

Daily Practices

Week of 9/13/21 - 9/17/21

DAY 1 // DAILY PRACTICES

PRAYER: Lord Jesus, please help me to slow down enough in this moment to be fully present to myself and to you. Please open my heart to receive what you want me to hear; and please empower me by your Spirit to live the way that you are asking me to live.

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

SCRIPTURE: Proverbs 1:1-7

1 The proverbs of Solomon, son of David, king of Israel: **2** To know wisdom and instruction, to understand words of insight, **3** to receive instruction in wise dealing, in righteousness, justice, and equity; **4** to give prudence to the simple, knowledge and discretion to the youth—**5** Let the wise hear and increase in learning, and the one who understands obtain guidance, **6** to understand a proverb and a saying, the words of the wise and their riddles. **7** The fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge; fools despise wisdom and instruction.

DEVOTIONAL: From the beginning of time, culture has been searching for ways to navigate the world in righteousness, justice, and equity. The book of Proverbs shows us two different types of wisdom—wisdom in how the world was designed to operate and wisdom in how to live despite the fractures of sin. Foundational to any form of wisdom starts with God. It doesn't start within ourselves, but it starts outside of ourselves in the Creator of all things. Solomon was considered the wisest man (outside of Jesus) ever to live. This didn't mean that he was perfect. This didn't mean that he was sinless. But it did mean that he turned to God for knowledge and instruction. Our hearts should be positioned toward God with humility and reverence, much like Solomon. Wisdom starts with God and is only found in humility toward him. Some of you need a reminder that you didn't earn your wisdom. Others may need a reminder that God's spirit is with you teaching and guiding you. You don't need to be at the top of the intellectual chain. You have the wisdom of God with you if you humbly seek after him.

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 to slow down enough in this moment to be fully present to myself and to you. Please open my heart to receive what you want me to hear; and please empower me by your Spirit to live the way that you are asking me to live.

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

SCRIPTURE: Proverbs 1:29-33

29 Because they hated knowledge and did not choose the fear of the Lord, **30** would have none of my counsel and despised all my reproof, **31** therefore they shall eat the fruit of their way, and have their fill of their own devices. **32** For the simple are killed by their turning away, and the complacency of fools destroys them; **33** but whoever listens to me will dwell secure and will be at ease, without dread of disaster.”

DEVOTIONAL: In a culture that speaks a lot of words, we are still left searching for wisdom. We can consume much knowledge, but still live without wisdom because we didn't turn to God with our knowledge. Wisdom takes knowledge partnered with fear of the Lord to live securely rooted and grounded in love. In the created order of all things, it was designed for us to seek after the wisdom of God and be able to live at ease, without dread of disaster. But this is not the way that we experience the world. While these proverbs highlight to us the way that it should be, we also know that our experiences may be different. Later in the book, Solomon will begin talking about the way things are currently experienced in light of sin, but for now we can learn much about the heart of God toward his people. God's heart for us is that we can trust him and dwell securely with him when we turn to him. Listening to his voice should bring a calm awareness that the presence of God is always with us. We can dwell securely, even in the face of grave danger, because God is faithfully loving us in all things.

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 to slow down enough in this moment to be fully present to myself and to you. Please open my heart to receive what you want me to hear; and please empower me by your Spirit to live the way that you are asking me to live.

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

SCRIPTURE: Proverbs 2:1-5

1My son, if you receive my words and treasure up my commandments with you, **2**making your ear attentive to wisdom and inclining your heart to understanding; **3**yes, if you call out for insight and raise your voice for understanding, **4**if you seek it like silver and search for it as for hidden treasures, **5**then you will understand the fear of the Lord and find the knowledge of God.

DEVOTIONAL: Solomon encourages his son to seek after insight and understanding like someone searching for hidden treasure. Most of the time we don't just stumble toward wisdom, but our heart has to be attentive for it. We have to posture ourselves in a way that allows us to receive the gifts of wisdom that God wants to give. When we are arrogantly pursuing our own way, then it shouldn't surprise us when we feel lost and confused. God's design for us is to turn to him. He wants our hearts to find their fullness in him and in him alone because there will always be enough of God. He can meet us in every circumstance. He can provide insight and direction to us in all things. Why wouldn't we turn to him in all things? He is present and active in all good circumstances and in all painful circumstances. Be attentive to God because he is attentive to 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 4 // DAILY PRACTICES

PRAYER: Lord Jesus, please help me to slow down enough in this moment to be fully present to myself and to you. Please open my heart to receive what you want me to hear; and please empower me by your Spirit to live the way that you are asking me to live.

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

SCRIPTURE: Proverbs 2:6-10

6 For the Lord gives wisdom; from his mouth come knowledge and understanding; **7** he stores up sound wisdom for the upright; he is a shield to those who walk in integrity, **8** guarding the paths of justice and watching over the way of his saints. **9** Then you will understand righteousness and justice and equity, every good path; **10** for wisdom will come into your heart, and knowledge will be pleasant to your soul;

DEVOTIONAL: Sin wrecks havoc on our world. It causes wars, disasters, disease, and pain. Oftentimes, our own personal sin requires that we face the consequences of our decisions. In those moments, we need to seek repentance and reparation. However, there are many times when someone may live uprightly and holy, and yet still experience pain. According to God's design, this is not the way that the world should be. Walking in integrity should lead toward flourishing. This is the way of wisdom. Yet, even though this is not our experience, this is the heart of God toward us. Even though we may experience pain, God's heart is still pleasant to our souls. His heart is close to us in spite of our experiences. Jesus lived the most holy and upright life and still experienced pain. He knows our pain. He knows what it is like. You have a savior that understands. You are not alone.

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 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. Please open my heart to receive what you want me to hear; and please empower me by your Spirit to live the way that you are asking me to live.

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

SCRIPTURE: Proverbs 3:3-8

3 Let not steadfast love and faithfulness forsake you; bind them around your neck; write them on the tablet of your heart. **4** So you will find favor and good success in the sight of God and man.

5 Trust in the Lord with all your heart, and do not lean on your own understanding. **6** In all your ways acknowledge him, and he will make straight your paths. **7** Be not wise in your own eyes; fear the Lord, and turn away from evil. **8** It will be healing to your flesh and refreshment to your bones.

DEVOTIONAL: Who doesn't want to experience healing and refreshment? But how Solomon tells us to pursue our refreshment is when we turn ourselves over to God for our care. This is where things get difficult. We want to stay in control ourselves. It feels easier. It feels less scary. We'd rather try to hold on to things. Even if we turn to God in most circumstances, Solomon encourages us to trust in God with our whole heart. All of it. In all circumstances. This means that we need to practice acknowledging God in all things. It means that we have to slow our minds down enough to remember that God is with us in wherever we are going or in whatever we are doing. Doing so, unites our heart with the heart of God and we can live knowing that the presence of God is at work. What is a specific area of your life where you want to start acknowledging the presence of God? What is a small step you can take to bring your attention to him?

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.