

Lectio Divina

Lectio Divina, translated “divine reading,” is an ancient technique, practiced by Origen as early as the year 220 A.D., involving a slow, contemplative praying of the Scriptures which enables the Word of God to become a means of growing closer to God. For centuries, the practice of lectio divina was kept alive in the Christian monastic tradition and has only in recent years been incorporated more widely into Protestant practice.

Lectio divina is most effectively practiced in solitude, free from distractions, typically on a daily basis for a period of thirty minutes to one hour, although we will utilize it in this corporate setting for an abbreviated period in order to introduce the technique. The value of reading the Scriptures in this way is to allow God to reveal different levels of meaning, usually in four steps or moments: reading, meditation, prayer and contemplation.

Tonight, I will guide us through a lectio divina of our Epistle Lesson, 2 Timothy 1: 5-7. For each of the four moments, I will give brief instruction, read the passage slowly and then pause to allow for reflection before moving to the next moment. If the practice of lectio divina is something that interests you and you would like more information, the guide that we are using tonight will be available on the CBF-NC website on Monday.

To begin, place your hands on your lap or by your side and sit in a comfortable position. You may keep your eyes open or close them, whichever allows you to rid yourself of distractions and focus on God’s Word.

Reading (Lectio): (May include reading the passage slowly several times.)

In the first moment, we both read and listen, reading slowly, attentively, gently listening to hear a word or phrase that is God's word for us this day.

Hear now God's Word: 2 Timothy 1: 5-7

Meditation (Meditatio):

In the second moment, we reflect deeply on the passage, focusing on a word or phrase that speaks to us in a personal way and pondering it, allowing it to interact with our thoughts, hopes and memories. This is not exegesis, but is a very personal reading and application to one's own life. Hear now God's Word: 2 Timothy 1: 5-7

Prayer (Oratio):

In the third moment, we enter into dialogue with God, offering ourselves to God and opening ourselves to be touched and filled by God's Word. We may continue to focus on the word or phrase that we are pondering in order to be changed by it. This is not primarily an intellectual exercise but more the beginning of a conversation with God.

Hear now God's Word: 2 Timothy 1: 5-7

Contemplation (Contemplatio):

In the fourth moment of contemplation, we simply rest in the presence of the One whose Word has become a means of inviting us into God's transforming embrace. Here we practice silence, letting go of our own words and enjoying the experience of being in God's presence. Hear now God's Word: 2 Timothy 1: 5-7