

Centering Prayer

Centering prayer is a form of contemplative prayer where the pray-er seeks to quiet scattered thoughts and desires in the still center of Jesus Christ's presence.

Explore: To quiet the heart and rest in God alone.

Scripture:

- "For in him we live and move and have our being." Acts 17:28
- "My soul finds rest in God alone." Psalm 62:1

Includes:

- Resting in and gazing on Christ.
- Waiting before the Lord in open attentiveness.
- Releasing distractions into the hands of God and returning constantly to his presence within.

Fruits:

- Bringing stillness into the busyness of life.
- Learning to listen to God.
- Seeking God's presence and assistance in all things.
- Resting in God's will rather than your own agenda.
- Developing a quiet center within that is not attached to outcomes.

A Short Method for Centering Prayer:

1. Set aside 10 minutes (increase the time as you can). Set a time if that helps you to be less concerned about when to stop.
2. Settle into a comfortable position.
3. Intentionally place yourself in the presence of God, in the center of his love.
4. Choose a simple word, phrase or verse from Scripture that expresses your desire for God (ie. Love, peace, grace, Jesus). Let this word guard your attention.
5. Take time to become quiet. It is not unusual for the first minutes to be filled with many thoughts. Don't worry about them or pay attention to them. Gently return your attention to the center of God's presence and love by repeating your word or phrase. Let the word draw your attention back to Jesus. Be with Jesus. Listen. Be still. When distractions resist let the following image help you return to Jesus.
 - a. Imagine that you are visiting a friend who lives on a busy street. Imagine it is a warm day and the windows are open and all the noise of life float into the room through the window. Despite all the distractions imagine your attention is devoted to your friend and you do not let your mind follow the sounds outside. As you meet with Jesus, acknowledge the noisy distractions that pull at your attention, but continually return to the moment with Jesus through your prayer word or focus.
6. Rest in the center of God's love. Trust that the Holy Spirit who abides in the depths of your spirit to connect you with God.
7. Take several minutes to come out of prayer. Don't hurry. Breathe in the presence of Christ. Offer yourself to God for the tasks awaiting you by saying, "I am yours" or "Remain with me."