

CALM. QUIET. HOPE. TRUST.
WEEK ONE

SPIRITUAL PRACTICE: Breathing Prayer

Take a deep slow breath in. Allow the air to fill your lungs, then slowly exhale. Repeat. Slow deep breaths allow us to relax and release the stress and tension that can overwhelm our bodies. Breathing prayers allow us to release our stress and worry to God and receive the Spirit of comfort and peace. These prayers are often a time to confess our need for God, and to invite His presence into our lives.

I spent a day on a spiritual retreat, walking around the hill country outside of San Antonio. I was using different spiritual practices to connect with God through Psalm 131. As I meditated on this Psalm, four statements came to my mind: *calm my heart, quiet my soul, hope in the Lord, trust now and always*. As I hiked along a creek, I began to recite these four statements in my mind. Slowly, it became patterned after my breath - calm, quiet, hope, trust.

Breathe in, asking God to calm your heart.
Breathe out, releasing quiet into your soul.
Breathe in, filling yourself with the hope of the Lord.
Breath out, releasing control by trusting God.

Breathe in: Calm my heart.
Breathe out: Quiet my soul.
Breathe in: Hope in the Lord.
Breath out: Trust now and always

Breathe in: Calm.
Breathe out: Quiet.
Breathe in: Hope.
Breath out: Trust.

Calm. Quiet. Hope. Trust.

Repeat this as you prepare yourself to spend time with God. Repeat this as you move from quiet time to the chaos of life. Repeat this as you are engulfed in the stressful storms of life. Repeat this as you lie down to sleep.