

Daily Practices

Week of 1/17/22 - 1/21/22

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: Romans 12:9-18

⁹Let love be genuine; hate what is evil, hold fast to what is good; ¹⁰love one another with mutual affection; outdo one another in showing honor. ¹¹Do not lag in zeal, be ardent in spirit, serve the Lord. ¹²Rejoice in hope, be patient in suffering, persevere in prayer. ¹³Contribute to the needs of the saints; extend hospitality to strangers. ¹⁴Bless those who persecute you; bless and do not curse them. ¹⁵Rejoice with those who rejoice, weep with those who weep. ¹⁶Live in harmony with one another; do not be haughty, but associate with the lowly; do not claim to be wiser than you are. ¹⁷Do not repay anyone evil for evil, but take thought for what is noble in the sight of all. ¹⁸If it is possible, so far as it depends on you, live peaceably with all.

DEVOTIONAL: The apostle Paul envisions a world where the people of the church live with love and harmony toward each other. He commands them to leave their old ways of relating and practice a new way of relationships. Spend some time responding to the scripture through the following guided questions.

RESPONSE: From his list of commandments in these verses, what practice stands out to you most about stepping into God's new way of relating? Take a moment to reflect on what living into this practice means to you.

Name one person specifically who you'd like to see this character trait take root in how you interact with this person. Now, take a moment to ask God for strength to live into this practice.

Think about this character trait/practice and take a few moments to sit in the reality that these are not just a list of dos and don'ts. Each of these practices are ways that God relates to us. The practice on which you are meditating today is how God looks at you.

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.

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SCRIPTURE: Psalm 145:8-14

⁸ The Lord is gracious and merciful, slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love. ⁹ The Lord is good to all, and his compassion is over all that he has made. ¹⁰ All your works shall give thanks to you, O Lord, and all your faithful shall bless you. ¹¹ They shall speak of the glory of your kingdom, and tell of your power, ¹² to make known to all people your mighty deeds, and the glorious splendor of your kingdom. ¹³ Your kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and your dominion endures throughout all generations. The Lord is faithful in all his words, and gracious in all his deeds. ¹⁴ The Lord upholds all who are falling, and raises up all who are bowed down.

DEVOTIONAL: King David writes this Psalm and highlights the abundance of God's steadfast love. In every human interaction, our experience of love is imperfect. We can't love perfectly and neither can others. Our imperfect experience makes it difficult to comprehend how deeply God abounds in love toward us. Our unfaithful love makes it difficult to comprehend how resolute and unwavering God's love is. Yet, even in our imperfect experience, God's never-ending love is found. He stands in the gap even though we can't grasp the measure of God's favor and kindness lavished upon us. While you may not fully understand God's love, it is present anyway. He upholds you and remains faithful to you 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.

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SCRIPTURE: Luke 5:33-39

³³ Then they said to him, “John’s disciples, like the disciples of the Pharisees, frequently fast and pray, but your disciples eat and drink.” ³⁴ Jesus said to them, “You cannot make wedding guests fast while the bridegroom is with them, can you? ³⁵ The days will come when the bridegroom will be taken away from them, and then they will fast in those days.” ³⁶ He also told them a parable: “No one tears a piece from a new garment and sews it on an old garment; otherwise the new will be torn, and the piece from the new will not match the old. ³⁷ And no one puts new wine into old wineskins; otherwise the new wine will burst the skins and will be spilled, and the skins will be destroyed. ³⁸ But new wine must be put into fresh wineskins. ³⁹ And no one after drinking old wine desires new wine, but says, ‘The old is good.’”

DEVOTIONAL: It is engrained in us to turn back to our old ways. If Jesus is a feast, we don’t partake in the meal. We have endless amounts of living water and bread of life, yet we would rather turn back to the scraps that we are more comfortable consuming. Even though we know Jesus is the better option, our flesh takes us back to the old habits in which our flesh would rather indulge. Jesus has transformed us into new life, yet we repeatedly stand back and say, “The old is good.” To what habits or behaviors do you step back and say, “The old is good?” How does God want you to enjoy the feast rather than consuming old crumbs?

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.

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SCRIPTURE: Psalm 19:7-10

⁷The law of the Lord is perfect, reviving the soul; the decrees of the Lord are sure, making wise the simple; ⁸the precepts of the Lord are right, rejoicing the heart; the commandment of the Lord is clear, enlightening the eyes; ⁹the fear of the Lord is pure, enduring forever; the ordinances of the Lord are true and righteous altogether. ¹⁰More to be desired are they than gold, even much fine gold; sweeter also than honey, and drippings of the honeycomb.

DEVOTIONAL: When we read God's word, Jesus is speaking directly to our hearts. We can trust that he is speaking life into our souls, even if the word challenges us to live differently. God's voice is true and trusted because he cares so deeply about the health of our souls. When God speaks through his word or through his Spirit, we can turn to him to like someone turning to fine gold. His words are more valuable to our souls than anything that the world has to offer. What are you turning to for nourishment? Where are you turning to other things instead of turning to God's voice in your life? Or maybe a more cutting question is this: How are you making space to listen to God in your day? Set some additional time aside in the middle of your day to turn to the voice of God.

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.

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SCRIPTURE: Romans 12:1-8

¹I appeal to you therefore, brothers and sisters, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship. ²Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your minds, so that you may discern what is the will of God—what is good and acceptable and perfect. ³For by the grace given to me I say to everyone among you not to think of yourself more highly than you ought to think, but to think with sober judgment, each according to the measure of faith that God has assigned. ⁴For as in one body we have many members, and not all the members have the same function, ⁵so we, who are many, are one body in Christ, and individually we are members one of another. ⁶We have gifts that differ according to the grace given to us: prophecy, in proportion to faith; ⁷ministry, in ministering; the teacher, in teaching; ⁸the exhorter, in exhortation; the giver, in generosity; the leader, in diligence; the compassionate, in cheerfulness.

DEVOTIONAL: This whole week has been about our propensity to turn back to our old ways rather than to the feast that God has prepared for us in Christ. But being transformed into something new requires a renewed commitment to listen to the voice of God. Where are you continuing to make space to hear from God? Today's passage reminds us that God make speak through others. Other people are so critical to the life of a believer that Jesus describes his body as the people of God. We need each other to grow up into the newness that God wants for us. We will continually say, "The old is good" unless we allow the Holy Spirit to speak into our lives through others. How are you opening yourself up to the voice of God through others?

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.

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