

## Discipleship Class

# LECTIO DIVINA

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## Week 2: Reading and Reflecting



We often come to Lectio Divina as a *distracted* and *anxious* Martha, but the goal is to take on the position of Mary, who can calmly sit at the feet of Jesus and receive His Word (see Luke 10:39).

### *The Importance of Being Relaxed*

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- ◆ Lectio Divina works best when our souls are *resting*, not *running*.
- ◆ "Shalom is the fertile potting soil for revelation and prayer." - John Paul Jackson
- ◆ Jesus taught a parable about how the cares of this world will choke out God's Word and prevent it from bearing fruit in our lives (See Mark 4:19).
- ◆ "The greatest enemy of the spiritual life is hurry." - Dallas Willard

*"My heart is not proud, Lord, my eyes are not haughty; I do not concern myself with great matters or things too wonderful for me.*

*But I have calmed and quieted myself, I am like a weaned child with its mother; like a weaned child I am content." (Psalm 131:1-2)*

- ◆ The Psalmist says that He calmed and quieted Himself. We know how to *distract* our minds. However, we don't know how to *quiet* our minds.
- ◆ The Psalmist says that He will let go of the things that he can't fix or figure out, and he will move to a place of just trusting in God and allowing Him to be our safe place.

### *How to Deal with Distractions:*

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- ◆ When there is something weighing on your heart tell the Lord about it (see 1 Peter 5:7). Talking with the Lord may help us to release it to the Lord.
- ◆ There may be certain worship songs that help quiet your soul.
- ◆ When distractions come, you can write it down. Writing it down can free up your mind to be able to receive from the Spirit.

### *Honoring God by honoring His Word:*

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As we engage in Lectio Divina, we must remember that the goal is not just learning content, but rather to communion with God. However, we are to *honor* the *content* that is before us, because it has been given to us by God. We honor the Lord by faithfully and carefully studying the content in the Scriptures.

"Lectio Divina is a way to practice giving God your full, undivided attention." - John Paul Jackson

## *We are to be students of the Scriptures:*

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“Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needs not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.” - 2 Timothy 2:15 KJV

## *Questions good students ask while studying:*

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### *1. Who is the author and audience?*

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1. Who wrote it?
2. When was it written?
3. Why was it written?
4. Who was the original audience?
5. How would the original audience have understood the content?

### *2. What is the main idea?*

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1. Where does the author *begin* and *end* a thought?
2. If your passage is in mid-thought, zoom out and see the passage within the context.
3. Zoom further out and see what the main thoughts are of that particular *chapter* and *book* of the Bible.
4. Zoom out again, and see how the rest of the Bible supports this main idea.
  - ◆ When Satan tempted Jesus in the wilderness, Satan used the Scriptures against Jesus, but how Satan used the Scriptures were *inconsistent* with the *teachings* of the Scriptures and *unfitting* with *themes* of Scriptures.

### 3. *What are the intentional details?*

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1. Jesus saw every letter as important:
  - ◆ “For truly I tell you, until heaven and earth disappear, not the smallest letter, not the least stroke of a pen, will by any means disappear from the Law until everything is accomplished.” (Matthew 5:18)
  - ◆ “God is in the details...” - Albert Einstein
2. If certain words repeat, ask why do they repeat? *(Usually to reinforce a primary point.)*
  - ◆ Example 1: “Holy, Holy, Holy”
  - ◆ Example 2: In Psalm 119: “revive me according to Your Word” (repeats three times in the chapter).
3. If certain themes sound familiar, ask why they sound familiar? *(Usually because there are patterns and parallels.)*
  - ◆ *Example:* There is a Joseph in Genesis and a Joseph who is linked to Mary. They are both dreamers. Through their prophetic dreams they end up in Egypt and save their families.
  - ◆ One prolific Bible-teacher even suggested that every major doctrine of Scripture such as the Trinity, salvation by faith, the Holy Spirit, the judgment of God, the grace of God, can be found in the book of Genesis alone.
4. Pay special attention to concrete imagery. These pictures will help your mind engage, and may link you to similar imagery in other passages.

## *Why Meditate Upon the Word:*

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### *1. Fruitfulness and success are promised to those who meditate on God's Word.*

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- ◆ *"Blessed is the one who does not walk in step with the wicked or stand in the way that sinners take or sit in the company of mockers, but whose delight is in the law of the Lord, and who meditates on his law day and night. That person is like a tree planted by streams of water, which yields its fruit in season..." (Psalm 1:1-3)*
- ◆ *"Keep this Book of the Law always on your lips; meditate on it day and night, so that you may be careful to do everything written in it. Then you will be prosperous and successful." (Joshua 1:8)*

### *2. It is loving God with all our minds.*

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- ◆ *Jesus taught that we are to "love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind, and with all your strength." (Mark 12:30)*
- ◆ *- We love God with our minds by filling our minds with His Word.*

### *3. We want our minds to be full of light.*

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- ◆ *When we fill our minds with the Word of God, it will lead to illumination and revelation (Psalm 119:30).*
- ◆ *The Word of God will protect our minds from becoming darkened (Romans 1:21, Ephesians 4:17).*

### *4. We want "the mind of Christ" (1 Corinthians 2:16).*

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- ◆ *This means we are to fill our minds with the words of Christ. If we are going to think *like* Him, we are to fill our minds with His blessed Words and the Scriptures truth about who He is.*

*5. If you don't fill your mind with what's good, it will get filled with what bad.*

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- ◆ We are instructed to think about the things that are true, honorable, just, pure, lovely, gracious, excellent, and praise-worthy (Philippians 4:8). Meditating upon the Word will get us doing just that.
- ◆ Fill your mind with what's *positive* that there is no room for what's *negative*.

## *How to Meditate on the Word of God:*

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"Those who are fast readers gain no more advantage than a bee would by skimming the surface of a flower rather than penetrating it to extract its pollen. Speed-reading can be used for other subjects but never for divine truth" - Jeanne Guyon

*1. Hagah (Hebrew word for Meditate): means to reflect upon and, quite often, to vocalize your ruminations.*

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- ◆ There is power released when we *speak* the Word (Psalm 103:20).

*2. "Think over what I say, for the Lord will give you understanding in everything." (2 Timothy 2:7)*

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- ◆ Our job is to think over God's Word and it's the Lord's job to give us understanding in everything. Meditation enables the Holy Spirit to unlock the Scriptures to us. This happens because meditation proves your hunger for the Word.
- ◆ Eugene Peterson describes meditation as when his dog was passionately and persistently cleaning off the bone, making sure it was stripped clean!

*3. Keep asking the why questions:*

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- ◆ Don't be discouraged when you are confronted with a mysterious text or if revelation doesn't come quickly. God hides revelation not from us, but for us. Those who are honorable will seek out and find what God has hidden. When you discovered something from digging, you will treasure it more than when it's just given to you.

- ◆ *"It is the glory of God to conceal a thing, but the honor of kings is to search out a matter." (Psalm 52:1)*

#### *4. Allow the Word to penetrate your being:*

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- ◆ If reading the Scripture is being acquainted, the meditation of the Scripture is cultivating a friendship with the text. You tend to open your heart more to your friends than a mere acquaintance.
- ◆ *"allow the Word to penetrate more deeply into our being until we become one with the text" - Basil Pennington*

## ACTIVATION # 2: Lectio Divina as a Group



**First Reading:** Just listen without preconceived ideas, but an openness.

**Second Reading:** Listen for a word or phrase that is highlighted to you.

**Third Reading:** We can have a time of sharing how the Lord is speaking to people in our group on their own journeys. Start with "I hear the Lord saying to me..."

**Fourth Reading:** We can hear the Scripture read one more time, and allow the Word and You to become one. Notice how the impact of the reading of the same passage is greater than the first time it was read.

### **Passage: (Psalm 1)**

*"1 Blessed is the man who walks not in the counsel of the wicked, nor stands in the way of sinners, nor sits in the seat of scoffers; 2 but his delight is in the law of the Lord, and on his law he meditates day and night. 3 He is like a tree planted by streams of water that yields its fruit in its season, and its leaf does not wither. In all that he does, he prospers. 4 The wicked are not so, but are like chaff that the wind drives away. 5 Therefore the wicked will not stand in the judgment, nor sinners in the congregation of the righteous; 6 for the Lord knows the way of the righteous, but the way of the wicked will perish."*



## HOMWORK # 2



*Step #1: Get your heart and mind calm.*

- ◆ Use the suggestions given at the top of this lesson.
- ◆ You may need to speak to your body and mind and command it to “be still”.

*Step #2: Work through a passage and write down your observations from the reading (who, what, when, where, patterns, pictures).*

*Step #3: Write in another section what you have gleaned while meditating upon the passage. (The whys behind the what.)*