

## PRACTICE FOUR

As you begin, take a few moments to pray as a missional community and invite the Holy Spirit to lead and guide your time together.

### **Eat & Debrief 25 min**

*While eating dinner, spend a few minutes catching up on life and then talk about the following debrief questions. If your group is larger than 7, you may find it beneficial to split into groups of 3-5 for this portion, "open the Bible together", and "discussion questions" at the end.*

1. How did it go this past week?
2. Was it easy or difficult to "let yourself feel"?
3. Did you feel comfortable being honest with the Father about your emotions?
4. What did "processing" those emotions with the Father look like for you? (*If you did not get here last week, that is ok, no need to feel any pressure*)

### **Open the Bible together 10 min**

*Have someone read Psalm 13 & 30:1-5 and talk about the following questions:*

1. What are some of the emotions you see present in the Psalms we've read?
2. Notice the repetition of the phrase, "How long?" in Psalm 13; are there feelings that you have held onto for long periods of time?
3. Are you able to name your emotions like David did in these Psalms?

### **The Explanation & Prompt 10 min**

*Watch the video prompt together as a group.*

1. Put away your phone or any other distractions, settle into your time/place with a "**Breathing Prayer**" (this is just a fancy term for ↓)
  - Close your eyes. Take long, deep, slow breaths. Release the constant chatter in your mind. Let each thought go as quickly as it comes, and just focus on your breathing.
2. Take a few moments to "**Abide**". Focus your mind and heart on the reality of God's nearness and that if you are a follower of Jesus, you have been given the Holy Spirit.
  - This is a good exercise regardless of whether we feel anything or not.
  - If you have trouble, it may be helpful to say/write something like, "God, you are here with me, thank you that you are good". Stay here as long as it takes to be able to remain/abide/hold on to this truth.

3. Ask the Holy Spirit to lead as you as you take a moment to **"Self-Reflect"**. It's helpful to ask yourself a few questions: "What am I experiencing now?"; "What have I been experiencing lately?"; "What is/has been going on in my heart and mind?".
  - God is not interested in falsehood or pretense.
  - Let yourself feel. What emotions rise to the surface, big or small?
  - Name "the good, the bad, and the ugly" of your emotional state.
  - Don't run away from what you're feeling.
  - Remember: our emotions aren't something to avoid. Instead, they are a place to meet God and open yourself up to him in new ways.
4. **Acknowledge** the full **truth** about "where you are" and "what you feel" with God. Honestly share this with the Father. Sit with it for a moment, knowing that he hears and is present and desires intimacy with us in both our most joyful and darkest moments.
  - If you find yourself struggling here, it may be worth returning to step 3 and reading Psalm 23 and sitting with it and then re-entering step 4 and 5.
5. **Share** your heart and process with the Father. There is no script for this, but the idea is to pour out/unpack your heart/what's going on with God.
6. **Invite** the Holy Spirit to make known the heart of the Father for us, along with clarity or wisdom. There is no need to rush or force this. We can trust the Spirit is at work in and among us more deeply and long before and after this prayer.

### **The Practice 15 min**

Dismiss everyone to go find a spot for the practice. Return to same group you debriefed with.

### **Work through these discussion questions 10 min**

1. What did you find easy or difficult?
2. Did you feel comfortable being vulnerable with the Father about your emotions?
3. What did "processing" those emotions with the Father look like for you?

### **Close in prayer 5 min**

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### **Tips for the Coming Week**

1. This is the type of practice that might take some time. Emotions can be hard, and naming them can be confusing. If you are having a difficult time putting a name to your emotions try using a "[feelings wheel](#)" to better define your emotions.
2. Keeping a journal can also be helpful for learning to name and understand emotions.
3. Lean on your community in times of difficulty, celebrate with them in times of joy!