



Being in the Moment: Christian Practices

1) “Am I here?”

At its core, to be here requires to NOT be somewhere else. The first tool therefore is to pay attention to where your attention actually is. Ask yourself, “Where am I right now?” or simply, “Am I here?” Make this simple but profound question a habit. Is my mind wandering? Am I concerned about tomorrow? Focus attention on where you are, and be aware of the position of your body. Tension, posture, breathing -- all these are a part of your presence in the moment.

2) Sound

Tune into just the sounds that are happening around you right now. Don't go to the mind to name them or explain how you feel about them or why they're happening. No effort is needed. Just listen, allow your ears to receive, and pay attention to this.

3) Body Sensation

Feel the sensations that are happening inside your body right now. Again, don't name the sensations (twinges, anxiety, exhaustion, pain etc.) and don't explain why they are happening. Just feel them directly as sensations. Notice too that they just happen, without effort. Notice tense muscles. The internal workings of your organs. Your heart beat.

4) Breath

When God created humans he breathed life, spirit and Holy wind into them. In that way our breath, our life, is a sacred thing. It is a connecting piece to God. The tool then is to feel your breath, pay attention to the sensation of the breath moving through you. Notice that without doing anything, your body is breathing itself, breathing you. Pay attention to the gaps between breaths, and the space of waiting for the next breath to happen. Get intimate with the entire breathing miracle occurring within you. The pause to deepen your breath. Focus on it and slow it. If it is helpful you can practice breathing in through the nose and out through the mouth.

5) Paying Attention to Mind

Turn your lens back on itself. Pay attention to what your mind is doing right now, listen to the thoughts that it is generating, the chatter it is chattering. Do not get involved in or respond to the contents, just observe your own mind in action, without doing anything about it. Don't exercise judgment on your thoughts, simply accept them. Notice them without condemnation or approval. This isn't about shaping yourself into something better, this is simply seeing where you are right now.

6) No Next

Remove *next*—imagine that there is no next event, next task, next person or next anything to get to. Invite yourself to stop preparing or getting ready for something else to come. Deliberately remove all *elses*. Meet now with nowhere and nothing else still to get to. I have the timer. We have committed to this time together. There is nothing else happening. There is nothing else to do, to write down, to learn, to hear, there is only now. Sometimes agreeing with yourself on a set amount of time and setting a silent alarm for the end of that time can be freeing in this. You know that until the alarm sounds there can be no next. You don't have to check it or think about, it will ring. Enjoy the moments you have set aside to consider only this time. Only this day. Remember *Matthew 6:34* “*So don't worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will bring its own worries. Today's trouble is enough for today.*”

