

Divorcing the World, Gazing on Jesus

You can call this whatever you'd like—turn your eyes on Jesus, look to Jesus, behold, meditate, etc. I use “gazing on Jesus” because Psalm 27 says, “to gaze upon the beauty of the Lord” in my chosen translation. Whatever you call it, it is the part(s) of our day when we stop and look with our spiritual eyes, or meditate, on who God is and who he says we are, on his attributes, on the throne room and activity of the kingdom of heaven.

Gazing on Jesus is part of our secret place or quiet time, devotion time. I believe it is a type of prayer, but I would not consider this a time for requests or intercession. Also, although the Word of God is included, this isn't Bible reading or working through a reading plan. I don't consider this time sermon prep or extra credit. Gazing on Jesus is setting our minds on everything he is and stirring our spirits with the Spirit. This is a way to remind ourselves that we are citizens of heaven and that our king is beautiful, wise, generous, and faithful. All the other loves in our lives are fading, but God remains.

I've heard it said and agree that meditating on Jesus and praying in the Spirit are the most transformative parts of our times with God.

Your secret place with God will take on its own personality. We should never try to carbon copy from others. There should be a real genuine approach to your devotion time. But, in an effort to be practical as well as theoretical in this study, here's a glimpse into my time with Jesus.

When I'm gazing/loving on Jesus, it looks something like this.

First, I made a habit about a year ago to acknowledge God and my need for him before I get out of bed. “Hey, Jesus! I long for you today. My spirit earnestly seeks you. Thank you for a new day.”

It varies a little. Once I'm up (for me, I'm dressed with coffee in hand), I do the same thing but a little longer. The first part of my secret place—sometimes the majority of it—is meditating on him. It may be at the piano or stretched out on my face, but most of the time, I'm pacing.

You're the one thing I need, Jesus. Pray in the Spirit*.
You are good and gracious. Thank you for your mercies today. Pray in the Spirit.
I'm here to buy oil by pressing into you again today. Fill me up. Pray in the Spirit.
You are holy and worthy, Jesus. Sing a chorus or two.
Abba! I'm yours. Spirit, I need your help today.

Then, I usually incorporate a verse or passage that I'm studying. Example,

You are the light of the world, the light of life, the light of men. Darkness doesn't understand you. You're the Father of lights, and there is no shadow with you! Wow!

*When I pray in the Spirit, it usually involves praying in tongues. But, I don't think you have to have your prayer language to pray in/with the Spirit. If you don't pray in tongues, try humming or singing a new song in between adorations. Or join in with the songs of heaven. Like, Holy, Holy, Holy, Worthy is Lamb.

I stay in this place until I feel my heart, soul, mind, and strength have shifted, aligned with heaven, or yoked up. The more I do this, the more aware I am of his presence. When I feel aligned, I usually get really quiet and practice listening. From there, I begin to voice some prayer requests or intercessions, and I end my secret place time by engaging the Word of God with a readied heart.

Psalm 119 Study

I'm including a study on Psalm 119 in this series because the entire chapter exemplifies divorcing the world and clinging to God and his word.

For this section, Gazing on Jesus, I've pulled the following verses from Psalm 119 and some others that highlight gazing, seeking, and looking—ideas that have to do with our eyes. The hope is to understand more why gazing on Jesus is vital, beneficial, and a great way to spend our time.

Enjoy these promises, declarations, and intercessions:

Promise — We are blessed when we seek
Blessed are those who keep his testimonies, who seek him with their whole heart. 119:2

Promise — We are not shamed
Then I shall not be put to shame, having my eyes fixed on all your commandments
119:6

Declaration — I will not wander from you
With my whole heart I seek you; let me not wander from your commandments 119:10

Declaration — I'm fixed on your ways
I will meditate on your precepts and fix my eyes on your ways 119:15

Intercession — I want to see your wonders
Open my eyes, that I may behold wondrous things out of your law 119:18

Declaration — Your way is faithful

I have chosen the way of faithfulness; I set your rules before me 119:30

Declaration — I turn from worthless things to your life

Turn my eyes from looking at worthless things; give me life in your ways 119:37

Promise — You secure my steps

And I shall walk in a wide place, for I have sought your precepts 119:45

Intercession — I long for your comfort

My eyes long for your promise; I ask, "When will you comfort me?" 119:82

Declaration — Your ways are everlasting

I have seen a limit to all perfection, but your commandment is exceedingly broad
119:96

Intercession — Turn your face to me, change our hearts

Make your face shine upon your servant, and teach me your statutes. My eyes shed streams of tears because people do not seek to keep your law 119:135-136

Declaration — I meditate on you all day, Lord

My eyes are awake before the watches of the night, that I may meditate on your promise 119:148

Other Verses

Psalms 27:4; 8; 13

One thing have I asked from the Lord, that will I seek after: that I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life, to gaze upon the beauty of the Lord and to inquire in his temple...for you have said, "Seek my face," My heart says to you, "Your face, Lord, do I seek...I believe that I shall look upon the goodness of the Lord in the land of the living!"

2 Chronicles 20:3-4 & 12

Then Jehoshaphat was afraid and set his face to seek the Lord, and proclaimed a fast throughout all Judah. And Judah assembled to seek help from the Lord; from all the cities of Judah they came to seek the Lord...Our God, we are powerless against the great horde that is coming against us. We do not know what to do, but our eyes are on you.

John 1:29

The next day [John the Baptist] saw Jesus coming toward him, and said, "Behold, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world." John 1:29

2 Corinthians 3:16-18

But when one turns to the Lord, the veil is removed. Now the Lord is the Spirit, and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom. And we all, with unveiled face, beholding the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from one degree of glory to another.

Ephesians 1:16-23

I do not cease to give thanks for you, remembering you in my prayers, that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory may give you the Spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of him, having the eyes of your heart enlightened, that you may know what is the hope to which he has called you...

Hebrews 12:1-2

Therefore, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us also lay aside every weight and sin which clings so closely, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, looking to Jesus the founder and perfecter of our faith...