# EKKO SAVING F.A.C.E. EXAMEN PRAYER | DANIEL SERIES

In our journey of faith and formation, we can find ourselves stuck in seasons where we feel dry and stagnant. It's an inexplicable feeling of distance, discomfort and disorientation, and we often hear it called a "desert or wilderness season."

There are many reasons that contribute to this kind of season, and we will all experience it at varying times in our lives. Sometimes it's due to something beyond our control, and other times it's the natural consequence of our wayward living. What we thought was a desert may be God disciplining us through "exile".

In love, God sends us into "exile" for us to come to our senses and mature.

So if we find ourselves in "exile" – experiencing the distance, discomfort and disorientation – what do we do? We must examine and excavate what got us into this mess in the first place. We do this by facing ourselves and facing God through contemplative and examen prayers. One prayer we can use is the Saving F.A.C.E. Prayer\*

### STEP 1

Invite the Holy Spirit & Ask for His Grace

**INVITE** the Holy Spirit to lead and examine you. The Spirit will convict by pinpointing what broke God's heart, what hurt others and/or how you hurt yourself.

"Knowing that I need God's help to see my darker side... I ask God to fill me with His Spirit. I ask God to be the leader and initiator of this prayer time, rather than letting me make it an obsessive brooding over the things I don't like about myself."

– Mark Thibodeaux

**ASK** for a double-portion of grace to pray this particularly difficult and vulnerable examen. You need extra grace to allow God to lead in a firm, yet unconditionally loving way.

#### NOTES

### STEP 2

Praying the Saving F.A.C.E. Prayer

#### FEAR

Looking over your day/week/season, ask God to show you what **Fear** is predominant in your heart. Try to dig deeply and see what you are really afraid of (it may not be what you expect because our true fears are often hidden beneath our level of consciousness).

As soon as you name that fear, simply take note of it and move to the next step.

#### ATTACHMENT

Looking over your day/week/season, ask God to show you any **Attachments** to which you've been clinging to lately. You might be overly attached to a person (infatuated), to an idea (stubborn), or to a behavior (bad habit). Pay particular attention to your emotional attachment to people, ideas, or behaviors.

Once you've identified a particular attachment, take note of it and move on to the next step.

#### CONTROL

Looking over your day/week/season, ask God to show you any situation in which you're trying too hard to exert **Control**. You may be trying to control people, organizations, or outcomes. It's difficult to admit that you're controlling, so ask God for the courage to do so.

When you find your particular obsession with control, simply acknowledge it and move to the next step.

#### ENTITLEMENT

Looking over your day/week/season, ask God to show you if you have any silly notions of **Entitlement**. For example: "I worked hard today, I deserve this doughnut / this drink / this cigarette." Or "I'm an important person; I'm entitled to skip my share of the chores, the menial tasks, the grunt work." Or "I'm the victim here. I have a right to blow up, to pout, to be passive, to feel sorry for myself."

If you find a false Entitlement, name it before God and move on.

Now, place before God the four discoveries you've made: one Fear, one Attachment, one need to Control, and one Entitlement.

Ask God to show you which of the four is most strongly affecting your life right now. Zoom in on that one issue and leave the other three behind. Ask God for insight.

#### NOTES

Now, ask God for forgiveness for the times when you've let it get the best of you.

Ask God to show you what tomorrow may look like if you acted out of freedom from this issue. In specific terms: How would your day be different if you didn't allow this issue to rule? How would your emotions, thoughts, words, and actions be different? Give this issue to God.

Say,

"Lord, today I wish to turn over my \_\_\_\_\_ to you. I ask you to take over and become the Lord of my life, rather than letting this issue lord over me."

Ask God to help you live your life in the freedom of God's mercy.

NOTES

## CLOSING

When you've finished praying the Saving F.A.C.E. Prayer you can pray Psalm 51 over yourself in closing.

"Create in me a pure heart, O God, and renew a steadfast spirit within me. Do not case me from your presence or take your Holy Spirit from me. Restore to me the joy of your salvation and grant me a willing spirit to sustain me... You do not delight in sacrifice or I would bring it; you do not take pleasure in burnt offerings. My sacrifice, O God, is a broken spirit; a broken and contrite heart you, God, will not despise."

- Psalm 51:10-17