

Week 33 Daily Devotional

I. Prayer to enter the Lord's presence:

Be still for a moment. "Lord, I give the day that is now past to you. It is yours. I give the day that is to come to you; help me to see where you are working and to join you there. Speak to me during these moments. I commit them and myself to you."

II. Prayer of Confession:

"Lord, you are faithful to forgive me and cleanse me of my sin when I confess it to you. I confess my sin(s) of _____. Thank you for forgiveness." (1 John 1:9)

III. Prayer of Thanksgiving:

Choose to be thankful, speak out loud of what God has done.

"Thank you, Father, for _____. Fill my heart and my mouth with gratitude throughout this day."

IV. Scripture Reflection

Day 1

Read

1John 2:19 They went out from us, but they did not really belong to us. For if they had belonged to us, they would have remained with us; but their going showed that none of them belonged to us.

Reflect

John is referring to people who had been a part of the church "visible" yet they were not actually part of the church "invisible." Visible vs. Invisible is terminology used to describe those who are members of local churches but are not actually born-again believers. Many in John's time as in ours seem to be followers of Christ and are part of the church as an "institution" but have never actually experienced regeneration and are not part of the church as the spiritual body of Christ.

Respond

Do you have questions? Ask them. Do you have struggles? Tell them. Your questions are not a threat to the gospel...the gospel is true and immune to threats. However your questions may be a threat to your own personal spiritual well-being if you keep them hidden. Ask your questions in community. Struggle in community. The enemy would love for you to go "inward" with your questions and struggles and try to make it through solo. Perhaps you don't have large questions or struggles, probably someone you know is struggling. Pray for them now, engage them as you have opportunity. Don't try to "fix their faith" just seek to be their friend. Walk with Jesus, walk with them.

Day 2

Read

2 Cor. 5:17 Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has gone, the new has come!

Reflect

This doesn't mean all the old struggles are gone or that all that made you, you are gone. It means Christians ("in Christ") have become a different kind of human. The old engine that drove your life (the flesh) has been replaced by a new one (the Spirit). We can revert to old patterns but we don't need to. We can increasingly live in step with the Spirit, we can "work out" what God in Christ has "worked in."

Respond

Do you have a vision for transformation in your life? There are three parts to this vision. 1)A belief that transformation in Christ is a "real" thing. 2)An expectation that you can take practical actions in step with the Spirit that impact this transformation. 3)You must make ongoing choices that will lead to real and lasting change.

What is your plan for transformation? Is it working? What do you need to do differently? What do you need to keep doing?

Day 3

Read

Rom. 12:1-5 Therefore, I urge you, brothers, in view of God's mercy, to offer your bodies as living sacrifices, holy and pleasing to God — this is your spiritual act of worship. Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is — his good, pleasing and perfect will. For by the grace given me I say to every one of you: Do not think of yourself more highly than you ought, but rather think of yourself with sober judgment, in accordance with the measure of faith God has given you. Just as each of us has one body with many members, and these members do not all have the same function, so in Christ we who are many form one body, and each member belongs to all the others.

Reflect

Transformation begins internally then works its way out externally into all the various aspects of our lives. Transformation is a work of grace in your life and it is a series of steps of faith that you take. All that you do with your body...mind, mouth, hands, etc. is to be an act of worship. This many sound impractical but it is actually enormously practical. A two-story life is impractical. Dividing who you are and what you do into "things that matter" and "things that don't" is impractical. But to live a single-story life where everything you do matters is both practical and transformational.

Respond

Talk with God about all the things you have facing you today. "All" meaning...driving, thinking, eating, breathing, talking with others, working, recreation. Ask God to be glorified in all of it. Ask him to make you more like Jesus as a result of this day.

Day 4

Read

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Reflect

Transformation only happens in community. It is both a personal and an inter-personal reality. Just as your cardiovascular system cannot become more fit without the legs and the legs cannot become stronger without the lungs so you will not become a more "fit" Christian without authentic engagement with others. Are you fully engaged with others in Christian community or are you "skimming the surface?" If you want surface transformation this will be enough. If you want deep change, then you need to go deep with others.

Respond

If you have deep relationships with others is there something you have been wrestling with on your own that you need to bring your friends in on? If you only have surface relationships with others, what needs to happen next to deepen them. Think this through right now and then ask God for help in following through on what you need to do next.

Day 5

Read

Phil. 2:2 Then make my joy complete by being like-minded, having the same love, being one in spirit and purpose. ³ Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit, but in humility consider others better than yourselves. ⁴ Each of you should look not only to your own interests, but also to the interests of others. Your attitude should be the same as that of Christ Jesus: ⁶ Who, being in very nature God, did not consider equality with God something to be grasped, ⁷ but made himself nothing, taking the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness. ⁸ And being found in appearance as a man, he humbled himself and became obedient to death — even death on a cross!

Reflect & Respond

Turn this passage into your prayer today. Personalize it as best you can. Do it slowly and reflectively. Come back to verse 3 over and over today. "Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit, but in humility consider others better than yourselves."

Ask God to make you less like Narcissus and more like Jesus when this day is done.

V. Prayer for others:

Pray specifically for the concerns of your life and the lives of others.

VI. Prayer of commitment:

“Lord God, I commit to love you with all my heart and with all my soul and with all my strength and with all my mind and to love my neighbor as myself. Empower me today to love you and others with everything that I am.” (Luke 10:27)

This Month's Scripture Memory:

Philippians 2:3-7

Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit, but in humility consider others better than yourselves. Each of you should look not only to your own interests, but also to the interests of others. Your attitude should be the same as that of Christ Jesus: Who, being in very nature God, did not consider equality with God something to be grasped, but made himself nothing, taking the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness.