



SILENCE AND PRAYER

Prayer Discussion

Play some soft reflective music as everyone quiets their hearts, minds and bodies.

Suggested Song – Be Still and Know (Steven Curtis Chapman)

Song can be read together or divide group to read alternately. Song can also be accessed on YouTube by googling Steven Curtis Chapman Lyrics.

Be still and know that He is God
 Be still and know that He is holy
 Be still, oh restless heart of mine
 Bow before the Prince of Peace
 Let the noise and clamor cease

Be still and know that He is God
 Be still and know that He is faithful
 Consider all that He has done
 Stand in awe and be amazed
 And know that He will never change
 Be still

Be still and know that He is God
 Be still and know that He is God
 Be still and know that He is God
 Be still
 Be speechless

Be still and know that He is God
 Be still and know that He is our Father

Come and rest your hear upon His breast
 Listen to the rhythm of
 His unfailing heart of love
 Beating for his little ones
 Calling each of us to come
 Be still, Be still

OPENING PRAYER

Response: Be Still and Know That I Am God (Ps. 46)

Reader: **BE**

do not do
 or pretend to be
 anything
 just be.

Response: All

Reader: **BE STILL**

calm those
 anxious unruly
 whirling thoughts
 into stillness.

Response: All

Reader: **BE STILL AND KNOW**

as the flower knows the sun's rays
 as the mouth knows bread
 as the heart knows love
 open yourself to knowing.

Response: All

Reader: **BE STILL AND KNOW THAT I AM**

here and now
around you and within you
behind and before
wherever you are
I am.

Response: All

Reader: **BE STILL AND KNOW THAT I AM GOD**

your Father and Mother
your Companion and Healer
your God and your All.

Response: All

1st READING: The Value of Silence – Taizé

If we take as our guide the oldest prayer book, the biblical Psalms, we note two main forms of prayer. One is a lament and cry for help. The other is thanksgiving and praise to God. On a more hidden level, there is a third kind of prayer, without demands or explicit expression of praise. In Psalm 131 for instance, there is nothing but quietness and confidence: “I have calmed and quieted my soul...hope in the Lord from this time on and evermore.”

At times prayer becomes silent. Peaceful communion with God can do without words. “I have calmed and quieted my soul, like a weaned child with its mother.” Like the satisfied child who has stopped crying and is

in its mother's arms, so can "my soul be with me" in the presence of God. Prayer than needs no words, maybe not even thoughts.

PAUSE: Be still. Be with your God in silence. (2-3 minutes)

In the silence of the heart God speaks. If you face God in prayer and silence, God will speak to you. Then you will know that you are nothing. It is only when you realize your nothingness, your emptiness, that God can fill you with Himself. Souls of prayer are souls of great silence. (Mother Teresa)

(CONT.) How is it possible to reach inner silence? Sometimes we are apparently silent, and yet we have great discussions within, struggling with imaginary partners or with ourselves. Calming our souls requires a kind of simplicity: "I do not occupy myself with things too great and too marvelous for me." Silence means recognizing that many worries can't do much. Silence means leaving to God what is beyond my reach and capacity. A moment of silence, even very short, is like a holy stop, a sabbatical rest, a truce of worries.

PAUSE/REFLECT: (Time determined by leader)

Where do I find silence and stillness in my life?

What in my life do I need to leave to God and to trust in His/Her care?

How has God revealed himself/herself to me this past week?

2nd READING: Source Unknown

There is a story of a Buddhist meditation group who asked their sensei how long they should meditate each day. The sensei pondered the question, then responded hesitantly, "Five minutes?" The group gasped. He rushed to adjust his answer, "Is that too long?" he asked.

What a comforting story! It reminds us not to belittle the mini-contemplative moments that punctuate each day: the momentary pause, the few deep breaths, the salute to the tree outside a window, the sigh of acceptance of what can't be changed. If these mini-moments ground us in a source of all being, the Holy One who is always lovingly active on our behalf, then their value cannot be minimized. They are a life line pulling through the waves and undertows of every day. They are the precious beads that can be strung together into a rosary of attentiveness to God. If they render us humbler, less controlling, more reliant on God, more loving, then they are as priceless as a long sit in the sun. Most days they can be the best practice to have.

PAUSE/REFLECT:

What “contemplative moments” have punctuated my days?

Are there “moments” that I have missed?

How can I be more attentive to God throughout my day?

SHARE REFLECTIONS (Time determined by leader/group)

CLOSING PRAYER: PS. 46 (ALL)

God is our refuge and strength,
an ever-present help in trouble.

Therefore we will not fear, though the earth gives way
and the mountains fall into the heart of the sea,
though its waters roar and foam
and the mountains quake with their surging.

There is a river whose streams make glad the city of God,
the holy place where the Most High dwells.

God is within her, she will not fall;

God will help her at break of day.
Nations are in uproar, kingdoms fall;
he lifts his voice, the earth melts.

The Lord Almighty is with us;
the God of Jacob is our fortress.

Come and see what the Lord has done,
the desolations he has brought on the earth.

He makes wars cease
to the ends of the earth.

He breaks the bow and shatters the spear;
he burns the shields with fire.

He says, **“Be still, and know that I am God;**
I will be exalted among the nations,
I will be exalted in the earth.”

The Lord Almighty is with us;
the God of Jacob is our fortress.