



## Sculptor Meditation

This meditation asks youth to visualize Jesus in the sculptor's studio.

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## OVERVIEW

A meditation in which we imagine ourselves as stones ready to be sculpted by God, as suggested in Brother Lawrence's The Practice of the Presence of God.

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## Scripture

### ISAIAH 64:8

Yet, O LORD, you are our Father;  
we are the clay, and you are our potter;  
we are all the work of your hand.

### JEREMIAH 18:1-6

The word that came to Jeremiah from the LORD: "Come, go down to the potter's house, and there I will let you hear my words." So I went down to the potter's house, and there he was working at his wheel. The vessel he was making of clay was spoiled in the potter's hand, and he reworked it into another vessel, as seemed good to him.

Then the word of the LORD came to me: Can I not do with you, O house of Israel, just as this potter has done? says the LORD. Just like the clay in the potter's hand, so are you in my hand, O house of Israel.

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## Quotations

My prayers consist of a simple continuation of this same exercise. Sometimes I imagine that I'm a piece of stone, waiting for the sculptor. When I give myself to God this way, He begins sculpting my soul into the

perfect image of His beloved Son.

— *Brother Lawrence*

We ought not to be weary of doing little things for the love of God, who regards not the greatness of the work, but the love with which it is performed.

— *Brother Lawrence*

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## Introducing the Practice

Brother Lawrence (1614-1691) was a Carmelite friar in France known for his spiritual wisdom regarding the presence of God. He was born to peasant parents, and he fought in the army before dedicating his life to God in the Carmelite monastery. After Brother Lawrence's death, a collection of his letters, conversations, and writings was published with a short biography of his life under the title *The Practice of the Presence of God*. This profound spiritual work teaches the supreme value of knowing the presence of God through faith in each moment of life. Brother Lawrence was not ordained to the priesthood as some members of the monastery were, and he served a lowly job in the kitchen of the monastery. Still, he was perfectly satisfied with his humble status in the monastery, and he sought the presence of God in all that he did. Brother Lawrence says, "At the beginning of my duties, I would say to the Lord with confidence, 'During my work, I would always continue to speak to the Lord as though He were right with me, offering Him my services and thanking Him for His assistance.'" Brother Lawrence speaks of keeping God present in his own soul wherever he went. For Brother Lawrence, there was no situation where one could not be actively aware of God's presence. Practicing the presence of God, according to Brother Lawrence, was the simplest and easiest way to progress along the spiritual path to God.

While Brother Lawrence speaks of practicing the presence of God at all times and places, he also gives some advice for specific practices that assist in bringing about an awareness of God's presence. Our meditation today is based off of a practice that Brother Lawrence explains in *The Practice of the Presence of God* in which one imagines oneself to be a block of stone waiting to be sculpted by God.

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## Preparing for the Practice

Have everyone spread out to find a comfortable place to sit where they can still hear the voice of the person guiding the practice.

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## The Spiritual Practice

Find a comfortable place to sit. Gently close your eyes and open your heart as you settle into the present moment. (1-2 min silence)

Imagine a sculptor's studio, empty except for one partially carved block of stone sitting in the middle of the room. This stone is being sculpted into a statue of you. What does it look like? What kind of stone is it? How close is it to being completed? Bring to mind as many details as you can. The height of the statue. The feel of the stone. The posture, the shape, and the size. (3-5 min silence)

Now become your statue. Look out at the room from your place in the stone. What does it feel like to be your statue? What does it feel like as you wait to be finished by the sculptor? (3-5 min silence)

Michelangelo once said about one of his sculptures, "I saw the angel in the marble and carved until I set him free."

Imagine Jesus walking into the studio with a chisel in hand ready to work on your statue. How does it feel to know that the sculptor sees your perfect finished form even before carving away all the unneeded stone? How does Jesus look at you? What do you feel when you see Jesus looking at you? (3-5 min silence)

How do you and Jesus interact? Does Jesus say anything to you? Do you say anything to Jesus? Or do you just silently look lovingly at each other? (3-5 min silence)

God created each one of us to be unique reflections of his image, but we are not yet perfect. God must chip away everything in us that is not the true self created in God's image. If you feel comfortable doing so, consent to Jesus working on you. Say to Jesus, "Lord, make me perfect as you see fit." Allow God to do his work. (3-5 min silence)

Know that your statue will not look like anyone else's because God did not create you to be the same as anyone else. You are a unique reflection of God's image, and God the sculptor can already see a masterpiece in your unfinished block of stone.

Amen.

*Duration: 15-20 minutes*

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## Discussion Questions

1. What did your statue look like? How did you react to seeing a statue of yourself?
2. How did Jesus' reaction to your statue differ from your own reaction?