

Practices for Life

Ignatian Examen

Defining the practice

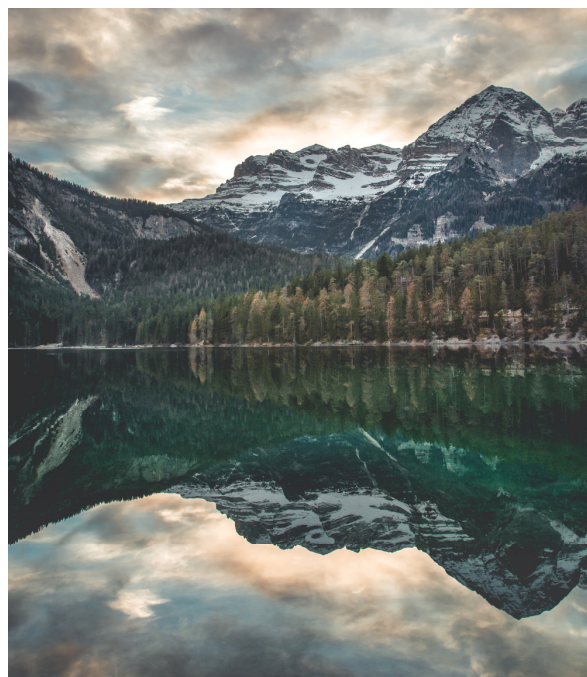
The practice of examen is about becoming more attentive to God's presence and actions in your life. It originated from Ignatius of Loyola (1491-1556), a Spanish nobleman who wanted to discern how God was moving in his life. He founded the Catholic religious order of the Jesuits.

Why this is helpful

This practice helps us see how God is near to us at *all* times. As we consciously begin to notice what moves us closer to or further away from God, we grow in gratitude for how God is present with us and humility as we acknowledge how we drift from him.

How to practice

- Begin with prayer, asking God to be present with you and to help guide your reflection.
- Choose a period of time for your reflection: during the past day, week, month, or year.
- Ask yourself when you have felt closest to God and also when you have felt furthest from him.
- Consider the specifics of these circumstances, including what was happening at those times to draw you nearer to or to distance you from God.
- Consider how you are experiencing God's presence in the present moment. Reflect on how God reveals himself to you in big ways and small ways.
- Bring your observations to God in prayer. Ask him to help you increase your awareness of and trust in him.



Test yourselves to make sure you are solid in the faith. Don't drift along taking everything for granted. Give yourselves regular checkups.

2 Corinthians 13:5 MSG

Things to consider

It might be initially easier for you to recognize God's nearness. Or you may be better able to identify times when God is far from you.

This practice can help you grow spiritually as you learn to do whichever of these is naturally more difficult for you.

Where you begin is a reflection of how God made you. Allow him to shape your development.



Rhythm of frequency