

Awaken to God's Presence | Breath Prayer

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SPEAKERS

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Joelle Wight 00:04

A gift of peace in the midst of troubling times. Project Zion Podcast offers this series of guided practices to help you connect with the divine no matter where you are or what's going on around you, take a deep breath and allow your spirit to find calm in the storm of life.

Shannon McAdam 00:28

Welcome to Awaken to God's Presence from Project Zion Podcast. My name is Shannon McAdam, and today we will be praying a breath prayer from Jane Bernard's book, *Praying with Body and Soul*. I'd invite you to find a comfortable position to sit in, maybe with your feet on the floor and your back supported, so that you can sit in an easeful way. As you sit, maybe take a moment to see where you're holding tension in your body that you could let go of just a little bit. When you are ready, take a few deep breaths and attend gently to both the inhalation and the exhalation.

Place a hand near your nose and mouth so that you can feel your breath going in and out, in and out, in and out.

Place your other hand on your chest so that you can feel the gentle rise and fall of your lungs.

With that hand in front of your nose and mouth, and other on your chest, play with deep and shallow breaths, slow and fast breaths. Feel your lungs expand and contract.

As you settle into a regular breathing pattern gradually begin to imagine that each breath moves beyond your lungs and into your entire body.

Follow your breath down into your belly, into your legs, all the way to your toes.

Imagine your breath filling your shoulders.

Imagine your breath flowing down your arms and into your hands all the way to your fingertips.

Imagine your breath soothing and easing your neck, circulating through your brain, massaging the space behind your eyes.

As you feel your breath in every part of your being, breathe a prayer of thanksgiving for the breath of life. Be aware of the abundance of air. Be aware of the ease with which it flows.

Be aware of how little thought you have to give to this life-giving gift.

Discover a phrase you can pray to the rhythm of your breathing, such as the breath of life. I give thanks, the breath of life. I give thanks. The breath of life, I give thanks.

Continue to pray your phrase for a few moments. Stay with your breathing, praying on the inhale and the exhale. The breath of life, I give thanks the breath of life. I give thanks the breath of life, I give thanks.

You may continue to stay with your breathing and praying as long as you wish, and then close your prayer in any way that seems right to you.

As we attend to the wonder of our breathing, our breath itself can become a prayer. When we are upset or out of sorts, confused, distracted, or in any other state of mind and heart that seems to place us beside ourselves, we can simply turn our attention to our breathing, in and out, in and out, in and out. This attention serves to remind us of the closeness of the spirit, the wonder of life and the longing of God to be in relationship with us. As you remember who and whose you are, perhaps Imagine you are breathing out whatever is bothering you and breathing in whatever you need. Breath Prayer is something that can constantly be with us, readily available and simple to do. When we pay attention, our bodies and breath teach us the constancy and closeness of God.

Amen