

God Disguised As Your Life

by James and Jerilyn Waddell

"God comes to you disguised as your life," writes spiritual author Paula D'Arcy. I have pondered this quote's meaning for many years, but I don't know if it connected beneath the surface until recently. It is a principle that both Jerilyn and I can recognize readily in others; as a chaplain and a therapist, we often spend time with patients in life review, where we take the moments and movements of a person's life and draw it together in themes toward its meaning and impact. We spend a lot of time searching for God in others' lives, and we always feel joy when the connection is made and the other person can say, "God was there in my life; I can see God with me right then and there."

Yet I do not know how much time I really spend paying attention to my own life, if I'm being honest. I would guess that most of us have not spent time finding where God has been disguised as our lives. We live in a busy, distracted time where news cycles, advertisements, and entertainment overrule most of the personal time we have left ourselves outside of working hours. God comes disguised as our lives, but we are not looking, and so we miss the opportunities for grace and mercy to touch and heal us.

It is vital that we recover practices that can reconnect us to ourselves and to those ways that God comes disguised as our lives. We want to invite you into a practice that we hope will help you connect to the times, events, and people in your life where God has come in disguise to you. We hope that you can take time, whether 5 minutes or 20 minutes, to practice the following steps.

Get into a comfortable position and close your eyes. Take several deep, cleansing breaths, paying attention to the flow of air, the movement of spirit, within you.

As you feel relaxed, allow your mind to wander to a memory, whether a person, an event, or a challenge you experienced. Allow your mind freedom to pull up whatever memory it wishes.

When you have a memory, make yourself conscious to hold the memory and to observe it. Notice what you see around you, what sounds and smells are present. If you find yourself distracted at any time, return with a deep breath.

Now ask yourself the question: "And where is God disguised in all of this?" Continue breathing as you explore where God has met you as you observe this memory. Hold a conversation with God when you find God's disguise.

As you feel the conversation winding down or the memory fading, allow yourself to emerge gently, breathing deeply and feeling your feet on the floor. Write down anything you experienced in a journal so that you can return and read.

We hope you find beautiful moments where God shows up disguised as your life.

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