

WEEK 2

# CULTIVATING AN INSPIRED LIFE

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## THIS WEEK:

*Open Your Eyes &  
Heart*

*Training*

*Scripture*

*Journal*

*A Letter from Mary*



## OPEN YOUR EYES AND YOUR HEART

Inspiration is all around us, although I think that most of us go through life with our eyes and our hearts half open. Cultivating inspiration in our lives can feel like a risky adventure to those of us who are reserved and prefer everything to be predictable. But we can learn to see, open our eyes and our hearts and step outside of our proverbial boxes, and in doing so we are awakened to new opportunities and lives full of promise.

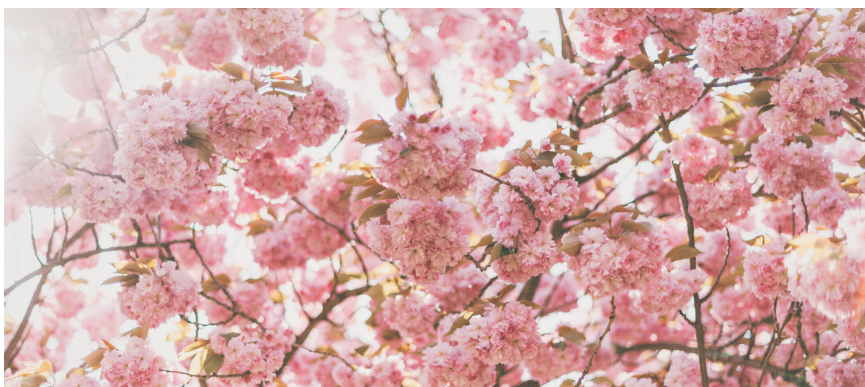


## TRAINING OUR EYES TO SEE AND OUR HEARTS TO FEEL

*Written by Mary Clewley*

Just as an athlete trains for a marathon, we train our eyes, our hearts, and our minds to see the beauty and inspiration of God all around us. As we train, we develop a deeper sense of the breadth of beautiful and happy moments which are the essence of inspiration. We learn to breathe them in, to focus our attention toward and invite these moments to grow in our hearts and our minds. As we breathe in these experiences, we breathe in the breath of God. *"Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning."* James 1:17 KJV God is the Father of everything beautiful, every good and perfect gift and everything inspiring.

Training our eyes to see and our hearts to feel is a commitment to deepening our prayer life and with a newly found richness we find peace for our minds, healing for our bodies and comfort at the sense of God's presence. We reflect upon His goodness with gratitude.



What kind of activities could you add to your routine as you invite more inspiration into your life?

Perhaps our yearning for inspiration is a deep-rooted desire to draw closer to God. Perhaps His healing presence is who we crave as we yearn for spiritual hope.

Everything we do is fleeting if it is not grounded in Christ. Gratitude is an essential part of training our eyes to see and our hearts to feel, as gratitude cultivates the inner life.

As we look at our daily lives through the lens of God, He expands our vision and helps us change what we can in order to see with new eyes that shed our limited perspective.

As we train ourselves to deepen our prayer life, we become sensitive to the presence of God and His plan for our us.

**"There are none so blind as those who cannot see."  
Jonathan Swift**



## SCRIPTURE:

Consider the lilies how they grow: they toil not, they spin not; and yet I say unto you, that Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these. Luke 12:27

Arise, shine; for thy light is come, and the glory of the Lord is risen upon thee. Isaiah 60:1

Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things. Philippians 4:8

Thus saith God the LORD, he that created the heavens, and stretched them out; he that spread forth the earth, and that which cometh out of it; he that giveth breath unto the people upon it, and spirit to them that walk therein: Isaiah 42:5

The Spirit of God hath made me, and the breath of the Almighty hath given me life. Job 33:4

And the LORD God formed man [of] the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul. Genesis 2:7

The knowledge of wisdom shall sweeten your soul: when you have found it, then there shall be a reward, and your hopes will not be cut short. Proverbs 24:4

Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things. Philippians 4:8

"think on these things..."

What is true?  
What is honest?  
What is just?  
What is pure?  
What is lovely?  
What is of good report?  
What is virtuous?  
What is worthy of praise?

**Journal your answers.** When you are done, your heart should be so full that it is filled with joy. Welcome to the process of cultivating inspiration! What we think about grows!

Consider the lilies how they grow: they toil not, they spin not; and yet I say unto you, that Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these. Luke 12:27

When we begin to feel a sense of awe, it moves us forward!

**"Awe is what moves us forward."**

**Joseph Campbell**



## JOURNAL...

Cultivating inspiration in our lives requires us to see things from a new perspective. We must choose to engage with our world, our imaginations, our hearts and our minds in order to live a life filled with inspiration. It is already there waiting for us-everywhere but we must choose to see it. We must open our eyes and our hearts.

Coming from a family with seven children, as children do, we sometimes said we were "bored". Our parents advised that there was no reason to be bored and that we just had to get outside and look around, create, read a book, pick wildflowers, sit down by the river that ran along the side of our land, lay under the pines, look for shapes in the clouds or daydream. They instilled in us at a young age that **inspiration is all around us if we choose to engage with it.**

Take time to pray over each question, read through each one and begin writing in your journal. Write what comes to you as you answer from your heart.

**"Beauty and art pervade all  
the affairs of life like some  
friendly genius, and  
embellish with their cheer  
all our surroundings."**

**Hegel**

**Please answer these questions  
in your journal this week:**

1. How do I see my everyday life?
2. What have I trained myself to see?
3. Am I half seeing? If so, what could I be missing?
4. Is my inner process connected with God? If so, describe. If not, how can you connect with Him as a collaborator of your inspiration?
5. "Seeing what is in front of one's nose requires a constant struggle." George Orwell. Please describe what this means in your own words.
6. "I believe talent is like electricity. We don't understand electricity. We use it." Maya Angelou. Please describe what this means to you in your own words. Is there a talent which you possess and are not using?
7. "Work of sight is done. Now do heart work on the pictures within you." Rainer Maria Rilke. Please describe what this means to you in your own words. What is "heart work"?



## A LETTER FROM MARY

Dear friend,

It is through our inner work that we come to possess wisdom and knowledge. We must do the work of our hearts and utilize the gifts which God has given us. It is in the utilization of our gifts that we come to a clearer realization of inspiration. Inspiration isn't a short-lived thing -- it comes from within; the glass is half full perspective and a resolution to make what we have right here and now-enough. Look around you, darling! How is your life embellished with the makings of inspiration? Inspiration is something of the Divine. It is God-ordained, and when we open ourselves up through the hard work of digging deep into our hearts and our relationship with Jesus, we find inexhaustible inspiration. The questions this week are meant to shake up stale thinking, to open your eyes to the beauty around you, inside of yourself and the beauty that is yours to share with the world.

I love this quote by Rollo May: "The artists seek to overcome the boundaries of life." Inspired living is within our realm right where we are, inside of our everyday lives with all of the ordinary of our days. We must train the eye to see it, open the heart to feel it and communicate with the Lord to receive it. **See it, feel it, receive it. We can overcome much when we open our eyes.**

Lord Jesus, we come to you to ask that your word would purify our hearts and open them to your will. We ask that you guide and protect us as we embark on each new day. Thank you for the gift of inspiration, Lord. We recognize that you are the source of the beauty around us and within. Amen. The knowledge of wisdom shall sweeten your soul: when you have found it, then there shall be a reward, and your hopes will not be cut short. Proverbs 24:4