

## **Practice #1**

### **Read Romans 12:18**

*18 If possible, live in peace with everyone. Do that as much as you can."*

**Ask:** *Why is it important to make peace?*

This is a question with many answers— some relating to our spiritual lives, but also to our social, mental, and even physical health! When you aren't at peace with others, you can't be fully at peace with God (spiritual). Jesus said that you shouldn't even make an offering or gift to God without first making things right with others (spiritual). When you're known as a person who always needs to win an argument, eventually, most people won't want to even be your friend (social), which can make you sad (mental). And being upset all the time can make you pretty miserable—and even cause your body to respond with things like a stomachache or a headache (physical). The next time you're in a disagreement with someone, pay attention to your own body and mind and see what you notice. With all those negative things that can happen when you're not making peace with others, it seems pretty important to make peace whenever you can.

### **Pray with team**

## **Practice #2**

**Ask:** *Why is it hard to give up what you think is fair?*

There's probably nothing harder when it comes to peace than letting go of what's fair. Losing an argument is one thing, but losing out on something that you believe you deserve? That's super hard. One thing that can help when you're feeling frustrated by the lack of fairness in a situation is remembering that Jesus gave up His actual life so we could have a relationship with God forever.

Then spend some time thanking God for sending Jesus and for the sacrifice that Jesus made. It will be hard to stay frustrated when you stay focused on Jesus and what He did! Use the following prompts to make your own prayer.

- Thank God for sending Jesus to be your Savior.
- Tell God about the unfair situation you're facing.
- Ask God to help you let go of your frustration and to choose your relationship with the person over your desire for fairness.
- Close by thanking Jesus for dying on the cross for Your sins, and for choosing His love for You over what was fair.

## **Practice #3**

*Why are promises important?*

How does it feel when someone keeps a promise they made to you? What if they made the promise a long time ago—do you ever doubt they will keep it? The more time that passes, the more you begin to doubt they will even remember their promise, much less keep it.

Find a friend or family member to talk with about promises. Each of you should share stories of when someone didn't keep their promise to you. How did that make you feel? And when someone did keep a promise they made to you, what did that do in your friendship?

When Jesus came to be our Savior, it was the fulfillment of a promise God had made hundreds of years earlier. A promise to make everything right in the world. There must have been so many times that God's people doubted the promise would ever come true. But God always had a plan, and that plan always included keeping the promise. Because God had made this promise to the world, when Jesus came to be our Savior, it showed us that we can trust God no matter what!

## **Practice #4**

### Why does Easter matter?

Have you ever thought about that question? Easter is much more than just one day. In fact, Easter affects every day that we live on Earth, and it affects us for all of eternity! Because of what Easter represents, we can have a relationship with God that is now and forever. When you think about it, Easter is every day, because Easter means that Jesus is alive!

Figure out a way to remind yourself every day that Jesus is alive. Here are some ideas:

- ➔ If you have a device, set a reminder that goes off at a certain time every day with the message, "Jesus is alive!"
- ➔ If you have a calendar or schedule, write "Jesus is alive!" at the top of each page.
- ➔ Make a poster or a banner that says, "Every day is Easter!" Hang it on the back of your bedroom door so you see it every day.
- ➔ Write reminders ("Jesus is alive!" "Every day is Easter!") on sticky notes, index cards, or any other small piece of paper that you can place in various spots around your room, backpack, car, and anywhere else you will see it often throughout the year.
- ➔ Come up with your own idea for reminding yourself of the good news of Easter!

## **Practice #5**

### **Read 1 Timothy 4:8**

*<sup>8</sup> Training the body has some value. But being godly has value in every way. It promises help for the life you are now living and the life to come.*

Did you know that you can pray and ask God for help to pray?

Did your brain just explode? It's true though; it takes practice to make prayer a part of your day, and God wants to help you as you practice. Read the prayer below that uses 1 Timothy 4:8 as the foundation.

Dear God, I know that what Timothy wrote is true: 'Training the body has some value. But being godly has value in every way. It promises help for the life you are now living and the life to come.' I want to be like You, and I know a big part of that is talking to You. Please help me practice talking to You. Remind me who You are throughout the day and help me see the things You are doing in my life and in the world. Help me turn to You when I'm having a great day and when things are hard. I want to practice talking to You so that prayer becomes a regular part of my life. I love You. In Jesus' Name, I pray. Amen.

## **Practice #6**

Read Matthew 16:13-16

*<sup>13</sup> Jesus went to the area of Caesarea Philippi. There he asked his disciples, "Who do people say the Son of Man is?" They replied, "Some say John the Baptist. Others say Elijah. Still others say Jeremiah, or one of the prophets." "But what about you?" he asked. "Who do you say I am?" Simon Peter answered, "You are the Messiah. You are the Son of the living God."*

As you read Matthew 16:13-16, what verb do you see used the most?

What do you think using that verb so much in this passage means for followers of Jesus?

That last question may have been tricky, but it comes down to this. We should practice talking about God. When Jesus lived on the earth, people often talked about who He was. But that didn't stop when Jesus went back to heaven to be with God. Even today, we should talk to others about God.

Like most things in life, the more you practice talking about God, the easier it will get. So how do you practice? Start by talking with someone who you know has put their trust in Jesus and who you feel comfortable talking to. Ideally, it will be someone that you can practice with in the future too. If possible, get a treat for you to enjoy and pick a comfy spot. As you enjoy your treat, share what you've been learning about commitment with them and ask how they have developed their relationship with God. You can also share prayer requests with each other and even pray together. If this is your first time talking about God with someone, you may be nervous, but keep practicing!

## **Practice #7**

Read Mark 12:41-44

*<sup>41</sup> Jesus sat down across from the place where people put their temple offerings. He watched the crowd putting their money into the offering boxes. Many rich people threw large amounts into them. <sup>42</sup> But a poor widow came and put in two very small copper coins. They were worth only a few pennies. <sup>43</sup> Jesus asked his disciples to come to him. He said, "What I'm about to tell you is true. That poor widow has put more into the offering box than all the others. <sup>44</sup> They all gave a lot because they are rich. But she gave even though she is poor. She put in everything she had. That was all she had to live on."*

Option 1: Jesus sitting down watching people drop in their offerings

Option 2: Rich people putting in large amounts of money

Option 3: The poor woman putting in a little bit of money

Option 4: Jesus calling the disciples over

Which option do you think most people would say represents the most sacrifice? \_\_\_\_\_

Read verse 43-44 and then choose the box that represents who Jesus says made the greatest sacrifice. If you chose the option of the poor woman donating her two coins, you're right. The woman who gave all she had shows us what it looks like to live for God.

It's not too challenging to practice living for God for a day or two, but sometimes we slip back into old habits—or forget to practice the new ones! One thing that can help as you practice living for God is having an accountability partner—someone who will check in with you from time to time to see how things are going. It can work really well if that person is also practicing living for God. Who is someone you can ask to help hold you accountable? Go to them, or call or text them, today and explain a bit about what you're looking for. If they are up for the task, let them know you'll be in touch soon with more details!