

Daily Practices

Week of 11/8/21 - 11/12/21

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 27:1-4

1Do not boast about tomorrow, for you do not know what a day may bring. **2**Let another praise you, and not your own mouth; a stranger, and not your own lips. **3**A stone is heavy, and sand is weighty, but a fool's provocation is heavier than both. **4**Wrath is cruel, anger is overwhelming, but who can stand before jealousy?

DEVOTIONAL: The brother of Jesus said that life is but a breath so we should not boast about tomorrow. Centuries prior, Solomon laid the foundation for James' wisdom. He too said that we should not boast about tomorrow. But, interestingly, Solomon doesn't stick with the emphasis of tomorrow's unknown. He emphasizes the boasting part of his statement. He goes on to say that we shouldn't boast and we should let other people speak on our behalf. Pride is a deathly heavy weight to bear. It leads to wrath, anger, and jealousy. The way of wisdom is humble and self-giving. Our actions should speak loud enough that others seek our good. What if we spent more time living in humility than trying to make a name for ourselves? What if we sought to live without recognition? Plan some time in your day when you intentionally do something kind in complete obscurity. Don't tell anyone. Begin a practice of serving others in quiet humility.

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.

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SCRIPTURE: Proverbs 27:5-9

5 Better is open rebuke than hidden love. **6** Faithful are the wounds of a friend; profuse are the kisses of an enemy. **7** One who is full loathes honey, but to one who is hungry everything bitter is sweet. **8** Like a bird that strays from its nest is a man who strays from his home. **9** Oil and perfume make the heart glad, and the sweetness of a friend comes from his earnest counsel.

DEVOTIONAL: Part of living in humility is to seek honest feedback from others. As long as we live in a world that has sin present, we will fall short. We will mess up. The gospel tells us that even though we fall short, we are loved and accepted by God. But this reality means that we don't have to pretend to have it all together. We don't have to find our identity in the affirmations of others. In fact, Solomon encourages us to seek feedback and earnest counsel from others, because too much affirmation is actually like eating too many sweets. After a while, you start to feel sick. Honest feedback can help us grow in the way of wisdom. Do people give you honest feedback? If not, why? Is it because they don't feel safe enough around you to be honest with you? Or is it because you are too scared to see how you need to grow? Remember the gospel tells you that, despite your flaws, you are loved and accepted by God.

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: Proverbs 27:17-19

17 Iron sharpens iron, and one man sharpens another. **18** Whoever tends a fig tree will eat its fruit, and he who guards his master will be honored. **19** As in water face reflects face, so the heart of man reflects the man.

DEVOTIONAL: “The heart of man reflects the man.” Since the beginning of time, God has been looking at the heart of humanity. We usually look at the external acts of others, which cannot be ignored, but God always looks at our external acts through the lens of our hearts. Jesus himself said that a good person produces good out of his or her own heart. And then on the flip side, an evil person produces evil out of the heart. This means that it is imperative that we examine our hearts. If we don’t give ourselves space to see what’s there, then we won’t honestly give our hearts to Jesus in order for him to transform us. Obviously, this isn’t easy. No one wants to look into the darkness of their hearts, but God already knows what’s there and he’s accepted you anyway. Whatever you find in the depths of your heart, God knows it already. Ask for God to come in and illuminate the darkness.

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: Proverbs 28:3-6

3 A poor man who oppresses the poor is a beating rain that leaves no food. **4** Those who forsake the law praise the wicked, but those who keep the law strive against them. **5** Evil men do not understand justice, but those who seek the Lord understand it completely. **6** Better is a poor man who walks in his integrity than a rich man who is crooked in his ways

DEVOTIONAL: From the depths of God's heart flows justice. Sure, there are laws that we need to create to seek justice in our society, but the ultimate way to pursue justice is to seek after the heart of God. Solomon says that the one who seeks the Lord will "understand [justice] completely." Justice doesn't come from riches or power. It comes from a wholeness that is found in God. Our goal in life should be to live whole-heartedly following Jesus, from whom justice flows. Even if we steward the riches and power that we have to seek a more just society, it won't end in true justice unless God's heart is on display through us. More riches and power shouldn't be for what we are striving. What we should be striving for is more of Jesus reflected to the world around us.

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: Proverbs 28:25-28

25 A greedy man stirs up strife, but the one who trusts in the Lord will be enriched. **26** Whoever trusts in his own mind is a fool, but he who walks in wisdom will be delivered. **27** Whoever gives to the poor will not want, but he who hides his eyes will get many a curse. **28** When the wicked rise, people hide themselves, but when they perish, the righteous increase.

DEVOTIONAL: The wisdom of God is oftentimes the foolishness of humanity. The way of the kingdom—the way of wisdom—is righteousness and justice, not financial self-protection. God consistently asks us to give away what we have been given. But the key is that we give away what we've been given because we have received much from God himself. We don't give in order to receive. We give because we already have received. When we sit in the lavishness of God's gifts of love and grace, it should motivate us to give to those who are in lack. We do all this not to bolster our own names, but to glorify the name of Jesus. How can you be generous today because God has been generous 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.