

My Examen Questions

I use a variety of examen questions. I pick one set to use for the day. It's whatever I feel like doing. No rules or right or wrong. The idea is to see God working in my day and more fully enjoy the blessings He has given me.

1. *Three Joys of Today*—Doesn't need to be deep, but what or who gave you joy today? A hummingbird in the backyard, the first bite of warm bread fresh from the oven, the sound of your child's voice on the phone across the miles.

By looking for the joys in your day and writing them down, we are more likely to recognize the joy in our tomorrow.

2. *Three Things I Did Well and One Thing I Can Do Better Tomorrow*—I learned this one from an athlete who trained with Olympians. She herself was one pole vault away from being on the Olympic team. She sprained her ankle on the approach to the last vault. She said Olympic athletes don't beat themselves up. Instead they give themselves credit for three things they did well that day. And those things don't have to be big. My lists often include doing my exercise that day or making a healthy dinner. Sometimes I give myself credit for staying in the moments of the day. Then the athlete states one thing, not ten, but one thing she will do better the next day. Again, this doesn't need to be big, but specific and with a plan how to do it. For me, if I want to do better with healthy eating and exercising, I write down what exercise I will do the next day. I decide what healthy foods I will eat. I have set myself up for success for the next day.

3. *What I Did Do, Did See, and Did Make*—I discovered this idea in Erin French's *The Lost Kitchen Cookbook* (page 141). She writes, "In September, I always look back on how terribly short the summer was, wondering why it can't last longer, and thinking about all the extra time I needed to accomplish everything that I hoped to do and somehow never got to. . . It's easy to contemplate all that we *didn't* do, see, or make. Instead, whenever I feel frustrated, robbed of time, in desperate need of more of this season I love so much, I try to take a moment to remember all that I *did* do, all that I *did* see, and all that I *did* make." I especially love this list. It's easy for me to feel I should be doing more or different things than what I am doing. This list helps me to see the richness of my life and be content. It is a good life.

4. *Consider God's Acts of Loyal Love*—I got this idea from Psalm 107:43. When we list the ways God showed us His loyal love in a day we truly know God better and see Him working in our lives. Contentment replaces envy. Peace replaces worry. God has us. He is always working in our lives (John 5:17).

5. *What Gave Me Peace and Joy Today*—Yes, it's similar to the first list. When I list who/what gave me peace and joy I see more of who/what I need to have in my life to build me up and keep me growing in my relationship with God. We all need to be encouraged. We all need a safe place to be ourselves and decompress. Recognizing those people is a gift we give ourselves.

Examining my day helps me enjoy it a second time and even more fully the second time. I see the love of others. I see God's faithfulness. I see that even on the hard days, this truly is a wonderful life.