

"How is Your Doing?" Part 7: Forgiveness Daily Practices for Monday, 2/17 - Sunday, 2/23 (download at montrosechurch.org/daily-practices)

Use these daily practices (provided by Marriage and Family Therapists John & Sunshim Loppnow) to help you draw closer to God and experience His presence.

Monday, February 17 - Mindfulness

- 1. Be Still** Bring your intention to notice your capacity to give/receive forgiveness.
- 2. Know** Think about times when you have asked these questions in your close relationships, "Will you be there for me?" "Can I trust you?" "Do I matter to you?" Imagine/recall times when you got the answer NO instead of YES. The sinking sensation of hearing NO makes it easy to become critical, defensive, contemptuous, and shut down. To become forgiving people, we need to practice returning to God's YES. Examine how quickly you can return to the presence of YES from NO, instead of continuing to re-tell your grievance story.
- 3. God is Good** If you notice that you are quick to return to the presence of His YES, celebrate and thank God. If you are slow to return to His YES, ask God to increase your capacity to hear His YES. If you notice that you stay in the place of NO, pray this sincere prayer: "Lord Jesus! Have mercy on me, for I am a sinner."

Tuesday, February 18 - Prayer

- 1. Be Still** Bring your intention to notice your longing for deeper connection with Him.
- 2. Know** Fr. Thomas Keating talks about how we all pursue happiness where we will not be able to find it: through security or survival, esteem or love, control or power. Then when someone frustrates our emotional program, we become rigid or chaotic, and our freedom to choose to forgive becomes limited.
- 3. God is Good** Take a moment to pray these prayers, and notice God's response:
 - God! Help me **let go of my demand** to feel secure; to feel important or loved; to feel powerful or in control.
 - God! Help me **forgive those who said NO** to my desire to feel secure; to feel important or loved; to feel powerful or in control.
 - God! Help me to **hear your YES** when I desire to feel secure; to feel important or loved; to feel powerful or in control.

Wednesday, February 19 - The Word

- 1. Be Still** Set your intention to notice how God speaks to you thru His living Word.
- 2. Know** Unless we name and process our hurt/anger, we cannot truly forgive our offender. We experience anger when we perceive that someone has violated one of our core values. Example: You value being merciful, loving, and caring, yet the other person disregards your value and acts in a way that goes against it. When we identify and see the beauty of our value, we can share our experience from the place of honoring our value(s), and that of others. Read Matthew 18:21-35 and identify values the Master possibly has (v. 25, 27, 33).
- 3. God is Good** Think about something you are struggling to forgive. What value of yours do you perceive is being violated? In the presence of God, lament the loss of your value not being honored. Notice the impact of this lament on your heart.

Thursday, February 20 - Journaling

- 1. Be Still** Set your intention to notice the desire to grow your capacity to forgive.
- 2. Know** Luke 7 tells the story of a sinful woman who anointed Jesus. Verse 47 says, "Therefore, I tell you, her many sins have been forgiven--as her great love has shown. But whoever has been forgiven little loves little." Draw a breath prayer from

this verse, and practice breath prayer to increase your capacity to show love to God by forgiving others (Matthew 18:21-35).

- 3. God is Good** Take the next three breaths and hear Jesus say to you:
 - In Breath: Little Forgiven, Out Breath: Little Love
Notice the thoughts/emotions/body sensations that arise in you after this prayer. Now, take the next three breaths and hear Jesus say to you:
 - In Breath: Much Forgiven, Out Breath: Much Love
Notice the thoughts/emotions/body sensations that arise in you after this prayer. In your journal, compare and contrast your experience with these two practices.

Friday, February 21 - Fasting

- 1. Be Still** Notice if you have the intention to follow Christ in His way of forgiveness.
- 2. Know** Unless we are confident that our life is without lack, we will not be able to let go of our hurt/anger, because it gives us a warped sense of power or control. Today, fast from a meal and intentionally choose NOT to draw power from food. Instead, feast on the strength of God's reality that our life is without lack - even when we let go of our hurt and desire to control!
- 3. God is Good** Notice how your fasting from drawing power from food and feasting on God's reality of life without lack affected your desire to forgive.

Saturday, February 22 - Service

- 1. Be Still** Set your intention to pay attention to how you have received forgiveness.
- 2. Know** We think and feel the way the one we love thinks and feels. Recall a time when you received someone's forgiveness and experienced the power of their loving presence. Perhaps they shared how they were hurt by your action or inaction, yet expressed their desire to love you.
- 3. God is Good** Think about how you can imitate his/her action through your own interaction with others. Examples: Write a thank you note to someone who has offered love to you through their forgiveness. Or write a note asking someone for their forgiveness. Ask God to reveal what value of his/hers you might have violated. If you are able to identify it, include it and let them know how you (intentionally or unintentionally) must have caused hurt in them. Whether or not you send the note is something you can discern with God and in community.

Sunday, February 23 - Worship

- 1. Be Still** Bring your intention to be present to God who answers YES when we ask for His forgiveness.
- 2. Know** God's forgiveness of our sin leads us to a place of gratitude and love bond with Him. As this connection grows, we begin to think and feel the way the One we love thinks and feels. Our God forgives readily, freely, and gladly - and the deeper our love bond with Him goes, the more our willingness to forgive grows.
- 3. God is Good** Take a moment to worship God by giving thanks to Him for the way He readily, freely, and gladly forgives you. After your worship of thanksgiving, notice how you can relate to Psalm 86:5, "You, Lord, are forgiving and good, abounding in love to all who call to you."