

If seeds in the black earth can turn into such beautiful roses, what might not the heart of man become in its long journey toward the stars?

G.K. Chesterton

Attention is the rarest and purest form of generosity.

Simone Weil

The really important kind of freedom involves attention and awareness and discipline, and being able truly to care about other people and to sacrifice for them over and over in myriad petty, unsexy ways every day.

David Foster Wallace

From Jesus's parable of the soils, hanging on His every word is like an act of hospitality—welcoming, attending, and responding to all that He says.

In some ways, we are our habits, and yet habits of the soul are hard-won. So for four weeks, Monday-Friday, we invite you to practice that habit of showing His word hospitality.

Each day, a simple plan based on selections from the Gospel according to John: dependent prayer, patient reading, focused reflection, culminating again in responsive prayer—all of it attention, a way of learning to hang on His every word.

To begin another year, with our attention likely so fragmented into innumerable directions, may this simple rhythm help gather up the fragments and focus them in His direction.

If we “become what we behold,” may this help us further to become who—and whose—we are already.

*Background Image Art: “Parable of the Sower,”
Pieter Bruegel the Elder, 1557*

The rhythm of hospitable attention:

Pray for help

Read the passage—maybe 2 or 3 times

Jan 10	John 1:1-13
Jan 11	John 2:13-22
Jan 12	John 3:1-7
Jan 13	John 4:1-15
Jan 14	John 5:19-29
Jan 17	John 6:41-51
Jan 18	John 7:14-24
Jan 19	John 8:31-38
Jan 20	John 9:1-39
Jan 21	John 10:7-18
Jan 24	John 11:17-36
Jan 25	John 12:20-26
Jan 26	John 13:12-20
Jan 27	John 14:15-24
Jan 28	John 15:1-27
Jan 31	John 16:4-15
Feb 1	John 17:20-26
Feb 2	John 18:33-38
Feb 3	John 19:17-30
Feb 4	John 20:24-29 / 21:15-22

Be still. Be quiet. Then ask: What questions does this raise? How would you summarize its point? What difference would it make if you really believed it?

Pray in response: for understanding, belief, courage, humility—whatever your attention to this passage brings to the surface.