

Breath Prayer

Breath prayer is a form of contemplative prayer linked to the rhythms of breaking; (1) breathe in, calling on a biblical name or image of God, and (2) breathe out a simple God-given desire. Breath prayer reminds us that each breath we are given is God's gift and that God's Spirit is nearer to us than our own breath.

Explore: To pray a simple, intimate prayer of heartfelt desire before God.

Scripture: ○ "Be joyful always; pray continually; give thanks in all circumstances, for this is God's will for you in Jesus Christ.: 1 Thessalonians 5:16-18

Includes: ○ Repeating a simple one-sentence prayer that begins with a biblical name or that is meaningful to you – followed by a phrase expressing your deep God-given desire.
○ Saying a traditionally scriptural breath prayer known as the "Jesus Prayer": "Jesus, Son of David, have mercy on me, a sinner"; breath prayer includes phrases of Scripture for example, "My soul glorifies the Lord" Luke 1:46, "My soul finds rest in God alone" Psalm 62:1. They can also be short, for example, "Come, Holy Spirit, come."

Fruits: ○ Keeping company with Jesus whether or not you feel his presence.
○ Putting into a phrase the deepest desire of your heart.
○ Regulating your imagination and fantasy life.
○ Breathing in the life of Christ and breathing out the work of Christ.

A Short Method for Centering Prayer:

1. Take a seat in solitude and silence.
2. Bend your head, close your eyes and breathing softly, in your imagination, look into your own heart.
3. Let your mind, or rather, your thoughts flow from your head down to your heart and say, while breathing: "Lord Jesus Christ, have mercy on me." (or another short scripture)
4. Whisper these words gently or say them in your mind while discarding all other thoughts. Be serene, preserving and repeat them over and over again.

Other examples include:

Breathe in, "Abba," breathe out "I belong to you"

Breathe in, "Healer," breathe out "Speak the word and I shall be healed."

Breathe in "Shepherd," breathe out "Bring home my lost son."

Breathe in "Holy One," breathe out "Keep me true."

Breathe in "Lord," breathe out "Here I am."

Breathe in "Jesus," breathe out "Have mercy on me."