

Lectio Divina



If you've ever tried to read the Bible, felt overwhelmed and quit, consider trying Lectio Divina.

Lectio Divina is a practice of prayerfully reading scripture. Traditionally, lectio has four steps: lectio (read), meditatio (meditate), oratio (pray), contemplatio (contemplate).

The Gospels provide some of the best places in scripture to practice lectio divina. Sign up for our Daily Devotional (covenant.org/dailydevo) and use the daily Gospel passage to practice lectio divina.

1. **Read:** During this step, read the text out loud, slowly and thoughtfully, not rushing to get to the end, but to listen to what God might be saying through the text.
2. **Meditate:** The early Christians practiced meditation by repeating a word or a phrase from scripture until it formed in their hearts and minds. Read the text out loud again and consider what word or phrase sticks out to you that you can meditate on throughout the day.
3. **Pray:** How can you pray from what you have meditated on? Maybe the word or phrase that stuck out to you has touched pain, anger or shame, and you need to register those feelings with God through lament. Perhaps it has revealed sin and your prayer needs to be one of repentance or confession. Maybe it has evoked gratitude. Whatever the case may be, spend a few minutes praying in response to the word or phrase that you meditated on.
4. **Contemplate:** After reading, meditating and praying, the final step is to rest in God's grace, allowing yourself simply to be with God. Spend a few minutes quietly praying for God's Spirit to lead you into deeper knowledge of God and of yourself.

The Word of Scripture should never stop sounding in your ears and working in you all day long, just like the words of someone you love. And just as you do not analyze the words of someone you love, but accept them as they are said to you, accept the Word of Scripture and ponder it in your heart, as Mary did. That is all. That is meditation...Do not ask, "How shall I pass this on?" but "What does it say to me?" Then ponder this Word long in your heart until it has gone right into and taken possession of you.

— Dietrich Bonhoeffer