



## TAKE 7: A TOOLBOX OF SIMPLE DAILY PRACTICES

### #1 Start Fresh: Morning Prayer

“For Christians the beginning of the day should not be burdened & oppressed with besetting concerns for the day’s work. At the threshold of the new day stands the Lord who made it. All darkness & distraction of the dreams of the night retreat before the clear light of Jesus Christ & His wakening word. All unrest, all impurity, all care & anxiety flee before Him. Therefore, at the beginning of the day let all distraction & empty talk be silenced & let the first thought & the first word belong to Him to whom our whole life belongs.” --Dietrich Bonhoeffer (1906-1945)

#### 3 Prayers for the Morning

- Lord, let my soul rise up to meet you as the day rises to meet the sun. Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be forever. Amen. **[commonprayer.net]**
- I thank you, living and enduring King, for you have graciously returned my soul within me. Great is your faithfulness. --Jewish traditional
- This is another day, O Lord. I know not what it will bring forth, but make me ready, Lord, for whatever it may be. If I am to stand up, help me to stand bravely. If I am to sit still, help me to sit quietly. If I am to lie low, help me do it patiently. And if I am to do nothing, let me do it gallantly. Make these words more than words, and give me the Spirit of Jesus. Amen

### #2 Fuel Up: Scripture to Go

Pray-as-you-go is a free app brings together music, a passage of scripture & a few questions for personal reflection. There’s a new 10-13 minute prayer session every day. Listen before you get out of bed, while you brush your teeth, walk to class! **[pray-as-you-go.org]**  
Sacred Space helps you to pray anywhere & anytime with the help of a daily scripture & thoughtful on-screen guidance. **[www.sacredspace.ie]**

### #3 Just Connect: Ask (& Listen)

“To listen is very hard. True listeners no longer have an inner need to make their presence known. They are free to receive, to welcome, to accept. Listening is much more than allowing another to talk while waiting for a chance to respond. Listening is paying full attention to others and welcoming them into our very beings. The beauty of listening is that, those who are listened to start feeling accepted, start taking their words more seriously and discovering their own true selves. Listening is a form of spiritual hospitality by which you invite strangers to become friends, to get to know their inner selves more fully, and even to dare to be silent with you.” --Henri Nouwen (1932-1996)

“Preach the Gospel all the time, and if necessary, use words.” --Francis of Assisi (attributed)

Wherever you are today, look for opportunities to ask questions that invite authentic, open response. See if you can ask three Real Questions in the next 24 hours. And then truly listen. [ **“The 36 Questions That Lead to Love”** *New York Times* ]

## #4 Take a Pause: Statio

Statio is a super brief, focused prayer. It can take only a few seconds out of your 24 hours!

Pause between tasks / encounters / activities / emails. Commit to God the thing you've just completed. Lift up the next thing before you begin.

*Statio* is “the practice of stopping one thing before we begin another” ---the time between times. The practice of statio is meant to make us conscious of what we're about to do and make us present to the God who is present to us. Statio is the desire to do consciously what I might otherwise do mechanically. Statio is the virtue of presence....We have learned well in our time to go through life nonstop. Now it is time to learn to collect ourselves from time to time so that God can touch us in the most hectic of moments. Statio is the monastic practice that sets out to get our attention before life goes by in one great blur and God becomes an idea out there somewhere rather than an ever-present reality here.” ---Joan Chittister (1936- )

## #5 Get Moving: Walk to Think

"Above all, do not lose your desire to walk. Every day, I walk myself into a state of well-being & walk away from every illness. I have walked myself into my best thoughts, and I know of no thought so burdensome that one cannot walk away from it. But by sitting still, & the more one sits still, the closer one comes to feeling ill. If one just keeps on walking, everything will be all right." ---Søren Kierkegaard (1830-1855)

Leave your devices behind & walk outside, aware of God's presence all around you.

## #6 Replay the Day: Examen

Check in with God at the end of your day. The Daily Examen is a prayer of attention, a prayerful reflection on the events of the day, that you may see God's hand in your whole experience. It's a tool to help you review & recall God's presence with you today and discern God's direction tomorrow. Here's one version of the Examen Prayer:

1. *I settle down.* As I get comfortable, I allow some moments to pay attention to myself and to my outer and inner surroundings. I ask God to help me as I pray.
2. *I review the day.* In my mind, I recall the hours that have gone before, using my imagination to “watch” the day from start to finish, almost as if it were a movie. I notice what I was feeling, where I felt God's presence, and where I accepted or turned away opportunities to grow in love.
3. *I give thanks.* I remember gifts I received over the past twenty-four hours. As I slow down and savor these good things, people, and occasions, I offer my thanks to God.
4. *I make room for sorrow.* As I remember ways I failed to act rightly—or even failed to care—I allow myself to feel regret. I ask God for forgiveness. I ask myself, Am I being prompted to take some action to make something right?
5. *I borrow hope.* As I turn from this day and look toward tomorrow, I ask God to grant grace and peace—and to help me be ever more mindful of God's presence, whatever may come.

## #7 Sink into Sleep: Invite Trust

How blessed a thing it is, then, that we are not expected to retain the conscious control of our lives by night as well as by day, but that we are allowed to lay the reins in God's hands, entrusting ourselves to His care when we are least able to care for our-selves. But we must really entrust ourselves. Sleep comes best to those who most put their trust in God. That is what the Psalmist means by saying 'He giveth his beloved sleep'...There is no better soporific than a trustful heart, no surer way of having a good night's rest than to commend ourselves to God's keeping, in believing prayer, before we go to sleep....If a mind unrelaxed from care, its best cure is to cast all our cares upon the Keeper of Israel who neither slumbers nor sleeps...

During the day we are so anxious to keep the reins of our destiny so entirely in our own hands that God has to wait until we are asleep in order to do for us and in us those things which we cannot do for ourselves ....All experience goes to show that the quality of our night's rest depends in large measure on the frame of mind in which we go to bed and compose ourselves to sleep. I shall conclude by saying this—and it is something of which I have continually to keep reminding myself: Every one who calls himself a Christian should go to sleep thinking about the love of God as it has visited us in the Person of His Son, Jesus Christ our Lord. –John Baillie (1886-1960)

Trouble falling asleep? Use this prayer from Howard Thurman to take you to a place of rest:

Our little lives, our big problems—these we place upon Your altar!

We do not know how to do what we know to do.

We do not know how to be what we know to be.

Our little lives, our big problems—these we place upon Your altar!

Pour out upon us whatever our spirits need of shock, of life, of release,  
that we may find strength for these days—

courage and hope for tomorrow.

In confidence we rest in Your sustaining grace which makes possible  
triumph in defeat,

gain in loss,

and love in hate.

We rejoice this day to say:

Our little lives, our big problems—these we place upon Your altar!

–Howard Thurman (1889-1981)

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