

And I Want You to Know...

Read John 14 – John 17



Chapters 14-17 in the book of John are in many ways Jesus' farewell address. Jesus prepares his disciples for when he will no longer be with them and shares with them all that Jesus wants them to know.

As Pastor Cara has been called into a new area of ministry serving as the United Methodist Tuscarawas District Superintendent, she encourages the people of Faith United to reflect and consider Jesus' words for us today.

Questions for Reflection:

- How have you experienced God at work in and through the ministries of Faith United?
- What words of Jesus from these chapters of John stand out for you?
- Memories point to the future. What helps you to move forward in faith?

The Prayer of Examen

The Prayer of Examen is a daily spiritual exercise credited to St. Ignatius of Loyola [1491-1556]. The Examen is a prayerful reflection on the events of the day in order to detect God's presence and discern his direction for us. The Prayer of Examen might also be called an introspective prayer. The word introspection means looking within. The Examen encourages assessing one's life before God on a regular basis. Recollection is the root of the prayer in which we focus on the last twenty-four hours of our life. This prayer is about noticing God's presence in our life, noticing and thanking God for his goodness, recognizing the movement of the Holy Spirit throughout our day, and acknowledging how we have failed God. Psalm 26:2, Jeremiah 17:10, and Psalm 139:23-24 are good Biblical references asking God to test us and examine our hearts and minds.

The Examen begins by recognizing that we are in the presence of God, recalling the events of our day with gratitude, seeking the guidance of the Holy Spirit, and reviewing our day making ourselves aware of the ways Christ has been at work as well as ways in which we have fallen short. When we intentionally notice these areas of our lives we become more conscious of our relationship with God, and as we become more conscious, we grow.

During this reflective prayer time you may want to ask yourself some of the following questions:

- ❖ What am I most/least grateful for?
- ❖ When did I feel a sense of love, peace, or joy (the fruit of the Spirit)?
- ❖ When did I feel exhausted, dead, drained, angry, mean?
- ❖ When did I notice God?
- ❖ Toward what actions, activities, or attributes is God drawing me?
- ❖ Where did I fail? Were there things I should have avoided?
- ❖ When did I show love? In what ways was I kind to others?
- ❖ Examine the habits and patterns of the day. Do my habits help me face my day with love or do they hinder me?

Preparation: Begin by quieting your body, mind, and spirit before the Lord.

Gratitude: Review the previous day looking for events, conversations, and experiences that provoke gratitude.

Remembering that no matter how bad a day has been, God continues His work in our lives. This prayer shapes us into grateful people.

Awareness of God: Review the past twenty-four hours in your mind looking for God's presence. Sometimes this is easy, other times it may be difficult. Ask God to help you become a person whose life is constantly aware of His presence.

Confession of Failure: Recall the past twenty-four hours alerting to the times you have failed the Lord, not acted in love, or refused the work of the Holy Spirit. Seek the Lord in confession and repentance & ask for forgiveness.

Thanksgiving: End your prayer by thanking God for his grace and love.

Share your thoughts by emailing or texting Kathy Schmucker (kschmucker@faithumchurch.org, 330-224-6138) or Pastor Steve (stultzcostello@faithumchurch.org, 330-224-7337). You are also welcome to share on social media @faithnorthcanton.