



PRAYER

CONTEMPLATIVE & CENTERING PRAYER

“Be still, and know that I am God!”

Psalm 46:10

“

... contemplative prayer, is not so much a way to find God as a way of resting in him whom we have found, who loves us, who is near to us, who comes to us to draw us to himself.

Thomas Merton

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More often than not we are spending time in prayer talking to the Lord, telling him our needs and expressing our desires. While this is not wrong and the Lord loves to hear from his children, contemplative prayer is a way we can seek to be with the Lord in a new and different way. Contemplation at its most basic definition is setting one's mind on things above, which comes from Colossians 3:2. It is the act and experience of opening and attending to the indwelling Holy Spirit and whatever he is already doing in our soul. God has gifted you through your will with the ability to open to the love of God, and contemplation is a form of opening to him and practicing the presence of God with you as you open your heart to that truth. To see God contemplatively is to see a God who sees you and knows you.

Centering prayer is an expression of contemplative prayer. Imagine contemplation as a gift from God and centering prayer, then, being a means to opening to the gift. Centering prayer is something that we can do, while contemplation is just the opening.

In Centering prayer we detach from our desire to control the experience. It is releasing and acknowledging that God is already here with you and he doesn't need to show up how you want him to show up. This time may be more purgative for you, or maybe a sweet pleasure, or like the deer panting. In Centering prayer we are just trying to open to what God is doing as we enter by faith. It is a form of dying to self and letting go of something to see what God is doing and saying.

PRAYER & PRACTICE

About 10 minutes:

Ask the Lord...

- *Lord, how do I feel about contemplative prayer and/or centering prayer? Why do I feel this way? What may you be inviting me into with this form of prayer?*

About 20 minutes:

Centering Prayer...

- *Choose a word that is important or sacred to you. Like, "Jesus...God...love."*
 - *This word acts as a symbol for you to come back to Him.*
 - *Use the word as a word of consent. What the word means is "I come back to You."*
 - *It is sacred and will use it as a symbol to anchor yourself back to prayer.*
- *Sit comfortably with your feet anchored to the ground. Introduce the time by saying your word: "Jesus" Here you are opening to God. When your mind wanders, it's alright, just come back to that word.*
- *Do this for 20 minutes. Then, sit in silence and end in the Lord's prayer found in Matthew 6:9-13.*

(you can also start with a shorter amount of time and add another minute or two each time you practice - i.e. start with 7 minutes, then progress to 10, then 14, then 20 etc).