

## Psalm 1 Retreat: Guided Meditation for Session 1 – Roots/Prayer

*Henri Nouwen, a highly respected spiritual writer says, "Prayer is the way to let the life giving Spirit of God penetrate all the corners of my being." He also writes, "Prayer is the divine instrument of my wholeness, unity, and inner peace." To let God in and experience that inner peace is difficult in a world of noise and constant movement. Meditation is one form of prayer that allows us to stop and listen – being present to ourselves and God.*

Let us together now stop and be present to God's love and presence all around us.

Calm your mind and clear out any roaming thoughts.

Close your eyes and take a deep breath and let it out. Breathe in ... breathe out.

Imagine yourself walking along a very beautiful pathway. You might notice as you move along this pathway that there are trees, the grass is green and fresh, a gentle breeze is blowing in a rhythm. You find yourself exploring your images and impressions, watching the trees, a gentle breeze blowing through the leaves, a soothing and calming feeling washes over you. This pathway takes you directly to an inner sanctuary, a beautiful place somewhere in nature.

As you are there now in your own sanctuary, you can find a place where you can rest in the soft grass and look at the beautiful scene before you. You notice the fresh clean air. What thoughts pass through your mind as you rest there now, simply relaxing and taking in the beauty of the scene?

As you relax more deeply, you notice it is morning and you are near a beautiful lake. A gentle mist appears before you...

As you watch the mist, you may notice the sun rising in the sky, and the warmth of the sun begins to warm your body. You may notice that the mist begins to evaporate. You can start to see a little clearer the beauty of this lake. The lake sparkles in the sunlight. It is very blue and clear and you find yourself drawn to that image of the lake. You're curious about what the water is like, how clean and soothing it would be and you might like to make your way closer to notice the smooth sand on your feet.

As you begin to walk closer you notice someone standing on the shore. He is standing in the water and the waves are lightly breaking. You recognize him as Jesus. You walk closer and stand next to him in the water.

You enjoy the sensation of the cool water on your feet and skin. It is refreshing and seems to clear away any uncomfortable feelings. Standing there with Jesus you both look out on the lake and begin to think about beauty. Jesus begins to quietly speak to you. Take a few moments to listen to his words, what is he saying to you? (Pause)

You are feeling a great sense of peace and comfort with Christ. His presence warms you and you feel the sun on your face. Now you begin to talk to Jesus. What do you need to tell him? Take some time now to leave your thoughts with Jesus and to feel his love for you.

Now it is time for you to leave. Jesus gives you a hug embracing every part of who you are. You are feeling an inner peace from his love and begin to walk back from the lake feeling refreshed and invigorated. You are making your way to the pathway and as you start walking you begin to notice how relaxed and good you are feeling. You can bring back those inner experiences with you to enjoy again. You can now reconnect with your body, wiggle your fingers and your toes.

Take a nice deep breath as you reorient yourself in the here and now, aware of yourself in the room. You notice sounds in the room. You are easily coming back into the room now.