

Learning to Be Still

*But I have stilled and quietened my soul: Like a weaned child with its mother,
Like a weaned child is my soul within me Psalm 131:2*

Relax yourself. Find a comfortable place to sit or lie down. Be at ease physically. Breathe slowly and deeply.

Let your mind also relax. Gently but firmly let go of words and thoughts (even those about God), also of cares, concerns, and anxieties (at least for this brief period of time). Hand things over to God on the basis of 1 Peter 5:7, ‘Cast all your anxiety on Him because He cares for you.’

Let your emotions settle too. Think about God’s love for you (not your love for God) — unconditional, unchanging and undeserved. Allow yourself to bask in this love, as if you were sunbathing. Let God’s love cover your whole being.

Allow yourself just to be quiet, knowing by faith that you are already in the presence of God, which means being in the presence of Love. Relax in the silence of that Presence. Just be there. Do not feel as if there is anything you have to do or achieve.

Perhaps listen to some instrumental music or a reflective song that leads you to be more aware of God.

Maybe focus on the stillness of a lighted candle.

Picture yourself as the child in Psalm 131.

Repeat a prayer word or phrase in tune with your breathing, such as ‘Abba, Father.’

If you are distracted (as you surely will be), don’t worry about it or fight against it. Simply re-focus yourself on your prayer word until you return to inner quiet.

As you feel yourself enter into stillness, **remain as still and quiet as you can.** Allow God to do whatever He chooses to do or not to do – let Him be in control. He may speak, He may not. You may feel God’s love, you may not. It is enough simply to give God your attention and to be quiet before Him. It is the communion of friends we seek

Slowly let yourself come out of the quietness perhaps by singing softly to yourself or praying a short prayer of thanks.

Remember:

Silent prayer is an act of faith.

It takes time, and it takes practice.

Sometimes it is easier than others, but always it is worthwhile.

There doesn’t have to be an ‘outcome’ or ‘result.’

It isn’t doing nothing or wasting time.

Adapted by Tony Horsfall from *Silence on Fire* by William Shannon