

Soaking in God's Presence

'Soaking' is a term we use for waiting on the Lord and soaking in God's presence. We are all good at being a Martha but not good at being a Mary (Luke 10:38-42). Despite all the beneficial things Martha did for Jesus and his disciples, Jesus said that Mary had chosen the best part -- to just sit at his feet and do nothing -- to be with Him and listen. We call this "active rest". Listening is the active part. Doing nothing is the resting part.

The Lord has promised that His grace is sufficient for all of our needs (2 Cor. 12:9). He wants to pour into us the resources that we need for each day. As we spend time in His presence He pours in His strength, peace, patience, endurance, comfort and joy. We learn to soak up everything you need from Him.

The scriptures encourage us to strive to enter God's rest (Heb. 5:11). We would like to encourage you to rest and do nothing occasionally -- to be refreshed and renewed by simply being in our Father's presence.

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The following is adapted from a pamphlet prepared by Robert and Janet Pengilley from Bath, UK -- used by permission.

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There are scriptures that call us to 'lie down', 'wait', 'rest', 'listen' and be 'quiet'.

How do I know if I need to 'soak'?

- ? If you are spiritually dry, soaking can revitalize your spirit.
- ? If you long to move more powerfully in the gifts of the Spirit, soaking can help you hear God clearer.
- ? If you are looking for fresh vision and direction in life, soaking can bring it.
- ? If you are hurting inside, soaking can ease the pain.
- ? If you are about to start something new and need the Lord's strengthening, soaking can refresh you.
- ? If you are searching for an answer to a problem/situation, soaking can help you find the way.
- ? If you carry responsibilities, soaking can lift your burden.
- ? If you are trapped by a habitual sin, soaking can empower you to break free.
- ? If you are having relationship difficulties, soaking can give you new resources of grace, patience and love.

- ? If you simply want to have more intimacy in your love for your heavenly Father, soaking can take you deeper.

Guide To Soaking

- ? Find yourself a space
- ? Make yourself comfortable - Lying down is the easiest way to rest
- ? Settle down and begin to open your heart to the Lord
- ? Listen to the worship
- ? Let the Holy Spirit come

"Drink, yes, drink deeply, O beloved ones!" Song of Solomon 5:1

So, do I just lie down with a blank mind?

No! Lie down with your mind set on Jesus. Give all your worries and cares to the Lord, talk to Him about them.

Pray a prayer that says to God something like: 'I invite You to come and search my heart. Come close and let me know Your love.' Let worship rise up inside you and give yourself to the Lord. If you become distracted then re-focus on Jesus. Remind yourself why you are soaking and listen to the worship.

"Waiting is not simply passive inactivity; it is active restfulness" (quote by Steve Smith, Father Heart Ministries, Brisbane, Australia)

Can I trust it is the Holy Spirit working?

These sessions are covered in prayer to create a safe place. Give the Holy Spirit permission to work in your heart - don't try to analyze things. The Lord has no favourites, he will always give the Holy Spirit to those who ask (Luke 11:11-13). Other spirits can't come near us when the Holy Spirit is around - expect His divine protection.

How long do I stay down for?

It takes most people at least ten minutes before they stop thinking about the day's events or future plans and come to a place of rest. So it's unlikely that you would get much out of soaking if you do it for less than fifteen minutes.

We have found that the Holy Spirit comes in waves. As you wait another wave will come to take you deeper into the presence of the Lord. So, the longer you soak the better.

Once I get up can I come back for more?

Yes, it is often good to get up, have a break and pray over things that the Lord has shown you (either on your own or with another), write things down so you won't forget, then return and soak some more. Just be sensitive to others about you and move quietly.

How will I know when God has finished?

The more you soak the easier it will become to recognize when to stop. Often you will sense a lifting of the anointing and a reviving of energy. Remember, you will never get beyond the need for more of the Holy Spirit.

Do I have to lie down?

No, you can soak sitting in a chair if you find it more comfortable. Being still and at rest is the key. It aligns our bodies with our heart's attitude of submissiveness and attentiveness to God. Lying down helps to minimize the distractions caused by activity in the room, and puts us into a vulnerable position to receive from the Lord.

How will I know if soaking is doing me any good?

Many people feel immediate benefits such as a renewed love for the Lord, a lifting of weights or fresh energy. Often evidence of long term changes are discovered later when back in daily life.

What if I fall asleep?

That's perfectly valid. Deep, Holy Spirit sleep is very good for us, especially in difficult and stressful times. (Gen. 2:21; 15:12; Dan 10:8-10; Luke 9:32)

Can I 'soak' at home?

There is a special anointing that comes when Christians are together in an atmosphere of worship, however, it is recommended to 'soak' at home as well, provided that you are undisturbed.

It is important to play intimate worship music that draws you closer to the Lord and brings you into 'stillness'.