

Daily Pauses: Praying the Scriptures—Connecting Daily with God

Sunday, September 6, 2015 Ephesians 4:32

Be kind, compassionate, and forgiving to each other, in the same way God forgave you in Christ.

Reflection: We all love to receive kindness, compassion and forgiveness. More than just loving these gifts, we need them. But we are not so unique. Everyone we come in contact with also loves and needs the gifts of kindness, compassion and forgiveness. What can you do to remember that kindness, compassion and forgiveness is given to you because you need them, but also so that you might pay them forward to others as well?

Breath Prayer: (Inhale) As I have been forgiven by Christ... (Exhale) I want to forgive others.

Monday, September 7, 2015 Psalm 86:15

...you, my Lord, are a God of compassion and mercy; you are very patient and full of faithful love.

Reflection: The Psalmist paints a most beautiful picture of the nature of God. God is compassion. God is merciful. God is patient and full of love. What does that picture of God say to you? Are there any boundaries to God's compassion, mercy, patience and faithful love? If so, what are they? If not, what does God's boundless love mean for your everyday life?

Breath Prayer: (Inhale) My God... (Exhale) is a God of endless compassion.

Tuesday, September 8, 2015 James 1:27

True devotion, the kind that is pure and faultless before God the Father, is this: to care for orphans and widows in their difficulties and to keep the world from contaminating us.

Reflection: One could substitute the word "compassion" for "devotion" in this verse and see a very practical picture of what compassion looks like. Compassion cares for the least in our society. It cares for those to whom life presents extreme challenges. When we look at the people that Jesus spent a lot of his time with, it was people who lived on the margins, the sick, the hurting, the confused, the hungry and the poor. What does this picture of compassion say to you about your own expression of compassion to others? Are there times when you feel poor in spirit, are found hungering for love, challenged on many fronts? Who are the people who show you compassion in those times?

Breath Prayer: (Inhale) True compassion is... (Exhale) caring for those who are struggling.

Wednesday, September 9, 2015 Matthew 5:45

So that you will be acting as children of your Father who is in heaven. He makes the sun rise on both the evil and the good and sends rain on both the righteous and the unrighteous.

Reflection: Here Jesus paints a very clear picture of compassion. God shines as goodness on both the evil and the good and sends refreshing rain on both the righteous and unrighteous. True compassion is given to all people regardless of any names or boundaries we create to separate us from one another and from God's unconditional love. Yet the truth is this is a very hard scripture for us to put into practice. When it comes to deserving God's compassion, many of us label people as being either in or out. Rarely, if ever, do we put ourselves on the outside. Are there people you believe not to be deserving of God's compassionate love? Whichever way you answer the question, how does your answer impact how you love others? How does your answer line up with God's goodness shining and raining down on both the righteous and the unrighteous?

Breath Prayer: (Inhale) The compassion of God... (Exhale) falls on all.

Thursday, September 10, 2015 Ephesians 2:5b

You are saved by God's grace!

Reflection: Grace! Nothing else is like it. By its own definition it is always free. It is always given without regard. The gift of salvation – wholeness of life – is a gift of God's grace. Salvation cannot be earned. It cannot be bought. It is free. What could be more compassionate than God's free gift – grace- of salvation? This compassionate gift is what separates Christianity from other religions. How have you experienced God's grace in your life? Who is the most gracious person you know? How has grace changed your life?

Breath Prayer: (Inhale) I am saved... (Exhale) by God's grace.

Friday, September 11, 2015 Galatians 6:2

Carry each other's burdens and so you will fulfill the law of Christ.

Reflection: The law of Christ is not like the law of the land. The law of Christ is defined by one word – love. The writer of today's scripture tells us that the way to fulfill the law of Christ's love is by joining together with others to lighten one another's burdens. In other words, compassion can mean to come alongside another to help them along their way. What are some ways others have come alongside you to help to carry some of your burdens? How have you helped others to carry their burdens?

Breath Prayer: (Inhale) Compassion is... (Exhale) carrying one another's burdens.

Saturday, September 12, 2015 Romans 12:20

If your enemy is hungry, feed him; if he is thirsty, give him a drink. By doing this, you will pile burning coals of fire upon his head.

Reflection: Here is the real test of compassion. Can you be compassionate to those who hurt us? Can you extend God's unconditional love to those we might label as our enemies? The Apostle Paul ends this scripture in a very interesting way. What do you think he means when he says, "By doing this, you will pile burning coals of fire upon his head."? How would feel if your enemy showed compassion to you?

Breath Prayer: (Inhale) If my enemy is hungry... (Exhale) I should feed him or her.

Notes:

Practices for Our Everyday Life with God

Week of September 6, 2015

