
THE STORY OF GOD

Practicing The Way - Meditation on Scripture

The Bible is not like any other book. When we come to the Bible God's Spirit is there with us helping us to understand. For this reason we can both experience it as a big, historical document but also as a very personal communication to us in that moment. We read the Word...but the Word also reads us. God uses it to help us reflect on our connection to Him and His work in the world and help us to trust His lead and follow Him more closely.

Lectio Divina

From: <https://practictheway.org/silence-solitude/week-five>

Lectio divina, or "spiritual reading" is an ancient practice of connecting with God in Scripture. Lectio Divina is not a new method of Bible Study. Whereas study of the Bible sets its focus on learning, lectio divina is an ancient time-tested method of meeting God in the Scriptures. In doing so, the disciple allows the Scriptures (in co-operation with the Spirit) to lead the reader into further intimacy with God as they are shaped into the image of Jesus in the process. The practice consists of five distinct movements:

- 1) Preparing to meet with God
- 2) Reading (lectio)
- 3) Reflection (meditatio)
- 4) Response (oratio)
- 5) Rest (contemplatio)

BEGIN WITH SILENCE AND PRAYER (5 MINUTES)

Invite the Holy Spirit to lead and guide your time together before spending a brief moment in silence. Hardness of hearing is an unfortunate side effect of the frenetic pace in which many of us conduct our lives. When your community comes together in the hopes of speaking to and hearing from God, even a momentary measure of silence can work to slow and silence the swirling chaos around us, that we might hear what God is saying in and through one another.

Choose a passage to meditate on. Today we'll be working with Matt 6:25-34 in church together. You may want to try this on your own in your time with God and can use a variety of passages in this practice.

Some suggestions might be: Psalm 100.
Romans 12
Psalm 23
John 15:1-17
Isaiah 58

1 John 1:5-2:2
Revelation 21:1-7
Psalm 139

After selecting one passage, read and move slowly through each of the five movements of spiritual reading.

Prepare to meet with God: Turn your phone off and leave it another room. Situate yourself comfortably in a quiet, solitary place. Calm your body and quiet your mind before God as you work to prepare your heart to receive what God has spoken, and to respond accordingly. Finally, invite the Holy Spirit to guide your thinking and feeling as you read.

Read (lectio): Read the passage slowly and carefully. Take your time. As you move through the text, pay close attention to what words and ideas draw your attention in unique ways. When your focus is drawn to a particular word or thought, pause momentarily to reflect on them with specificity.

Reflect (mediatio): Upon completing the passage, return to the beginning and read again. On your second journey through the text, allow the text to connect with you personally. Which words or phrases assume a particular resonance with your heart, your season of life, your person in this moment. Posit the following questions: What do I need to know, or be, or do in light of the text? What does this mean for my life today?

Respond (oratio): Talk to God about your experience.

Rest (contemplatio): Pause to sit in God's presence before fleeing from the moment. You might express wonder, awe, gratitude, or praise through words, or you might allow yourself to feel and experience these things quietly before God.

REFLECT:

Rejoin your group and reflect on the following:

How was your experience trying out meditating on scripture? Did you find it natural or difficult? Why? Did you notice anything interesting in your time with the Word that you could share with the group?