

The Path of Totality

session 2

The House of Love

part 1

the Peasant's Blessing



support resource

*You have said, "Seek my Face." My heart says of you,
"Your face Lord, do I seek!" Psalm 27:8*



The Peasant's Blessing

Dwell in me, as I dwell in you.
Jesus, John 15:4

The eternal God is your dwelling place, and underneath are the everlasting arms.
Deuteronomy 33:27

In the strength of the memory of the peasant's blessing, the prisoner stood up and began to live from a realization that he was held and cared for, from the dawning reality of a safe home within. The clinging fear that had expressed itself as anger, suspicion, withholding himself, and as judging others, was dissolved in a growing compassion—for himself and his fellow prisoners.

The deepest invitation of our lives is to rest beneath God's hand of blessing, under a sense of compassionate touch, welcome and care. This requires a continual inner discipline to recall what's true, real and indestructible—our preciousness and safety in God.

Activity

Ask - *Is there any moment of the prisoner's story in the video, or in the Scriptures above—any word, picture, or message—that creates some feeling in me, or seems especially attractive or important?*

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Ask - *What am I being invited toward here? Maybe I don't know for sure, but if I had to guess, what might God be inviting me toward? What's one practical way I can say, "yes!"*

practices

Spend regular time just resting beneath God's blessing, leaning deeply into God's compassion. What words of love and wellbeing is God speaking in you right now?

Create a 6-word phrase, draw a picture, or create a short rhyme that affirms your safety and wellbeing under Jesus' care. Recall this regularly, helping you sow courage to joyfully live your true self.



Behold the One Beholding You

the story is told

of a French cleric who heard that a congregation member, a peasant farmer, had an unusually deep prayer life. At first the cleric was miffed that someone in his congregation, no less a simple peasant, should be considered to pray more deeply than he! But he swallowed his pride and went to see the peasant. "Tell me," asked the cleric, "what is the method of your prayer life?" The peasant looked at the cleric with some bewilderment and responded, "There is no method. I look at Jesus, and Jesus looks at me."

Gazing into God

Take 5-20 minutes a few times a week to simply lean your deepest self quietly and attentively into God. There is a deep part within you that yearns to relax under God's care. Give that part of yourself room to let go of the rest of the world for a few minutes and just be with God with interest, openness, and ready attention. Let the Holy Spirit teach you this way of prayer.

NOTE: It can be helpful to recall the physical posture of Mary in Luke 10 as she listens at the feet of Jesus—gazing, attentive, interested, loving, quiet, surrendered, listening. Her interest is more in Jesus himself than in the things he says. Lean your inner self into God in this way. When stray thoughts come, don't worry. Each stray thought is an opportunity to lovingly return to God!

Gazing with God into my Life

At times a question, problem, or stuck spot arises in life. Instead of reflexively attacking the problem, strategizing, praying hard (and often worrying and freaking out) it can be really helpful to simply sit with God and be together calmly, patiently, and gently with your issue.

Take 5-20 minutes a few times a week to sit in company with God with your question or problem. Leave your assumptions, timetables and demands behind. While holding your issue loosely and lovingly, place your gentle attention in God. As the days pass notice changes in your perception of the situation, including a growing sense of new possibilities. Let the Holy Spirit teach you this way of prayer.



Prayers of Gazing

*You have said, "Seek my Face." My heart says to you,
"Your face Lord, do I seek!" Psalm 27:8*

Praying Scripture

Select a piece of Scripture, maybe starting with the psalms. (Move on to other passages later.) Notice which portions of the passage connect with your own longings, joys or fears. Join your inner intention with the Scripture and pray it as your own prayer. From time to time pause to let your spirit lean toward God in wordless, worshipful union.

Stepping into Scripture

Through God's gift of imagination step inside Scripture passages. Experience the story through the eyes of each participant. Be aware of the moments of the story that most touch you. Pause occasionally to let your deepest self gaze in union, fellowship and worshipful inquiry into God. Gospel passages are a good place to start.

Creation

God's face is shown in nature in beautiful and healing ways. He is uniquely present in his creation. While walking in nature, occasionally let your spirit lean wordlessly and worshipfully into God.

Your word

Think of one or two words that both express and request union with God at this time in your life (e.g. "I love you," "you're my home," or you own special words). Quietly speak these words aloud as you go about your daily routine.

Your art or hobby

Your art or hobby are creative gifts that intimately connect you with your Creator. They are lenses into God who shares in the joy you take in your art. Pause occasionally with your art or hobby to receive God's happy gaze.

Your pen

Many people find that when they put pen to paper their roaming thoughts get focused and God's words become more clear. As you journal from the heart, pause sometimes to let your spirit lean into and take comfort in God.



Is there a word, phrase or image

from this poem that speaks to what I'm seeking at this time in my life?

Enjoy a gentle, open conversation with God and yourself about this.

The Journey

by Mary Oliver

*One day you finally knew
what you had to do, and began,
though the voices around you
kept shouting
their bad advice--
though the whole house
began to tremble
and you felt the old tug
at your ankles.*

*"Mend my life!"
each voice cried.
But you didn't stop.
You knew what you had to do,
though the wind pried
with its stiff fingers
at the very foundations,
though their melancholy
was terrible.
It was already late
enough, and a wild night,
and the road full of fallen
branches and stones.*

*But little by little,
as you left their voices behind,
the stars began to burn
through the sheets of clouds,
and there was a new voice
which you slowly
recognized as your own,
that kept you company
as you strode deeper and deeper
into the world,
determined to do
the only thing you could do--
determined to save
the only life you could save.*