

Awaken to God's Presence | Responsible Choices

SUMMARY KEYWORDS

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SPEAKERS

Wendy Brian

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Greetings sojourners. My name is Wendy Bryan. I'm a minister, spiritual director and spiritual formation specialist in Community of Christ. It's good to be with you today.

In Community of Christ, we have nine enduring principles that guide our lives, our ministry, and our stories. These nine principles are: All are Called, Worth of all Persons, Responsible Choices, Pursuit of Peace (Shalom), Unity in Diversity, Blessings of Community, Grace and Generosity, Continuing Revelation, and Sacredness of Creation. Today, I offer you a meditation on responsible choices.

As we begin, please know that silence and meditation is a gift. It is a chance to listen. From time to time in this process today, there will be silent moments. Let them speak to your heart. You may want some paper and something to write with as you move through this time with the Divine today. Feel free to press pause for those silent moments.

As we move through this meditation today, take notice if any of your thoughts or emotions have spaces in your body that you feel them. Perhaps it is sorrow you feel in your heart, or a question that even pondering it makes your head hurt. It could be a tightening of your neck and shoulders or in your gut. Allow yourself to feel that space in your body, acknowledge it. Release it. It no longer needs to dwell in you. Find a comfortable place for you to occupy. Feel your body sink into that space. Feel your feet on the floor which connects you to the earth.

Let's start by taking three deep breaths in and out.

In and out.

In and out.

In Romans 7:15, the author of Romans, who is believed to be Paul, writes, I do not understand my own actions for I do not do what I want, but the very thing I hate. Let me read that one more time. I do not understand my own actions. For I do not do what I want, but the very thing I hate.

Spend a couple of minutes and think about a situation where your actions in that situation surprised you? Because that was not the action you expected from yourself. In your mind or on paper, ask forgiveness to whomever needs to hear it. If recalling a safe situation made you feel it in your body somewhere, acknowledge that and release it. How would you handle this situation differently if presented with it today?

Often times our decisions have to be made in the moment. But sometimes we have many moments to ponder the best path forward. What equips you with those instantaneous decisions? How have you set your path in a way that you are ready to make responsible choices? What can you correct in your life today in order to make responsible choices in the future? Write those down and say a prayer about it.

At decision times when you can sit back and think about your choices, what strategies enable you to make sure they are responsible choices? What strategies hinder it? Write that down and pray about it.

Moving forward then, take notice of those times when the choices are required in your life. Which ones seem particularly hard? Which ones take no thought at all?

In all your choices, remember that God walks with you. Call upon God for clarity in your choices and strength to do what is right. How might that prayer to God in this look? Again, release your body for past decisions that cause you regret.

Today, start anew knowing that you have been gifted with grace and that you are deeply loved. There has been a lot to process here. Continue to dwell on it after you leave this space.

To close this time together, I'd like to share a prayer with you written by Nancy Bieber. From the book called, *Decision Making and Spiritual Discernment*. Breathe in these words:

Here we are loving one Creator God, half awake to this astounding world. half awake to our own mysterious lives. Absorbing only drops of this richly layered life. We want to notice more to be alive to who we are within, to the stories and the dreams to the person we have become. And the one we can become. To know what is real. We are ready to surrender illusion. That painted comfort which has been our friend. We want to see what is true, what is real, to hold as much as heart and mind can hold of the world we live in and whom we can become. We want to be awake, God, to your opening paths to create and participate in the shaping of the way. Here we are loving one. Ready to begin. Amen.