

Experiencing Jesus' Presence No Matter How Hectic Your Day Gets

I pondered over Christy's dilemma: "How do I maintain a disciplined devotional time with God when I work full time and care for an infant?" She was exhausted after several days of travel to a conference for her work and her struggle was palpable, even over the phone. Uttering the simplest of prayers was difficult for her weary spirit.

I remembered when I, as a young parent, felt this same struggle. I wished that I had known then what I have now experienced to be true about prayer. I want to dedicate this blog to all of those for whom lack of time due to busyness, family obligations, work, serving others and even church activities has blocked or slowed their spiritual passion.

In our everyday lives, there are seasons when prayer and practicing spiritual disciplines is more difficult, even seemingly impossible. Some simple spiritual tweaks in how we move through our days can make a huge difference in how we view and practice prayer in the midst of seasons when life is extraordinarily busy.

Let me use Christy's situation as an example. Infants are delightful but time-consuming creations of God. Our hearts are set on caring for them, and our bodies are exhausted doing the same. When parenthood, jobs and other obligations are upon us, our spiritual health often suffers. But some uncomplicated adjustments to our mindsets can move us from prayerlessness to a continual state of prayerfulness.

1. Be aware of the presence of Christ in you.

I firmly believe that the command to "pray without ceasing" is

especially applicable to the busy seasons of our lives. But our connectivity with God is the first thing that often suffers in such times. Then, we feel guilty and sad about the loss of communion, even though we know guilt comes from the enemy. However, our loving Father has promised He will never leave us nor forsake us (see Deut. 31:8). Jesus is living within us through the power of the Holy Spirit. Because He is the Living Word, His Word is also within us. Read John 1:1-5 from The Amplified Bible slowly and simply enjoy the truth of His Presence as this truth sinks into your weary spirit:

In the beginning [before all time] was the Word (Christ), and the Word was with God, and the Word was God Himself. He was [continually existing] in the beginning [co-eternally] with God. All things were made and came into existence through Him; and without Him not even one thing was made that has come into being. In Him was life [and the power to bestow life], and the life was the Light of men. The Light shines on in the darkness, and the darkness did not understand it or overpower it or appropriate it or absorb it [and is unreceptive to it].

2. Experience Him even in the routine and mundane.

Because the Word is living in us, and because He is the living light and life within our spirits, we can commune with Him even in the most mundane, routine tasks or in the midst of the crazy-busy times. God doesn't disappear when we step out of our quiet times. As others have said, we may move away from God, but He never moves away from us. He is always patiently waiting, always present, always the living, active Word within us.

That is a spiritual reality for every believer. Even when His presence seems distant, Jesus is present with us as the light who has overcome the world. He is the consolation to our desolation, yet He is present in both. It is possible to draw

near even when we feel very far away because of His constant presence. Converse with Him as a friend and take time to listen in whatever moments your schedule allows—feeding or cuddling a baby, waiting at a signal or for a train to pass, while preparing a meal, as you have time between appointments and especially while driving (a great time to converse with God).

3. Give your day as an offering.

“So here’s what I want you to do, God helping you: Take your everyday, ordinary life—your sleeping, eating, going-to-work, and walking-around life—and place it before God as an offering” (Romans 12:1, MSG).

All of life is conversation with God because He is present within you. The way to overcome having your spiritual life choked out or stifled by seasons of busyness is to set your heart on being more acutely aware of His continual presence. When you are speaking to others, Jesus is there. When you are completing a task, He is with you. When a deadline looms, He is actively at work within you. There is nowhere you can go to escape the relationship. You can choose, however, to allow that relationship to slip into a one-sided one by losing your awareness. So take your life and place it before God as an offering, even if it is not your best one at this moment. Take Jesus into your busyness. Allow Him to help you find the breathing spaces within which to speak His name, give Him thanks, seek His counsel, ask for help or just soak in the knowledge of His presence—even if just for a moment. {eo}

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