

Week 8: Lectio Divina (Divine Reading)

The four Lectio Divina “moments” flow in and out of each other according to the inspiration of the Spirit. We will read the passage three times in three different voices. Following each reading will be a minute or so of silence to reflect on the questions below. You may want to jot down a brief note in your journal about what God is saying to you.

- 1st reading - What word or phrase stirs my heart?
- 2nd reading - What is the word or phrase saying to me?
- 3rd reading - How is God inviting me to pray, to grow and change?

READING – Philippians 2:1-8, 12-13 (CEB)

¹ Therefore, if there is any encouragement in Christ, any comfort in love, any sharing in the Spirit, any sympathy, ² complete my joy by thinking the same way, having the same love, being united, and agreeing with each other. ³ Don't do anything for selfish purposes, but with humility think of others as better than yourselves. ⁴ Instead of each person watching out for their own good, watch out for what is better for others. ⁵ Adopt the attitude that was in Christ Jesus:

⁶ Though he was in the form of God,
he did not consider being equal with God something to exploit.

⁷ But he emptied himself
by taking the form of a slave
and by becoming like human beings.

When he found himself in the form of a human,

⁸ he humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of death,
even death on a cross.

¹² Therefore, my loved ones, just as you always obey me, not just when I am present but now even more while I am away, carry out your own salvation with fear and trembling. ¹³ God is the one who enables you both to want and to actually live out his good purposes.

REST in God beyond thoughts. Take a moment to be still and breathe deeply in God's presence with you.

RESOLVE: As you emerge from this place of personal encounter with God to life in the company of others, resolve to carry this word with you and to live it out in the context of daily life and activity.

Week 8: Classical Spiritual Disciplines

1. How do you respond to the word “discipline”? Does it have positive or negative connotations for you? Why? Do you try to avoid discipline, or does discipline become all consuming?
2. Do you tend more toward a “do-it-yourself spirituality” or a “let-God-do-it-all mentality”?
3. Disciplines come with mixed motives. We can attempt to use them to gain God’s favor, to get God to do what we want, to accomplish transformation by our own efforts, to impress others, to make ourselves feel better, etc. What temptations or motives do you tend toward most?
4. What is the only pure motive for spiritual disciplines and why does it matter?
5. How do you understand the relationship between classical spiritual disciplines and personal spiritual disciplines?
6. Describe your understanding of prayer. How has your understanding and practice of prayer shifted throughout your life? What role has both personal and corporate prayer played in your own spiritual life?
7. How have you personally experienced the difference between formational reading and informational reading? How has the lectio divina process impacted the way you read scripture and other spiritual or devotional resources?
8. What else stood out to you from this week’s reading?

Next Steps

What is one specific way I will respond to God’s invitation for me this week?

For Next Week

1. Read Chapter 10: The Nature of Spiritual Disciplines
2. Consider one area where your body is “dead because of sin,” - a harmful habit, a disruptive attitude, a destructive relationship, etc. What spiritual discipline might help you open yourself to God’s transforming work in this area? See pp. 155.
3. Optional: Other great resources for exploring spiritual disciplines include *Celebration of Discipline*, by: Richard Foster and *Sacred Rhythms*, by Ruth Haley Barton. Available on Amazon.