

Prayer

Enter In

Take some time and ask yourself what you think God desires of you. More Bible study? More evangelism? Less sin? More church? What is it that God truly wants from you?

The Kingdom of Heaven is Like This

King David wasn't a sinless man. In fact, God kept him from building the Temple because so many people were killed (mostly enemies) under his reign. He did however have an amazing heart and was very aware of God's presence in his life. Now take a couple minutes and read through Psalm 139.

There is a prayer, though not quite as old as David, that has echoed the attitude of the psalm for centuries, the Prayer of Examen. The two fold aim of this prayer is first, asking God to open us up to what is inside of our hearts and secondly, asking God to make us more aware of his presence in our daily, ordinary lives. The prayer comes in various forms and phrases, but here is my favorite wording of it.

First, take some time to thank God for all the good things in your life. It's often easy for me to focus on the hard and difficult things in my life, so this part helps me focus on the good in my life. Second, review your day, hour by hour, paying attention to how your heart/spirit felt and how you interacted with your various experiences. Third, in the review of your day, ask God's forgiveness to wash over those areas which were not in line with his desires. Ask God to help you, in the upcoming day, to be more like Jesus in similar situations. Fourth, take a few minutes and simply relax, offering the previous day (in full) to God, knowing that he loves you in full and desires that you grow up in Him.

As You Go

The Prayer of Examen is most powerfully used in a consistent rhythm. Try taking 20 minutes at the end of each day this week to practice it. Don't however, feel too legalistic about it, if you had a long day, skip it, you can always process the next morning if you so desire.

