

"How is Your Doing?" Part 3: Empathy Daily Practices for Monday, 1/20 - Sunday, 1/26 (download at montrosechurch.org/daily-practices)

Use these daily practices (provided by Marriage and Family Therapists John & Sungshim Loppnow) to help you draw closer to God and experience His presence throughout the coming week. The Loppnows are leading the Developing a Deeper Connection class starting today at 11:30 a.m. at the Ministry Office.

Monday, January 20 - Mindfulness

- 1. Be Still** Bring your full attention to God who is kindly present to you and your interior world.
- 2. Know that God Cares** Ponder on the truth that God sees you through the eyes of empathy even when you don't see yourself that way. Notice how you treat yourself when you fail to live up to God's values. What is the first thing you tell yourself? What are your default actions/addictive behaviors to possibly avoid feeling sadness, shame, anger, fear, disgust, despair? How might your body be affected by your attempt to 'not feel the pain'?
- 3. Interact with the Caring God** Tell God what you noticed above. Notice how God would see you through the eyes of empathy and receive His empathy. If you find this challenging, pray, "Lord Jesus, have mercy on me!" If you received God's empathy and found it helpful, give thanks for the gift.

Tuesday, January 21 - Prayer

- 1. Be Still** Bring your full attention to God who is kindly present to you and your longing for intimacy with Him.
- 2. Know that God Cares** "Will you be there for me?" This big question is deeply rooted in the human nervous system by our relational God. Know that God answers YES with each breath you take, even when others say NO. For your next three breaths, practice breath prayer based on the Biblical truth, Immanuel (God with us) and Matthew 28:20b, "I am with you always to the very end of the age."
 - Breathe in and hear God say to you, "YES, my child."
 - Breathe out and say back to God, "Thank you, thank you, thank you."
- 3. Interact with the Caring God** Notice the impact of this prayer. If pleasant, thank God for His gift. If unpleasant, pray, "Lord Jesus, have mercy on me!"

Wednesday, January 22 - The Word

- 1. Be Still** Bring your full attention to God who is kindly present to you and your commitment to know Him through His words.
- 2. Know that God Cares** Know that God's words are alive and have power to help you become a person who naturally synchronizes with people in joy and sorrow. Slowly read Romans 12:15 three times with the intention to memorize, "Rejoice with those who rejoice; mourn with those who mourn."
- 3. Interact with the Caring God** Slowly read Romans 12:15 again and hear God speaking directly to you, "[My child] I rejoice with you when you rejoice and mourn with you when you mourn!" Notice the impact this reading has upon you.

Thursday, January 23 - Journaling

- 1. Be Still** Bring your full attention to God who is kindly present to you and your intention to grow your capacity for empathy.
- 2. Know that God Cares** Empathy is conveyed to others faster with non-verbal communication than with words. To grow our capacity for empathy, we must increase our awareness of non-verbal language: facial expressions, eye contact, tone of voice, gesture, posture, timing, and intensity. With non-verbals in your

mind, read John 8:1-11 and think about how Jesus interacted with the woman caught in adultery, as well as her accusers.

- 3. Interact with the Caring God** In a conversational way, journal your observation of how Jesus used non-verbals. Example: Dear Jesus, I notice that you didn't use much eye contact initially with the angry scribes/Pharisees and the woman who was in shame. I notice that you used the posture of bending down, standing. I wonder what tone of voice you used. I also notice your timing; you didn't respond quickly; you seemed to pause. Lastly, I notice that the intensity of your response is quite different from the intensity of the scribes/Pharisees.

Friday, January 24 - Fasting

- 1. Be Still** Set your intention to pay attention to aspects of your mind that are apathetic.
- 2. Know that God Cares** Apathy is defined as lack of feeling or interest. Noticing areas where we lack feeling, or the willingness to feel or show interest, is often the beginning of transformation and movement toward having the mind of Christ.
- 3. Interact with the Caring God** Fast, or abstain from angry thoughts as well as apathetic thinking/feeling. Choose a favorite passage of scripture to feast upon when you are fasting or abstaining from angry thoughts. Proverbs 29:11, Ecclesiastes 7:9, Proverbs 22:24, etc.

Saturday, January 25 - Service

- 1. Be Still** Set your intention to pay attention to how God is inviting you to serve someone by offering them empathy.
- 2. Know that God Cares** Meditate on Romans 12:15 today, "Rejoice with those who rejoice; mourn with those who mourn." Ask yourself where you do this well and where you fall short. Ask the Holy Spirit to help you grow in this capacity.
- 3. Interact with the Caring God** Ask the Holy Spirit to lead you to someone who needs empathy. Here are some phrases you can put into practice: "I can see you." "I hear you saying ... (these thoughts and feelings)" "I can imagine how big this is for you."

Sunday, January 26 - Worship

- 1. Be Still** Bring your full attention to God who is present to you in a caring manner, here and now by pausing/breathing/slowly walking/quietly sitting, etc.
- 2. Know that God Cares** The incarnation was an act of God's empathy. He listens to our deep longing and tenderly treats our weakness. Recall a time when God tenderly responded to your suffering or weakness. Let this be oxygen to your soul.
- 3. Interact with the Caring God** Pause and worship God and His capacity to empathize with us. Your worship can be expressed in words, songs, movements, and etc. Gaze upon his delight in you and your worship. Imagine how God would express non-verbal cues with you. What would His facial expressions, eye contact, tone of voice, gesture, posture look like?