

Philippians Daily Office
Week of August 23

Morning

Intro

Welcome to the practice of the Daily Office. How might our days be grounded more deeply in God's presence if we pause each morning, mid-day, and evening for silence, scripture, and prayer? During these next few weeks we will be living in the book of Philippians. Each week, we will soak in a passage and reflect on it throughout the day. How might we be formed by Jesus to be like Jesus as our lives become steeped in the Word of God?

Silence

Let's begin in silence. Silence helps us to settle the internal and external noise and distractions that so often stand in the way of our ability to hear the Lord.

Take a deep breath.

Remember, right now, that God is personally present with you. Psalm 139 says there is no where we can go to escape God's loving presence, and it says that you are so precious to God, that the Lord's thoughts about you outnumber the grains of sand.

Take another deep breath. God is closer than the air we breathe.

Take two minutes of silence to rest in the presence of the Lord.

Scripture

Now I invite you to read to this passage from the third chapter of Philippians.

I once thought these things were valuable, but now I consider them worthless because of what Christ has done. Yes, everything else is worthless when compared with the infinite value of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord. For his sake I have discarded everything else, counting it all as garbage, so that I could gain Christ and become one with him. I no longer count on my own righteousness through obeying the law; rather, I become righteous through faith in Christ. For God's way of making us right with himself depends on faith. I want to know Christ and experience the mighty power that raised him from the dead. I want to suffer with him, sharing in his death, so that one way or another I will experience the resurrection from the dead!

In this passage, Paul shares the futility of all he once used to define himself. His identity does not come from his standing in the community or his adherence to the Law. No, all of that is nothing. It is garbage compared to knowing Jesus. It is helpful to remember that *knowing Jesus* according to Paul is more than intellectual knowledge. It is an interactive relationship with Jesus.

It has been said we are strongly tempted, in our culture, to believe we are what we do, what we have, or what people say about us. Where are you tempted to find your identity?

Is it in what you do: your position, influence or accomplishments?

Is it in what you have: your possessions, children, or experiences?

Is it in what people say about you: your reputation, likes and retweets, or your popularity?

Will you hold that in mind as you reflect on these words from Paul? Repeat them aloud slowly and reflectively, allowing yourself to steep in this Word of God. May this text be infused in our lives today.

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Amen.

Mid-day

We pause now in mid-day. How have you heard from the Lord today? In what ways have you noticed Jesus with you in the ordinary moments of your day? What has he been saying to you?

Silence

Let's allow the hurry, anxiety, and distractions of the day to settle as we let go and entrust it all to the one who is with us and loves us more than we can possibly understand.

Take a deep breath. Remember what Paul says, "In God we live and move and have our being."

Take another deep breath.

Take two minutes of silence to rest in the presence of the Lord.

Prayer

Now will you join me in this prayer from Julian of Norwich?

God,
Of your goodness, give me yourself;
You are enough for me, and
Anything less that I could ask for would not do you full honor.
And if I ask anything that is less, I shall always lack something, but
In you alone I have everything'.
Amen.

Evening

Silence

Tonight, we pause to rest with Jesus.

Let us first pause in silence, so we might be grounded in the loving presence of God.

Take a deep breath.

Remember Jesus promised to be with us always.

Take another deep breath.

The prophet Zephaniah says, "For the Lord your God is living among you. He is a mighty savior. He will take delight in you with gladness. With his love, he will calm all your fears. He will rejoice over you with joyful songs."

Take two minutes of silence and hold this truth before you. The Lord "delights in you with gladness."

Prayer

As we continue this time of prayer, we are going to reflect on our day. As we review this day, would you listen to the Holy Spirit? What is God bringing to your mind from today?

Let's begin with gratitude. Thinking back on your day, for what are you grateful? Take a moment to notice and thank God for the gifts of today.

Now would you look back on your day and notice when your identity was grounded in your relationship with Jesus? When did you feel at peace? When did you feel free from the need to prove your value and worth?

Let's continue reflecting on our day, remembering that we are in the presence of Jesus, the one who loves us more than we can possibly know. When did you tie your identity to what you do, what you have, or what people say about you? How did you strive to prove to others that you matter, that you are valuable?

Would you now choose one of these moments? It may be a moment you were at peace with Jesus or a time you were striving to prove yourself set yourself, and would you have a conversation with Jesus about it? Choose one, and use this space to speak to him and listen.

Let's close our time with this prayer from Ignatius of Loyola.

Take, Lord, and receive all my liberty,
my memory, my understanding,
and my entire will,
All I have and call my own.

You have given all to me.
To you, Lord, I return it.

Everything is yours; do with it what you will.
Give me only your love and your grace,
that is enough for me.
Amen