

## Rendezvous with God

### Waiting For God

#### **Welcome and Settling In -- about 15-30 minutes**

Take time to settle into the space, locate bathrooms, coffee and other essentials; welcome your retreat partner; set up emergency contacts and any other business. (You may want to post a "Silent retreat in progress; please do not disturb" sign). Pray for each other, together, before you enter into silence. Keep your conversation brief!

#### **Come into the Lord's Presence – 10 minutes**

Take 5 to 10 minutes in silence to consciously settle yourself with the Lord. Turn off your cell phone; lay down the burdens, issues and distractions you brought with you, at Jesus' feet. Settle your body, mind and spirit in the Lord's presence. Bring your hopes and fears for the day to the Lord, remembering that He loves and welcomes you as you are. You could use as a breath prayer, this prayer taken from Psalm 23, "Good Shepherd, restore my soul" – or even "Lord, make me to lie down in green pastures".

**Greet the Lord**, Father, Son and Holy Spirit with one of these prayers, or your own:

#### **A Prayer for Quiet**

I have, O LORD, a noisy heart. And entering outward silence doesn't stop the inner clamor. In fact, it seems only to make it worse. When I am full of activity, the internal noise is only a distant rumble; but when I get still, the rumble amplifies itself. And it is not like the majestic sound of a symphony rising to a grand crescendo; rather it is the deafening din of clashing pots and clanging pans. What a racket! Worst of all, I feel helpless to hush the interior pandemonium.

Dear Lord Jesus, once you spoke peace to the wind and the waves. Speak your shalom over my heart. I wait silently ... patiently. I receive into the very core of my being your loving command, "Peace, be still." Amen. (Richard Foster; Prayers from the Heart; p. 58)

**or this:**

#### **A Prayer of Accepted Tenderness**

Today, O LORD, I accept your acceptance of me.  
I confess that you are always with me and always for me.  
I receive into my spirit your grace, your mercy, your care.  
I rest in your love, O Lord. I rest in your love.

Amen.

(Richard Foster; Prayers from the Heart; p. 54)

## **Come into the Courts of the Lord with Praise – 20 - 30 minutes**

Take at least 20 minutes to worship. Begin by praising God with this praise song, or other hymns, songs.

### **I Waited For The Lord On High**

Words & Music by Bill Batstone

Chorus:

I waited/ For the Lord on high  
I waited/ And He heard my cry

He pulled me out of my despair/ He taught me how to walk  
From fear into security/ From quicksand to the Rock

CHORUS

I sing to let the people know/ That I have been restored  
And they will kneel and understand/ To return and trust in the Lord

CHORUS

And there's a new song/ In my heart to sing  
There's a new song/ Praises for my King

I waited

(c) 1982 Maranatha! Music/ASCAP

## **Read a Psalm as an act of worship**

– e.g. Psalm 40, or Psalm 62

Then try something creative to express your love and worship to Jesus. Choose activities that will draw you into God's presence, and enjoy your time with Him. Here are some ideas:

- If you are outdoors, stand or sit in one place and thank God for every detail you can notice about his creation; or go on a “God hunt” seeking signs of the Creator’s hand as you walk.
- Use art supplies to draw or create an image that reflects a truth to praise God for.
- Let the Holy Spirit lead you to worship with dance, or other creative expression.

### Meditate and Reflect on God’s Word

Before you begin to reflect on the Scripture passage for the day, take an attitude check. How do you feel about waiting? When is waiting OK? When is it a struggle?

Take 5 minutes to wait in anticipation of hearing from God in His Word.

### Read Romans 8:1-39

Spend some time studying Romans 8 to get an overview of the text. You might take a few minutes to outline the argument of the text; or try to diagram the cause-and-effect relationships in the passage; or make two columns and contrast the Law of the Spirit of life with the Law of sin and death. Try not to get sidetracked in detailed analysis today, but look for the broad, plain meaning of the text as a background for your communion with God.

### Meditation #1—Walking In Christ

St. Paul makes some bold and encouraging proclamations about our identity in Christ in this chapter. Here are some of them:

- v. 1 – (No condemnation for those in Christ)
- v. 2 – (Law of Spirit of Life set me from the law of sin and death)
- v.15 – (Not spirit of fear, but adoption/sonship)
- v. 28 –(All things work together for good...)
- v.31 – (If God is for us, who can be against us?)
- v. 35 – (Nothing shall separate us from God’s love)

It seems that Paul can’t write about theology without getting personally involved. Most of the chapter uses “we”, including himself and his hearers, and making the content very practical. In his excitement in v. 2, he gets even more personal, rejoicing that “the law of the Spirit of life set me free...” This is not cold doctrine for Paul, but joyful Good News.

### Reflect:

How personal and practical is your theology? Reflect on one or more of these verses and ask:

- Do I believe this?
- Is this my experience of the Christian life?
- Where can I see freedom and life overcoming bondage and death?
- Where are the places I experience a “disconnect” between my life and Paul’s theology? Are there any obvious causes?

## Rejoice in the Lord:

Take an extended time to rejoice and enjoy with God the truths of these verses about who you are in Christ.

## Repent:

Following the truth of Rom. 8:13, "by the Spirit, put to death the misdeeds of the body" so you may live. Take some time to invite the Holy Spirit to search your heart for places where you are being controlled, not by the Spirit of Christ, but by your sinful nature. Admit this to God and repent, making a plan for changing your allegiance in this area of life from the authority of your sinful nature, to the authority of God.

**Rest and Remember** again, who you are in Christ.

**Take a break.** (Remaining aware that you are in communion with God, go for a walk, have a snack, or take a nap!)

## Meditation #2 -- Waiting for God

As the semester begins, we are all shifting into high gear, making to-do lists and checking off the items. You may be on campus, or working on fund development so you can get to campus. The summer season is over and there is an eagerness to be productive and successful in this open-window time when new students are really "fresh-men and -women" ready for harvesting. It is vital as you plunge into to the work God has given you to do, that you remember who really does the work. That same Spirit by whom we "put to death the misdeeds of the body" is the Spirit who calls, equips and leads us into ministry, and who alone can produce fruit that lasts.

## Read Romans 8:18-25.

Reflect and ponder the "eager expectation" and the "groaning" of all of Creation, waiting for God's children to be revealed. How has our human sin and immaturity impacted the whole of Creation?

Hope involves waiting for God to do what we know He is going to do, because He said so. We wait for His action in the world and in the culture – but we also wait for His work in us, namely our spiritual formation.

What is it like to "wait eagerly" for your adoption as God's daughter or son? Meditate on the tension between v. 15 ("you received the Spirit of sonship") and v.23 ("as we wait eagerly for our adoption as sons.")

Eagerly waiting – hoping; or in other Scriptures, receiving the Lord – trusting. How do we live this way? It is not the passivity of Jonah, who refused to act in faithful obedience, but rather waited and cried out for God to kill him! Rather, it is an expectant surrender of my agenda, and an acceptance of God's. This hope is not passive but active waiting. My action is to watch and wait and hope and receive and listen – that is, to surrender and follow God

Take time to wait and hope in the Lord.

Additional Resources for Spiritual Formation and Prayer can be found at:

Take a break.

### **Meditation #3 – Praying**

Read Romans 8:26

Take time to let the Holy Spirit search your heart and intercede for you and with you.

What is God's desire for your life, and for your ministry this semester?

What is the cry of your heart?

Share it with God.

Take a break.

### **Closing**

As you end your Rendezvous with God, take time to give thanks for your time with Him. Also ask yourself, when will you plan another Rendezvous with God? What worked well, and what would you do differently?

In the last ten minutes, meet with your fellow retreatant(s) and share your experience as you feel comfortable. Take care to honor each other's quiet state and the privacy and intimacy of the day. Together, give thanks to God and pray for protection as you go back to the "real world".

As a closing "Hymn" Read Romans 8:28-39 aloud together, and give God praise for the truth of this Word.

Go in peace to love and serve the Lord!