

# Daily Practices

Week of 12/6/21 - 12/10/21

## 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:** Psalm 126

**1**When the Lord restored the fortunes of Zion, we were like those who dream. **2**Then our mouth was filled with laughter, and our tongue with shouts of joy; then they said among the nations, “The Lord has done great things for them.” **3**The Lord has done great things for us; we are glad. **4**Restore our fortunes, O Lord, like streams in the Negeb! **5**Those who sow in tears shall reap with shouts of joy! **6**He who goes out weeping, bearing the seed for sowing, shall come home with shouts of joy, bringing his sheaves with him.

**DEVOTIONAL:** The Advent season reminds us that Jesus has come to redeem us and that he will return to restore all of creation to himself. We can look back and see that God has done great things for us, yet we are waiting for the day when all will be made right. It’s a tension that Christians are living in. We weep at the brokenness of the world now, but then we can look forward to the day when our weeping will turn into shouts of joy. Psalm 126 meets us in this tension. It meets us with hope for our future and peace for our present moment. We can trust that God will restore us because he has given his presence to us right now. We can turn our weeping to him because he cares for us, and we can turn our shouts of joy to him because he is rejoicing alongside us.

**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:** Isaiah 19:18-25

**18** In that day there will be five cities in the land of Egypt that speak the language of Canaan and swear allegiance to the Lord of hosts. One of these will be called the City of Destruction. **19** In that day there will be an altar to the Lord in the midst of the land of Egypt, and a pillar to the Lord at its border. **20** It will be a sign and a witness to the Lord of hosts in the land of Egypt. When they cry to the Lord because of oppressors, he will send them a savior and defender, and deliver them. **21** And the Lord will make himself known to the Egyptians, and the Egyptians will know the Lord in that day and worship with sacrifice and offering, and they will make vows to the Lord and perform them. **22** And the Lord will strike Egypt, striking and healing, and they will return to the Lord, and he will listen to their pleas for mercy and heal them.

**DEVOTIONAL:** Isaiah tells of a coming sign from the Lord. In the middle of a pagan land, he promised to send a savior to those who are oppressed. God will make himself known. He will have the final say. We can have hope and peace knowing that God is our defender. Advent shows us that God is near to us right now. He is listening and he will not be slow to mercy. God wants to be the healing balm to the wounds that have been plaguing you. When we turn to him, he will be there. He may not fix our physical problems yet, but he will be the healing presence that fulfills the ache in our hearts.

**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:** Isaiah 35:3-7

**3** Strengthen the weak hands, and make firm the feeble knees. **4** Say to those who have an anxious heart, “Be strong; fear not! Behold, your God will come with vengeance, with the recompense of God. He will come and save you.” **5** Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf unstopped; **6** then shall the lame man leap like a deer, and the tongue of the mute sing for joy. For waters break forth in the wilderness, and streams in the desert; **7** the burning sand shall become a pool, and the thirsty ground springs of water; in the haunt of jackals, where they lie down, the grass shall become reeds and rushes.

**DEVOTIONAL:** We can trust that God is coming for us. In fact, all of creation is longing for the day when we can experience the wholeness that God designed for us. Someday all will be at peace. Until then, we can rest in the refuge of God’s peaceful presence. He sent his Spirit to live within us and testify to our hearts that we are loved and accepted by him. Through the power of the Spirit, we can face whatever the world throws at us. In our own strength, we can’t do it. But in the strength of the Spirit, we can live with presence in any situation.

**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:** Isaiah 9:9-7

**6** For to us a child is born, to us a son is given; and the government shall be upon his shoulder, and his name shall be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. **7** Of the increase of his government and of peace there will be no end, on the throne of David and over his kingdom, to establish it and to uphold it with justice and with righteousness from this time forth and forevermore. The zeal of the Lord of hosts will do this.

**DEVOTIONAL:** Isaiah is looking forward to the day when this peace that God promised will come. God is establishing justice and righteousness through the saving work of Jesus. As we prepare to celebrate Jesus' first coming, we can see the lengths that God will go through in order to establish a world with righteousness, justice, and peace. He stopped at nothing. He laid aside the glories of heaven to walk upon a cursed earth. He laid down his life in order for us to receive his life. Isaiah promised that God would do this with great "zeal," and with great zeal did he. When we long for the promise of a renewed life, we can trust that God will zealously stop at nothing to establish peace and justice.

**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:** Luke 2:11-14

**11** For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord. **12** And this will be a sign for you: you will find a baby wrapped in swaddling cloths and lying in a manger.” **13** And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God and saying, **14** “Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace among those with whom he is pleased!”

**DEVOTIONAL:** All of heaven rejoiced at the birth of Jesus because they knew what was happening. Heaven was coming to earth to restore God’s relationship with humanity. Sin fractured everything. God wasn’t pleased with us. It is why we couldn’t find true peace. But with the coming of Jesus, God was making a way for us to return to the good graces of the relationship with him. Through Jesus, God was making a way for us to find peace. Our faith in Jesus, allows him to attribute his righteousness to our lives. When God looks at us, he sees the righteousness of Jesus and God is pleased with us. All of heaven knew that humanity was about to return to their rightful place as sons and daughters of God because of the perfection of Jesus. We get to join heaven in singing, “Glory to God” because God has made a way for us to experience the peace of a relationship with 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.