

3 Worship-Filled Ways to Celebrate God's Presence

Steve and I have just spent the last week and a half in Naples, Florida. It's been a gift to rest, write, pray and reflect for extended periods of time—all to simply enjoy God's presence.

Each night, we took a walk to the beach to watch the sun go down. We weren't alone. Couples sat on lawn chairs with wine and cheese, and families stretched out on beach towels with buckets and shovels. Everyone waited for the big event. One night, as we watched the orange sun drop below the surface of the horizon, there was a bright splash of light. The sight took my breath away. The crowd on the beach literally cheered and broke into applause. As Steve and I strolled back to where we were staying, I got to thinking, *The crowd on the beach was applauding God.*

Later that night, we sat in the hot tub star gazing, each star brilliantly showing forth the glory of God. The psalmist said it so well: "The heavens proclaim the glory of God. The skies display his craftsmanship. Day after day they continue to speak; night after night they make him known" (Ps. 19:1-2).

It's easy in the stress and chaos of life to miss the beauty of simply celebrating the beauty of God's creation. How do you create moments to celebrate beauty and worship the Creator in the midst of busy schedules and packed to-do lists?

Eliminate hurry. I believe it was Dallas Willard who first said, "Ruthlessly eliminate hurry." Rushing continually robs us of moments where we can be fully attentive to God. As a result, we live fractured lives, continually distracted by the tyranny of the urgent. Instead, create transition time in your day so that you are not always rushing frantically to get to

the next appointment. Ask the Holy Spirit to fill you at the beginning of each day, and ask Him to remind you through the day to be attentive to His voice.

Take a worship walk. If the weather allows, be intentional about getting out and taking a worship walk. Turn off your cellphone and focus on the beauty you see as you walk. Snow on the mountains, flowers blooming, different colors of plants, the different shades of blue in the sky—all of it points to the creative brilliance of our God. Listen to the nature sounds, birds, crickets, bubbling water ... and let it inspire you to praise God.

Reflect on Psalm 19. Read the psalm out loud. Maybe memorize the first few verses. Then spend a few quiet moments reflecting on what creation teaches us about God. For those of you who are artists (whether painters, songwriters or poets), spend a few moments creating your own psalm celebrating and applauding the God of creation.

Friend, here's the thing. Don't let your life circumstances rob you of enjoying and celebrating the beauty of God's creation. All of creation worships Him, and you were designed to worship Him as well. Allow the beauty of His creative works to point you to His glory, and then bow low in worship. He alone is worthy of all of your praise. {eoa}

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This article originally appeared at .