



SEEING THE SCRIPTURES THROUGH A NEW LENS

LECTIO DIVINA

WHAT IS LECTIO DIVINA?

Lectio Divina is Latin for 'divine reading'. It is an ancient way of taking the word of God deep into our hearts and lives. As we read, we are inviting the Holy Spirit, who **breathed out** the Scriptures that we read, to **breathe them in to us** and give life. As Paul writes in Colossians 3:16, we are to "Let the word of Christ dwell in us richly." Through the Bible, God wants all of who He is (Father, Son & Spirit) to interact with all that we are (mind, emotions, body & soul). In Lectio Divina, we don't read the Bible like a textbook and try to learn something from it. We read reflectively and prayerfully, as a conversation with God. We are seeking to interact with God and let him in to every area of our lives.

WHY SHOULD WE TRY IT?

As people born in the West, which is infused with the philosophies of modernism, we tend to read the Bible primarily with our minds. We tend to read the Bible looking for concepts, truths and principles to apply and for explanations that help us better understand our world.

While we should be getting these concepts, truths and principles from Scripture, the Bible was written as a story. It is meant to engage not just our minds, but our hearts and the deepest parts of who we are. Think about how you read other books that are not the Bible- or how you watch movies. We don't tend to read or watch to learn a concept, but to be engaged in a story. And, as we engage in the story, powerful and life-changing truths emerge.

This is our goal as we read through Scripture using the Lectio Divina method. We will learn life-changing truths and our minds will be engaged. We will find explanations and concepts that allow us to think differently. But, we will do so by entering into the story of the Bible, trying to experience what the characters in the story felt, heard, saw, and touched. Instead of trying to explain something that we've never experienced, we are looking to experience something that leads to understanding and explanation. Ironically, wonderful insights often come when we abandon pursuing them and instead focus on being in God's presence and listening to the Word. We are inviting the Holy Spirit, who breathed out the Scriptures that we read, to breathe in to us and give life.

HOW DO WE DO IT?

It's really pretty simple! Slow down and don't read the Bible like a textbook, but like a story. Ask the Lord to let you imagine yourself in the story and experience what the people in the story experienced. There are a few simple steps:

READ —> **REFLECT** —> **RESPOND** —> **REST**
A PASSAGE **SILENTLY** **PRAYERFULLY** **IN GOD'S PRESENCE**

1. Pick a Passage to Read.
2. Pick a Character in the Story to Follow.
3. Read the passage several times, engaging your 5 senses (touch, taste, smell, sound and sight).
4. Write down the story from that person's experience.
5. If there are several characters in the story, try to put yourself in their place.
6. Meditate and ask God, "What are you saying to me? And what am I going to do about it?"
7. Share with a group of people. You'll see things that no one else saw, and vice versa.

You'll begin to see and feel the Scriptures in a new way. And you'll find that your mind is engaged through your experience of the story. Truth will get into your heart, and your mind will be engaged, and your life will change.