

Rest

“I am held, not striving.”

For many of us, stillness is the hardest thing. We have been moving and doing for so long that stopping feels irresponsible, even dangerous. This exercise is not about achieving a peaceful feeling. It is simply an invitation to let your body remember what it feels like to be held rather than to strive.

Arriving in Your Body

Find somewhere comfortable, a chair, a couch, wherever you are right now. Let your feet rest flat on the floor and your hands fall open in your lap. Take a slow breath in through your nose and a long exhale through your mouth. Just like that.

Now, without moving, notice a few things quietly:

- The weight of your body being held by whatever you’re sitting on.
- Your feet making contact with the ground.
- Any sounds around you. Just let them be there.

Pray simply: “Lord, You are here. And so am I.”

“Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest.” — Matthew 11:28

Let those words land somewhere in you. You don’t have to do anything with them. Just let them be true for a moment.

Noticing What You’re Carrying

Place one hand on your chest. Take a breath and gently ask yourself: What am I striving to hold together right now? You don’t need to solve it. You’re just noticing.

Maybe it’s a relationship, a role, a version of yourself you feel pressure to maintain. Maybe you’re not sure, and that’s okay too. Where does it show up in your body? Tight chest? Clenched jaw? A kind of low-grade hum of tension?

“Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls.” — Matthew 11:29

Jesus isn’t asking you to try harder here. He’s inviting you to lean on something steadier than your own effort.

Setting Something Down

Take a slightly deeper breath in and on the exhale, imagine gently setting something down. Not solving it. Not handing it off to someone else to fix. Just setting it down for right now, in this moment.

Try it again: breathe in and on the exhale, let your body soften just a little. It's okay if this feels hard. Rest often does, at first.

"He makes me lie down in green pastures, he leads me beside quiet waters, he refreshes my soul." — Psalm 23:2-3

In this image, God is the one leading. God is the one refreshing. You are simply the one being led. What would it feel like to let yourself be led right now, even for just a minute?

Being Held Without Effort

Keep your hand on your chest. Feel your heartbeat. Your heart is beating without your trying. Your lungs are breathing without your managing them. Something is sustaining you right now that has nothing to do with your effort.

"There remains, then, a Sabbath-rest for the people of God." — Hebrews 4:9

Rest isn't just a day on the calendar. It's a posture, a way of being held rather than holding everything yourself.

Whisper it, or just let it move through you quietly: "I am held. I don't have to hold it all."

Notice how your body responds to that. Even a small softening counts.

Taking This With You

Gently bring your awareness back to the room. Feel your feet. Feel the weight of your body. Take an easy breath. Ask yourself honestly: What would it look like to carry this, held rather than striving, into the next hour of my day? You don't have to have an answer. The question itself is the practice.

Place both hands over your heart and close with this prayer: "Lord, teach me to rest in You, not just on a day off, but in the middle of everything. Hold what I've been carrying. I trust You with it. Amen."

Take one more slow breath. And when you're ready, open your eyes and carry a little of this with you.