

A Meditative Exercise in Sabbath Being

Read Gen. 1:26-2:3

Note that human beings were created on the last day of creation. Imagine you are Adam or Eve. What is your first full day of life? It is the Sabbath, a day of resting with God. After first resting with God, then you go and work. What does this rhythm of 1 and 6 tell us about our purpose?

Our created purpose and value is not primarily in what we do. It is in being with the Lord. There are many ways to be with the Lord. One way which has been part of the Christian church is through a meditative prayer style. This style focuses on God's Word and resting. It helps us to quiet down with Him and allow his presence to take priority in our prayer.

An Exercise in Being

It has been said that “we are human-beings, not human-doings.”

The Sabbath concept helps us remember that our value is first found in God. This is called “Christ-Esteem.”

In him we were also chosen, having been predestined according to the plan of him who works out everything in conformity with the purpose of his will, in order that we, who were the first to hope in Christ, might be for the praise of his glory. Eph. 1:11-12

“I believe that Jesus Christ... is my Lord, who has redeemed me, a lost and condemned person...that I may be his own....”

from Luther's explanation to the 2nd Article Of the Apostles' Creed

Meditation has always been a part of God and His relationship to His people.

May the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart be pleasing in your sight, O LORD, my Rock and my Redeemer. Ps. 19:14

Within your temple, O God, we meditate on your unfailing love. Ps. 48:9

I will remember the deeds of the LORD; yes, I will remember your miracles of long ago. I will meditate on all your works and consider all your mighty deeds.

Your ways, O God, are holy. What god is so great as our God? Ps. 77:11-13

A meditative prayer exercise.

1. Sit comfortably, relaxed and quiet.

2. Choose a Word from the Lord (some have been suggested below). Read it silently to yourself, allow it to take root in you. Another way to do this is for the leader to choose the Word, read it three times slowly aloud.

Be still, and know that I am God; I will be exalted among the nations, I will be exalted in the earth. Ps. 46:10

This is what the Sovereign LORD, the Holy One of Israel, says: "In repentance and rest is your salvation, in quietness and trust is your strength." Is. 30:15

Then their eyes were opened and they recognized him, and he disappeared from their sight. They asked each other, "Were not our hearts burning within us while he talked with us on the road and opened the Scriptures to us?" Luke 24:31-32

3. Close your eyes. You are ceasing. You are simply being in the presence of the Lord. Not unlike Adam and Eve were on their first day of life. No expectations are placed on you. You have no expectations for this exercise.

4. If thoughts enter in while you are in this meditation prayer, jot them down if you need to remember them, then return to your Word from above. (Note: the leader may provide scratch paper and pencils in advance).

5. After about 15-20 minutes the leader will begin to say the Lord's Prayer quietly. With your eyes closed simply join in.

Note: This is a practice which students can do at home.