

HEARING GOD'S VOICE THROUGH SCRIPTURE:

The practice of *Lectio Divina*

Lectio Divina (literally translated as “sacred reading”) is one way of opening ourselves up to the transforming work of God’s Spirit in our hearts and lives. Richard Peace, in his book *Noticing God*, defines it as “an ancient form of Bible reading (which can be traced back to the Benedictines).” It is a four step process, which he describes on page 99 of his book, and here’s how it works:

Step 1: Reading/listening. Read aloud a short passage of Scripture. [Pastor Marlayna invites you to start with Psalm 23.] As you read, listen for a word or phrase that speaks to you from the passage. What is God’s Spirit drawing your attention to? Write down the word or phrase that seems to “jump out” at you. (Note: There may be more than one! But, start with one 😊)

Step 2: Meditating. Repeat aloud the word or phrase to which you are drawn. Make connections between it and your life at this point in time. What do you think God might be saying to you by means of this word or phrase? Write it down.

Step 3: Praying. Take these thoughts, meditations and ideas from steps 1&2 and offer them back to God in prayer, giving thanks for God’s guidance and resting in God’s love for you. The prayer can be as simple as, “God, I thank you for _____.”

Step 4: Contemplating. Move from the activity of prayer to the stillness of contemplation. Simply rest in God’s presence. Stay open and listen for—and to—God. How is God revealing himself to you? What do you notice? After a while, write down any new insights you might have gained about God.

Psalm 23 (New Revised Standard Version)

- ¹ The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want.
- ² He makes me lie down in green pastures;
he leads me beside still waters;*
- ³ he restores my soul.*
He leads me in right paths*
for his name’s sake.
- ⁴ Even though I walk through the darkest valley,*
I fear no evil;
for you are with me;
your rod and your staff—
they comfort me.
- ⁵ You prepare a table before me
in the presence of my enemies;
you anoint my head with oil;
my cup overflows.
- ⁶ Surely* goodness and mercy* shall follow me
all the days of my life,
and I shall dwell in the house of the Lord
my whole life long.*

NOTE: *Pastor Marlayna explained this practice in her sermon on April 17th, 2016.*