



5 SIMPLE PRACTICES TO

stay focused on Jesus

THIS HOLIDAY SEASON



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Hey Friend!

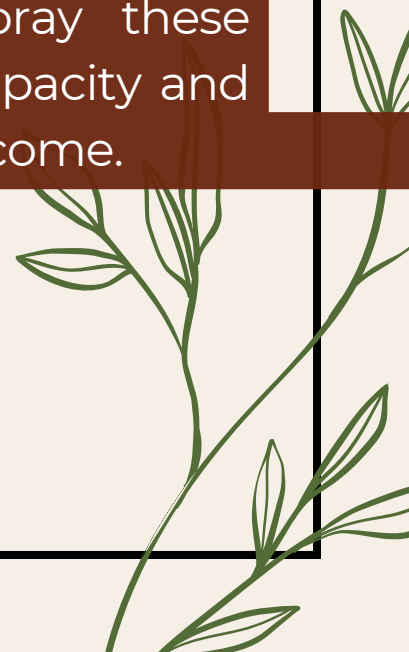
I'm Becky... wife and mama to three busy boys, one who is autistic. Holidays can make it even more busy around here. That's why I wanted to share 5 simple, easy ways you can connect with Jesus and stay focused on Him during holiday seasons (or any season of life that requires "extra" or is hard). Our hearts need to stay centered on Christ, and it's not just because it's the right thing to do. Jesus is our Source, our Strength, and our Savior who will sustain us through life's busy and broken moments. Holidays can also feel heavy with grief, loss and relational strain. Whatever circumstances you find yourself in, I pray these practices empower you to lean into the capacity and character of Christ now and in the years to come.

Connect with Becky more...

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5 easy practices to keep Christ the focus this holiday...

- 01 Pause and Breathe
- 02 Release and Rely
- 03 Practice Praise
- 04 Meditate on ONE verse
- 05 Be Present and Play
- 06 Bonus 1: Choose a Fruit to Cultivate
- 07 Bonus 2: Look for Jesus Moments





01

Pause and Breathe

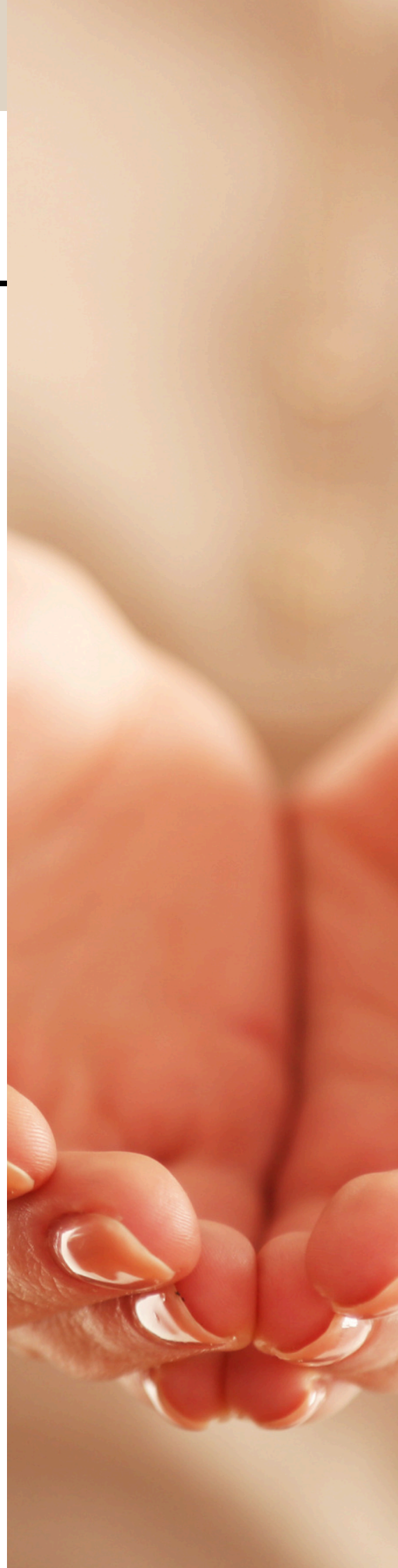
Our bodies are not made to go non-stop. We need to still our souls and rest, even in the midst of crazy schedules. Plan times to pause during your day and physically take 5 deep breaths. I use the **One Minute Pause app**, which literally is a one minute pause you can schedule into your phone. Pausing helps cultivate peace in our hearts when situations start to get overwhelming. It also helps us remember God's presence. *He is always near and with us.*

02

Release and Rely

This step can be combined easily with *Pausing and Breathing* if you'd like! After taking five deep breaths, ask God if there is anything you need to surrender and release to Him. **Is there anything you are holding onto? Why is it hard to give it to God?** Be honest with Him. He wants your full, authentic heart.

We were never made to be the savior of our stories. God wants us to hand our most precious things over to Him so we don't have to carry them. We can't receive peace and freedom from Jesus when our hands are closed tight. Releasing our cares and concerns to Christ helps us also release the outcomes and rely completely on Him. *What do you need to let go of today?*



03

Practice Praise

We were made to be worshippers, first and foremost. Sometimes the stress and busyness of the season makes us weary as we take our eyes off of the God the season is celebrating. *Distraction and discouragement are very effective tools of the devil.* One way to be proactive when your heart starts to feel overwhelmed is to practice praise! You can do this various ways:

- Pop on your favorite worship songs or playlist
- Play some Christ-centered Christmas songs
- List attributes of God that you love *out loud* for a couple minutes. (Ex: “God, I praise You for being gracious, forgiving, truthful, just, etc.”)
- Make a Faithfulness List - List off the ways God has been faithful to you this past week, month or year. Watch that list grow quickly!
- Pray your favorite Psalm back to God.
- Worship with your whole body - get on your knees, have a dance party, raise your hands.





Oh Come Let Us
Adore Him...

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04

Meditate on ONE verse

Sometimes when we think about spending time with God, it can seem daunting because we think we need 30 min or more of uninterrupted time. But life just doesn't make that possible sometimes. **God is not concerned with the quantity as much as the quality of time we spend with Him!** We do need to fill our mind with truth, so staying connected to God's Word is vital. Try these easy tips:

- Google a verse for what you are struggling with and meditate/memorize it throughout the week.
- Write a verse(s) you love on notecards and put them around the house. Our minds need reminding, especially if they are tired. That's totally ok!
- Try an app or study that focuses on the Word first thing in the morning. I love the **First 5 app** by Proverbs 31 Ministries or the Bible app.





05

Be Present and Play

The holidays have a way of making us DO so much for our families, we forget to just BE with them! **The most treasured present we can give our kids is our presence.** So here is your invitation to sit with your family and enjoy them. Play, watch holiday movies together, bake with them, drink copious amounts of hot cocoa, build things, create art, go outside, look at Christmas lights. Do what brings JOY to your hearts! Tis the season to treasure each other and make memories that you actually want to make. When we honor time with family, we are honoring the most important relationships God has given us, besides Himself.



Choose a Fruit to Cultivate

Have you ever asked God to cultivate a specific fruit of the Spirit in your life? For me, the holiday season can generate good emotions and hard ones like frustration, overwhelm, and relational pain. When I start feeling these emotions, I ask the Lord to help me cultivate a fruit that counters the feeling. It's not that these feelings are invalid, *but I do not want to stay in those feelings.* I want to soak my heart in the truth, and I need the Spirit's help to show me where I need to grow and heal. Sanctification is dependent on the Spirit, not self. So let's ask Him to grow the fruit we feel we are lacking most. **Where we are weak, God will show up and show us His strength!**

Which fruit are you asking God to grow in you today? Love, Joy, Peace, Patience, Kindness, Goodness, Faithfulness, Gentleness, or Self-Control?





07

Look for Jesus Moments

We can refocus our hearts on Jesus at any time. God's mercies are new every day, for every moment. Ask God to help you spot the Jesus moments, the little lessons we can remember and teach to our children. ***Some of the most powerful lessons happen when we aren't planning them.*** *But God is everywhere, which means biblical application is too.* Celebrate Jesus at church, in your living rooms, at the store, in the car. Make a birthday cake for Jesus and sing to Him like you would anyone else (we do this every year). Jesus moments are just waiting to be discovered and discussed! May our eyes ever be on the lookout for them, this season and always.



Enjoy Jesus
and each other
this season!

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