



## Christian Meditation: An Ancient Form of Contemplative Prayer A Brief Introduction

Christian meditation is not something new or unusual. Meditation, is also known as contemplative prayer and is the prayer of silence and listening. In the Christian tradition, meditation is also called the “*prayer of the heart*” or “*contemplative prayer*.”

There are three basic elements in this form of meditation:

- Silence
- Stillness
- Simplicity

This ancient Christian way of prayer has been rediscovered for Christians by the Benedictine monk John Main OSB (1926 – 1982). John Main recovered the way of bringing the mind to rest in the heart through the teaching of the first Christian monks known as the Desert fathers.

Father John Main taught that to meditate you

Sit still with your back straight  
Close your eyes (gently)  
Repeat your mantra interiorly and continuously.

There are many sacred words which can be used as a mantra, for example the name *Jesus* or the word *Abba*. One

recommended mantra in Christian meditation is *Maranatha*.

It is an Aramaic word, the language that Jesus spoke. It is the oldest Christian prayer and it means “Come Lord.”

St. Paul ends the 1<sup>st</sup> letter to the Corinthians and St. John the Book of Revelation with this phrase Come Lord – Maranatha. This phrase captures the faith of the early Christians.

Christian Meditation is not a relaxation or visualization activity (although one of the benefits is that we feel more relaxed as we rest in the arms of God). Christian Meditation focuses on God and not a mental reflection on oneself.

When we meditate, we move from mental prayer (prayer of the mind) to a deeper level, the heart (the prayer of the heart). It is an acknowledgement that the Spirit dwells within us and that we need to be quiet and still to listen to the Spirit.

Like all prayer forms Christian Meditation requires practice and a commitment.

Christian Meditation is held online via Zoom on Tuesdays at 10:30 a.m. For more information or to receive the link please contact Catherine Ecker.



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