



grow

deeper
in Christ

“I am the vine; you are the branches. If you remain in me and I in you, you will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing.”

John 15:5, NIV

Reviewing Your Day...

REVIEWING YOUR DAY is a practice that can be used effectively by individuals or with others. It can be done alone in as little as fifteen minutes, or be the focus of a dinner conversation with others. This practice will help you become more aware of God's presence in and throughout your days.

This process is sometimes called the prayer of examen. “The Examen makes us aware of moments that at first we might easily pass by as insignificant, moments that ultimately can give direction for our lives.”¹

1) *Recall you are in the presence of God.* We are always in God's presence, but in prayer we place ourselves in God's presence in an especially attentive way. God knows you intimately. He loves you in the deepest way possible. In John 15, Jesus says, “Abide in me and I will abide in you.” This invitation is to make our home in him. As you still yourself, be aware that God is present both around you and within you.

2) *Look at your day with gratitude.* After a few moments, begin to give thanks to God for the gifts of today. Special pleasures will spring to mind: a good night's sleep, the smell of the morning coffee, the laugh of a child, a good meal or lesson learned. As you move in gratitude through the details of your day give thanks to God for his presence in the big and the small things.

3) *Ask help from the Holy Spirit.* Ask that God's Spirit might help you to look at your actions and attitudes. Ask for help to understand the motivation of your heart, to see the gifts of God and how you've responded to them. Ask that you'd learn and be shaped as you reflect. Remember, this is not a time to dwell on your shortcomings. Rather, it is a gentle look at how you have responded to God's gifts. It is an opportunity for growth of self and in relationship with God.

4) *Review your day.* This is the longest of the steps. Here you review your entire day, watching it like a

movie that replays in your mind. Be sure to notice the details, the context of what happened and how you acted. As you look through the day, notice especially your motives and feelings. This is not psychoanalysis; rather it is a time for you to discern your daily motives, actions and reactions. Don't try to fix everything in this stage, just examine how conscious you have been of God's presence and actions in your life. What moved you toward God? What moved you away from God? End with giving thanks for the day.

Reviewing your day with family

"The Examen is a practice for discerning the voice and activity of God within the flow of the day. It is a vehicle that creates deeper awareness of God-given desires in one's life."²

1) Each evening as you gather for dinner have the family share from their day.

- What was a highlight in your day?
- What didn't go so well?

As you begin this practice, it is sometimes hard to remember or think of what to say, but as you continue

you will begin to anticipate what you will share.

2) After you have done this for awhile you can begin to add new questions.

- Where did you see God at work today?
- Where did you see someone act in faith?
- Who would you like to pray for today?
- Where do you see needs that we might address as a family?

3) Close your time in prayer.

"These commandments that I give you today are to be on your hearts. Impress them on your children. Talk about them when you sit at home and when you walk along the road, when you lie down and when you get up."
—Deuteronomy 6:6-7

Endnotes

1. Dennis Linn, Sheila Fabricant Linn, and Matthew Linn, *Sleeping With Bread* (Paulist Press, 1995).
2. Adele Ahlberg Calhoun, *Spiritual Disciplines Handbook: Practices That Transform Us* (Intervarsity Press, 2005).



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