

*Trans-form Notes*  
**Spiritual Practice: Prayer of Examen**

**Text: Ephesians 1:17-18; Philippians 1:6, 9-10; Psalm 139:23-24**

- ❖ Read, meditate on, and pray through one or more of these passages Ephesians 1:17-18; Philippians 1:6-10; or Psalm 139:23-24.

**Reflect:** (Spend time with God thinking about these statements or questions)

- ❖ How does the presence of the fruit of the Spirit in your life reveal God's presence and His will?<sup>1</sup>
- ❖ What has God been doing in your life in the past six months? What themes do you think are emerging and how will you attend to them?<sup>2</sup>

**Interact:** (Discuss the following questions with your group or some friends)

- ❖ Read Ephesians 1:17-18 out loud and let everyone just meditate and chew on the short passage. Give the time about 5 minutes and just ask everyone to share what they hear God saying to them. Has this prayer been answered in anyone's life? How has the answer been revealed in their life?
- ❖ How do you tend to recognize God's presence in your day? How do you respond to God's presence?<sup>3</sup>
- ❖ What are some simple ways you have either experienced or ways you think might be helpful to recollect God throughout your day, week, month, and year?
- ❖ When do you regularly reflect on what God has done in your life? If you don't when might you like to? Share the fruit that has come from your time of examen or reflection.
- ❖ When have you felt closest to God? What moves you toward or away from God? Where are you at right now; are you moving toward God or do you find yourself resisting Him?
- ❖ What hinders your ability to be attentive to God? (busyness, stress, etc.) What helps you pay attention to God?

**Apply:** (Look for ways to apply at least one concept to your life)

- ❖ Take some time daily or at least once a week when you can reflect back to begin to discern where God is in your life. You can use the Prayer of Examen, your own questions, or use some of the ones below:
  - Did I meet God in the joy or pain of others?
  - Did I bring Christ into my world some way?
  - Did anyone bring God to me?
  - Did I reach out to someone in trouble or sorrow?
  - Did something that happened today give me a better sense of being loved, tired, angry, or needing God in some way?
  - Is there any event of the day that revealed some part of my life that I am withholding from God?
  - When did I have the deepest sense of connection and God's presence today? When did I have the least sense of connection?
  - What was the most life giving and most life draining part of my day?

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<sup>1</sup> Calhoun, Adele Ahlberg *Spiritual Discipline Handbook* Inner Varsity Press 2005 pg 54

<sup>2</sup> Ibid

<sup>3</sup> Ibid

## Prayer of Examen

We know we should pray, but often we just don't know what to say or what to pray about. The following is an ancient prayer handed down through the centuries helping many to become more aware of the movement of God in their lives.

The Examen of Consciousness is an exploration of how God is present within the events, circumstances, feeling of our daily lives. The method reflects the dynamic movement of personal love: what we always want to say to a person whom we truly love. "Thank you...Help me...I love you...I'm sorry...Be with me..."

You can pray through the outline below meditating on each point for a period of time but many also find journaling through this prayer to be a blessing.

(Start with thanksgiving, noticing the moments that you were most grateful and least grateful for.)

Loving God, I am totally dependent on you. Everything is a gift from you. **All is gift.** I give you thanks and praise for the gifts of this day...

God, I believe you work through and in time to reveal me to myself. Please give me an **increased awareness** of how you are guiding and shaping my life, as well as a more sensitive awareness of the obstacles I put in your way...

**You have been present in my life today.** Be near, now, as I reflect on:

Your presence in the events of today...

Your presence in the **feelings** I experienced today...

Your **call** to me...

My **response** to you...

This might also be helpful

- Ask when did you give and receive the most love today? When and where did I give and receive the least love today?
- What was the most life-giving and life-draining part of my day?
- When today did I have the deepest sense of connection with God? When today did I have the least sense of connection
- Where was I aware of living out of the fruit of the Spirit? Where was there an absence of the fruit of the Spirit?

Oh God, I ask **your loving forgiveness and healing.** The particular event of this day that I most want healed is...

Filled with hope and a firm belief in your love and power, I **entrust myself to your care**, and strongly affirm...(Claim the gift you most desire, most need; believe that God desires to give you that gift.)