

Inner Sanctuary Centering Exercise

1 - Getting Ready.

- While **sitting quietly**, make yourself comfortable - your body should be supported and relaxed.
- **Scan** from head to toe, relaxing each part of your body in sequence.
- As you finish, come into God's presence, **release** any **thoughts** that are going through your mind – relinquish all your preconceptions and anxieties and any need for protection or promotion.
- Using **mental imagery**, imagine placing any cares and concerns aside for a time (if necessary, write them down).

2 - Controlled breathing.

- Take slow, **controlled breaths** in... then out. Focus on your breathing, the Spirit in... anxieties out.
- Once you have a **gentle rhythm** and are comfortable proceed as directed below.

3 - Creating a Safe Place / Inner Sanctuary

- After a few moments, **invite the Holy Spirit** to be present and cleanse your imagination.
- Spend time **giving thanks** to God for what He has done (you can also recall scripture verses).
- Ask the Holy Spirit to **recall** a safe and pleasant **memory** where you can meet the Lord.
- It may recall a **real** or **imaginary** place or somewhere you have been before that is special, like a beach, a location along a quiet stream, a childhood memory, or somewhere where you sensed **God's presence** and **peace**.
- Begin to quietly **speak words of thanks** for the memory - praise to the Lord.

4 - Resting in God's Presence.

- **Enjoy** all the **surroundings**, including sounds, sights, feelings. If you experience some dissonance or distraction, ask the Holy Spirit to take it away in the name of Jesus.
- When ready, **invite the Lord to join you** in that place. If that frightens you, ask him to come as a Lamb, or to allow you to feel his presence (Optional).
- Once there, **notice the warmth of His love**. Let it soak into your being. If you are allowing Christ to be there, notice his appearance and draw close (Optional).
- When ready, **tell God how you feel about Him**. Then ask how he feels about you. He may respond with words or actions. Either way, experience his acceptance and delight.

5 - Practicing Thankfulness

- Spend a few moments **giving thanks** and praise for the memories and related thoughts.
- Take a few deep breaths, letting them out slowly, then say **Amen** (Optional conclusion).
- Afterward, you may want to journal what the Lord has spoken or revealed to you.

6 - Entering In (Optional):

- Once you have reached this point, you may also reflect on a **passage of scripture**, a Psalm, Gospel passage, devotional reading, or audio Bible reading, then close in prayer.

7 - Reflecting:

- **What did God speak** into your life during this time?
- **How is God**, through the Holy Spirit, **directing you** to respond?
- **Journal** or note and promptings, images, thoughts, or impressions for future discernment.