

## Week 4

November 29, 2020



### Examen

*Our daily work will look and feel a little different than normal... And that's because it IS different than normal. Throughout our gratitude series, we are going to be practicing The Examen. This is a prayer practice for discerning the voice of God and the activity of God throughout the day. It fosters gratitude and creates deeper awareness of God-given desires in one's life. The Examen is not about completing a task, but about building a relationship with God. Whether you begin or end your day with it, you're invited to use this practice every day this month. You'll receive a different version of the examen each week of our Grateful series.*

### BE STILL

Find a quiet place where you can be alone with God. Get into a comfortable position and allow yourself to relax. Quiet your mind, your body, and your heart before God. Pay attention to your breathing for a moment. Breathe in deeply the love of God and exhale the stress and distractions of the day. Try to turn down the volume on your random thoughts and preoccupations.

There's nothing magical about praying; prayer is simply a conversation with God. So, invite God to be with you in this time. Ask God to help you to be grateful and honest as you look back on the day. Let yourself see your day as God sees it.

### PRACTICE GRATITUDE

Gratitude cultivates our hearts and minds to see God working. Gratitude, practiced often enough, helps us find God in all things and can transform the way we look at our life and at other people. So, review the day and name the blessings, from the most significant and obvious to the more common and ordinary. Don't feel that you have to mechanically go through the day hour by hour or make a list of *all* the day's gifts. Instead, savor whatever gifts God shows you.

With God present, go back through your day. For what and for whom are you grateful? As things come to mind, pause and express your gratitude to God.

Consider not only voicing your gratitude to God, but also to others in your life. If there was a particular conversation or interaction you were grateful for today, actively tell the person you are thankful. Mail a note, send a text, make a phone call. Do something tangible that expresses that gratitude.

## **PRAY THROUGH YOUR DAY**

### *Noticing Internal Enemies*

As you review your day, were there places where any enemies of gratitude surfaced? Did you notice entitlement, selfishness, greed, or anything like them in your heart or spirit? Are there any places where you are addicted to criticism, analysis, or negativity?

Take some time, with God guiding, to look through your day. Allow God's loving kindness to lead you to repentance as you notice these enemies and confess them to God.

### *Noticing External Challenges*

Were there any external challenges or circumstances that made gratitude difficult today? How did you handle them? Where is there evidence of God's presence in the hardship? Is there anything you can be thankful for in it?

If you're unable to see God's presence in your challenge right now, pray an honest prayer telling God how you feel. Spend some time with Jesus in the Garden of Gethsemane (Matthew 26:36-46). What does he want to tell you?

### *Noticing God's Love*

Did you notice any situations or circumstances where you leaned into God's love and practiced gratitude in a new way? Thank God for these moments.

## **REJOICE AND SEEK FORGIVENESS**

Rejoice in the moments God brought you closer to Him today.

Confess the moments when you resisted God's presence and ask for His forgiveness.

Thank God for the gift of awareness.

Receive God's grace for your entire day.

In Christ, there is no condemnation.

## **LOOK TO TOMORROW**

Just as God was with you today, He is faithful and will be with you tomorrow. Invite God to be part of it. Ask Him for a greater awareness of his presence.

As you think ahead to tomorrow, what do you need God's help with? Invite Him to help you. Is there a specific gift of grace you need? Thank Him for His grace.