

Daily Practices

Week of 9/20/21 - 9/24/21

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 3:19-22

19 The Lord by wisdom founded the earth; by understanding he established the heavens; **20** by his knowledge the deeps broke open, and the clouds drop down the dew. **21** My son, do not lose sight of these— keep sound wisdom and discretion, **22** and they will be life for your soul and adornment for your neck.

DEVOTIONAL: The foundations of the world are built upon the wisdom of the Lord. The natural order that provides life to everything was created by God himself. The breath that we breathe was designed to be continually created by the plants around us. The sun was designed to warm the atmosphere to create the rain needed to hydrate all living creatures. We could spend a lifetime describing the wisdom of God found in creation. That's what science is for! The study of science illuminates the wisdom of God. In today's reading, Solomon is begging his son not to lose sight of the wisdom of God because, just like in creation, ordering our lives around God's wisdom provides life for our souls. What is the wisdom of God revealing to you 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 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 4:23-27

23 Keep your heart with all vigilance, for from it flow the springs of life. **24** Put away from your crooked speech, and put devious talk far from you. **25** Let your eyes look directly forward, and your gaze be straight before you. **26** Ponder the path of your feet; then all your ways will be sure. **27** Do not swerve to the right or to the left; turn your foot away from evil.

DEVOTIONAL: One of the overarching truths that Solomon is trying to communicate is that the path to living life more fully human is to follow after the wisdom of God. Solomon wrote this long before Jesus walked on the earth, but the language should sound a lot like the language used for following Jesus. The wisdom of God is found perfectly in the person of Jesus. You could say that Jesus put flesh on the wisdom of God. To follow after him, without swerving to the right or to the left, we need to place our gaze directly on him. We need to walk the path that he has set before us. In your response time, seek the Holy Spirit's guidance. Where is he convicting you? How are you swerving to the right or left away from the path that Jesus walked before you? And once again, Solomon tells us why we unite our hearts in him. When our hearts are united with the wisdom of God, then from them will flow the springs of 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 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 6:1-5

1My son, if you have put up security for your neighbor, have given your pledge for a stranger, **2**if you are snared in the words of your mouth, caught in the words of your mouth, **3**then do this, my son, and save yourself, for you have come into the hand of your neighbor: go, hasten, and plead urgently with your neighbor. **4**Give your eyes no sleep and your eyelids no slumber; **5**save yourself like a gazelle from the hand of the hunter, like a bird from the hand of the fowler.

DEVOTIONAL: Solomon is getting more and more practical as we go along. He is giving to us principles for how the world should be, trying to pass along the wisdom that's learned. In today's reading, he wants us to hear how important it is for us to keep our word. If we say that we are going to do something, then we need to do it. If we break our trust, or flat out lie, then we need to work incessantly to make it right. Yet this is so difficult for us because we are too proud to admit when we are wrong. Humility and honesty are the way toward life. Deception and dishonesty are the way toward death. The longer we go without making our wrongs right with our neighbors, then the more damage we do to our own souls and the hearts of our neighbors. In what ways do you hope to see humility lead you toward 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 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 8:32-36

32 “And now, O sons, listen to me: blessed are those who keep my ways. **33** Hear instruction and be wise, and do not neglect it. **34** Blessed is the one who listens to me, watching daily at my gates, waiting beside my doors. **35** For whoever finds me finds life and obtains favor from the Lord, **36** but he who fails to find me injures himself; all who hate me love death.”

DEVOTIONAL: Solomon has personified wisdom in Proverbs 8. He is writing in such a way that wisdom is speaking to the listener. Read this passage again and imagine that Wisdom personified is speaking to you. What does that sound like? It sounds like words that Jesus would speak to us because, remember, Jesus is this wisdom of God that has actually been personified. This means that when we listen to Jesus, when we keep his ways, when we spend time with him, then we find life. Brother or sister, we have access to both the incomprehensible wisdom and the flourishing life of God. How? We have access to all of that through Christ. So will you watch daily at his gates? Will you wait for him? Because according to Solomon those who watch and wait are called “blessed.”

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 9:7-12

7 Whoever corrects a scoffer gets himself abuse, and he who reproves a wicked man incurs injury. **8** Do not reprove a scoffer, or he will hate you; reprove a wise man, and he will love you. **9** Give instruction to a wise man, and he will be still wiser; teach a righteous man, and he will increase in learning. **10** The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom, and the knowledge of the Holy One is insight. **11** For by me your days will be multiplied, and years will be added to your life. **12** If you are wise, you are wise for yourself; if you scoff, you alone will bear it.

DEVOTIONAL: Solomon contrasts the wise person with the scoffer. The wise person listens to correction and instruction. The scoffer turns aside in anger and arrogance. Which one do your actions align you with? Do you hear corrective feedback well? Or do you get defensive and angry? Are you a wise person or are you a scoffer? Solomon tells us that those who are wise are willing to hear from others because they know their place before God. God is god and they are not. Their hearts receive wisdom because they postured in humility from the very beginning. Those who are not postured toward God, and then thereby others, in humility will end up bearing their burdens alone. People will turn away because the scoffer has pushed them away. Instead, as followers of Jesus, our hearts should already be postured toward humility because we know that we could not do life on our own. We needed Jesus, so it shouldn't surprise us that we need others. You don't have to bear your burdens alone. Invite others in. Listen to their wisdom.

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.