



MAKING SPACE WITH JESUS DURING THESE CHALLENGING TIMES

Each of these resources comes recommended by YFC Leader Development.

Guided Practices for Prayer

Lectio Divina.....	page 3
Praying Scripture.....	page 4
Examen.....	page 5

Podcasts We Enjoy

- [Ruth Hayley Barton](#)
- [Lisa Harper](#)
- [Andy Stanley](#)

Apps and Websites We Use

- [Lectio365](#)
- [She Reads Truth](#) (Free Bible studies and downloads)
- [He Reads Truth](#) (Free Bible studies and downloads)
- [FaithGateway](#) (Free Bible studies and downloads)
- [Our Daily Bread](#) (Free classes)

Books We Really Like

- Sacred Rhythms*, Ruth Haley Barton
- Pursuing God's Will Together*, Ruth Haley Barton
- Invitation to Retreat*, Ruth Haley Barton
- The Rest of God*, Mark Buchanan
- Invitations from God*, Adele Ahlberg Calhoun
- The Ruthless Elimination of Hurry*, John Mark Comer
- All Shall Be Well*, Catherine McNiel
- Eternity is Now in Session*, John Ortberg
- Soul Keeping*, John Ortberg
- Liturgy of the Ordinary*, Tish Harrison Warren
- Rare Leadership*, Marcus Warner, Jim Wilder, et al.

Lectio Divina

Lectio Divina, or Divine Reading as it is translated, has been practiced in the church since the third century. The “movements” we use today were first described in sixth century writings so it has been around for a long time. It differs from other methods of Bible study in that while traditional Bible study engages the mind, the focus of Lectio is to engage the heart. To view the scripture as the living word, one that brings life and nurture to the soul. As we move from listening with the head to listening to the heart, from activity to receptivity. Creating space for God’s word to speak to us. It is an opportunity to trust in the good slow work of God.

Here are the simple steps and questions.

Step 1: Find a quiet place, free from distractions. Get comfortable. Take some time to quiet your heart. Pray and ask the Holy Spirit to guide your time through the scripture passage. His word is living and active, life producing and exposes the intentions of our hearts (Hebrews 4:12-13).

Step 2: Read the passage first to familiarize yourself with it. Most of us bring years of context into each of our readings.

Step 3: Read the passage a second time praying for ears to hear and eyes to see a word or phrase He wants to bring to your attention today.

Step 4: Sit with your word or phrase for a minute then begin a third reading. Does a picture or image come to mind, or maybe a strong feeling or impression that you can identify? Remember the number of times that Jesus asked His listeners to picture or imagine something to bring it to life.

Step 5: Read the passage again, what is God’s personal invitation for you? You can write down what God may be inviting you to do, or just “be” in the moment. Pray for the courage to live into what has been given to you. Give thanks.

Praying Scripture

In the early centuries of the church, believers were taught to pray the scriptures.

Since the Bible is divinely inspired, praying scriptures can deeply connect us to the mind and heart of God. As scripture repeatedly is prayed, one benefit is memorization. His word truly is a lamp for our feet, and a light to our path (Psalm 119:105). Our speech and prayers can be gracious and seasoned with salt, making the best use of our time (Colossians 4:5-6).

Definition - Praying Scripture allows God to direct the content of prayer. It opens the heart to praying through particular prayers, psalms, teachings, and hopes found in scripture.

Practice Includes:

- Meditating on scripture, interacting around any revelations the stories bring
- Listening, lingering, and reflection of the stories
- Listening for the questions Jesus asks His disciples as if He was asking you the questions
- Placing your name in the place of "you" pronouns
- Adopting prayers from David, Daniel, Paul, Mary, Jesus, and other biblical people

God Given Fruit

- Growth in your love for God and His Word
- Receive direction in your prayers
- Surrendering your agenda in prayer, responding to God's agenda as revealed through scripture
- Slowing down scripture reading to a pace that serves listening
- Personalizing scripture by submitting your name where it's appropriate to do so

Spiritual Exercises

Step 1 - Take a few minutes to quiet your heart. Breathe in God's love. Breathe out self-doubts.

Step 2 - Select a passage of scripture.

Possible Options:

- Utilize the Lord's Prayer as a framework.
- Pick a Psalm and substitute your name for the pronouns me and I. Example: Psalm 139:13-14
- Convictions of your own sinfulness, pray through Psalm 51 or Psalm 32.
- Concerns for the church: Pray one of Paul's prayer for the church (Ephesians 1:15-21 or Philippians 1:3-6, 9) or Jesus' prayer for the church in John 17.
- Sing God's word: When a song comes into your mind, receive it as a word from God. Listen to the song. What is God saying to you? What do you want to say to God?
- Is there a prayer in scripture that you can make as your own love song to God?

Close: Give thanks. Journal a response. Look and listen in the days following your praying scripture experience; can you be praying the scripture for people God brings into your path?

*Resources on Praying Scripture:

Praying the Parables by Joyce Huggett.

A Call to Spiritual Reformation by D.A. Carson

The Prayer of Examen

The purpose of this prayer practice is to help us process our lives each day with God and before God. The Examen carves out a few moments of solitude in the midst of every day to allow us to reflect on what is going on and where our actions and choices are taking us. It is a form of discernment because it enables us to look concretely at events and ask:

Where is God in this situation?

How is God leading me?

What is God saying to me?

How was God there for me in that specific experience?

What in my present situation is leading me to God and others in love?

What is leading me away?

What is the underlying spirit in my dealing with others?

What is really going on and what's happening in my life these days?

The whole point of examine is to become more God centered by observing the moments when we are and are not God centered.

What the prayer looks like...

Transition into Examen:

I pray, asking the Holy Spirit to help me become aware of the love with which God looks upon me as I begin this practice of Examen.

Step one: I notice the gifts that God's love has given me this day and I give thanks to God for them.

Step two: I ask God for insight and the strength that will make this practice of Examen a work of grace; fruitful beyond my human capacity alone.

Step three: I review the last day with God. I look for stirrings in my heart and the thoughts that God has given me this day. I look also for those that have not been of God.

I review my choices in response to both throughout the day and in general.

Step four: I ask for the healing touch of the forgiving God who, with love and respect for me, removes my heart's burden's.

Step five: I look to the next day and, with God, plan concretely how to live it in accord with God's loving desire for my life.

Finally, aware of God's presence with me, I prayerfully conclude this practice of Examen.

Other Examen Questions:

What gave me life?

When did I give and receive the most love?

When did I feel the most alive today?

For what do I feel most grateful?

Where did I most encounter or see God?

What sucked the life for me?

When did I give and receive the least love?

For what am I least grateful?

Where did God seem absent?