



BEACH SUNRISE MEDITATION

PSALM 65:8

“Those who dwell at the ends of the earth are in awe of your signs. You make the going out of the morning and the evening to shout for joy.”

EXPERIENCE

As you wait for the sunrise, take a few minutes just to listen, look, feel, smell, and even taste the experience of being at the ocean's edge when you arrive. Let your senses wake up and come alive with the thrill of being at the beach.

Take your sandals off and walk in the surf or just sit down in the sand.

Take out your journal and pen and make a list of all the ways you are experiencing the sunrise. You can write sentences, phrases, or just single words to describe your experience.

- *Breathtaking shades of orange, pink, yellow, blue, white, purple, violet*
- *The softness and gentleness of pastel colors*

- *Warmth of the sunlight shining on my face*
- *Reflection on the wet sand like glass that sand becomes under intense heat.*
- *Arcs of orange and blue, like a half circle, a 180-degree arc*
- *Like a hug with gentle arms wrapping around you*
- *Indescribable beauty and loveliness*
- *Morning glory*
- *Refreshment*
- *Fresh new day and fresh breeze*
- *The delight of the dawn of a new day that shouts for joy*
- *The sunrise (the actual sun peaking over the horizon) is such a short and fleeting moment, so special and so worth seeing.*

CONTEMPLATION

What were your reasons for coming to the beach this week? weekend?

- *We came for refreshment, rejuvenation, a pause in the busyness of life. What better way to be reminded of each day as a fresh new start than seeing a sunrise.*

In what ways does the sunrise reflect the beauty of God?

- *God's beauty is expansive, impossible to fully appreciate in all of its grandeur.*
- *Just as the beauty of the sunrise is not static but dynamic, becoming increasingly beautiful and stunning, until finally you cannot look at it because the sun is too bright, too glorious. Our experience of God's beauty is not static but dynamic.*

What are all the ways you can think of that God is beautiful?

- *God begins the day with beauty. The day is ushered in with glorious colors. The sky is painted in such an array of colors that no painter's canvas, no matter how good the painter, could ever*

capture. Radiant and glorious is the morning sky—radiant and glorious is our Lord Christ.

- *All the colors are a reminder that God's beauty is multi-faceted. The colors of an early morning sunrise are just a foretaste of the infinite radiance of the colorful beauty of God.*

As you watch the sun rise and usher in a fresh new day what are some of the ways you desire to be refreshed by your time at the beach? How does God's Word, creation meditation, and prayer factor into your answer?

- *We desire quality time with God. We desire fresh memories with family members. We desire a deep appreciation of the beauty at the beach. We are committed to reading God's Word each day, doing one meditation on an element from creation every day, and going on prayer walks in the surf, talking out loud to God. Having quality conversations around the dinner table.*

Where in your life right now do you need a fresh new start?

- *Need to return to work upon my return with a fresh perspective.*
- *Need fresh energy to re-engage leading, teaching, coaching, and caring well for those God has placed in my path.*

What has God communicated about fresh new starts in his Word and in his World?

- *The sunrise every morning is a daily emblematic reminder of God's love of fresh starts. God delights to renew. Joy comes in the morning. It was with the sunrise that Christ was raised from the tomb. Resurrection was an early morning event.*

PRAYER

O Lord, I am reminded this morning of how beautiful you are. Your character is perfect. We are drawn to who you are and desire to be in your presence. You are warm toward your children, a gentle Father

who wraps us up in your kindness. You invite us to enjoy your beauty, to delight in who you are, to join you in your joy. Yet, all too often, we skip opportunities to see and savor our Creator and Redeemer. Instead, we sleep through the early morning hours and miss the chance to meet with you. Help us this week at the beach to choose you O God over an extra hour of sleep. Help us to take advantage of each new day as an opportunity to connect with you—to bask in the glory of your radiant and joyful presence. Amen.

CONFIRMATION

Psalm 65: 4a, 7-8 – “Blessed is the one you choose and bring near . . . [O God of our salvation] who stills the roaring of the seas, the roaring of their waves, the tumult of the peoples, so that those who dwell at the ends of the earth are in awe at your signs. You make the going out of the morning and the evening to shout for joy.”

The sunrise is an expression of God’s joy. God is a happy God, a joyous being, who delights to express joy—even shout it! The sunrise shouts! Bright, colorful, warm, and beautiful, it conveys the character of God. The Lord bookends the day with this glorious pronouncement of his character as a call to those who know him and who he chooses to draw near. God desires for you to live joyously today, not because you are at the beach, but because you are a chosen child of God whom he has drawn near. As he stills the roaring seas and waves may he still your anxiously busy heart today that you might find true joy in Him. Perhaps you might want to finish your day at this same spot with your gaze turned westward to savor the sunset as well.

The sunrise is an emblem (a sign) of God’s joy. (see also Psalm 19:5)