

# PRACTICING PRESENCE

REST • RENEWAL • RELATIONSHIP

## WHY PRESENCE?

In this season of Lent, we remember the garden days of Genesis — **walking with our Beloved God in a rhythm of holy rest and holy work**. Our Creator rested — and called it holy. That creational rhythm is not lost; it is fulfilled in Christ. In Luke 5:16, we see how Jesus withdraws to quiet places to pray, embodying the rhythm we were made for. In Mark 2:28, He declares Himself Lord of the Sabbath, reminding us that sabbath rest is for the good of humanity — for mercy, for rest, renewal, & relationship. Lent is all about that rhythm of return: waiting in the presence of the Father through prayer, fasting, repentance, & preparation. We were made for our Maker — not made to live weary lives (Matthew 11:28-30). As Augustine wrote, *“You have made us for yourself, and our heart is restless until it finds rest in you.”*

## WHAT IS PRESENCE?

Practicing Presence is about **cultivating awareness and attentiveness to God in our daily lives** — especially in our everyday relationships — as God’s children already made Beloved by Christ (*I have loved you with an everlasting love.* — *Jeremiah 31:3*).

As we practice Presence together, we grow more present to the God who is already present to us, and more aware of His heart for His beloved children (both ourselves and others). We see our relationships (with God, ourselves, others, and creation) and our work **begin to flow from gratitude and intentional rest**. This means making space — margin for thanksgiving, love, obedience, Gospel, and joy.

So – here’s the invite: **Stop & rest. Stop & enjoy. Stop & contemplate**. Stay awake to God & to people. Plan for interruption. For inconvenience. Meet yourself and others with the patient, loving presence of Christ.

So often this will mean denying ourselves — turning down technology and resisting the pull toward efficiency and self-focus. Still, friend, think: **Belovedness over burden. Presence over perfection**. Our life in God’s holy garden flows from grace: rest, renewal, & relationship. Presence.

## HOW TO PRACTICE PRESENCE

**Stop & Rest:** Pause your body and your striving. Sit, breathe slowly, and remember: you aren’t what you produce. Create a plan or reminder — don’t let this get lost in the current. (*Isaiah 30:15*)

**Stop & Enjoy:** Slow down and receive a good gift — a meal, a song, a walk, a conversation. Notice. Savor. And give thanks. (*James 1:17*)

**Stop & Contemplate:** Turn all your attention toward God. Notice His nearness. Listen. (*Ps. 46:10; 1 Sam. 3:10; John 15:4*)

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### THE ONE-MINUTE HABIT

Pause in the morning, afternoon, and evening. Breathe deeply. Recall your identity in Jesus. Thank God that you are His Beloved — pray simply to see the belovedness of others. Notice & give thanks.

### THE HARD STOP (HOLY REST)

Set aside one hour to stop. Rest. Enjoy. Contemplate. Read, pray, journal, listen, or walk quietly. Unplug from all unneeded types of technology & noise. Lean away from efficiency. Pray simply. Tap [Right Here](#) to access Daily Examen resources (tap About to read; then Media Formats to access the app. Simple & free to use).

### THE FULL STOP (SABBATH)

Set aside one day to stop working, wanting, & worrying. Rest. Enjoy. Contemplate. Take a nap. Take a tech break. A buying break. A chore break. Be with creation. Be with loved ones. Grab some solitude. Gather with your church. Prepare ahead to keep the day light and unburdened. Keep a gratitude list; resist entitlement, discontent, & distractedness. Tap [Right Here](#) for more resources!

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*Where did I notice God’s goodness or feel close to God today?*

*In which moments did I feel far from God?*

*What am I carrying that God did not ask me to carry?*

*Who did I truly see — and who truly saw me?*