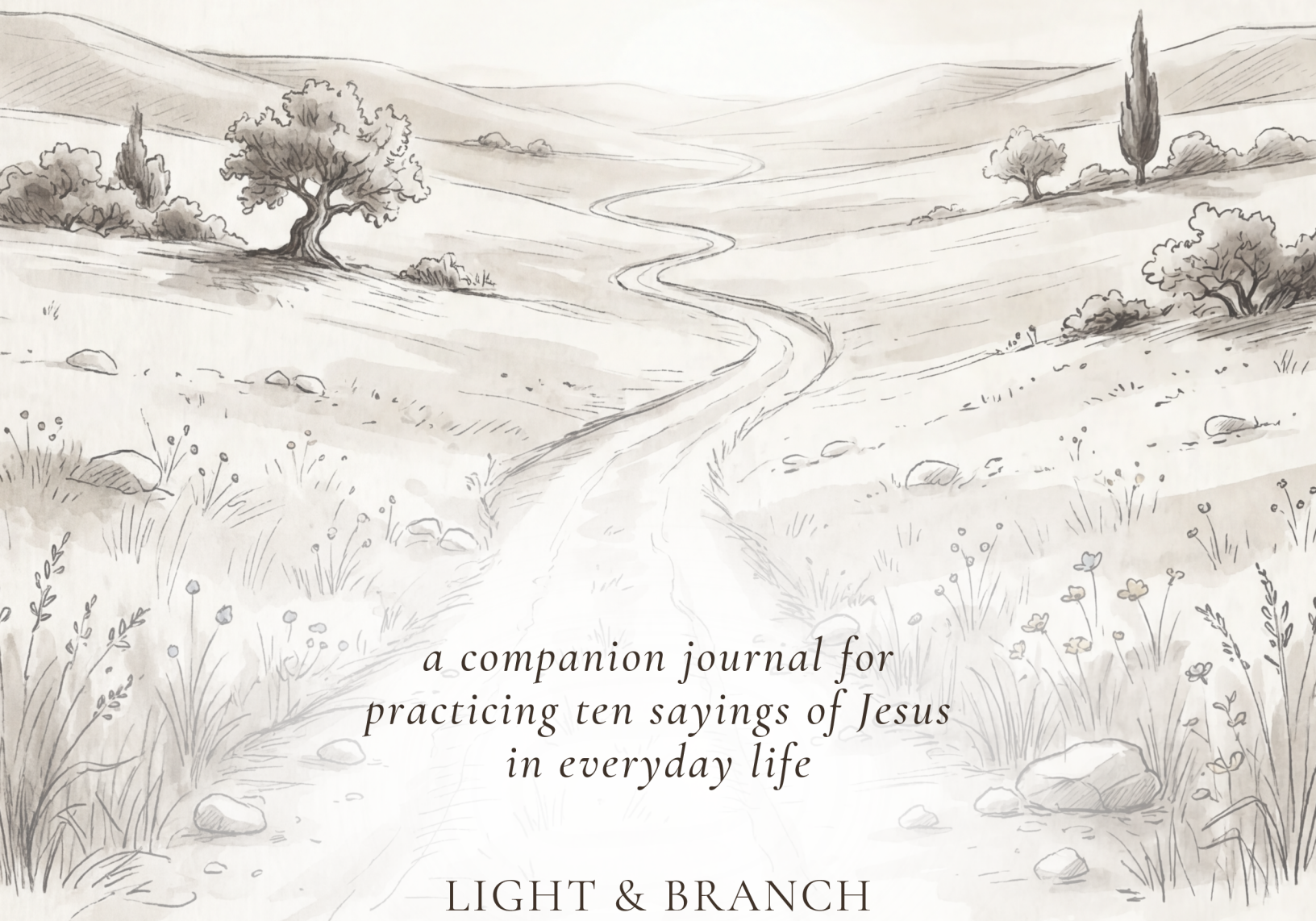


# The Words We Still Need



PRINTABLE  
REFLECTION JOURNAL



*a companion journal for  
practicing ten sayings of Jesus  
in everyday life*

LIGHT & BRANCH





# The Words We Still Need: Printable Reflection Journal



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# Welcome

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This journal was created to help you slow down with the ideas in *The Words We Still Need*. The goal is not to rush through every page or produce perfect answers. The goal is to notice where these sayings meet real life — in your reactions, relationships, conversations, habits, and choices.

Use these pages one saying at a time. Return to them when needed. Write honestly. Leave blanks where you need to. The value is not in filling every line, but in giving yourself space to reflect, practice, and return.





# How to Use This Journal

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Each saying includes four pages:



## **Reflect**

Begin with the meaning of the saying and the questions it raises.



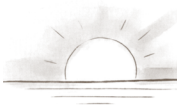
## **Notice**

Look for where this saying shows up in ordinary life.



## **Practice**

Choose one specific response, habit, or moment to work with.

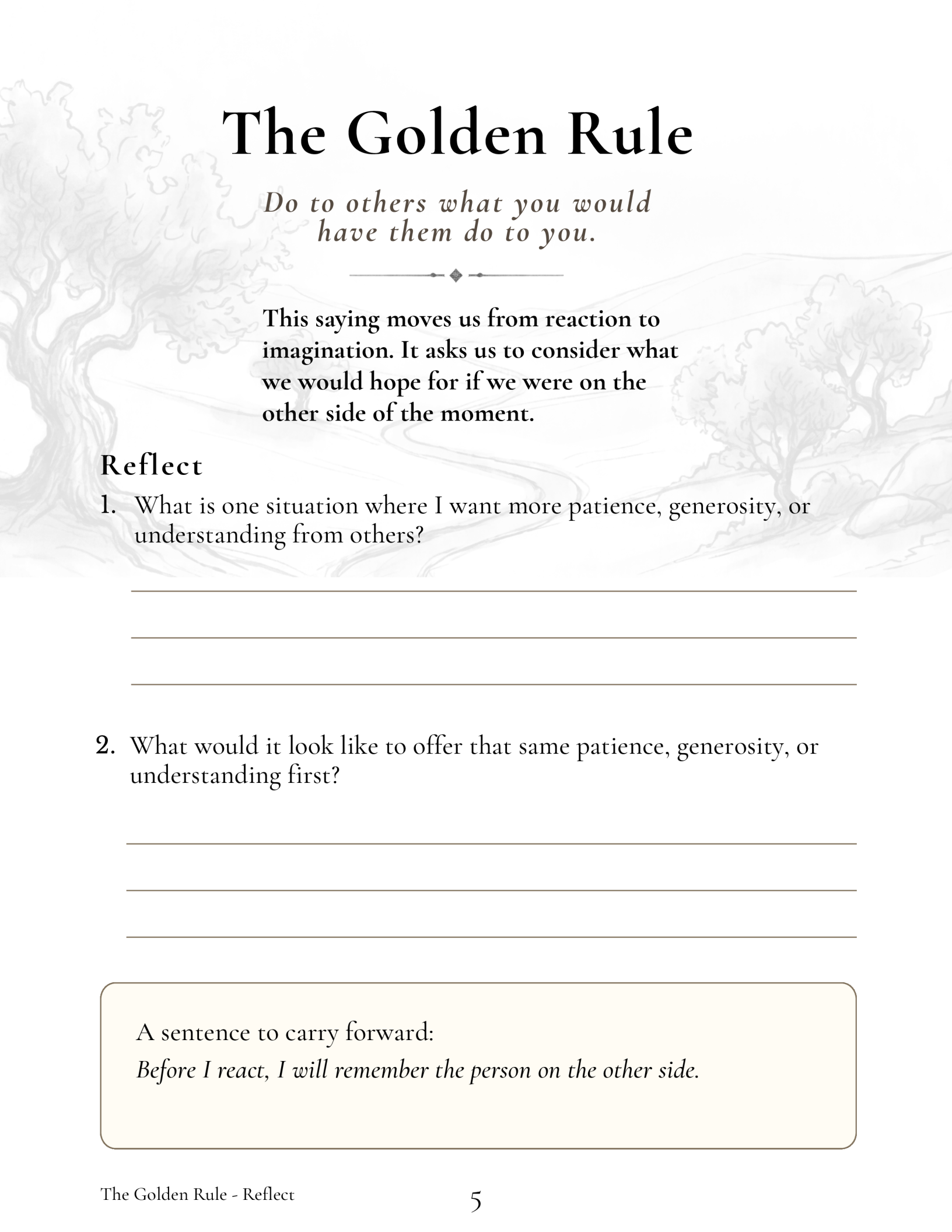


## **Return**

Come back after a few days and reflect on what you noticed.

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You can move through the journal in order, or begin with the saying that feels most relevant right now.



# The Golden Rule

*Do to others what you would  
have them do to you.*

—◆—

This saying moves us from reaction to imagination. It asks us to consider what we would hope for if we were on the other side of the moment.

## Reflect

1. What is one situation where I want more patience, generosity, or understanding from others?

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2. What would it look like to offer that same patience, generosity, or understanding first?

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A sentence to carry forward:

*Before I react, I will remember the person on the other side.*



# Where This Shows Up

The Golden Rule is often hardest in ordinary moments: when we feel misunderstood, interrupted, criticized, ignored, or inconvenienced.

## Notice

1. Where do I find myself reacting quickly instead of pausing?

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2. Who do I most easily forget to treat with the same patience I want for myself?

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3. What do I usually want from others in tense moments?

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One situation I want to pay attention to:

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# Practice This Week

Choose one moment where you are likely to react quickly. Before responding, pause and ask:

*If I were on the other side of this moment, what would I hope for from me?*

1. My usual reaction is:

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2. The response I want to try instead is:

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3. A phrase I can remember in the moment:

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4. One small action I can take:

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# Return and Reflect

Come back to this page after a few days.

1. What happened when I tried to practice this?

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---

2. What felt difficult?

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---

---

3. Where did I still react from impatience, pride or self-protection?

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What do I want to carry forward?

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# The Greatest Commandment

*Love God. Love your neighbor.*

— ♦ —

This saying gathers life around love — not vague sentiment, but reordered attention, devotion, and care.

## Reflect

1. What has been receiving the best of my attention lately?

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---

2. Who near me may need more presence, patience, or care than I have been giving?

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---

A sentence to carry forward:

*Love is not only what I feel; it is what I give my attention to.*

# Where This Shows Up

Love often becomes abstract until we look at our calendar, our reactions, our habits, and the people closest to us.

## Notice

1. What do my daily habits suggest I love most?

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2. Where am I giving attention to things that leave me more distracted, anxious, or self-focused?

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3. Who is easy for me to overlook because they are familiar, inconvenient, or quiet?

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---

One person I may be called to notice more fully:

---

---

# Practice This Week

Choose one person you regularly overlook, rush past, or take for granted.  
Offer one concrete act of attention or care.

1. What they may need from me:

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---

---

2. One specific act of love I can offer:

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---

3. What might get in the way:

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---

---

A phrase I can remember in the moment:

*Love begins where my attention goes.*

# Return and Reflect

Come back to this page after a few days.

1. What did I notice when I gave more deliberate attention?

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2. Did love feel easy, inconvenient, uncomfortable, or natural?

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3. Where did I confuse love with approval, control, or obligation?

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4. What kind of love do I want to practice more intentionally?

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# Love Your Enemies

*Love your enemies and pray  
for those who persecute you.*

This saying does not ask us to pretend harm is harmless. It asks us not to let hostility decide who we become.

## Reflect

1. Who is difficult for me to think about with mercy right now?

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2. What would it mean to refuse bitterness without excusing what was wrong?

---

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---

A sentence to carry forward:

*I do not have to become what wounded me.*

# Where This Shows Up

This saying often appears where resentment feels justified: conflict, betrayal, politics, family wounds, workplace tension, online outrage, or old pain.

## Notice

1. Who or what brings out contempt in me?

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2. What story do I repeatedly tell myself about this person or group?

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3. What does resentment seem to give me?

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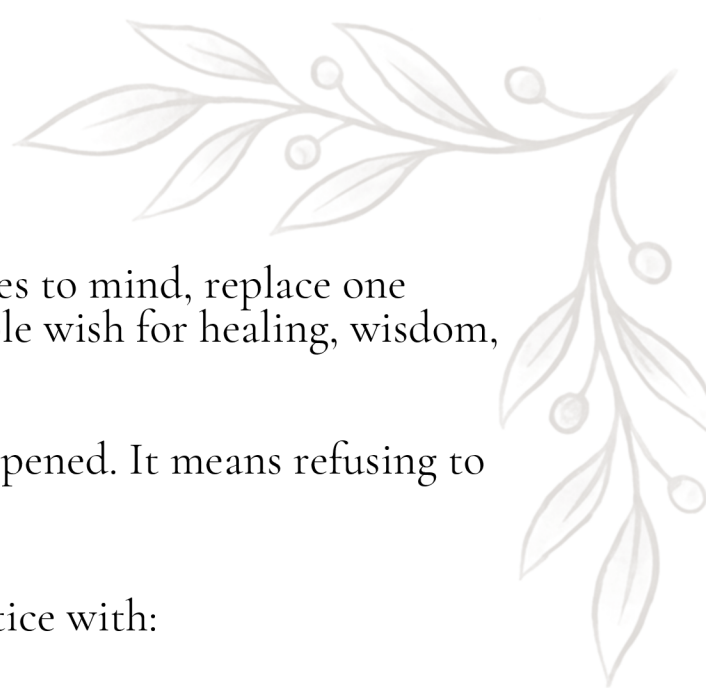
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The resentment I most need to examine:

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## Practice This Week

When this person, group, or situation comes to mind, replace one rehearsed insult or resentment with a simple wish for healing, wisdom, or change.

This does not mean approving of what happened. It means refusing to let hatred shape you.

1. The person or situation I want to practice with:

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2. My usual inner response:

---

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---

3. A more merciful response I can try:

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---

---

A sentence I can carry:

*Mercy can be strong without being naïve.*

# Return and Reflect

Come back to this page after a few days.

1. What happened inside me when I practiced this?

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2. Did I feel resistance, grief, anger, relief, or something else?

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3. What did I learn about my attachment to resentment?

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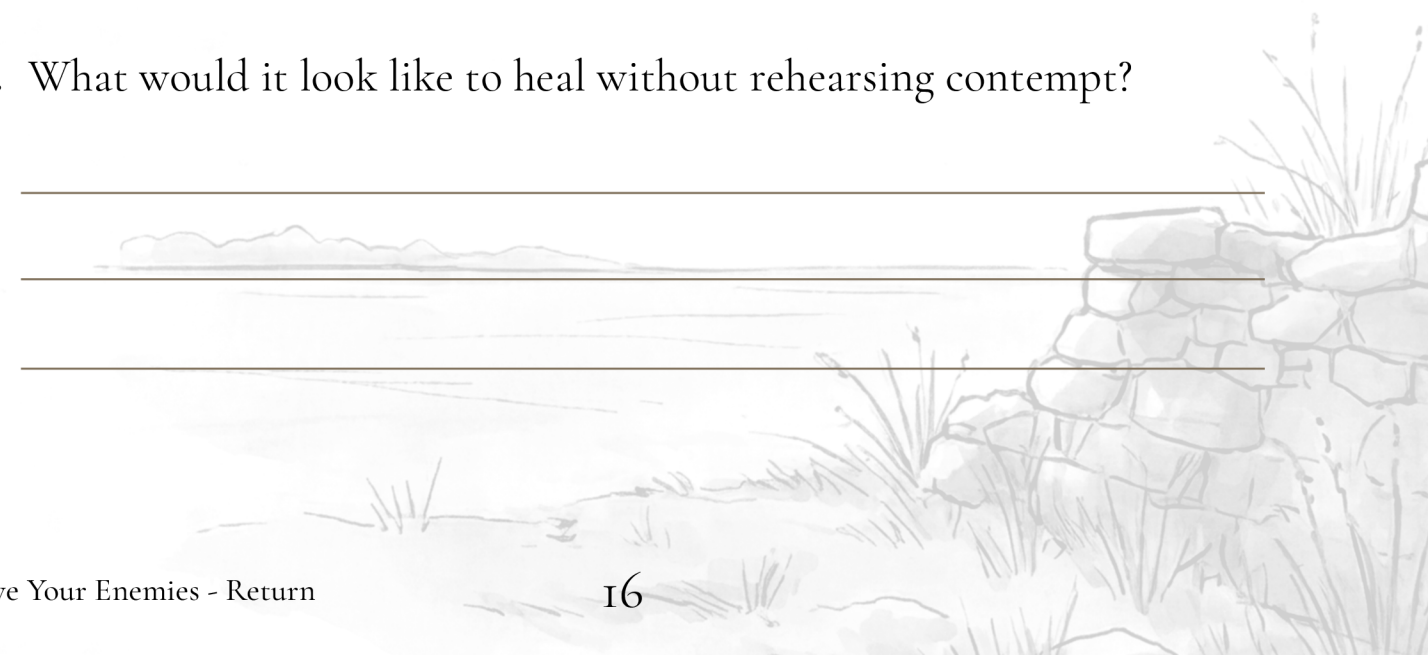
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4. What would it look like to heal without rehearsing contempt?

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# Do Not Judge

*Do not judge, or you too will be judged.*

— ◆ —

This saying asks us to notice how quickly we reduce people to their worst moment, while hoping others will see more in us.

## Reflect

1. Where have I been quick to assume the worst about someone?

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---

---

2. What part of the story might I not know?

---

---

---

A sentence to carry forward:

*I can be honest without being harsh.*



# Where This Shows Up

Judgment often feels like clarity, but sometimes it is impatience dressed as certainty.

## Notice

1. Who have I mentally reduced to a label?

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---

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2. What kinds of mistakes do I judge most harshly in others?

---

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3. Where am I asking for grace while offering very little of it?

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One judgment I want to examine:

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## Practice This Week

Before forming a hard conclusion about someone, pause and ask:

1. What else might be true here?

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2. The person or situation I want to approach differently:

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---

---

3. What differs between by first assumption and other possible explanations?

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A sentence I can carry:  
*There may be more to the story.*

# Return and Reflect

Come back to this page after a few days.

1. What did I notice when I slowed down my judgment?

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2. Did curiosity change anything?

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3. Where did I still want to be right more than I wanted to understand?

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4. What do I want to practice next time?

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# Turn the Other Cheek

*If anyone slaps you on the right cheek,  
turn to them the other cheek also.*

— ♦ —

This saying is not about weakness. It is about refusing to let insult, pride, or retaliation control the next move.

## Reflect

1. Where am I tempted to respond to disrespect with more disrespect?

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2. What would strength look like if it were not driven by pride?

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---

---

A sentence to carry forward:

*I can stay steady without striking back.*

## Where This Shows Up

Retaliation can be obvious, but it can also be subtle: sarcasm, withdrawal, coldness, public correction, last-word arguments, or quiet contempt.

### Notice

1. What kind of disrespect triggers me most quickly?

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2. What is the difference between dignity and pride in this situation?

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---

3. Where might a non-retaliatory response still need to be clear and firm?

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---

One moment where I tend to retaliate:

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---

## Practice This Week

In one tense moment, choose a response that is calm, clear, and non-retaliatory. This is not passivity. It is disciplined strength.

1. The situation I want to practice in:

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---

2. My usual reaction:

---

---

---

3. The steady response I want to try:

---

---

---

A sentence I can carry:  
*I do not need to mirror the insult.*



# Return and Reflect

Come back to this page after a few days.

1. What happened when I chose not to retaliate?

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2. Did restraint feel strong, weak, frustrating, or freeing?

---

---

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3. What did I want to say but chose not to say?

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4. How can I practice steadiness without avoiding truth?

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# The Beatitudes

*Blessed are the poor in spirit, the meek,  
the merciful, the peacemakers...*

The Beatitudes turn our usual ideas of success upside down. They bless humility, mercy, grief, hunger for what is right, and the work of peace.

## Reflect

1. Which quality from the Beatitudes feels most needed in my life right now?

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---

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2. Which one feels hardest for me to value?

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---

A sentence to carry forward:

*The quiet virtues still matter.*

# Where This Shows Up

The Beatitudes challenge the traits our world often rewards: dominance, image, certainty, winning, self-protection, and outrage.

## Notice

1. Where am I tempted to prize being impressive over being faithful, honest, or merciful?

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2. Which quiet virtue do I tend to overlook?

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3. Where do I resist mercy because I fear being taken advantage of?

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The Beatitude quality I want to notice this week:

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# Practice This Week

Choose one Beatitude quality and look for one ordinary place to practice it:

*Mercy - Meekness - Peacemaking - Purity of heart - Hunger for righteousness  
Humility - Comfort for those who mourn*

1. The quality I choose:

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---

2. Where I can practice it:

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---

3. What this will require from me:

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---

A sentence I can carry:

*Blessing may look quieter than success.*

# Return and Reflect

Come back to this page after a few days.

1. What did I notice when I practiced this quiet virtue?

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2. Did it feel natural or countercultural?

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3. Where did pride, cynicism, or self-protection show up?

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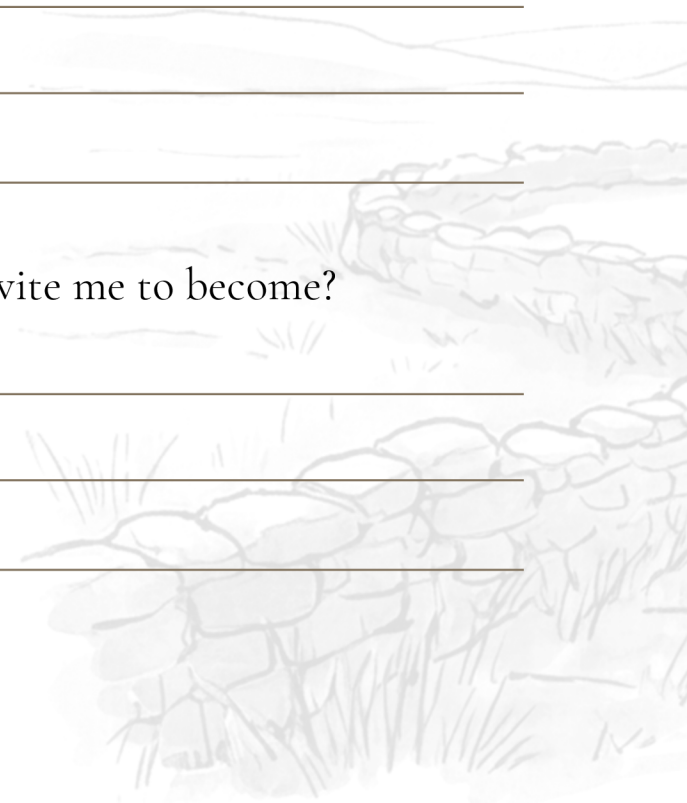
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4. What kind of person does this saying invite me to become?

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# The Lord's Prayer

*Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name...*

— ◆ —

This prayer gathers life around trust, daily need, forgiveness, and the desire for what is good to be done on earth.

## Reflect

1. What need am I carrying today that I usually try to manage alone?

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2. Where do I need to practice forgiveness — either receiving it or extending it?

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---

A sentence to carry forward:

*I can ask for enough grace for today.*



# Where This Shows Up

The Lord's Prayer brings attention to dependence, desire, provision, forgiveness, temptation, and trust.

## Notice

1. What does “daily bread” look like for me today — not everything I want, but what I truly need?

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2. Where am I carrying unforgiveness?

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3. What temptation or pattern do I need help resisting?

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The need I want to name honestly:

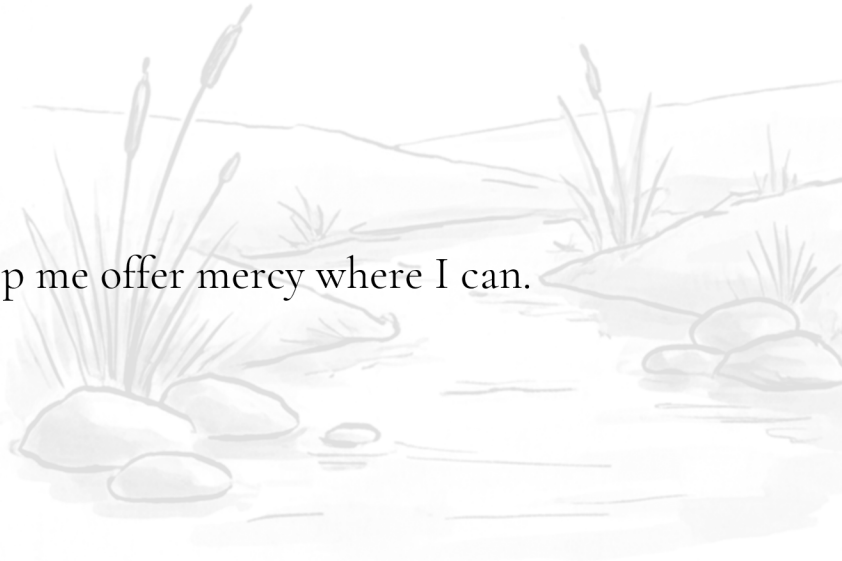
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## Practice This Week

Begin one day with a simple pause:

Give me what I need for today. Help me offer mercy where I can.



1. What I need today:

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2. Someone I need to forgive or soften toward:

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---

---

3. One way I can seek what is good today:

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---

---

A sentence I can carry:

*Today is enough to begin with.*

# Return and Reflect

Come back to this page after a few days.

1. What changed when I focused on today instead of trying to control everything ahead?

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2. Where did I notice anxiety, striving, or fear?

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3. Where did forgiveness feel difficult?

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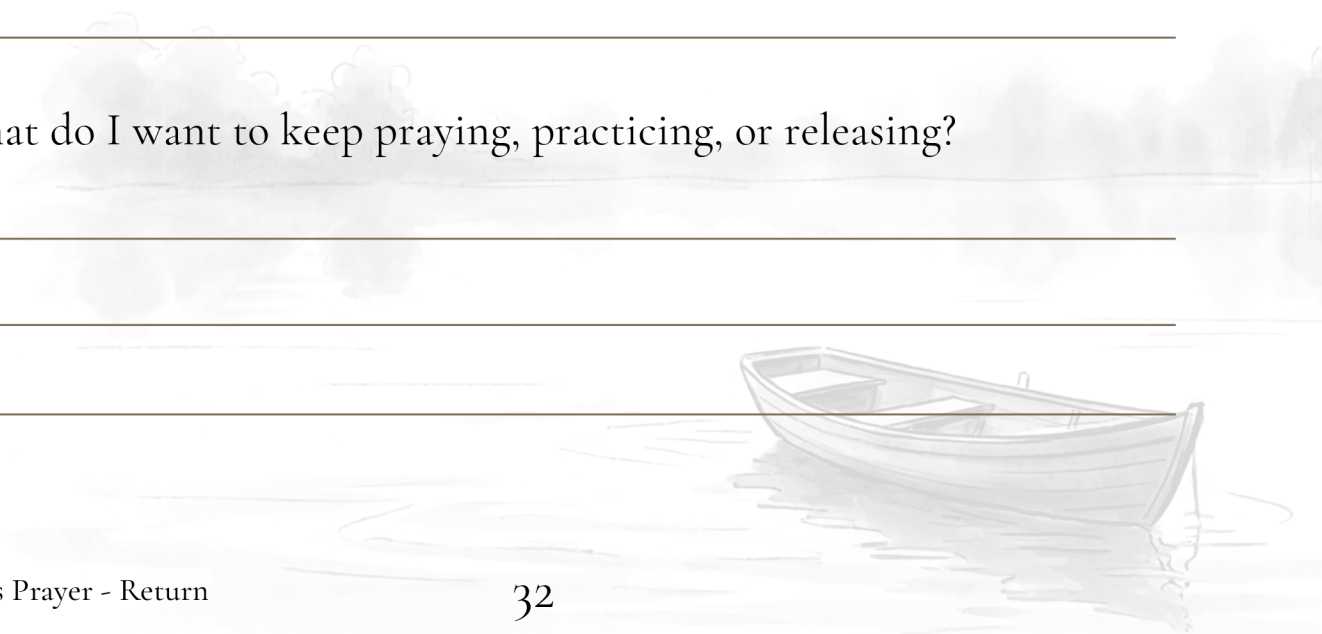
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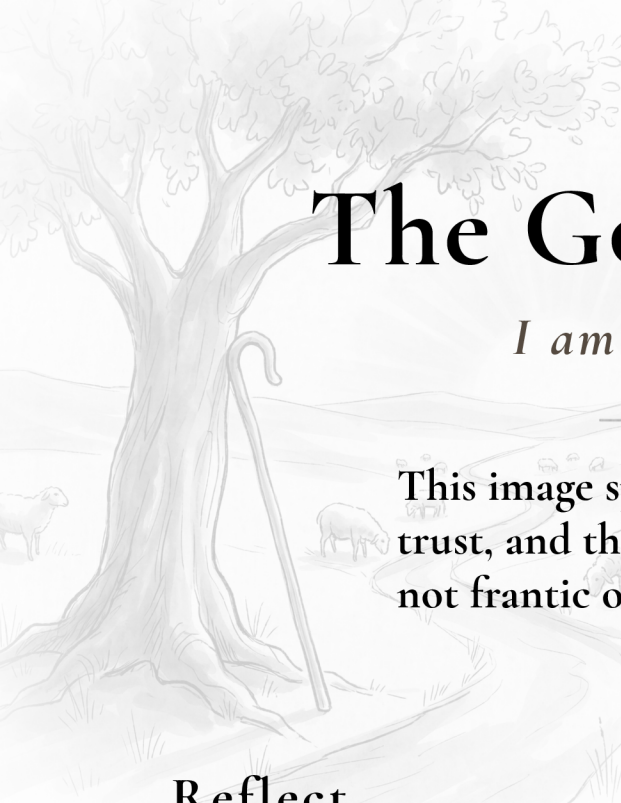
4. What do I want to keep praying, practicing, or releasing?

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# The Good Shepherd

*I am the good shepherd.*

This image speaks to guidance, protection, trust, and the need to be led by a voice that is not frantic or false.

## Reflect

1. What voices have been shaping my decisions lately?

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2. Where do I need guidance, steadiness, or protection?

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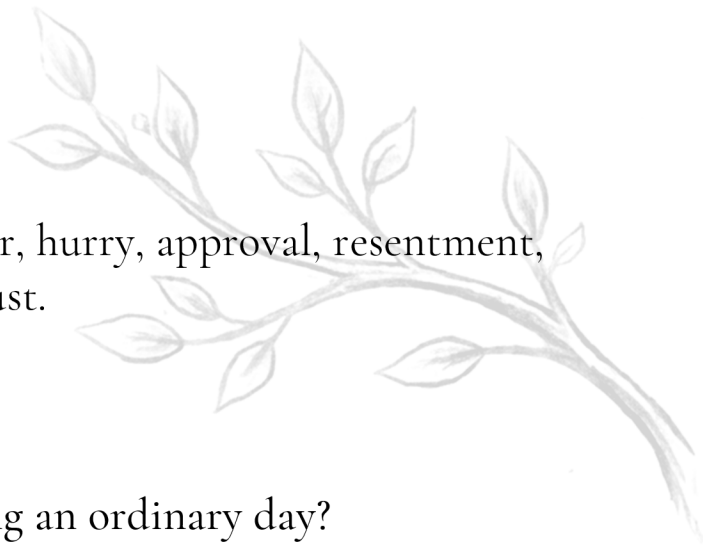
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A sentence to carry forward:  
*Not every voice deserves my trust.*

# Where This Shows Up

We are always being led by something: fear, hurry, approval, resentment, ambition, distraction, wisdom, love, or trust.



## Notice

1. What voices do I hear most often during an ordinary day?

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2. Which voices make me more anxious, hurried, or hardened?

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3. Where am I following noise instead of wisdom?

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The voice or influence I need to examine:

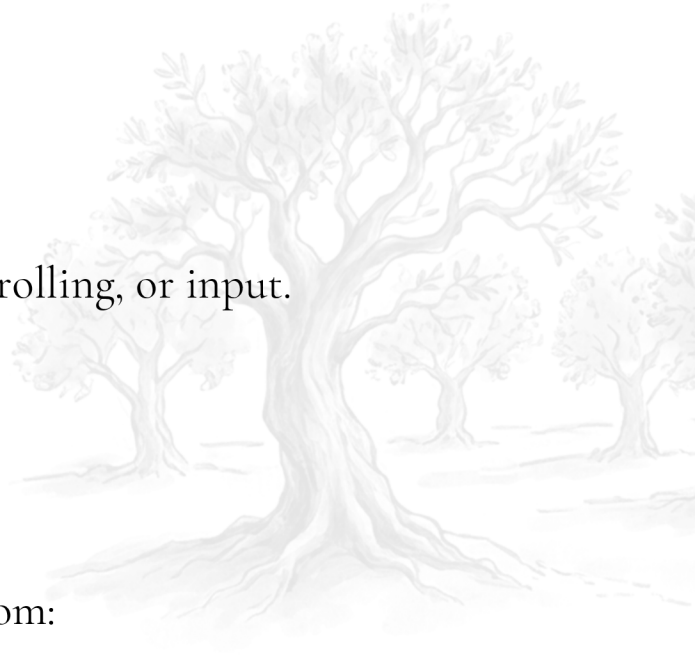
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## Practice This Week

Create one quiet moment without noise, scrolling, or input.

Ask: What voice am I actually following?



1. What I need to turn off or step away from:

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---

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2. What decision or situation needs guidance:

---

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---

3. The wiser voice I want to listen for:

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---

---

A sentence I can carry:

*A frantic voice is not always a true one.*

# Return and Reflect

Come back to this page after a few days.

1. In the quiet, was silence uncomfortable, clarifying, frustrating, or peaceful?

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---

2. What voices have been shaping me more than I realized?

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---

3. Where do I need to stop following fear, hurry, or approval?

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4. What would trust look like in this situation?

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# The Prodigal Son

*He was lost and is found.*

This story reminds us how easily we can wander, resent, return, or withhold welcome — and how powerful mercy can be.

## Reflect

1. Where do I recognize myself in this story: wandering, returning, resenting, or welcoming?  

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---
2. Is there any place where I need to come home — to honesty, humility, forgiveness, or love?  

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A sentence to carry forward:

*Return is still possible.*

# Where This Shows Up

The story of the prodigal son is not only about rebellion. It is also about resentment, pride, mercy, restoration, and the difficulty of celebration.

## Notice

1. Where have I wandered from what I know is good?

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2. Where do I resent mercy being offered to someone else?

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---

3. What would coming home look like right now?

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---

---

The part of the story I most identify with today:

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---

## Practice This Week

Take one small step toward return: apologize, tell the truth, soften resentment, ask for help, or welcome someone with more mercy than they expect.

1. The place where I need to return:

---

---

---

2. One step I can take:

---

---

---

3. Where I may need to offer welcome instead of resentment:

---

---

---

A sentence I can carry:

*The way back can begin with one honest step.*

# Return and Reflect

Come back to this page after a few days.

1. What did I notice when I took a step toward return, honesty, or mercy?

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2. Which felt harder: asking for mercy or offering it?

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3. What does this story invite me to believe about restoration?

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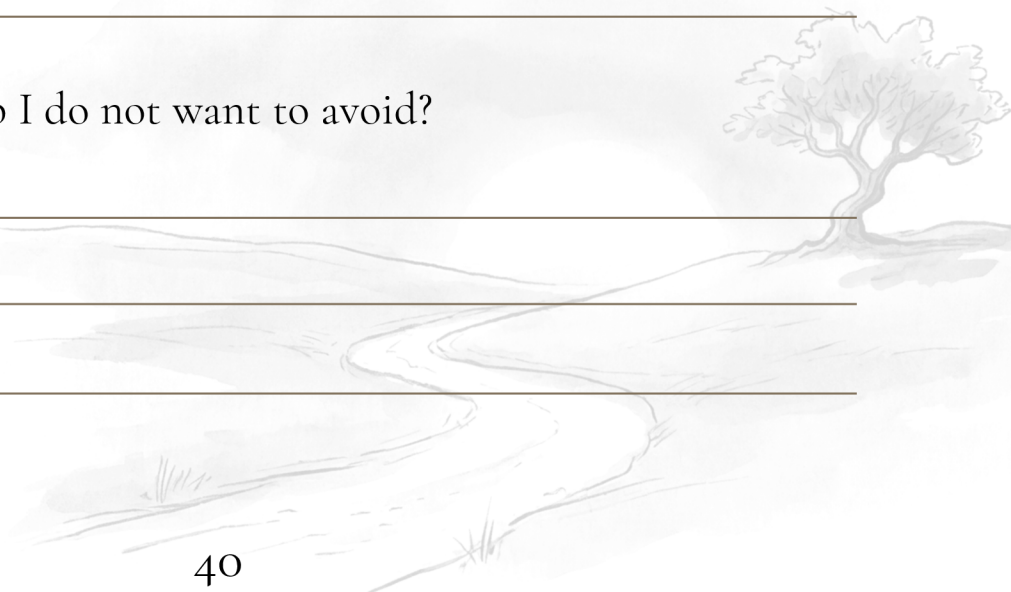
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4. What is one next step I do not want to avoid?

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# Father, Forgive Them

*Father, forgive them, for they  
do not know what they are doing.*

These words do not make evil small. They  
reveal a mercy large enough to resist hatred  
even in the presence of injustice.



## Reflect

1. Where am I carrying anger that may be becoming part of me?

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---

2. What would forgiveness mean here if it did not require denial, excuse-making, or pretending nothing happened?

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A sentence to carry forward:

*Forgiveness does not erase the wound; it loosens its grip.*

# Where This Shows Up

Forgiveness is often misunderstood. It does not mean calling harm acceptable, removing all consequences, or rushing healing. But it does ask whether we want the wound to keep governing our inner life.

## Notice

1. What anger or hurt do I return to most often?

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2. Am I confusing forgiveness with excusing, forgetting, or reconciling?

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3. What part of me still wants the wound to stay central?

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The hurt I want to examine carefully:

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## Practice This Week

Write one honest sentence about the harm, then one sentence about the freedom you want.

Example: What happened was real. I do not want it to rule me forever.

1. The honest sentence:

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---

---

2. The freedom sentence:

---

---

---

3. A resentment I am tired of rehearsing:

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---

A sentence I can carry:

*I can tell the truth and still move toward freedom.*



# Return and Reflect

Come back to this page after a few days.

1. What came up when I reflected on forgiveness?

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2. Did I feel resistance, sadness, anger, fear, relief, or something else?

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3. Where might forgiveness be a process rather than a single decision?

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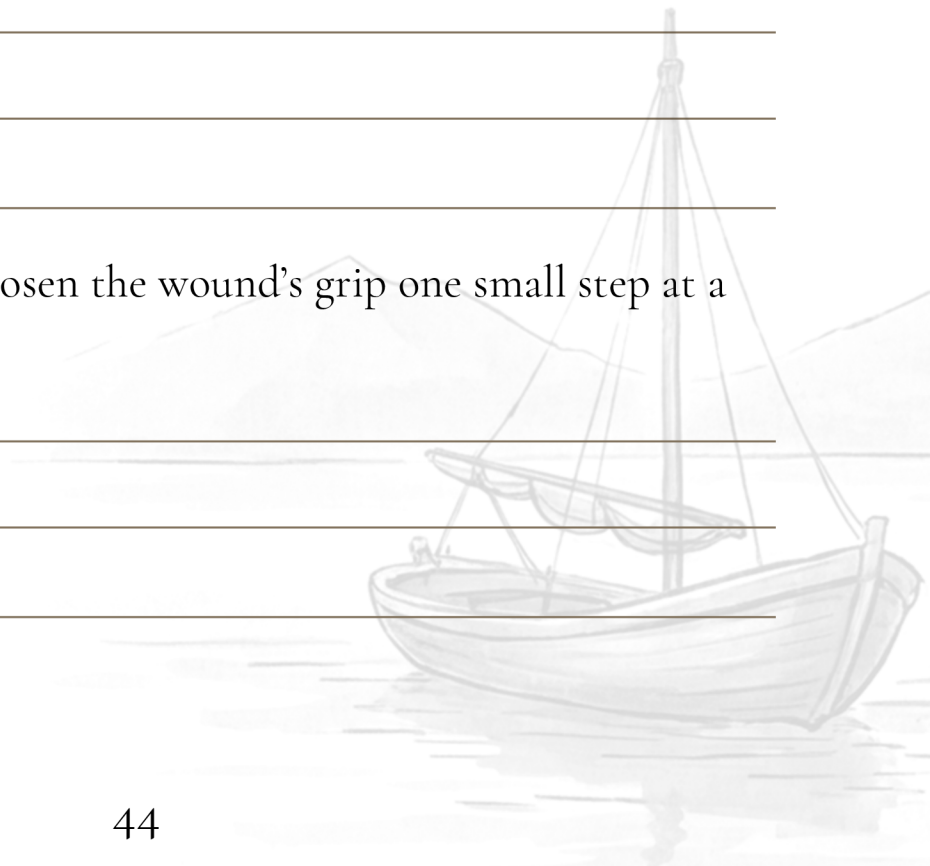
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4. What would it mean to loosen the wound's grip one small step at a time?

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# What I Noticed

After spending time with these sayings,  
pause and look back.

1. Which saying challenged me most?

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2. Which saying comforted me most?

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3. What pattern did I notice in my reactions, relationships, or  
attention?

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4. Where did I see even a small sign of change?

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# What I Want to Practice

Reflection matters most when it  
becomes embodied in ordinary life

1. What is one virtue I want to keep practicing?

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2. What is one habit, reaction, or pattern I want to leave behind?

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---

3. What is one relationship or situation where I want to show up differently?

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---

4. What is one small practice I can continue this week?

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# A Simple Rule for the Days Ahead



Based on what I have reflected on,  
I want to live with more:

- |                                   |                                      |
|-----------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Patience | <input type="checkbox"/> Forgiveness |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Mercy    | <input type="checkbox"/> Peace       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Courage  | <input type="checkbox"/> Attention   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Humility | <input type="checkbox"/> Compassion  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Honesty  | <input type="checkbox"/> Wisdom      |

1. One sentence I want to carry forward:

---

---

2. One practice I want to continue:

---

---

3. One relationship I want to handle with more care:

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This image shows a blank sheet of white paper with horizontal ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and extend across the width of the page. In the bottom right corner, there is a faint, light green illustration of what appears to be a cluster of bushes or small trees. The overall appearance is that of a clean, unused notebook page.