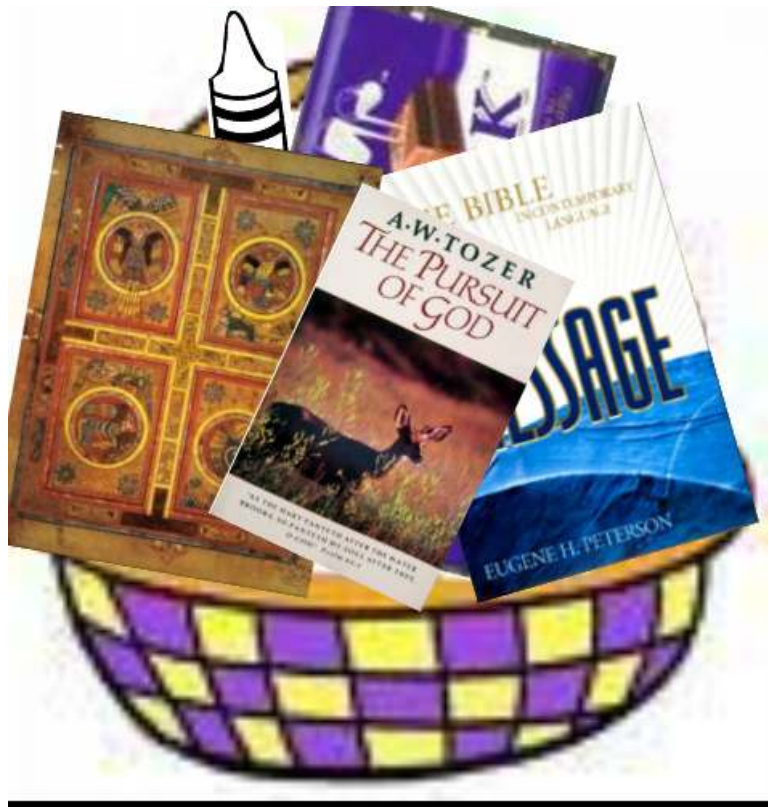


# Taking Time to Pause



How to have your  
own Spiritual  
Retreat

By Rachel Larkin

PAUSE: N. TO CEASE, OR CAUSE TO REST.  
A MUSICAL TERM.

PAUSE: V. TO PAUSE UPON, TO DELIBERATE.

DELIBERATE: V. TO BALANCE IN THE MIND,  
TO WEIGH, TO CONSIDER.

REST: V.

1. TO CEASE FROM ACTION OR MOTION OF ANY KIND; TO STOP
2. TO CEASE FROM LABOUR, WORK OR PERFORMANCE
3. TO BE QUIET OR STILL; TO BE UNDISTURBED
4. TO BE QUIET OR TRANQUIL AS THE MIND; NOT TO BE AGITATED BY FEAR. ANXIETY OR OTHER PASSION
5. TO SLEEP
6. TO LEAN; TO RECLINE FOR SUPPORT, TO TRUST, TO RELY
7. TO BE SATISFIED
8. TO ABIDE, TO REMAIN WITH
9. TO BE CALM OR COMPOSED IN MIND; TO ENJOY PEACE OF CONSCIENCE

I DEFINITELY WANT THIS REST!!!!!!

It's coming up to that time of year where most of us take a break from work and go on holiday. Our family is going camping—no T.V., no phones, no work and definitely no vacuum cleaning!

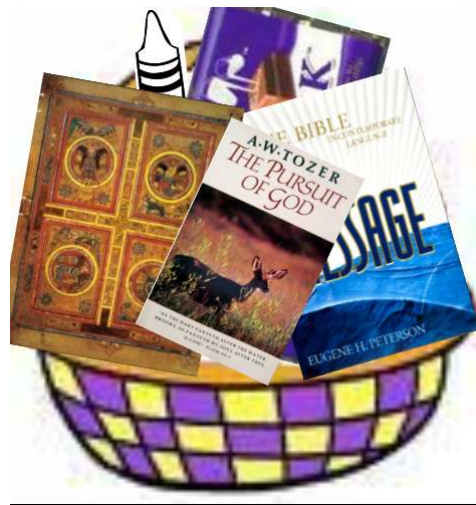
It is common over the new year for people to review the past year and to set New Years Resolutions. Usually the resolutions are to better their finances, gain a healthier lifestyle or learn a new hobby.

It's amazing, but true that amidst the Christmas rush and preparations for the holiday that our spiritual lives are left untouched and don't feature in our New Year's Resolutions. BUT, I say that the holidays are a perfect time to review our Christian walk and strengthen our relationship with God.

It has become a tradition for me to use the Christmas break as a SPIRITUAL RETREAT. It is an opportunity to good to miss! - to be able to PAUSE from my normal life and have the extra time to invest in my relationship with God, I can't wait!

## My Spiritual Retreat Basket of Goodies

- ♥ Bible
- ♥ Journal, pens, highlighter
- ♥ Inspirational Christian books
- ♥ Chocolate—yep I am afraid I am addicted!



# YOUR SPIRITUAL RETREAT

**R**EVIEW your Journal, looking for Rhema words /promises and lessons that God was trying to teach you during the year.

**E**VALUATE—Did you learn from God's lessons? Did you apply God's Kingdom principles to your life? Are you closer to God now than 365 days ago?

**T**ALK TO GOD , praise Him for the year's blessings and hard times. Spend time worshipping Him. Ask Him to show you what is on His heart for you in the coming year.

**R**EAD THE BIBLE (and other great inspirational Christian books) Listen to His guidance and direction for the coming year. Savour His Word—*"Your words are what sustain me; they are food to my hungry soul"* Jeremiah 15 v 6 (TLB)

**E**MBRACE His message to you. Dwell and meditate on the promises that He gave you during the year.

“Embrace” means—to clasp, accept, seize, welcome, obtain, cover, enclose, hold, enfold, encompass.

*“Jesus was matter-of-fact: **Embrace** this God-life. Really **embrace** it, and nothing will be too much for you. This mountain, for instance: Just say, 'Go jump in the lake'—no shuffling or shilly-shallying—and it's as good as done. That's why I urge you to pray for absolutely everything, ranging from small to large. Include everything as you **embrace** this God-life, and you'll get God's everything. And when you assume the posture of prayer, remember that it's not all asking. If you have anything against someone, forgive—only then will your heavenly Father be inclined to also wipe your slate clean of sins.”*  
*Mark 11 v 21—23 (The Message)*

Take a hold of what God wants to do in your life in 2007. Exciting!! Catch a vision. Dream a little, NO! Dream a lot!

**A**BIDE in His Presence—no excuses now , you are on holiday—you don't have to be away from the family to abide.

Practice taking moments throughout the day - while at the beach, while driving around—contemplate who God is and who He is to you. Practice constantly turning to Him, abide in Him. His actual physical presence dwells inside you via His Holy Spirit!!!!

**T**REASURE what God has reveal during your SPIRITUAL RETREAT . If you don't usually keep a journal, consider seriously taking up the practice of keeping a record of God's workings in your life. It comprises a large part of my Christian growth.

*“But Mary treasured up all these things and pondered them in her heart” Luke 2 v 19*

**By Rachel Larkin**

*Rachel Larkin currently resides in New Zealand with her soul mate, Noel and their three awesome boys (aged 9 to 5). Rachel worked in the corporate world for ten years as a Chartered Accountant before coming home to educate her children. She has a passion for inspiring and encouraging women to partake of all that God has for them. Check out more encouraging articles and freebies at her website: <http://www.Rachel-Larkin.com>*