

Week of May 4-10

Morning

Intro

Welcome to the Practice of the Daily Office. In this season of disruption and uncertainty, we invite you to join us in a rhythm of prayer. 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?

Silence

Let's begin in silence.

Take a deep breath.

Remember, right now, you are in God's loving presence. However you are beginning this day, whatever emotions you are feeling, the Lord is with you. Psalm 139 says there is no where we can go to escape God's loving presence.

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 listen to the Lord in the Word of God. In a time of uncertainty, it is helpful to remember that God is sovereign. The Lord is in control. Jesus is King of this *present* Kingdom of God.

Let's begin with becoming familiar with this passage from the Gospel of Matthew.

Then they brought him a demon-possessed man who was blind and mute, and Jesus healed him, so that he could both talk and see. All the people were astonished and said, "Could this be the Son of David?"

But when the Pharisees heard this, they said, "It is only by Beelzebul, the prince of demons, that this fellow drives out demons."

Jesus knew their thoughts and said to them, "Every kingdom divided against itself will be ruined, and every city or household divided against itself will not stand. If Satan drives out Satan, he is divided against himself. How then can his kingdom stand? And if I drive out demons by Beelzebul, by whom do your people drive them out? So then, they will be your judges. But if it is by the Spirit of God that I drive out demons, then the kingdom of God has come upon you.

Read this passage again. What are you curious about? What questions come to mind in this text. What would you like to ask Jesus?

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Did any questions come to mind? I invite you now to spend time with the Lord. Ask Jesus your question and listen for his response. What does Jesus have to say to you today? If no question came to mind, perhaps you would consider this one. "Jesus, how can I partner with your kingdom?"

Would you continue to hold this question with you today? Reflect on it. Think about it. Pay attention to what the Lord brings to mind. You might even invite someone into your question. Share with them what you are hearing. Ask them what they think.

Prayer

Jesus, we want to stand with your kingdom. Show us where we are building our own kingdom instead of yours, and help us to live more fully in the midst of yours. Amen.

Mid-day

Silence

We pause now in mid-day. Perhaps much has happened already today, or maybe the day has begun slowly. However, this day is unfolding. Let us begin our mid-day prayer in silence. Take a deep breath. Remembering what Paul says, "In God we live and move and have our being."

Take another deep breath.

These next moments of silence are yours to rest in the presence of the Lord.

Prayer of Intention

Would you join me now in this prayer for the Kingdom of God from Fran Pratt.

God of peace and love,

Bring to us a new awareness of your kingdom at work in the world.

Grant that we may see and understand the small and unassuming things, which take patience and attention to notice:

A seed.

Yeast in bread

Treasure buried in a field

A net cast into water

A baby lying in a manger.

We acknowledge that we mostly miss the signs when they are not flashy or earth-shaking,

But that your kingdom is all around us.

We acknowledge that Christ came to exhibit neither wealth nor political power,

But self-sacrificing love.

We acknowledge that the progress of the good work we do may be imperceptible to us,

And that our success is in our obedience to you.

We welcome your kingdom, in the world and in our hearts.

We seek your kingdom, trusting that we will find it.

We anticipate your kingdom,

Working toward peace

Providing for the poor

Healing the sick

Loving our enemies.

We trust in your love to provide for us in our seeking.

Whether your spirit comes to us as a wind or a whisper,

May we know your presence and be useful in your kingdom work.

Amen

Evening

Silence

This evening we pause once again to recognize and rest in the loving presence of God. Take a deep breath. In Matthew 28, Jesus promised, “surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age.”

Take another deep breath.

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

Noticing God

Tonight, I invite you to reflect on your day. Dallas Willard taught that the kingdom of God is the range of God’s effective will. In other words, the kingdom is anyplace where what God wants to be done is done. Our kingdom is where what we want done is done. God’s invitation is to bring our kingdom into God’s kingdom.

As you review your day, when did you submit your kingdom to God’s kingdom? Take a few minutes to reflect on this question.

As you continue reviewing your day, when did your kingdom take priority over God’s kingdom? Take another few minutes to reflect on this question.

Now would you choose one moment from your day and speak to Jesus about it? It may be a moment your kingdom joined God’s kingdom or one where it did not. Pick one, and have a conversation with Jesus. Take a moment now to talk to him and listen.

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit. Amen.