



A Quiet Day for Scotland

Centring Prayer

Centring Prayer

The leader may wish to introduce centring prayer as a group activity which individuals may also wish to use in their personal times of quiet.

Centring prayer is a gentle activity, which enables us to keep our attention focussed on God instead of allowing the mind to run hither and thither after every thought that is presented to it.

One of the simplest ways to begin centring prayer is to use a word of one or two syllables, such as **God, love, peace, Jesus, Spirit**. Try to use a word that expresses your wish to be open and surrendered to God.

Sit comfortably but alert, close your eyes and relax. Begin to let the word you have chosen be spoken in your mind repeating it slowly and gently rather like the rhythm of stroking a cat or watching the sand run through an egg timer.

It may feel a little strange at first but as you continue it will become comfortable and familiar. You may find the word slipping away from you as you settle into a deeper attention to God. This may feel like doing nothing at all but while you are attentive to God, prayer is taking place.

If, as so often happens at first, you find yourself paying attention to your thoughts and following them instead of paying attention to God, then gently place your word back in your mind, concentrating again and repeating it again over and over. Do not become

judgmental or strict with yourself, simply maintain the discipline of returning to your word each time your attention wanders.

At the end of the allotted time of say 15-20 minutes or so you may wish to end by gently letting go of your word, conversing with God about your day or saying a formal prayer to yourself. Allow yourself a few minutes of silent stillness before opening your eyes again and bring yourself back to the awareness of your surroundings and the people you are with.

Centring prayer is not a way of summoning God to be present to you, rather it is a way of showing God that you are ready and willing to be present to Him. The rest is up to Him and it is He who will determine what happens next.



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