

**Sermon on the Mount Daily Office**  
**Week of November 1**

**Morning**

**Intro**

Welcome to the practice of the Daily Office. In this practice we are seeking to ground our lives more deeply in God's presence as we pause each morning, mid-day, and evening for silence, scripture, and prayer. In this season, we are going to ground ourselves in Jesus's teaching in the Sermon on the Mount. How might our lives be formed if we soak in this important teaching for three months? How might our relationships reflect Jesus' words? How will our work deepen? How might we be equipped to live in the Kingdom and cultivate pockets of the Kingdom in the world?

Will you join us in this journey?

**Silence**

Let's begin in silence. Silence helps us to settle the internal and external noise and distractions that so often stand in the way of our ability to hear the Lord.

Take a deep breath.

Remember, right now, that God is personally present with you. Psalm 139 says there is no where we can go to escape God's loving presence, and it says that you are so precious to God, that the Lord's thoughts about you outnumber the grains of sand.

Take another deep breath. God is closer than the air we breathe.

Take two minutes of silence to rest in the presence of the Lord.

**Scripture**

This morning, let's sit in Jesus's teaching from Matthew 7:1-6.

"Do not judge, or you too will be judged. For in the same way you judge others, you will be judged, and with the measure you use, it will be measured to you.

"Why do you look at the speck of sawdust in your brother's eye and pay no attention to the plank in your own eye? How can you say to your brother, 'Let me take the speck out of your eye,' when all the time there is a plank in your own eye? You hypocrite, first take the plank out of your own eye, and then you will see clearly to remove the speck from your brother's eye.

"Do not give dogs what is sacred; do not throw your pearls to pigs. If you do, they may trample them under their feet, and turn and tear you to pieces.

This week's passage is a familiar one. When Jesus speaks about judging in this passage, he is not talking about discerning right from wrong. Jesus is speaking of the kind of judgment that assigns value to another perhaps even going so far as to condemn them. This is easy for us to do, isn't it, to give value to another based on their past, their appearance, beliefs, financial status, or their political position?

And the value we assign most often is a value that is less than what we believe our value to be. The kind of judgement Jesus is speaking against is the kind that devalues another particularly as a way of elevating our own value. But this is a denial of the basic scriptural truth that each and every one of us is a beloved image bearer of God.

I have found I am most tempted to judge others when I am not rooted myself in the love of God. We will examine who we are tempted to judge tonight, but this morning, let us begin our day by grounding ourselves in the truth of our own belovedness.

Listen to these words from the prophet Zephaniah. "The Lord your God is with you, the Mighty Warrior who saves. He will take great delight in you; in his love he will no longer rebuke you, but will rejoice over you with singing."

The Lord your God, the Mighty Warrior who saves, is with you, and he delights in you. Have you ever considered that God doesn't just love you, God *likes* you? God takes great delight in you!

Author and professor James Bryan Smith teaches his students to consider that Christ dwells in them and delights in them. In fact, he teaches them to introduce themselves this way. "I am one in whom Christ dwells and delights."

Let's spend time with this today. Will you to consider the truth that God delights in you? You might even choose to repeat that phrase with me, "I am one in whom Christ dwells and delights." Let's rest in God's incredible love now.

I am one in whom Christ dwells and delights.

I am one in whom Christ dwells and delights.

I am one in whom Christ dwells and delights.

Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit. Amen.

### **Mid-day**

We pause now in mid-day. How have you lived in the teaching of Jesus today? How is it echoing through your day?

### **Silence**

Let's allow the hurry, anxiety, and distractions of the day to settle now as we let go and entrust it all to the one who is with us and loves us more than we can possibly understand.

Take a deep breath. Remember what Paul says, "In God we live and move and have our being."

Take another deep breath.

Take two minutes of silence to rest in the presence of the Lord.

### **Prayer**

Will you join me now in this prayer written by Fran Pratt?

God, one of the best things about the way you made things,  
And the most challenging for us,  
Is that joy is always available.  
Returning to love is always an option,  
Even in the midst of turmoil;  
Even in distress.

We know that we always have access to joy  
By choosing to be in the present moment,  
To practice gratitude,  
To pay attention,  
To be mindful,  
To surrender.

When we become awake to you, God,  
We open the door to joy;  
We open the door to your constant loving acceptance,  
And to the gladness of your presence.

Sing aloud, and shout!  
Rejoice and exult with all your heart!  
The LORD has taken away the judgments against us,  
And has turned away our enemies.

God rejoices over us with gladness.  
God renews us in love.  
God exults over us with loud singing.  
We share in the joy of God.  
Amen

**Evening  
Silence**

Tonight, we pause to rest in the peace and strength of Christ as we continue living in the Sermon on the Mount.

Let us first pause in silence, so we might be grounded in the loving presence of God.

Take a deep breath.

Remember Jesus promised to be with us always.

Take another deep breath.

Paul writes, "God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us."

Take two minutes of silence to rest in the presence of the Lord. In this space, rest in this truth. Jesus did not die to *make* you loveable. He died *because* he loves you.

**Prayer**

This morning we reflected on Jesus's teaching "Do not judge..." Skye Jethani describes this passage as a command to avoid the temptation to devalue others, to "exclude anyone from the reach of God's love or to see ourselves or our group as inherently superior to another."

Who do you find yourself tempted to exclude from God's love? Who are you tempted to believe is inferior to you?

Is it people with a troubled past?

Maybe people who look different than you?

Perhaps it is people with less or more money than you.

Or maybe in this season it is people who hold a different political belief.

Tonight, would you choose one person or type of person whom you are tempted to judge. I invite you to close your eyes and form a mental image of this person. Can you picture them in your mind? How are they dressed? What do they look like?

What are they doing? What are they saying?

Now remember that even this person is created in the image of God. She or he is not outside the reach of God's immeasurable love.

Imaging Jesus in the scene with him or her. How is Jesus demonstrating his love for them?

Jesus, we release all of these individuals and groups into your care. Whether they are following you or not, whether they treat others with kindness or not, even they are not outside the reach of your love. Tonight, will you grace them with an experience with your love. Draw them to live more fully in your love today. Amen.