

Dear Church of the Apostles Family,

I am blessed to subscribe to a resource entitled "Mindful Christianity Today." I am so pleased to be able to share this with you, especially during this difficult time in our lives with the COVID-19 situation.

Beside the Still Waters:

A Meditation Exercise to Overcome Your Fearful and Anxious Moments

(This exercise is a proven spiritual tool to calm yourself in moments of chaos that modern life presents. This practice is not meant to replace meditation or the supervision of a physician in case of clinical depression or anxiety.)

**\*Practice this exercise three times a day as a prescription for spiritual health\***

When the weight of the world seems to be pressing down on you, try releasing your fears and worries into the arms of God. You can cut through the hundreds of anxious thoughts bouncing around in your head by focusing on God's love for you.

Remember that you are in control of your mind and your thoughts. It is not the other way around.

Find a quiet space for a few moments. Let the encouraging words at the beginning of Psalm twenty-three wash over you.

***"The Lord is my Shepherd, and I have everything I need. He makes me lie down in green pastures; He leads me beside still waters. He restores my soul."***

First, read the powerful truth of these words aloud slowly.

Next, repeat these verses silently, as you breathe in slowly and focus your mind on the declaration: ***"The Lord is my Shepherd, and I have everything I need."***

Next, meditate on the words: The Lord is "MY" Shepherd and "I" have everything "I" need.

Declare that truth as you repeat those lines and with every exhale release the negative thoughts that hold you captive.

Understand that you have everything you need because your life is in His hands.

Ask the Heavenly Father to "MAKE you lie down" and quiet your soul in the beautiful green pastures.

Imagine in your mind a safe place of tranquility for you.

Let Christ lead you by the hand to the crystal-clear waters to calm your spirit.

Visualize the quiet waters by releasing any other emotional turmoil you feel in your life. Allow the worries to float away onto those waters.

As you center the thoughts of your mind on the eternal hope of God, repeat to yourself: ***"He is everything I need."*** Then repeat the profound promise of the Psalm: ***"He restores my soul."***

As you breathe in, focus on accepting this truth: Jesus is enough, and you will become still and at peace. In Christ, you have everything you need. In Him the weight of the world will pass away.

Gently let go of the problems that trouble your soul by turning your attention fully on His unconditional love.

Be mindful that He cares for you. As you focus on the power of the Scripture, and His love you will notice that worry, anxiety, fear, begin to give way to the serene truth of the Psalm.

**Additional Scripture Reading:**

***“I am leaving you with a gift-peace of mind and heart. And the peace I give is a gift the world cannot provide. So, don’t be troubled or afraid.”*** – John 14:27 (NLT)

***“Cast all your worry on him because he cares for you.”*** – 1 Peter 5:7

My hope is that this will be a helpful tool for us all during these uncertain days as we continue to do our part in following the recommendations of our national, state, and local leaders.

I join with you in continuing to pray for our leaders, medical personnel everywhere, and people affected by this virus. Remember that God is faithful and will make a way!

Blessings for the journey,

Pastor Narda