FOUR

The Law of Love requires that I think of others ahead of myself. In so doing, I actually discover myself precisely by giving myself away. Virtues like charity, mercy, justice, or friendship all require that I think and give of myself to others first. We fear this because we think that if we give ourselves away, we will run out of self to give. Mother Theresa taught her sisters, “Give until it hurts. For everything you give after that is all from Jesus.” A friend of mine recently shared with me that his experience at AA meetings is exactly like this. When he goes and shares himself with others and invites them to his meetings (when appropriate), that’s how he finds healing and growth. “What if they don’t want to come,” I asked him. “Their response doesn’t matter.” He told me. “It’s the getting out of myself and thinking of them and inviting them that keeps me sane!”

## FIVE

When we live Joy according to Mother Theresa’s wisdom, we will discover Jesus in our hearts, who lives there by the power of the Holy Spirit. And HE thinks of us! This is why St. Peter tells us, “Cast all your cares on him because he cares for you” (I Peter 5: 7). Living with resentment makes our world narrow and confined, trapped in our own self-centeredness. As Jesus told St. Catherine of Sienna when she expressed anxiety, “You think of me, and I will think of you!” This is why St. Paul wrote to the Galatians, “But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance: against such there is no law” (Galatians 6: 22,23). Let us all commit ourselves to giving up premeditated resentments rooted in our own expectations, and instead live with JOY, Jesus and Others before Ourselves!

### Reflection Questions

- o What word or phrase from the meditation resonates most with you?
- o How does this meditation relate to your personal life or contemporary society?
- o What challenges you the most?