

Listening to God through *Lectio Divina*

Adapted from an article by Andy Rau

What is *Lectio Divina*?

Lectio Divina (literally, divine reading) is an unhurried, contemplative reading of a portion of Scripture. It came into practice in the 200s as early Christians sought communing with God through solitude. Practicing *lectio Divina* begins when we withdraw to a quiet or still place, with no agenda or checklist in mind. *Lectio Divina* invites us into conversational intimacy with God through His Word.

Preparation

- ❖ Choose a short passage of Scripture (ideally, less than 15 verses)
- ❖ Oftentimes The Psalms, The Gospels (Matthew, Mark, Luke and John) and the Epistles (the letters found in the New Testament, spanning from Romans to Jude) are used.
- ❖ Go to a quiet place. Put your body in a comfortable position. Slow your breathing and focus on your attention on God.

Step 1: READ THE TEXT (*lectio*)

- ❖ Focus your affection and attention on God.
- ❖ Read the passage slowly and listening for God to speak through it.
- ❖ Look for a phrase or two that grabs your attention.

Step 2: MEDITATE ON THE TEXT (*meditatio*)

- ❖ Focus your affection and attention on God.
- ❖ Read the passage slowly again. As you read, reflect on the words. Interact with them. Invite them to shed light on your thoughts and experiences.
- ❖ Ask God to connect these truths to your life; to impress them on your heart and mind.

Step 3: PRAY THE TEXT (*oratio*)

- ❖ Focus your affection and attention on God.
- ❖ Read the passage slowly again. Talk with God about what He has spoken to you through the text.
- ❖ Do not bring demands and petitions to God; rather, ask God to take his Word into the deepest and most intimate places in our lives. Invite Christ to expose and search you, so that He might cleanse you, heal you and make you free.

Step 4: LIVE THE TEXT (*contemplatio*)

- ❖ Focus your affection and attention on God.
- ❖ Read the passage slowly again. As you do, entrust yourself to God and reflect on what He has spoken. *Be still and know that He is God (Psalm 46:10).*
- ❖ Rest in His all sufficient grace. Rest in His unconditional love for you.
- ❖ Remain in His presence, but do not feel the need to fill the space with words.
- ❖ Having been in God's presence and shaped by God's Word, ask God to release you to fulfill His purposes for you today.

"Christians feed on Scripture. Holy Scripture nurtures the holy community as food nurtures the human body. Christians don't simply learn or study or use Scripture; we assimilate it, take it into our lives in such a way that it gets metabolized into acts of love, cups of cold water, missions into all the world, healing and evangelism and justice in Jesus' name, hands raised in adoration of the Father, feet washed in company with the Son."

– Eugene Peterson, "Eat This Book"