



REDISCOVERING OUR PLACE IN GOD'S STORY

ACT 5 DEVOTIONAL ACTIVITY: DESIRING GOD

DEVOTIONAL READING

"When was the last time you felt it - your own longing, that is? Your longing for love, your longing for God, your longing to live your life as it is meant to be lived in God? When was the last time you felt a longing for healing and fundamental change groaning within you?"

Do not rush past this question; it may be the most important question you ever ask. In religious circles we are much more accustomed to silencing our desire, distancing ourselves from it, because we are suspicious and afraid of its power. Are not my desires shot through with human deception and sinful urges? What if they overtake me and propel me down a path I ought not travel? Worse yet, what if I touch that place of longing and desire within me and let myself really feel how deep it goes, only to discover that those desires cannot be met? What will I do with myself then? How will I live with desire that is awake and alive rather than asleep and repressed?

Your desire for more of God than you have right now, your longing for love, your need for deeper levels of spiritual transformation than you have experienced so far is the truest thing about you. You might think that your woundedness or your sinfulness is the truest thing about you or that your giftedness or your personality type or your job title or your identity as husband or wife, mother or father, somehow defines you. But in reality, it is your desire for God and your capacity to reach for more of God than you have right now that is the deepest essence of who you are. There is a place within each one of us that is spiritual in nature, the place where God's Spirit dwells within our spirit, and here our truest desires make themselves known. From this place we cry out to God for deeper union with him and with others."

From *Sacred Rhythms* by Ruth Haley Barton

ACTIVITY Read the story of Blind Bartimaeus in Mark 10:46-52.

- 1) Place yourself in the story of Bartimaeus. Where do you find yourself? In the crowd? Sitting on the side of the road? Able to cry out (or unwilling to cry out) to Jesus? Running to Jesus (with or without your cloak)?
- 2) Jesus often asked people: What is it you want? What do you seek? What do you want me to do for you? If Jesus were to ask you a similar question today about your life, how would you answer him?
- 3) In what areas of your life do you long most for spiritual transformation? What do you long for most from God?
- 4) Jesus promised us that, despite our broken examples in human relationships, God will give us good gifts when we ask. What would you ask God for right now?
- 5) Jesus promised that, even though He was ascending to His Father, He would not leave us alone. He would send us the Holy Spirit to guide, comfort, and empower us. In what ways do you most need the Holy Spirit to reveal Himself in your life right now?

Daily Prayer: Holy Spirit, grant me power, with all God's children, to know the height, depth, width and breadth of Jesus' love—a love that surpasses knowledge; the only love that is better than life; the only love that is enough. You've poured out his love into my heart before; do it again, and again and again. May the love of Jesus be the most compelling and propelling force in my life; turning my whining into worship; my timidity into fearless faith; small dreams into a kingdom vision; my hesitation to risk much, into a life of Kingdom adventures. Amen