

ENDORSEMENTS



Spiritual Practices of Jesus

Learning Simplicity, Humility, and Prayer with Luke's Earliest Readers

Available October 6, 2020 | \$25, 240 pages, paperback | 978-0-8308-5226-0

Luke's Gospel was written to transform. Exploring Luke's portrait of the spirituality of Jesus, Catherine Wright focuses on the themes of simplicity, humility, and prayer in Jesus' life and teaching, considering how readers have understood and employed key Lukan passages for spiritual formation from the first century and the ancient church to today.

Imitating Jesus Through Luke's Gospel

"Wright combines careful exegesis and painstaking research into the ancient writers with refreshingly authentic reflections from her own Christian community and experience. By expanding the notion of spirituality beyond prayer into the Lukan emphases on simplicity of life and the humility that flows from an understanding of the true self, Wright has found in the Third Gospel resources that could, if taken seriously, restore the Western church to authenticity."

—**Sharyn Dowd**, New Testament scholar and pastor

"What does it mean to follow Jesus in the twenty-first century? Wright provides a stimulating account of what this might look like through a close reading of three of Jesus' primary spiritual practices in Luke's Gospel. She sets forth Jesus' spiritual practices through convincing exegesis, situating Jesus in his historical context, and through examining the reception of Jesus' teachings in the early church. Wright successfully shows how Jesus is the supremely good king and teacher who calls his people to a distinctive way of life. We need more books like this helping to point the way forward to how Jesus' practices—specifically simplicity, humility, and prayer—can shape the lives of would-be disciples of Jesus."

—**Joshua W. Jipp**, associate professor of New Testament at Trinity Evangelical Divinity School, author of *Reading Acts*

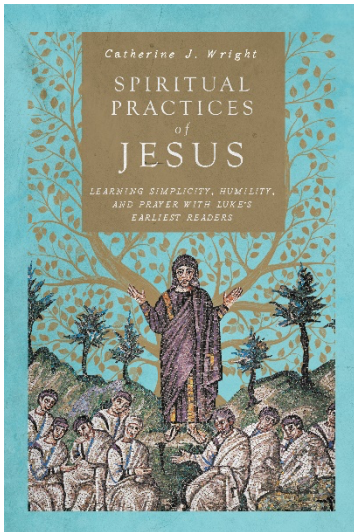
"With *Spiritual Practices of Jesus*, Catherine J. Wright has given a gift both to church and academy. Looking at Jesus' teaching and deeds of simplicity, humility, and prayer, she follows a similar pattern: she traces the theme in the Gospel narrative; then she contextualizes its practice within the views expressed in the larger Jewish and Greco-Roman environment of antiquity; finally, she explores the ways in which the teachings of the Lukan Jesus on simplicity, humility, and prayer were received in the early church. Wright is fully conversant with the pertinent primary and secondary literature, and along the way, she sprinkles examples from popular culture to present in bold relief the countercultural claims of Jesus. Pastors and lay Bible teachers will find here a kind of evangelical version of Ignatius's *Spiritual Exercises*, a treasure trove intended to encourage modern believers to adopt a simpler, humbler, and more prayerful way of life."

—**Mikeal C. Parsons**, professor and Macon Chair in Religion at Baylor University

"There's a lot going on in this well-crafted book. Catherine Wright wants us to read Luke's Gospel as Christian Scripture. She wants us to learn habits of reading Luke faithfully from the early church. She wants us to take seriously first-century expectations for a narrative like Luke's lest we overwhelm the text with twenty-first-century assumptions. Above all, though, she wants us to be shaped decisively through encountering Jesus in Luke's Gospel. Focusing on the coherence of



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Jesus' life and teaching around spiritual practices, Wright invites us to apprentice ourselves to Jesus, our teacher and royal model. Here is a book you will want to read slowly, perhaps with others, taking in and becoming like the scriptural Jesus."

—**Joel B. Green**, professor of New Testament at Fuller Theological Seminary

"In *Spiritual Practices of Jesus*, Catherine Wright invites readers into a delightful place where biblical studies and spiritual formation meet, a rare space that allows for Luke's Gospel and his literary world to embrace. I enthusiastically recommend this book. Wright's work not only expanded my understanding of how Luke's audience would have first heard his Gospel, but it also inspired me to double down in my own pursuit to imitate his Christ in simplicity, humility, and prayer."

—**Joseph R. Dodson**, Denver Seminary

"Catherine Wright looks back with a prophetic edge, inviting us to read Luke through the eyes of the early church, taking on our tendencies to keep Scripture at a safe distance or to spiritualize Jesus' most difficult commands. She invites us to encounter the gift of freedom in the unlikeliest of places by worldly standards—through simplicity, humility, and prayer—knowing that Jesus has the power to unburden and transform our hearts for the sake of this world God loves so much."

—**Karna Marks**, reverend at Immanuel in Pepin, Wisconsin

"*Spiritual Practices of Jesus* situates simplicity, humility, and prayer squarely within Jesus' life, the literary world of the early church, and the writings of early Christian leaders. Rather than abandoning readers to guess the meaning of or how to implement spiritual practices, Wright guides us through the many literary sources unpacking concrete dimensions of each practice for the world we live in today. Wright's conversation with Luke and other writers fully describes the ancient context for what many dismiss as a modern addition to Christianity."

—**Stan Harstine**, professor in religion at Friends University



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