

## Prayer of Silence or Centering Prayer

Psalm 46:10 invites us to know that God is 'God for us' by welcoming us into His presence. "Be still, and know that I am God!" the text says. How does being still help us know God?

It is true that some things get to our heart much quicker than others. Tragedy moves our hearts almost immediately. A generous gift, a surprise visit, an unexpected message of good news can turn our heart. These things bring almost instant gratitude, joy or lament. But knowing that God is God for us can take some time to affect our hearts.

Centering Prayer or the Prayer of Silence is one of those methods found throughout church tradition that has helped faithful followers of Jesus be still and know that God is God for us!

How does it work? Like all practices, it will take some time to settle in and sense how it works and what to expect. Nevertheless, there is great value in learning to slow down, and rest in God's graces.

### How it Works

To start, **First**, choose a word or phrase that will help bring you back to God when your mind begins to wander. Something like "Here I am Lord," or "Jesus have mercy," or "Come Holy Spirit" are common. At other times, it might be a character trait of God or a gift from God that guides. Concepts like faithful, hospitable, or a mighty rock might help. It may be that you are seeking grace, peace or love. Choose a word that will serve to bring you back to focus when the mind wanders or begins thinking.

**Second**, take a deep breath and relax. Invite God into your space and indicate you are ready to listen. (Take 10-30 seconds) And yes, this is the way most reflective type prayer starts.

**Third**, let your worries and concerns go and let the chosen word guide you to receive God and his presence. (Start with 5 minutes and work up from there as comfortable.) You may find that it is just quiet. It may be a sense of welcome. It may be a pebble in your shoe. It may be a lot of words or emotions that come whirling around. Whisper the word in your mind or out loud to help you be still and know that God is for you and with you.

**Fourth**, when your time is up, thank God for his love, and commit yourself to his ways.

Over the next week, strive to practice this 2 or 3 times. Find a quiet space and comfortable position. Enjoy being still and knowing God is with us! Be gracious with yourself as you learn. God does love us to be with Him.