

Stop, Look, and Listen

In his book "[Emotionally Healthy Spirituality](#)," Peter Scazzero shares a story about farmers in the Midwest who prepare for blizzards by tying a rope from the back door of their house out to the barn as a guide to ensure they could return safely home. During these fierce and dangerous blizzards, a farmer could not see the end of his or her hand. Many froze to death in those blizzards, disoriented by their inability to see. If they lost their grip on the rope, it became impossible for them to find their way home. Some froze within feet of their own front door, never realizing how close they were to safety.

Peter Scazzero suggests a spiritual rope in the blizzard - the ancient practice of [the Daily Office](#) - stopping to be still with God a few times during the day. He writes:

"Three times a day (Daniel) got down on his knees and prayed, giving thanks to his God, just as he had done before..." "I wait for the Lord, my soul waits, and in His word I put my hope." - Dan.6:10; Ps. 130:5

Lord, help me to grab hold of you as my rope in the blizzard today. The idea of stopping to be with you one, two, or three times a day seems overwhelming, but I know I need you. Help me to be still and to wait patiently for you ([Ps. 37:7](#)). Teach me to be prayerfully attentive to you not only when I stop and pause, but also throughout the day. Amen.

The basic elements are "Stopping, Centering, Silence and Scripture." Because of my ever-weakening memory, I just call these elements: "**Stop, Look & Listen.**"

Sometimes, the flurry of activity around me makes me feel like I'm in a blizzard. To combat the disorientation, I stop, close my eyes (not if I'm driving of course!) and take a breath. I whisper a prayer and invite God in. Because in the blizzard, it is all too likely that I will forget to stop, so I set the alarm on my phone to softly ring/vibrate three times a day as a reminder. I'll try to read a Scripture but won't feel guilty if I can't. Just the pause is usually enough to refocus me.

Other reminders to me are the Christmas carols that are piped through the mall's speakers, broadcast over the radio, background music for TV commercials. Whenever I catch a familiar carol, even if it's the instrumental version, I tune in to the words from memory. These carols are worship songs for me. Well, not "Grandma Got Run Over By A Reindeer," but how about:

- Hark the Herald Angels sing :: *GOD AND SINNER RECONCILED*
- O Little Town of Bethlehem :: *IN THE DARK STREETS SHINETH THE EVERLASTING LIGHT
THE HOPES & FEARS OF ALL THE YEARS ARE MET IN THEE TONIGHT*
- Emmanuel :: means *GOD WITH US*
- Come Let Us Adore Him :: **NOW !**

As we shop, if the kids are driving us crazy, when the dinner burns, if the boss is unreasonable, when the traffic is unbearable, let's tune in to Him and tune out the rest.

*My soul thirsts for God, for the living God. When can I go and meet with God? Psalm 42:2
Right here, my daughter, right here. Meet with Me.*