

International World Youth Day Prayer Meditation

“Be Not Afraid”

This meditation could be done on one's own or with a small group of people. If done alone, read it through first and then read it again, slowly pausing where you feel you want to pause. If done in a group, have one person lead the group at an appropriate pace.

The meditation is best conducted in a candle-lit room, lightly scented with aromatherapy oil or incense. Ensure that the room is not too cold and not too hot. Invite participants to make use of pillows and rugs. The participants could either sit or lay down, although sitting is the better posture.

Some appropriate music could be used, remembering that this meditation lends itself to spaces of silence.

If it's appropriate, an aromatic balm could be lightly applied to the palms of each participant or they could be invited to apply it to the palms of their own hands.

What are some of the things young people are afraid of today?

Afraid of being alone.

Afraid of not having friends or of losing friends.

Afraid of not or never having had a girl or boyfriend.

Afraid when parents fight and quarrel.

Afraid that parents will separate or divorce.

Afraid of not having money just to get by.

Afraid that school work is getting harder.

Afraid of not coping with school.

Afraid of being swamped with school assessment tasks.

Afraid of exams especially the HSC and all it entails.

Afraid of not getting into university.

Afraid of not getting into the TAFE or university course of their choice.

Afraid of not having sufficient money to pay for higher education.

Afraid of global issues of justice.

Mention here some of your own personal fears.

Scripture Gospel of Matthew 6:25-34

Read the scripture passage through slowly and with awareness twice.

I warn you, then do not worry about your livelihood, what you are to eat or drink or use for clothing. Is not life more than food? Is not the body more valuable than clothes? Look at the birds in the sky. They neither sow nor reap; they gather nothing into barns; yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are not you more important than they? Which of you by worrying can add a moment to their life span? As for clothes, why be concerned? Learn a lesson from why wild flowers grow. They do not work, they do not spin. Yet I assure you not even Solomon in all his splendor was arrayed like one of these. If God can clothe in such splendor the grass of the field, which blooms today and is thrown on the fire tomorrow, will he not provide much more for you? O weak of faith. Stop worrying, then, over questions like, what are we to eat, or what are we to drink, or what are we to wear? Your heavenly Father knows all that you need. Seek first his kingship over you, his way of holiness, and all these things will be given you besides. Enough, then, of worrying about tomorrow. Let tomorrow take care of itself. Today has troubles enough of its own.

Which of the above do you worry about? Is it your job, your study, your way of life? Clothing, food, drink, drugs, money in general?

Does thinking about how it used to be alter anything, make any difference? Has it ever solved anything, made you satisfied, changed anything?

Has dwelling on the past or future altered the way you feel, made you feel better, changed anything?

His way of holiness?

We tend to live in the past or in the future. What do you make of the following:

Be still and know that I am God. This is “His way of Holiness”?

Reflect on the following

I was regretting the past and fearing the future

Suddenly my Lord was speaking.

My name is I Am, He paused. I waited. He continued,

When you live in the past

With its mistakes and regrets,

It is hard. I am not there.

My name is not I was.

When you live in the future,

With its problems and fears,

It is hard. I am not there.

My name is not I will be.

**When you live in the present moment
It is not hard. I am here.
My name is I Am.**

Find a quiet place and make yourself comfortable there. Relax all parts of your body, from the top of your head to the tip of your toes. Become aware of the surface that your body is resting on. Become aware of your breathing. Don't alter it. Be aware of it. Is it fast /slow? Warm /cool? Hot/ cold? Take notice of how you are feeling as you sit.

Listen to the sounds outside in the distance. Man-made sounds, sounds of other human beings, sounds of nature. Totally tune into these and then choose, if possible, to focus on the sounds of nature. Perhaps a bird or a number of birds, then the more dominant bird sound. Notice how your sense of hearing becomes more focused, more attuned to these sounds of nature, once you stop your constant thinking.

Now bring your awareness inside the room you are in or to the immediate space around you if you are outside. Bring your senses to play in feeling the atmosphere around you. The air as it makes contact with your bare skin, the skin of your arms. Legs, face.

Become aware of your breathing again. This time let your breath slow down. Take a shorter breath in, pause and let the breath go out long. In short, pause, out breath longer. Your breath grows long, your breath goes deep. Be aware of the very point of entry of the breath into your body. Which nostril is more sensitive to the incoming breath? Let the breath go, slowly. Grow deep.

Remind your self of the words of sacred scripture as you continue in awareness of breath going slow, growing deep.

"Be still and know that I am God"

Be still and know that I am

Be still and know

Be still

Ancient peoples believed that God was in the very air they breathed. Once they stopped breathing, they died. God's Spirit in the air they breathed sustained them, gave life, was the vital life-force. One could not live without the air we breathe, one cannot live without God's spirit.

Now visualize yourself surrounded by a gold mist, it's God's spirit of peace. Slowly breathe in this gold mist spirit of peace and let it seep into every part of your body, let it mingle with your spirit self and let it bring peace to your soul, your whole being. As you breathe out and your breathe grows slow and deep, feel the effects of God's spirit of peace on your whole being as peace replaces unpeace.

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Then, after a while and at your own pace, let the mist change to the colour of silver which represents God's spirit of love and breathe in God's spirit of love and, as you breathe out, feel any trace of unlove leave your being and as you continue to breathe in and allow your breath to go slow and grow deep, feel God's love grow in your heart and replace any unlove you may be experiencing in your life right now with God's love.

When you are ready, let the mist change to the colour of violet which symbolizes God's healing and breathe in this divine spirit of healing. Feel healing replace hurt and fear, all the hurts and fears you are experiencing and all the hurts and fears that have accumulated over the years of your life. Hurt and fear that has come from worry, worry about life, work, study, relationships, family worries and global worries.

Allow all these colours to mingle as God's spirit of peace, love and healing touch and become one with your spirit, feel the effects of peace, love and healing on your body and mind.

Now let go of all images and just allow your breath to breathe for you and, after a while, if you wish you could say the name of Jesus as you breathe in and become aware of yourself feeling a deeper level of peace and tranquility as you now come to experience God's promise in God's words, "Be still and know that I am God". Rest now and simply be. This is what Jesus meant when he said to experience His way of Holiness.

"Be not Afraid" No 2 Could be played from John Michael Talbot's Table of Plenty Any of the Mantras & Chants from Monica Brown's "Quiet My Soul" or "Holy Ground". A beautiful Blessing is Enya's No 18 Lord of the Rings.

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