

## Self-Guided Pause Retreat

### Introduction

Welcome to *Pause*, where we experience peace and purpose by turning off distractions and tuning into God and his world. By pausing from our bustling lives, we say that our satisfaction is in who God is for us in Jesus Christ. From this place, we then arise in mission to be God's reconciling agents, passing the peace to an exhausted world.

### Invitation

*We begin this Pause Retreat invited into God's presence, welcomed into the reality of his kingdom, of which we are so often unaware. The invitation is a way to open ourselves to God's grace, peace and purposes.*

### Opening Reflection (10 minutes)

My heart is firmly fixed, O God, my heart is fixed; I will sing and make melody. Wake up, my spirit; awake, lute and harp; I myself will awaken the dawn. I will confess you among the peoples, O Lord; I will sing praise to you among the nations. For your loving-kindness is greater than the heavens, and your faithfulness reaches to the clouds. Exalt yourself above the heavens, O God, and your glory over all the earth. (Psalm 57:7-11)

Take time now to slow down. Lay aside burdens. Silence distractions. Forget to do's. Then, having quieted your heart, enter rest. Enter delight. Enter worship. Enter silence. Fill your soul. You are right where you need to be.

**Notice** (20 minutes)

What is beautiful around you? In the rush of our days, it is easy to overlook so much. Think about the things you see, smell and hear. Remember that God is even in these details.

How would God want you to pray or praise for this? What could God be wanting you to learn? How could he be affirming you or leading you to change? Remember that the gospel is at work in this issue.

**Listen** (20 Minutes)

We listen to God through his word and the Spirit. Read the following passage.

Matthew 11:28-30 "Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy and my burden is light."

What might God want you to learn about himself? About humanity? What would happen if this became powerfully alive in you today?

**Notice** (20 min)

Walk to a new place and see another aspect of beauty. What do you see, hear, touch? As you do this, consider what St. Augustine wrote, "You stir man to take pleasure in praising you, because you have made us for yourself, and our heart is restless until it finds its rest in you."

How could you pass the peace you are finding in God to someone near you or someone in need? How could you learn from them where they find peace?

How will you keep a practice of Pause in a sustainable way to root your identity in Christ? How will you pass the peace of Pause to someone across a difference from you in a sustainable way?

## **Closing Prayer:**

Almighty God, I seek communion with You. From the fret and fever of the day's business, from the world's discordant noises, from the praise and blame of men, from the confused thoughts and vain imaginations of my own heart, I would now turn aside and seek the quiet of Your presence. So many days I worked and strived; but now, in stillness of heart and in the clear light of Your eternity, I would ponder the pattern my life has been weaving.

May there fall upon me now, God, a great sense of:

Your power and Your glory, so that I may see all earthly things in their true measure.

Let me not be ignorant of this great thing, that one day to You is like a thousand years and a thousand years like one day.

Give me now such understanding of Your perfect holiness that it will make an end of all pride in my own attainment.

Grant to me now such a vision of Your uncreated beauty that it will make me dissatisfied with all lesser beauties.

*Though earth and man were gone,  
And suns and universes cease to be,  
And You were left alone,  
Every existence would exist in Thee.*

I am content, Father, to leave my life in Your hands, believing that the very hairs upon my head are numbered by You. I am content to give over my will to Your control, believing that I can find in You a righteousness that I could never have won for myself. I am content to leave all my dear ones to Your care, believing that Your love for them is greater than my own. I am content to leave in Your hands the causes of truth and of justice, and the coming of Your Kingdom in the hearts of men, believing that my passion for them is but a weak shadow of Your purpose. To You, God, be glory forever. Amen.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> John Baillie. *A Diary of Private Prayer*.