

Lectio Divina – Reading Scripture with God

The Bible is the inspired word of God. It is not a book about God. It is a book from God, written to his people in order to reveal himself to them. God is present in the Bible, so a disciple will read with God's presence in mind.

When we practice *Lectio* (lex-ee-oh) *Divina*, we listen to the Word of God. We listen to the words of the Bible, and we listen to Jesus through the Holy Spirit. We read with an ear toward what he is saying to us in the passage and what that means in our lives. In this sense, *Lectio Divina* is as much a practice of prayer as it is scripture.

1. Find a quiet place to practice. Take a moment to rest. Close your eyes and take a deep breath. Quiet your heart, and remember you are in God's presence.
2. **Lectio** (read): In the first movement of lectio, we read the passage. Be intentional about the pace of your reading. Don't rush through it. Read the passage slowly and reflectively. Let the words pour over you. Pay attention to what stands out. Is there a word, phrase, character, or even a concept that catches your attention? (Don't hurry to find meaning; just note that God has something to say in what stands out.)
3. **Meditatio** (mediate): In this stage of lectio, we mull over what stood out in the passage. Some have referred to this stage as time to chew on the text. We are not necessarily looking for theological interpretation. We reflect on the passage with God. This stage is one of receiving. Read the passage again, keeping in mind what stood out in your earlier reading. Once again be intentional about the pace of your reading. Listen to the Holy Spirit. What is God saying to you in the passage? How do you find yourself responding to what stood out and what you are hearing?
4. **Oratio** (pray): In the first two movements we receive, but in the third movement we respond. Based on your time in the first two movements, what will you say to God? You may consider:
 - a. In God inviting you to do something?
 - b. Do you sense a need to confess or repent?
 - c. Are you grateful for His words?
 - d. Are you fearful about what God is inviting you to do?
 - e. Talk to God about it.
5. **Contemplatio** (contemplate): After reading, meditating, and praying, in this final movement of lectio, we submit to God's presence. Read the passage a final time and rest in the presence of God. Let go of agendas, fears, and all that pulls your attention away from God's loving presence. Here you can read and be at peace in the presence of the one who created you and loves you.

Some passages to practice *Lectio Divina*:

The Lord Calls Samuel (1 Samuel 3:1-21)

Moses and the Burning Bush (Exodus 3:1-22)

Vine and the Branches (John 15:1-17)

Do Not Worry (Matthew 6:25-34)

Jesus washes the disciples' feet (John 13: 1-17)

Imitating Christ's humility (Philippians 2:1-11)

Faith and Deeds (James 2:14-25)

God's love and ours (1 John 4:7-21)