

Daily Practices

Week of 11/15/21 - 11/19/21

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 29:4-7

4 By justice a king builds up the land, but he who exacts gifts tears it down. **5** A man who flatters his neighbor spreads a net for his feet. **6** An evil man is ensnared in his transgression, but a righteous man sings and rejoices. **7** A righteous man knows the rights of the poor; a wicked man does not understand such knowledge.

DEVOTIONAL: As part of his character, the heart of God is fully just, and he created justice to be imprinted on the heart of humanity. However, in our own ways, we've perverted justice since sin entered the world at the fall. We will struggle with our desire for justice and our desire to use others for gain. According to Proverbs, the way of wisdom isn't to seek our own gain—that just leads to a web of lies and sin. The way of wisdom is to fight for the rights of the poor and marginalized. We should care about injustice because God cares about injustice. As you look around the world, what areas of injustice has God weighted your heart with to specifically care? It is humanly impossible to fix every injustice in the world. However, God does want you to use your talents and gifts to seek justice for those around 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 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 29:8-11

8 Scoffers set a city aflame, but the wise turn away wrath. **9** If a wise man has an argument with a fool, the fool only rages and laughs, and there is no quiet. **10** Bloodthirsty men hate one who is blameless and seek the life of the upright. **11** A fool gives full vent to his spirit, but a wise man quietly holds it back.

DEVOTIONAL: Wisdom seeks to live with self-restraint. It is not rash nor is it reactive. In fact, we are told that the wise “turn away wrath” and “quietly holds back.” Now this isn’t relating to someone’s outgoing personality (an outgoing personality is one of the many types of personality that reflect the multi-faceted image of God). But, this proverb is talking about speaking and acting impulsively. God wants us to live according to his way of wisdom. We can see into the heart of God even more by looking at the fruit of the Spirit found in Galatians 5. One of the character traits that is listed is “patience.” This matches nicely with today’s proverb. One who is patient will not act impulsively or rashly. Where in your life do you act impulsively and without patience? What leads you to respond rashly in those situations? How might the Holy Spirit want to convict your heart or comfort your soul in those moments?

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 29:12-14

12 If a ruler listens to falsehood, all his officials will be wicked. **13** The poor man and the oppressor meet together; the Lord gives light to the eyes of both. **14** If a king faithfully judges the poor, his throne will be established forever.

DEVOTIONAL: The systems of evil are constantly at work. Broken people lead to broken systems. And for as long as we live in a world that's marred by sin, we will be faced with broken systems and our own individual sin. But this doesn't mean that we can absolve ourselves from responsibility. We are called to follow after Jesus, who fully embodied the way of wisdom. Even though Jesus defeated sin and death, even though he took the weight of every injustice on his back, the world is still marred by continual injustice. Until all is made right in the future, we are called to live in this tension of pursuing just systems. We are called to lead in ways that influence those around us for goodness and peace. As the apostle Paul said, "do not grow weary in doing good." How is God calling you to influence those around you toward goodness and justice?

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 29:22-25

22 A man of wrath stirs up strife, and one given to anger causes much transgression. **23** One's pride will bring him low, but he who is lowly in spirit will obtain honor. **24** The partner of a thief hates his own life; he hears the curse, but discloses nothing. **25** The fear of man lays a snare, but whoever trusts in the Lord is safe.

DEVOTIONAL: A continual theme throughout the book of Proverbs has been the pride and arrogance of mankind. Since the beginning, we have been trying to show God that our ways are better than his ways. We think that we have a better concept of reality than he does, so we try to make our own way. But God says that pursuing one's own ways will actually be like laying a snare that traps the one who set it. Pursuing our own ways will just lead to more anger and strife. It will ultimately lead to destruction—maybe not in this life, but that destruction will come. The last line in verse 25 is a beautiful promise for each one of us: “whoever trusts in the Lord is safe.” When we turn over our trust to God, rather than to our own selves, then we are actually stepping into the safest place for our souls. God will never abandon you nor will he leave you. Take some time sitting in this promise.

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 30:1-6

1 The words of Agur son of Jakeh. The oracle.

The man declares, I am weary, O God; I am weary, O God, and worn out. **2** Surely I am too stupid to be a man. I have not the understanding of a man. **3** I have not learned wisdom, nor have I knowledge of the Holy One. **4** Who has ascended to heaven and come down? Who has gathered the wind in his fists? Who has wrapped up the waters in a garment? Who has established all the ends of the earth? What is his name, and what is his son's name? Surely you know! **5** Every word of God proves true; he is a shield to those who take refuge in him. **6** Do not add to his words, lest he rebuke you and you be found a liar.

DEVOTIONAL: Proverbs 30 moves away from the proverbs of Solomon, and the way it is written is clearly different. Agur expresses his exasperation to God. He is tired, lost, and confused. But rather than turning his questions against God, he takes them directly to God. Agur's faith wasn't weak. In fact, it was incredibly strong. Feeling and naming our doubts to God takes far more strength than pretending that they don't exist. And what Agur finds as he expresses himself is a deep rest in God. Even though you may feel deep doubts and weariness in your life, God wants you to turn to him as your refuge. What are you trying to ignore in your spirit rather than expressing it to God? How have you experienced God as a safe refuge for you when your spirit and your strength was spent?

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.