

Prayer through IGNATIAN EXAMEN

Practices:

1. slowing down
2. paying attention
3. seeking God in all aspects of our lives
4. entering into gratitude
5. discovering patterns or ways of living that are showing up
6. bringing these patterns to God's loving presence for renewal

PREPARATION/PRESENCE:

"I can never escape from your Spirit! I can never get away from your presence...you are there." Psalm 139:7,8, NLT

- Remember that we are and always are in the presence of God
- 4 Minutes of silence
- Centering prayers for silence
 - Lord Jesus Christ, son of God, have mercy on us sinners
 - Jesus
 - YHWH
- After silence, group prays together: May we stay alert and be in prayer so we don't wander; **our spirit is eager, ready for anything in God**

STEP #1 GRATITUDE/THANKSGIVING

"Be thankful in all circumstances, for this is God's will for you who belong to Christ Jesus." 1 Thessalonians 5:18 NLT

- Silently consider this last week with gratitude and recall the blessings
- 4 minutes of silence
 - What are we grateful for this week
 - Where have we noticed God this week
- Pray aloud a one or two-sentence prayer of gratitude
- After each prayer of gratitude, group prays together:
 - **Father, we thank you**

STEP #2 PETITION/DEPENDENCE

"Search me, O God, and know my heart; test me and know my anxious thoughts." Psalm 139:23, NLT

Pray: Father, give us the grace to see this last week as you see it. **Holy Spirit, Open our eyes**

- Silently seek the Holy Spirit's guidance
- 4 minutes of silence
 - Holy Spirit, guide this time
 - Holy Spirit, show us what we need help with
 - Holy Spirit, show us who around us needs help
 - Holy Spirit, show us where the Father is at work
- After silence, group prays together: Holy Spirit, orient our spirit toward the light and truth - **instruct, guide, correct, and speak to us**

STEP #3 REVIEW THE WEEK/FAITHFULNESS

"Examine yourselves to see if your faith is genuine. Test yourselves. Surely you know that Jesus Christ is among you; if not, you have failed the test of genuine faith." 2 Corinthians 13:5 NLT

- Silently review this last week
 - Listen to the Father's voice, with truth, and with compassion.
 - Trust whatever comes, saying "YES" to God in this moment.
- 4 minutes of silence
 - What was the most life-giving moment
 - What was the most life-depleting moment
 - What was the most difficult or challenging part of the week
 - When did the church feel most connected to God
 - When did the church feel least connected to God
- Pray aloud a one or two-sentence prayer of experience
- After each prayer of experience, group prays together:
 - **Father, we seek first your kingdom**

STEP #4 CONFESS/FORGIVENESS

"Point out anything in me that offends you, and lead me along the path of everlasting life." Psalms 139:24 NLT

- Silently review this last week
 - Remember confession and forgiveness bring us back into right relationship with the Giver of Life.
 - Consider where we might need to reconcile with God or another person and resolve to make it right as quickly as possible.
- 4 minutes of silence
 - Where did we not show up
 - When did we not respond to the invitation to love and be loved
 - What we need to do differently
 - What do we need to make right
- Pray aloud a one or two-sentence prayer of confession
- After each prayer of confession, group prays together:
 - **Father, forgive us**

STEP #5 DECIDE/RENEWAL

"But don't just listen to God's word. You must do what it says. Otherwise, you are only fooling yourselves." James 1:22 NLT

Pray: God, thank you for helping us to see who you have made us to be and who you are helping us to become. **Jesus, help us perceive the new thing, free us**

- Silently look forward into the coming days, focus on the future
- Listen for course correction, righting wrongs, and fresh starts.
- 4 minutes of silence
 - Where might God be prompting us to go
 - What might God be prompting us to say
 - How might God be prompting us to act
- Pray aloud a one or two-sentence prayer of expectation
- After each prayer of expectation, group prays together:
 - **Lord, your servants are ready**

STEP #6 FINAL PRAYER

Complete this Examen with group prayer, allowing the group members to pray spontaneously from their hearts.

- Close with group prayer:

Our Father in heaven, may your name be kept holy.

May your Kingdom come soon.

May your will be done on earth, as it is in heaven.

Give us today the food we need,

and forgive us our sins, as we have forgiven those who sin against us.

And don't let us yield to temptation, but rescue us from the evil one.

Matthew 6:9-13 NLT