

## DAY 5 MIDDAY/EVENING OFFICE

### *Silence and Stillness before God (1-2 minutes)*

#### **Scripture Reading**

So I give you now a new commandment: Love each other just as much as I have loved you. For when you demonstrate the same love I have for you by loving one another, everyone will know that you're my true followers. (John 13:34-35, TPT)

#### **Devotional**

Have you ever heard of The Journal of Happiness Studies? It's like an academic peer review publication! They use the tools of research in order to figure out, to understand, what makes human life flourish. They want to know what produces happiness and what gives people joy.

They have found things **that affect** an individual's happiness. Things like: weather, diary writing (or as we call it today, keeping a personal journal); health and preventative care; marital status and its effect on children; and so forth.

Here's the interesting thing: When they looked at what distinguishes quite happy people from less happy people. They found that there is one factor, one difference that consistently separates those two groups. Any idea what that might be? First of all, let me tell you what it is not.

It's not attractiveness. It's not what kind of shape your body is in. It's not success in the career of your choice. It is not health. It's not income. It's not IQ. It's not how much money you make, how much money you have, or what kind of financial portfolio you possess.

It's not about the car you drive, the clothes you wear, the house you live in, the office you hold, the position you've acquired, or the reputation you've earned.

What distinguishes consistently happier people from less happy people? **It is the presence of deep, joy-producing, life-giving, meaningful, rich relationships with other human beings.**

It is having and spending meaningful time with family, friends, and people who care deeply about us. It is the relationships that are absolutely indispensable, non-negotiable and quasi-essential to human well-being.

One author wrote: **"Happiness is best predicted by the breadth and the depth of one's social connections."**

#### **Questions**

**Are you interconnected** to such a community? If not, we would love to help you get connected! Contact the church offices and find out what groups are available.

#### **Prayer**

Tell God what you've learned about the importance of getting connected with others. Ask Him for the opportunities to reach out and embrace someone specifically this day.

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