

# "How is Your Doing?" Part 5: Compassion Daily Practices for Monday, 2/3 - Sunday, 2/9 (download at [montrosechurch.org/daily-practices](http://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.

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## Monday, February 3 - Mindfulness

- 1. Be Still** Set your intention to slow down and notice your interior world.
- 2. Know** God sees that "the relationship is bigger than the problem!" He cares about His relationship with you more than about proving He is right, and is always compassionate towards us. To become people of compassion, we need to be aware of whether or not we are in a relational state. If you answer "Yes: to one of these statements, you might be in a non-relational state:
  - I just want to make a problem, person, or feeling go away
  - My mind is "locked" on something upsetting
  - I just want to get away, fight, or freeze
  - I aggressively interrogate, judge, and try to fix others
- 3. God is Compassionate** If you find yourself in a relational state, give thanks to God. If you find yourself in a non-relational state, share this with God and ask for His help by praying "Lord, Jesus Christ, Son of God! Have mercy on me," in confidence that He wants to give the good gift of compassion to His children.

## Tuesday, February 4 - Prayer

- 1. Be Still** Set your intention to pay attention to your longing for intimacy with God.
- 2. Know** Look online at the Rembrandt painting "*Return of the Prodigal Son*". Author Henry Nouwen observes that this painting could have been called, "The Welcome by the Compassionate Father". He sees the father's hands as the central point, with the left hand being masculine and the right hand being more feminine, "so the character is mother as well as father." (**The Return of the Prodigal Son**, 94.)
- 3. God is Compassionate** Notice what emotions, longing, and prayer the image of the father's hands evokes in you. Offer your experience as a prayer, and notice how God receives your prayer, and responds back to you.

## Wednesday, February 5 - The Word

- 1. Be Still** Set your intention to notice how God speaks to you with His living Word.
- 2. Know** Comparison is an obstacle to compassion. In the story of the prodigal son (Luke 15), notice how the elder son experienced comparison that derailed him from experiencing compassion (v28-30). Notice how the Father extended compassion to the elder son: "My child, you are always with me, and everything I have is yours." (v31) We are called to be compassionate just as God is compassionate. Re-read the Father's words in Luke 15:31 three times with the intention to memorize. Allow the words to sink into your heart and grow your capacity for compassion.
- 3. God is Compassionate** Would you hear God speak directly to you in this verse? "[My child] you are always with me, and everything I have is yours." Notice the impact of hearing these words spoken to you.

## Thursday, February 6 - Journaling

- 1. Be Still** Set your intention to pay attention to who God says He is instead of who you think He is.
- 2. Know** God draws near us with compassion at times when others might draw away from us. In Mark 1:40-41, Jesus drew toward a man with leprosy and touched

him, while the world drew away from him. "A man with leprosy came to him and begged him on his knees, 'If you are willing, you can make me clean.' Filled with compassion, Jesus reached out his hand and touched the man, 'I am willing,' he said. 'Be clean!'" Is there a time in your life when you felt like this man, suffering from isolation, loneliness, or something bad that happened to you? How did God come toward you to bring healing and restoration, directly or through others?

- 3. God is Compassionate** Journal about the time in your life recalled above:
  - How was God's compassionate presence known to me?
  - How was God's compassionate action revealed (people, circumstances)?

## Friday, February 7 - Fasting

- 1. Be Still** Set your intention to pay attention to how you react when you don't get what you want.
- 2. Know** Marital researcher Dr. John Gottman can predict divorce with 90%+ accuracy, with the #1 predictor being contempt - comments/non-verbals made from a one-up position, i.e. "I am better than you!" Fast from contemptuous comments/looks/tones of voice when you notice thoughts of "I am better than you" arising within you. Practice compassion by pausing to see the suffering in the person you are tempted to have contempt toward.
- 3. God is Compassionate** Examine your day in light of fasting from contempt and feasting on compassion. If you have increased awareness of contempt, even if you were not able to fast from it, give thanks to God for the gift of self-awareness. If you lessened the use of contempt, give thanks and celebrate this with God!

## Saturday, February 8 - Service

- 1. Be Still** Set your intention to pay attention to how God is inviting you to serve someone through an act of service to alleviate their pain and suffering.
- 2. Know** Meditate on Luke 6:36 (CEB) "Be compassionate just as your Father is compassionate."
- 3. God is Compassionate** Pause, quiet your heart and ask the Holy Spirit to help you notice who in your circle needs compassion today. Brainstorm ways you can intentionally show compassion to this person(s) and then go and show compassion as your Father does! This act might stretch you, but will be transformative for you and the other(s) as you share in God's divine nature.

## Sunday, February 9 - Worship

- 1. Be Still** Set your intention to pay attention to God's presence with you and action for you by pausing/breathing/slowly walking/quietly sitting, etc.
- 2. Know** Attachment research shows that we become like those we love. Notice your heart's attachment (bond) to God's compassionate love. Celebrate where your bond is strong, and ask for the Holy Spirit's help where the connection is weak.
- 3. God is Compassionate** "The Lord is gracious and righteous; our God is full of compassion," (Psalm 116:5). May these words be upon your lips this entire day. Speak them throughout the day, remembering God's compassion upon you, upon the other, and upon us all.