

Contemplative Prayer

Spiritual Practices with *Jackie Trottmann*



Contemplative prayer uses what is called the sacred word.

The idea is that when thoughts start to come into your mind, you focus on the sacred word to bring you back to just resting in God.

The word is not spoken. The word is in your mind. These words are taken from Scripture.

Examples of words are Jesus, grace, peace, be still (I like these two words taken from Psalm 46:10 and Mark 4:39), mercy, etc.

Gentleness is the key to using the sacred word. When your thoughts drift, say the sacred word to clear the thoughts. The act is as gentle as if the sacred word were a feather placed on top of a cloud.

The metaphor is used that the mind is a river and thoughts are things that are floating by. In contemplative prayer the goal is to learn to just let the thoughts go, in other words, let them float by so you can just focus on God's presence.

Thoughts like I need to put eggs on the grocery list, has it been 20 minutes yet, that email has to go out by 3PM.... etc. Just let them go, or say the sacred word to get back on track. The goal is to do 10-30 minutes 1-2 times per day.

It wasn't until I had used a [guided meditation](#) for quite some time to quiet my mind chatter that I could do complicative prayer. It is the most challenging spiritual practice, but very rewarding.

When someone is going through a challenging time or when you are just with a loved one, sometimes you don't know what to say. But the most important thing is to show up, to be with that person. The greatest gift we can give to God is our presence – giving our time and attention to God in whom we live and move and have our being.

Contemplative prayer is one of the greatest gifts we can give to God.