

Prayer Resources from Lynn Ziegenfuss

Hard Feelings Podcast - Episode 6

"Finally, listen to your heart. It's there that Jesus speaks most intimately to you. Praying is first and foremost listening to Jesus, who dwells in the very depths of your heart. He doesn't shout. He doesn't thrust himself upon you. His voice is an unassuming voice, very nearly a whisper, the voice of gentle love. Whatever you do with your life, go on listening to the voice of Jesus in your heart. This listening must be an active and very attentive listening, for in our restless and noisy world God's so loving voice is easily drowned out. You need to set aside some time every day for this active listening to God if only for ten minutes. Ten minutes each day for Jesus alone can bring about a radical change in your life.

"You'll find that it isn't easy to be still for ten minutes at a time. You'll discover straightaway that many other voices, voices that are very noisy and distracting, voices which do not come from God, demand your attention. But if you stick to your daily prayer time, then slowly but surely you'll come to hear the gentle voice of love and will long more and more to listen to it."

Henri Nouwen, ***Show Me the Way***, pgs. 28-29

Praying with the Examen

I. Sitting with your Consolation

- A. Sit in chair, take some deep breaths, let the chair hold you
- B. Ask God (whomever you image) to bring to mind a moment/experience in the last day for which you are most aware of God's presence (or for which you are most grateful or felt was most life-giving.)
- C. Relive the moment/experience, consider who was there, what was said or what happened in that moment. What do you notice? What feelings stir? To what might God have you pay attention.
- D. Stay there long enough to savor, breathe in the gratitude and receive life again.

II. Sitting with your Desolation

- A. Ask God (whomever you image) to bring to mind a moment/experience in the last day for which you were least aware of God's presence/God seemed distant. (or for which you are least grateful or felt was least life-giving.)
- B. Relive that moment, who was there, what was said, and be with whatever you feel, without trying to fix or judge. What do you notice? What feelings stir? What do you wish weren't true?
- C. Now imagine letting God's (whomever you image) presence enter the moment. Where is God (near you? In front or behind?) What is God's countenance? What might God say? What might you want to ask God? What do you notice or what are you feeling?
- D. As you end your prayer time, Give thanks for whatever you experienced or noticed, if prompted bring a confession for what you want to do differently. Maybe ask God for an intention/invitation for the next day.

III. Journaling

You may want to jot down what you noticed to see if any patterns emerge or awareness's of God or yourself consistently arise.

The Welcoming Prayer

For this practice, get yourself into a comfortable listening posture. It may be helpful to sit with your feet flat on the floor, rest your hands in your lap, and listen with your eyes closed. Take a couple of deep breaths.

This is a portable prayer to practice in the midst of life on the go. Take a moment you're currently walking through, one that has put you in an unwelcome situation or heard unwelcomed words or thoughts that stir unwelcomed feelings and/or reactions.

Pause to notice your thoughts, emotions and feelings without judgment. Try to practice a spirit of self-compassion.

- 1) Sink into your feelings, what you are aware of in this moment.
- 2) Name what you are welcoming (not the situation, but what the situation has stirred up in you that you wish wasn't there.)
- 3) Practice this simple prayer.
 - I let go of my desire for safety and security. (pause)
 - I let go of my desire for affection and esteem. (pause)
 - I let go of my desire for power and control. (pause)
 - I open myself to the love and presence of God and God's healing action and grace within.