

Rediscovering the Joy of Being with God

Yesterday we began our series on the Spiritual Disciplines. In this season when many of us are more isolated than usual and have fewer points of contact with our church family, it seems timely to take a look at some of the time-tested practices our Christian brothers and sisters have used to draw closer to God down through the ages. It's also timely to be studying this in the fall with our All Church Meeting just a few weeks away. This is typically a time when we take stock of our ministries, the health of our church, and remind ourselves of our mission and how we might continue to be faithful to it. Equipping our church to practice the Spiritual Disciplines as a way of drawing near to God is a very tangible way to be faithful to the first tenet of our mission, which is to help others to know and follow Jesus.

In addition to Luke's teaching on a particular discipline each week, we thought it would be helpful to our individual practice of them if we sent out some more detailed "how to's" for each discipline once a week. This week's discipline is meditation, so outlined below are some pointers for how to engage with God through meditation on Scripture. We hope you find it helpful, and we are praying for each of you as you pursue Jesus this week.

Scripture Meditation

Before you begin, read through the pointers below:

1. **Choose a time of day** when you can have an uninterrupted stretch of about 20 minutes.
2. **Find a quiet location** by yourself and get into a comfortable position.
3. **Select a verse or short passage** of Scripture to meditate on—the verse of the day from The Bible App or a few verses from a Psalm is a good place to start. The goal of Scripture meditation is to meet with God, *not* to get a large portion of Scripture under your belt.
4. **Try to relax your body, breathe slowly** and deeply and pray a simple prayer inviting God to be present: "Speak Lord, for your servant is listening." and/or "Come Holy Spirit."
5. **Read the verse or passage slowly**, listening for one word or a phrase that stands out to you or generates an emotional response from you.
6. **Spend a few moments savoring** that word or phrase, turning it over in your mind, repeating it silently—at this point, don't analyze or try to figure it out.
7. **Read the verse or passage a second time**, this time paying attention to where in your life that word or phrase applies.
8. **Spend a few moments pondering** what God is saying about that part of your life and how the word or phrase connects to it.
9. **Read the verse or passage a third time**, listening for what God is inviting you to in that area of your life—perhaps to trust him more deeply, to let go of something, to do something risky for him, to forgive someone, to be more Christlike, or to receive healing.
10. **Spend a few minutes responding to God** and his invitation, receiving what he has for you and trusting that he will be faithful to give you what you most need according to his promise to accomplish his work in and through you, his willing servant. If you like to journal, this might be a good thing to record in your journal.
11. **As you bring this time of meditation to a close, thank God** for meeting with you and invite him to continue reminding you of what he has shown you throughout the coming day or week.