

CULTIVATING AN INSPIRED LIFE

WITH MARY CLEWLEY/HOPEFILLEDLIVING.COM



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Cultivating an Inspired Life

WRITTEN BY MARY CLEWLEY

Welcome to the first day of your journey toward living a more inspired life! You have made a commitment to begin the process of learning the art of cultivating a new discipline. Congratulations! As adult learners, trying new things or a new way of thinking about our lives and new ways of doing things can be difficult. Habits are ingrained and challenging to change, and change in and of itself is difficult for most. That makes you the exception. You have opened your heart to learning new things, and I pray that you can take what you learn here and apply some of it to your life, your situation or your circumstance in whatever way works best for you, as the pursuit of lifelong learning is vitally important on many levels; intellectually, spiritually, emotionally and relationally.



What Does it Mean to Cultivate Inspiration?

WRITTEN BY MARY CLEWLEY

A loose definition of the word "cultivate" is to grow or nourish, prepare or develop something. To "inspire" is to bring about a feeling or to feel something, to breathe in that something or to fill up on that something. When we cultivate inspiration, we essentially work at developing it in our lives. In order to develop any new way of thinking, doing, or being, we must prepare, give it thought, breathe it into our spirit and create it as though it is already a part of who we are.

"For we walk by faith, not by sight." 2 Corinthians 5:7

Faith is something that we must work to cultivate. It is an essence of our being that we *breathe* into our spirit as though it is already a part of who we are. To deepen our faith, we must develop our spiritual muscles through the daily disciplines of prayer, worship, and a relationship with God.

From a spiritual perspective, to *cultivate* something is an act of faith, just as we walk by faith. We may not yet see it, but somewhere is the belief that we will eventually. We walk in the faith that as we nourish our will and desire for that which we hope to cultivate more of, it will come to pass. Breathing into our spirit through prayer and confession, we call things that are not as though they are. We learn, grow, develop, and practice the very things which we aspire to make relevant in our lives--the very things that we cannot yet see but actively believe. In all spiritual practice, we walk by faith -- standing on the promise of hope for things unseen to be made manifest.

"For we walk by faith, not by sight." 2 Corinthians 5:7

CULTIVATING AN INSPIRED LIFE

A Prayer to Guide You



A Prayer to Guide You

A PRAYER TO GUIDE YOU

by Mary Clewley

**EXERCISES FOR YOUR
WEEK**

**MEDITATING ON
SCRIPTURE**

Blessed Father in Heaven,
At the beginning of this new journey of cultivating inspiration, I come before you and ask that you guard my heart, my mind, my soul and my body and guide me into a deeper, more understanding relationship with you. Lord, may the result of my journey be pleasing in your eyes and give fruitful insight into the areas of my own personhood that you would like me to develop more fully. Watch over me on this journey. Guide me and hold me close to where you are. I never want to stray from your plan for my life, and I know that you have given me unique gifts and strengths to share with the world. You are my refuge and my strength, and I ask you to open my eyes to any areas of opportunity for growth that you have ordained for me. Grant me daily victories, that I may be encouraged to continue to pursue spiritual and personal growth. Amen.

Your turn: Write a prayer of your own, asking for guidance as you begin this course.



Exercises for Your Week

by Mary Clewley

Understanding that you have taken this course to cultivate inspiration in your life is to understand that you are prepared to do some of the work of looking inward. Part of any good and lasting change is the preparation involved. Just as we would not set off for a two week vacation without our luggage, we must assume that to learn to cultivate something means we must also prepare. In this study, we will be unpacking some of our spiritual luggage and some faulty beliefs about joy and happiness and how deserving or undeserving we feel in response to our conditioning through life experience.

The assignments for this week are meant to help you to think deeply about and answer some questions on a separate piece of paper or in a journal that you dedicate to this study. Tackle one question per day. Read the question, sit with it, and pray. Answer each question after you have prayed.

1. Why have you chosen to take this course? What do you hope to learn?
2. Define "Cultivating Inspiration" in your own words and how your relationship with Christ plays a role in your sense of inspiration.
3. Has there been a time in your life when you felt particularly inspired? If so, please describe your experience, what it was and why it made you feel inspired.
4. How has your life story formed your concept of inspiration? Was there a personal who inspired you? If so, please explain.
5. Spend some time thinking about your most fulfilling life events today. Please list them from 1-5 and share about them in your journal. Why do you feel they felt so fulfilling?
6. Make a list of the people and/or activities that inspire you today and explain why.
7. Write a prayer, thanking God for guiding you along the first week of this study. Ask Him to give you a sense of peace and accomplishment for trying something new and putting on your thinking cap!

Tackle one question per day.
Read the question, sit with it and pray.
Answer each question after you have prayed.

CULTIVATING AN INSPIRED LIFE

Meditating on Scripture



SCRIPTURES TO GUIDE YOU THIS WEEK:

1 THESSALONIANS 5:18

PROVERBS 16:3

1 CORINTHIANS 12:4-6

EPHESIANS 4:1-16

ROMANS 1:11-12

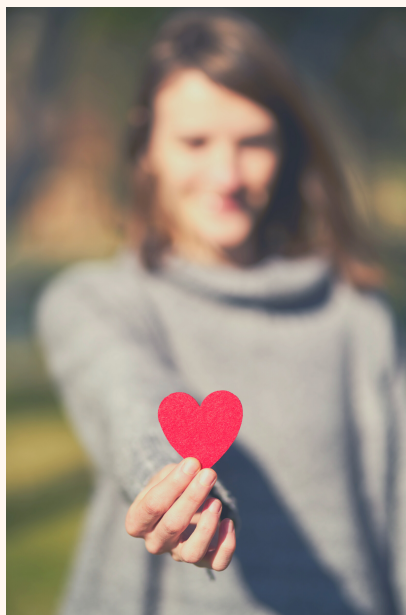
LUKE 1:45

PSALM 118:24

Living inspired invites us to join into a conversation with God regarding our everyday spiritual gifts, fulfillment, service, joy and passion. God has a listening ear, and He is always there to fill us with wisdom. So often we view the Lord as a distant being to whom we pray. We can get the sense that the relationship is void of reciprocation. As we meditate on His word each day during this study, we must invite him into the conversation and ask for him to impart His wisdom into our studies, our hearts and our efforts to cultivate inspiration in our daily living. We can ask him to give us further insights about our spiritual gifts, how we should use them, how to cultivate them to their fullest, and what pursuits will bring us to the fullness of His joy for our lives. We are never as fulfilled as when we feel as though our lives are in accord with the Father.

God has given us the gift to see those things that are not right for us and a sense of peace and joy at those things which are. We know in our heart and in our spirit what aligns with our belief system. God has faithfully bestowed unique gifts to each of us, but He says, "But covet earnestly the best gifts: and yet shew I unto you a more excellent way" 1 Corinthians 12:31. He is telling us here that while we can strive for the greater gifts...He will show us the best gifts as we meditate upon His word and stay in communication with Him.

*My dearest brothers and sisters in Christ, let us be steadfast
in our faith even in trying times.*



Meditate on These Scriptures:

In every thing give thanks: for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you.

1 Thessalonians 5:18

Commit thy works unto the Lord, and thy thoughts shall be established. Proverbs 16:3

Now there are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit. And there are differences of administrations, but the same Lord. And there are diversities of operations, but it is the same God which worketh all in all. 1 Corinthians 12:4-6

I therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you that ye walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called, With all lowliness and meekness, with longsuffering, forbearing one another in love; Endeavouring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.

There is one body, and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling; One Lord, one faith, one baptism, One God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all. But unto every one of us is given grace according to the measure of the gift of Christ. Wherefore he saith, When he ascended up on high, he led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men. (Now that he ascended, what is it but that he also descended first into the lower parts of the earth? He that descended is the same also that ascended up far above all heavens, that he might fill all things.) And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ:

Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ: That we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive; But speaking the truth in love, may grow up into him in all things, which is the head, even Christ: From whom the whole body fitly joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love. Ephesians 4:1-16

For I long to see you, that I may impart unto you some spiritual gift, to the end ye may be established; That is, that I may be comforted together with you by the mutual faith both of you and me. Romans 1:11-12

And blessed is she that believed: for there shall be a performance of those things which were told her from the Lord. Luke 1:45

This is the day which the Lord hath made; we will rejoice and be glad in it. Psalm 118:24



Letter from Mary



It is with prayer and thanksgiving that I greet you today on the last day of your first week of this journey! I want to tell you how personally happy I feel for you, and I pray that this study will be a continual stream of inspiration for you as you embark on a journey toward a new perspective on cultivating inspiration. What I hope you will do today is to review all of your notes, the scripture for the week and your prayerfully answered questions for the week. Spend some time giving thanks, and rest in it.

A new concept for you to consider while thinking about all of the inspiring things your want to see, do, experience, and cultivate is the idea of a heavenly vision. That is, pursuing all of these wonderful things with a vision of God's plan for your life and how you can impact others. With that in mind, as we aspire to new heights, we stop to pray about what we can do to make the world a better, more peaceful, calm, and spiritual place. How can we utilize our unique gifts to touch the world with hope and ongoing inspiration in spite of ongoing turmoil? In what ways can we inspire others to their fullest potential?

I have found this to be true over and over again in my life: the more I give of myself to others, the more joy and inspiration I receive. God continually replenishes our inspiration as we give. Our inspiration well will never run dry as we pursue holiness.

My belief is that holiness comes when we fully surrender to the ebb and flow of God's desire for us. It's a gift that keeps on giving. 1 John 1:7 tells us the we should "walk in the light" of the Father's will for our lives.

I pray His blessings over you! I pray that as you embark on new adventures in your lives, you will let Him plant you and you will bloom where you are planted.

Regardless of the storms of our time, God has a plan for you.

If you are inspired by this course, please share your experience with friends who might also benefit from it and encourage them to sign up for the next one!

As always, you are in my heart and prayers, and my prayer is that you will continue to discover God's plan for your life.

xoxo.
Mary

