

CORE COMPETENCIES

Core Beliefs

- Trinity
- **Salvation by Grace**
"I believe a person comes into a right relationship with God by His grace, through faith in Jesus Christ."
- Authority of Bible
- Personal God
- Identity in Christ
- Church
- Humanity
- Compassion
- Eternity
- Stewardship

Core Practices

- Worship
- Prayer
- Bible Study
- Single-Mindedness
- Biblical Community
- Spiritual Gifts
- Giving Away My Time
- Giving Away My Money
- Giving Away My Faith
- Giving Away My Life

Core Virtues

- Love
- Joy
- Peace
- Patience
- Kindness/Goodness
- Faithfulness
- Gentleness
- Self-Control
- Hope
- Humility

Did your parents require you to write thank you notes when you were a child? Mine did, though I have often failed in this exercise as an adult. But the importance—the simple rightness of expressing thanks to those who have been good to me has been impressed deeply into my thinking. In some ways, that's like some of what we find in the Psalms. Is there anyone more worthy of praise and thanks than our amazing God? I pray that as we enter into these Psalms we will find ourselves writing those thank you notes, too—with our lives!

In His Praise,

Richard Gotthardt, Pastor of Spiritual Formation

Monday

Begin your time today by sitting in silence for a few moments.

Make a list of any distractions you may have or discouraging situations you are facing. In prayer, ask God to help you hear the words He has for you in scripture today.

Read Psalm 145.

This is a psalm of praise from King David. Over and over throughout this Psalm he describes God's greatness and responds to these truths.

Reread verses 1-7 slowly, and as you read, underline every "I will" phrase.

What are David's four "I will" statements?

We will use these four statements to direct the rest of our time this morning.

****I will exalt** – Although David is a king, he understands that God is the ruling King over all creation and he exalts God or lifts Him up.

Think on this truth—God is King. He is King over your life and over all the earth. If you have failed to recognize God's supreme authority, confess this to Him.

In prayer, proclaim Him to be King.

****I will praise your name** – David expresses his desire to live a life that praises God's name in both his words and actions every day.

How did your words and actions in recent days praise the name of God?

In prayer or song, praise the name of God!

****I will meditate** – David makes a conscious ongoing decision to observe the world around Him noticing God's wonderful works and then reflecting on God's character as displayed in these works.

Think about the world outside your window. How are God's great works demonstrated in this creation?

What does this show you about God as Creator of everything?

****I will proclaim** – David chooses to not keep silent about the awesome power of God. He vows to proclaim it to others so that they may know God's greatness.

Think about your day yesterday. How did you proclaim/fail to proclaim God's greatness to others? Did anything keep you from doing this?

How will you proclaim His name today?

Tuesday

Begin by expressing to God in prayer that He is King over your life and that you submit to His authority.

Read Psalm 145 slowly. Reread verses 8-10 again.

What do these verses tell us about how God relates to us?

Give a specific example from your life in which you have seen God be gracious, compassionate, slow to anger or rich in love?

Thank God for His continued love and compassion even when we turn away from Him. End your time today by memorizing verses 8-10.

Wednesday

As you begin today, remind yourself that God is King over your life. Thank Him for His power and guidance.

Read Psalm 145 in its entirety and then reread verses 11-13.

Every King has a kingdom, but only God has an eternal Kingdom. God's Kingdom is not just a future reality in heaven, but it is present even now on earth. Every day we have the opportunity to follow God as King and further His kingdom purposes.

What direction does verse 11 give followers of Christ?

Why do we do this (vs. 12)?

God is asking us to be Kingdom people by living lives in which His glory and might are displayed through our words and actions so that *all* people can know who He is.

Think of the different environments and people you will encounter today. How might they look different if they genuinely encountered the greatness of God and His Kingdom?

How can your life *tell of the glory of His Kingdom* and *speak of His might* today? Try to be specific.

Pray asking God to help you stay focused and keep His kingdom purposes in the forefront of your mind today.

Read verse 13 aloud as a closing prayer.

Thursday

Read Psalm 145 aloud as a prayer to begin this morning.

Reread verses 14-16.

These verses tell of God's provision to us through His presence and through meeting tangible physical needs.

Verse 14 speaks about God's nearness and presence with those who are downcast.

Describe a time in which you experienced God's nearness in discouragement or difficulty.

Thank Him for His sustaining presence.

Verse 15 speaks of God's provision of food, a physical need.

Acknowledge to God that whether you have plenty or are in need, He is the One who provides *everything* that you have.

Thank Him for His provision.

Verse 16 describes God as a generous giver who satisfies the desires of every living thing.

Often we will find ourselves in times where our relational, physical, emotional or spiritual desires are unmet. We can get so fixated on our unmet desires that we miss out on where God has abundantly met our desires. Think about your life. How has God abundantly provided what you desired?

Thank Him for His generosity and express to Him your unmet desires.

Ask God to continue to shape your desires to align with His plan for your life.

Spend a few moments picturing God's open hand towards you and thank Him for His provision.

Friday

Read Psalm 145:21 aloud as a declaration of your intentions today.

Read Psalm 144 and then reread verses 17-21.

What do these verses tell us about God?

What do we learn about how He relates to us?

Verses 18 and 19 tell us that God will be near to those who call on Him in truth, or accept the truth of Him as King, and us as His followers. He will hear us and save us from our sin.

What do these verses tell us about those who do not cry out to God in truth?

Allow these truths to sink in. Spend the remaining time today praying for those around you who have not yet called on God in truth. Pray that they will understand and embrace the truth of God's love and turn from sin.