

## Centering Prayer Week 8

*“For God alone my soul waits in silence,  
for my hope is from him.  
He alone is my rock and my salvation,  
my fortress; I shall not be shaken.  
On God rests my deliverance and my honor;  
my mighty rock, my refuge is in God.  
Trust in him at all times, O people;  
pour out your heart before him;  
God is a refuge for us.” Psalm 62:5-8*

### **Resting and Being (Chapter 16 Audiobook, Chapter 15 Book)**

#### **Resting**

In the sixth century, Gregory the Great defined contemplation as resting in God. Resting in God does not necessarily include the felt sense of physical relaxation. It is not so much about feeling emotionally peaceful or even necessarily have a quiet mind. Contemplative resting is a resting of your being in the Being of God. With this very subtle resting, your mind, heart, and bodily awareness can also find rest and just be in the source from which thoughts, emotions, and sensations arise: God’s indwelling presence.

What is it like to rest? We cannot achieve resting in God. Resting in God surfaces in our consciousness as a gift. The active attitude of resting, just letting go and resting in God’s presence without any effort, without any action to change your experience, opens you to contemplation. Felt experiences of God are not a goal, but a gift that, like a compass, orients you on the spiritual path into God’s being.

#### **Being**

Being means not doing anything other than just being. In a sense, the attitude of being is an undoing. You let go even of *trying* to rest. In the attitude of being, there is no presence of God to find or yield to. God’s Being just is. Whatever is there, activity or rest, just be in it, for activity and rest are both held in God’s being. Action and presence are one. In the depths of God’s Being, rest beyond resting. Wait beyond waiting. Be beyond being. With time, learn how resting in God helps you be in God. You experience how being in God’s Being helps you learn how to practice resting in God’s presence.

*“God said to Moses, “I am who I am.”<sup>14</sup> He said further, “Thus you shall say to the Israelites, ‘I am has sent me to you.’”<sup>15</sup> God also said to Moses, “Thus you shall say to the Israelites, ‘The Lord,<sup>16</sup> the God of your ancestors, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, has sent me to you.” Exodus 3:14-15*

*I am who I am* – a statement of ineffability, of transcendence infused into existence, a name of being. God’s says, “I just am – existence, unending, unconsumed.” This image and these words point to an experience in which linear time collapses into the radiant present of God’s Being. Eternity is held in God’s Being. How do you apprehend God’s Being? There is no way to find God’s Being because it is already here. Just be.

### In God Alone My Soul

The image shows a musical score for the hymn "In God Alone My Soul". It consists of three systems of music, each with a vocal line and a piano accompaniment. The key signature is one sharp (F#) and the time signature is 4/4. The lyrics are: "In God a-lone my soul can find rest and peace, in God my peace and joy. On - ly in God my soul can find its rest, find its rest and peace. In". The score includes various musical notations such as notes, rests, and dynamic markings. The final measure of the third system is marked "Last time" with a fermata.

Text: Taizé Community  
Tune: Jacques Berthier (1923-1994)  
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This 10 week series is based on David Frenette’s book and audio workshop on Centering Prayer.

- The Path to Centering Prayer: Deepening Your Experience of God, David Frenette, 2017.
- Centering Prayer Meditations: Effortless Contemplation to Deepen Your Experience of God, David Frenette (2014, Audiobook)