

Take 20

A Soul Care Resource

Compiled by
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Take 20 is designed to be used for about 20 minutes of prayer and reflection. It is a collection of quotes, Scriptures, and hymns related to a specific topic. At the end an opportunity is given to practice Scripture-based Reflective Prayer.

I want deliberately to encourage this mighty longing after God. The lack of it has brought us to our present low estate. The stiff and wooden quality about our religious lives is a result of our lack of holy desire.

Complacency is a deadly foe of all spiritual growth.

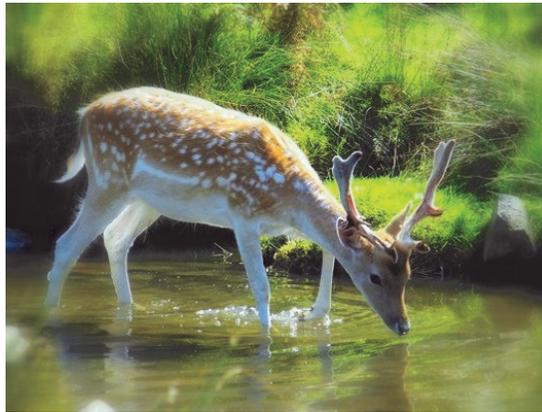
Acute desire must be present or there will be no manifestation of Christ to His people. He waits to be wanted. Too bad that with many of us He waits so long, so very long, in vain.

—A. W. Tozer in *The Pursuit of God*

DEEP DESIRE

The more I need God, the more I desire Him;
the more I desire Him, the deeper my intimacy with Him.

As the deer pants for streams of water, so my soul pants for you, my God. My soul thirsts for God, for the living God. When can I go and meet with God?
Psalm 42:1-2



There comes a place on our spiritual journey where renewed religious activity is of no use whatsoever. It is the place where God holds out his hand and asks us to give up our lovers and come and live with him in a much more personal way.

It is the place of relational intimacy that Satan lured Adam and Eve away from so long ago in the Garden of Eden. We are both drawn to it and fear it.

Part of us would rather return to Scripture memorization, or Bible study, or service – anything that would save us from the unknowns of walking with God.

We are partly convinced our life is elsewhere. We are deceived....The desire God has placed within us is wild in its longing to pursue the One who is unknown.

—Curtis and Eldredge in *The Sacred Romance*

- ◆ You have made us for yourself, O Lord, and our hearts are restless until they rest in you.
—St. Augustine, *Confessions*
- ◆ There is nothing desirable save God; let us, then, desire only him.
—Charles Spurgeon on *Psalm 73*
- ◆ Deepening intimacy with God is the outcome of deep desire.
—J. Oswald Sanders in *Enjoying Intimacy with God*
- ◆ Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life.
—Peter in *John 6.68*

We are half-hearted creatures fooling about with drink and sex and ambition (and religious effort) when infinite joy is offered us, like an ignorant child who wants to go on making mud pies in a slum because he cannot imagine what is meant by the offer of a holiday at the sea. We are far too easily pleased.

—C. S. Lewis in *The Weight of Glory*

Take delight in the Lord, and he will give you the desires of your heart.

—Psalm 37:4

Whom have I in heaven but you?
And earth has nothing I desire besides you.
My flesh and my heart may fail,
but God is the strength of my heart and my portion forever.

—Psalm 73:25-26

One thing I ask from the Lord, this only do I seek: that I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life, to gaze on the beauty of the Lord and to seek him in his temple.

—Psalm 27:4



Jesus, Thou Joy of Loving Hearts

Words by Bernard of Clairveaux

Jesus, Thou Joy of loving hearts,
Thou Fount of life, Thou Light of men,
From the best bliss that earth imparts,
We turn unfilled to Thee again.

Thy truth unchanged hath ever stood;
Thou savest those that on Thee call;
To them that seek Thee, Thou art good,
To them that find Thee, all in all!

We taste Thee, O Thou living Bread,
And long to feast upon Thee still;
We drink of Thee, the Fountain-head,
And thirst our souls from Thee to fill!

Our restless spirits yearn for Thee,
Where'er our changeful lot is cast;
Glad when Thy gracious smile we see,
Blest, when our faith can hold Thee fast.

O Lord, be Thou our strength and stay!
Make all our moments calm and bright,
Chase all dark thoughts of sin away,
Shed o'er us here Thy holy light.

Please take Psalm 27:4 (sidebar) and pray, using the following steps to guide your time with the Lord:

Four Stages of Reflective Prayer ©

1. **Read** – Read the verse slowly and prayerfully several times (out loud if possible), savoring the words and letting them sink in. Write down any words or phrases that seem to stand out.
2. **Reflect** – Now begin to think about the words or phrases that stood out to you. Come in faith with the expectation that the Lord will speak to you. Ask him a question such as “What does this mean?” to help you reflect more deeply. You may also think about the passage through the eyes of the author or someone mentioned in the verses. Write down any insights that God gives you.
3. **Respond** – Prayer is a two-way conversation with the Lord. Respond from your heart to what he has been revealing to you in his Word, especially taking time to listen to what he may be saying to you personally. You may want to write out your prayer to God and anything he says to you.
4. **Rest** – At any time, when you begin to sense the presence of the Lord, stop any mental effort you are making and just rest in and enjoy his presence. This is the time to savor the special moment of connection between you and God. Treasure God's Word in your heart.