

3 Spiritual Strategies to Repel Distractions When You Pray

“Seek the LORD while he may be found; call on him while he is near” (Is. 55:6).

Do you find that you are sometimes easily sidetracked from the importance of an issue at hand by small, insignificant things that can cause you to lose your focus completely? I am very susceptible to such distractions, especially when I am attempting to attend to my soul. For instance, it is a simple thing to be intent upon sitting in the lovely company of the Father, only to find that something left undone on my to-do list can quickly yank me out of His presence.

My ultimate goal is to be so fixed upon Jesus that nothing can keep me from seeking more of Him once He and I are in the midst of a sweet time of communion. Here are some prayer strategies I have learned that can help you remain in the presence of God without allowing the persistent annoyances of life to intrude, even if you are in the middle of them. When practiced regularly, they can allow your love relationship with the Father through prayer to be embedded into the natural flow of life.

This article will focus on seeking God in silence in the ordinary moments of life.

1. Submit your mind to God.

“To pray is to descend with the mind into the heart and there to stand before the face of the Lord, ever-present, all-seeing within you.” –Theophan the Recluse

When our minds are separated from our hearts through the

busyness of life, it is difficult to be continually present to God. If we desire to hear His voice and seek Him continually, we must learn how to submit our minds to Him at the level of our hearts, silencing the din around us. To do this, bring all of your worries, stresses, situations, relationships, work, needs, joys, sorrows and more to the Father in a prayer of the heart. Like an open book, stand before the One who lives within you through the power of the Holy Spirit. If your purpose is to seek Him and to draw near to Him, then your heart is the location of that meeting. Your priority is to submit your activity, work and feelings to Jesus.

How is this possible? How do you come near to God in this way? What kind of posture, position or mindset will draw you into His presence? This is not an easy practice and takes intentional discipline. It is in silence that you surrender to His kingdom purposes for you. When you still your noisy thoughts and quiet your driven ambitions, you are able to meet face to face with the Lord. You are able to call on Him while He is near, because there is nothing blocking your communion. His full attention is on you at all times, but now your full attention is also on God.

2. Close yourself off from distractions.

If you practice stillness before God in the midst of the noise around you, taking time to close ourselves off from the distractions of the moment you are in, you will be able to hear the Father speak in your yieldedness. It may mean finding a quiet place to spend a few minutes alone in order to block out the din around you. Or, it may mean putting on some headphones or inserting earplugs. Taking time to be still in silence takes much practice. But the results will be invaluable to your souls.

As you listen, God may give words of comfort, encouragement, conviction and so on. Or, perhaps He will just sit with you in a way that you know you have been in His presence, even for a

moment—and that will be enough.

3. Write down the distractions to deal with later.

It is so easy when intending to be still, to be distracted by thoughts, ideas, issues that need to be dealt with, etc. As you are practicing silence, quickly write down whatever distracts you. You can deal with them at the appropriate time. By doing this you are better able to listen to the heart of God. Here you are practicing the truth of 2 Corinthians 10:5b: “Bringing every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ.”

“In silence, you leave the many to be with the One.” —Mama Maggie Gobran

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