

Daily Practices

Week of 4/19/21 - 4/23/21

DAY 1 // DAILY PRACTICES

PRAYER: Lord Jesus, please help me slow down enough in this moment to be fully present to myself and to you. May I become more aware of your Spirit's presence with me right now. Please open my heart to receive from you.

SILENCE: Set a timer for two minutes. Sit in silence and bring your attention to the presence of God with you right now.

SCRIPTURE: Acts 1:6-9

⁶So when they had come together, they asked him, "Lord, will you at this time restore the kingdom to Israel?" ⁷He said to them, "It is not for you to know times or seasons that the Father has fixed by his own authority. ⁸But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth." ⁹And when he had said these things, as they were looking on, he was lifted up, and a cloud took him out of their sight.

DEVOTIONAL: After Jesus rose from the dead, he walked on the earth for about forty days. He revealed his resurrected self to people, showing how the power of God raised him from the dead. His closest followers were ecstatic because they could just imagine all the things they would be able to do with this power that Jesus had. They were ready for Jesus to usher in his earthly kingdom. His followers were right—Jesus was going to give them his power and he was going to establish his kingdom; but they were wrong as to how Jesus would do these things. The power they would receive wasn't political power and the kingdom that Jesus would establish wouldn't be an earthly kingdom. God's power would come to reside in each of them through his Holy Spirit. The kingdom would span the globe, but it would be in their hearts. Everything that Jesus did was unexpected. In fact, rather than gathering together an army, Jesus physically left them. He left them so that God could come reside within them. When we place our faith in Jesus, the power of God's Spirit moves into your whole being seeking to transform you to be more like Christ. Today, just spend some time becoming aware of God's Spirit with you. At all times, God is with you and in you.

RESPONSE: Take two minutes to respond to the scripture, devotional, or the Holy Spirit's prompting. Respond by writing in a journal, by meditating on a specific thought, or by talking with God.

SILENCE: Set a timer for two minutes. Sit in silence and bring your attention to what God is speaking to you.

DAY 2 // DAILY PRACTICES

PRAYER: Lord Jesus, please help me slow down enough in this moment to be fully present to myself and to you. May I become more aware of your Spirit's presence with me right now. Please open my heart to receive from you.

SILENCE: Set a timer for two minutes. Sit in silence and bring your attention to the presence of God with you right now.

SCRIPTURE: Acts 2:1-6

¹When the day of Pentecost arrived, they were all together in one place. ²And suddenly there came from heaven a sound like a mighty rushing wind, and it filled the entire house where they were sitting. ³And divided tongues as of fire appeared to them and rested on each one of them. ⁴And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues as the Spirit gave them utterance. ⁵Now there were dwelling in Jerusalem Jews, devout men from every nation under heaven. ⁶And at this sound the multitude came together, and they were bewildered, because each one was hearing them speak in his own language.

DEVOTIONAL: Just as Jesus promised, within days after his ascension, the Holy Spirit was sent to those who believed. In a powerful scene, the Holy Spirit empowered believers to clearly communicate the message of Jesus to those who had gathered from all over the world. People from the nations heard this message in their own native tongue. What was clear in this moment was that the Good News of Jesus was moving. It was moving, not just in the room where these disciples were located, but it was moving into the whole world. Pentecost shows us God's desire for His message to be delivered to everyone, everywhere. This very moment at Pentecost is the reason why you are able to experience the Holy Spirit's power in your life today.

RESPONSE: Take two minutes to respond to the scripture, devotional, or the Holy Spirit's prompting. Respond by writing in a journal, by meditating on a specific thought, or by talking with God.

SILENCE: Set a timer for two minutes. Sit in silence and bring your attention to what God is speaking to you.

DAY 3 // DAILY PRACTICES

PRAYER: Lord Jesus, please help me slow down enough in this moment to be fully present to myself and to you. May I become more aware of your Spirit's presence with me right now. Please open my heart to receive from you.

SILENCE: Set a timer for two minutes. Sit in silence and bring your attention to the presence of God with you right now.

SCRIPTURE: Joel 2:28-32

²⁸ "And it shall come to pass afterward, that I will pour out my Spirit on all flesh; your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your old men shall dream dreams, and your young men shall see visions. ²⁹ Even on the male and female servants in those days I will pour out my Spirit. ³⁰ "And I will show wonders in the heavens and on the earth, blood and fire and columns of smoke. ³¹ The sun shall be turned to darkness, and the moon to blood, before the great and awesome day of the Lord comes. ³² And it shall come to pass that everyone who calls on the name of the Lord shall be saved.

DEVOTIONAL: The prophet Joel wrote about the coming of the Holy Spirit approximately 900 years prior to Pentecost. Joel foretells of a day when the Spirit would be poured out on "all flesh," and anyone who "calls on the name of the Lord shall be saved." This is a beautiful reminder to us that it has been God's desire from the beginning to bring all of humanity back into relationship with himself. How important was this day? It was so important that God wanted us to pay attention. Joel said that there would be many signs pointing to the Holy Spirit's arrival. These signs were great and awesome, but they paled in comparison to the importance of the Holy Spirit's power and beauty. Isn't this so true of us? Don't we often get distracted by the signs of the Spirit rather than getting lost in the consuming power and beauty of the Holy Spirit himself? This awe-inspiring, beautiful, powerful, and wonderful God lives within you if you have placed your faith in Jesus. Right now, you are the home of the Holy Spirit.

RESPONSE: Take a few minutes to respond to the scripture, devotional, or the Holy Spirit's prompting. Respond by writing in a journal, by meditating on a specific thought, or by talking with God.

SILENCE: Set a timer for two minutes. Sit in silence and bring your attention to what God is speaking to you.

DAY 4 // DAILY PRACTICES

PRAYER: Lord Jesus, please help me slow down enough in this moment to be fully present to myself and to you. May I become more aware of your Spirit's presence with me right now. Please open my heart to receive from you.

SILENCE: Set a timer for two minutes. Sit in silence and bring your attention to the presence of God with you right now.

SCRIPTURE: Acts 2:37-39

³⁷ Now when they heard this they were cut to the heart, and said to Peter and the rest of the apostles, "Brothers, what shall we do?" ³⁸ And Peter said to them, "Repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins, and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. ³⁹ For the promise is for you and for your children and for all who are far off, everyone whom the Lord our God calls to himself."

DEVOTIONAL: Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord receives the "gift of the Holy Spirit." What a way to describe the Holy Spirit as a gift! There is nothing that we have to do to earn the presence and power of God in our lives. It is given to us a free gift. But it is important to treat the gift with the honor that it deserves. This gift of the Holy Spirit is precious. It is the most prized possession that any of us could ever be given. God is literally living within all of us bringing us into close relationship with the perfect Father. Maybe you don't feel like you deserve this precious gift. Luke (the writer of Acts) says that this promise is given to all of us—even those who are far off. Maybe you feel far off from God. The Holy Spirit wants to minister to you. He wants to testify to you how much you are loved by God. God wants you close to him. His arms are open to you. Will you open your heart to allow him to work in your life?

RESPONSE: Take two minutes to respond to the scripture, devotional, or the Holy Spirit's prompting. Respond by writing in a journal, by meditating on a specific thought, or by talking with God.

SILENCE: Set a timer for two minutes. Sit in silence and bring your attention to what God is speaking to you.

DAY 5 // DAILY PRACTICES

PRAYER: Lord Jesus, please help me to slow down enough in this moment to be fully present to myself and to you. May I become more aware of your Spirit's presence with me right now. Please open my heart to receive from you.

SILENCE: Set a timer for two minutes. Sit in silence and bring your attention to the presence of God with you right now.

SCRIPTURE: Acts 2:42-48

⁴² And they devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and the fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers. ⁴³ And awe came upon every soul, and many wonders and signs were being done through the apostles. ⁴⁴ And all who believed were together and had all things in common. ⁴⁵ And they were selling their possessions and belongings and distributing the proceeds to all, as any had need. ⁴⁶ And day by day, attending the temple together and breaking bread in their homes, they received their food with glad and generous hearts, ⁴⁷ praising God and having favor with all the people. And the Lord added to their number day by day those who were being saved.

DEVOTIONAL: The work of the Holy Spirit leads to great unity. If each of us who believe have God residing inside of us, then it should lead us to true unity because this true unity is based in God and God alone. Sure, we might be able to unite around other things as well, but ultimately the unity we share is based on God's pursuit of us. We were all "far off" from God but he pursued us anyway. Even when none of us deserved to be pursued by God, he chose to do it anyway. And then he took it a step further and took up residence within us. The same is true of others who believe in his name. He loved us—yes, even the difficult ones of "us"—with such a love that permeates our being because he permeates our being. How could we be divided if God lives inside of us? That's easier said than done, but remember you have the power of the Holy Spirit there to help you.

RESPONSE: Take two minutes to respond to the scripture, devotional, or the Holy Spirit's prompting. Respond by writing in a journal, by meditating on a specific thought, or by talking with God.

SILENCE: Set a timer for two minutes. Sit in silence and bring your attention to what God is speaking to you.