

The Flawless Source of Your Fervent Fascination With Jesus

Scripture states that God formed us in the womb, that we were intricately woven together, and He saw, knew and understood our frame (Ps. 139, paraphrased). And as He created us, He was fascinated with us.

In the womb is the only time that we are ever exclusively alone with God. No other person, no other interaction or distraction, no outside influence could possibly compare with the intimacy of this time. There is no need for answers, because there are no questions. There are no words, because there is no need for conversation. There is only each other's presence—love inexplicable. A fascinating love that is forming and creating you.

And as you are being woven together, you listen to the sound of your heart beating in sync with your heavenly Father's. The beauty of life unfolds in a secret, undisturbed, undistracted place. Your life—held in the hands of the life-giver Himself. There in hiddenness, you are wrapped in fascination. Every detail of our frame has His complete interest and attention.

I have what I think is a brilliant theory on why infants cry at birth. I believe a newborn's cry is the vocal expression of every human being's inner longing. It is as though, they instinctively understand they have been separated from God. So, they cry out. Now born, they will spend the rest of their lives searching for Him. Made in His image, we are designed to live fascinated as He is. And so, we spend our lives searching to be in fascination once again.

There are two brief and simple sentences found in the Gospel of Mark that perfectly sum up what I am trying to convey. I

believe they speak for all humanity. The first sentence takes place the day after Jesus had healed a great many people at the house of Simon Peter. As the new day dawned, a multitude had already gathered in hopes of hearing, seeing and perhaps receiving a healing from this healer. But where was He? We know by the account that Jesus had slipped away to a deserted place to pray. The text reads: "Simon (Peter) and his companions went to look for Him" (Mark 1:36, NIV).

When they found Jesus, Peter, in seeming irritation, uttered these words. It's a sentence that well describes and expresses every human heart. Peter said (likely in an exasperated tone), "Everyone is looking for you!" (Mark 1:37).

I'm sure we have all experienced days when we have looked for Jesus, searching frantically just like Peter and his friends on that day, desperately needing to see His hand at work in our lives. And when our miracle does not take place and our questions remain unanswered, we declare Him to be missing just as they did—there in our waiting, looking for a sign, ready to see Him work a wonder, believing what we need is an answer, a miracle, longing to see His hand at work—and nothing. We find nothing.

The Longing for Fascination

The Cambridge Dictionary defines the word fascinate as "having one's complete interest and attention." I believe Peter and his companions that day were actually fascinated—Jesus had their complete attention and interest. But the attention was for what they could obtain and their interest was to see what He could do. I believe it best described as a displaced fascination, wrapped up in the "What will He do next?"

If we are honest, our confession would reveal that we mostly want to find Him because we need something from Him and have often felt as Peter did in that passage—tired, exasperated, maybe even hopeless, and in our restlessness, we find that

sometimes we panic when we cannot find Him.

It is not wrong to seek Jesus because we have need. I do, however, wonder what things would look like, what we would receive and what miracle would take place if our motive for seeking and searching was simply to be with Him, to be a people fascinated with His beauty. Attentive and interested. Longing for relationship with Him, conversation with Him. After all, He has been fascinated with us since the beginning.

It is intriguing to say the least, that Jesus does not respond to Peter and his friends' frustration. He does not address their frustration. Instead, the next passage reads: He said to them, 'Let us go into the nearby towns, that I may preach there also. For that is why I have come" (Mark 1:39).

There is a familiar phrase often used when teaching small children to cross the street. We teach them to "Stop, look, and listen." This Scripture carries a similar lesson; it's an invitation to do the same.

Do not cross or better yet, do not search frantically about. Instead, stop. Once you have stopped, lean into Him; listen for His heart. What if the desperation you feel is really your spirit crying out for the atmosphere and presence of God—to be fascinated with Him much as He has been with you since before you were born?

Jesus says to Peter: Not here, not amid the crowd, with all these distractions. No, let's go somewhere else, where I can preach. Some translations say, "speak." A small village. A place we have not been before. This is why I came, to speak.

There is a battle far greater than the battle to have prayers answered, needs met. It's the battle that seeks to separate you, to cut the cord that ties you to His life-giving, sustaining presence and voice. It seeks to allure you elsewhere.

Friend, everyone is looking for Jesus. Even those who insist that they are *not* looking for Jesus, because woven into the fabric of who we were created to be, the infinite God created an infinite longing within us to be fascinated. And this fascination can only be fulfilled in His company.

Leave the crowds, the distractions behind; go with Him to a place you have never been before. Gaze upon Him, take His hand in yours and allow Him to fascinate you with His love.

Prayer: Holy Spirit, I want to be and live fascinated by You. Yes, Beautiful Jesus, everyone is looking for You. We long to be fascinated by You. Come to us. Nothing truer has ever been said. {eoa}

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