

# Mind the Gap

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## The Task

Jesus clearly spent His entire life “on mission”. He knew why He was on this planet and He lived like He knew it. Too often, we either forget our purpose or we forget to live like we have a purpose. God’s plan for your life is for you to become the person He created you to be. But we constantly find ourselves not doing the very things that we need to do. One absolutely critical step we need to take to close the distance between who we are and who we are called to be is actually incredibly simple. To do the work that is set before you — the task at hand — as best you can, no more and no less. Unfortunately, we are often daunted by this simple task for a number of reasons: we try to do everything and not merely the “one thing”, we equate our work with our worth, and we are often slaves to perfectionism, performance, or results. But doing the task at hand as one who is profoundly loved by God changes all that. And sets us free to get one step closer to the person we were meant to be.

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## Discussion Questions

1. Have you ever found yourself putting off what needed to get done? What is one reason why you might find it difficult to do the task that is set before you?
2. Are you familiar with the idea of the “work behind the work”? The idea that what holds us back or weighs us down isn’t the task itself, but what we have “attached” to the task. Have you ever found yourself battling the monsters of Perfection, Performance, or the need to see immediate Results? What could you do about it?
3. Have you ever encountered what Stephen Pressfield called “the resistance”? The thing that we turn to instead of doing the task at hand? What are one or two ways you have experienced “the resistance”? Describe.
4. We cannot become the people we are meant to be without prayer. Where do you encounter “the resistance” in this specific area?
5. Many times, we perceive failure in prayer because we didn’t get an answer, didn’t “feel” anything, or were unintentionally distracted (among other things). How could you adopt the attitude of Jesus Christ when it comes to your prayer life?

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## God in Real Life

1. Josh Kaufman teaches that it takes 20 hours of intentional practice to get good at a thing. Are you willing to take the “20 Hour Prayer Challenge”? Beginning this week (or this Lent), map out how you will pray each day so that you will have had 20 hours of

intentional prayer time. The goals are not answers, inspiration, consolation, or results. The goal is simply to be able to spend intentional time with God the Father, Jesus Christ the Son, and the Holy Spirit. Use Father Armand Nigro's essay as a guide.

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## **Be Transformed**

The Bible speaks of living in the moment and walking in the freedom of the Spirit, even in the midst of trials (AKA "real life"):

- A. Saint Paul wrote about walking in the Spirit at each moment. (See Galatians 5:25)
- B. In the first reading for this Sunday, Job found himself in dire straights. He had lost everything he considered a blessing, including his children. In this place, he reflected on what seemed like the "futility of life". The Scriptures don't "candy coat" this honest experience. (See Job 7:1-4,6-7)
- C. Jesus talks about the need for the Holy Spirit to be in a person to enable them to "close the gap". On our own, it is an impossible task. But with the Holy Spirit, the impossible becomes possible. (See John 16:7-15)
- D. The Catechism of the Catholic Church notes that we need to cooperate with grace in order to become who we are meant to be: "The dignity of the human person is rooted in his creation in the image and likeness of God; it is fulfilled in his vocation to divine beatitude. It is essential to a human being freely to direct himself to this fulfillment. By his deliberate actions, the human person does, or does not, conform to the good promised by God and attested by moral conscience. Human beings make their own contribution to their interior growth; they make their whole sentient and spiritual lives into means of this growth. With the help of grace they grow in virtue, avoid sin, and if they sin they entrust themselves as did the prodigal son to the mercy of our Father in heaven. In this way they attain to the perfection of charity." (CCC 1700)

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## **To the Heart**

"Rising very early before dawn, he left and went off to a deserted place, where he prayed." (Mark 1: 35)

"The glory of God is a human being fully alive; and being alive consists in beholding God."  
~Saint Irenaeus