

How To Pray: Upward. Inward. Outward

Questions to Ask yourself and God while reading the Bible:



I. UPWARD – Prayer is Devotional

What am I learning about God in this passage?

How does this passage help me enter his presence?

What troubles my heart that I need to lament upwards?

- Lord, I praise you that you are _____.
- Lord, I thank you for _____.
- Lord, help my mind and heart be in agreement with what you are showing me.

II. INWARD - Prayer is Transformational

What am I learning from this passage about myself, those close to me, or my church?

Where does this passage speak into my life/soul and how will I respond in prayer?

- Lord, I come to you asking, seeking, and knocking for ___?
- Lord, I regret _____ and ask for forgiveness?
- Lord, what do you want to show me or say to me?
- Lord, what is your will for me in this situation and what do I need to do?

III. OUTWARD - Prayer is Missional

What am I learning from this passage concerning others? How does this passage call me to intercede for them?

- As the Lord lays someone on your heart pray for BOB (Burden, Opportunities, and Boldness)
- Lord, who are you calling me to stand in the gap with prayer? How do I need to battle the enemy on their behalf?
- Lord, what specifically do you want me to pray for and do this week?

Lectio Divina

The ancient Christian practice meeting God through slow reading, meditating, praying, and contemplating of the Bible. Allow for moments of silence after each reading of scriptures.

1. **Read (*Lectio*)** – Slowly and prayerfully read a small portion of scripture. As you do allow yourself to come into the presence of God. Listen for the Holy Spirit to catch your attention with a word or phrase that “stops” you...that gets your attention...that “summons” you.

Question: Lord, what word or phrase are you wanting to speak to me and grab my attention?

Temptation: to go beyond simple listening and trying to figure out why the word or passage holds meaning to me.

2. **Meditate (*Meditatio*)** – Read your passage slowly again and consider how the word/phrase is speaking to your life. Allow it to interact and work with your reason, imagination, memory, hopes, desires, or emotions.

Question: Where is this passage speaking into my life/soul? How is my heart responding to this word/phrase?

Temptation: to go beyond where the word connects to my soul and try to figure out what I am supposed to do.

Note: If reading a story ask, “Where am I in this scene and what do I hear in the words addressed to me?”

3. **Pray (*Oratio*)** – Read the passage once more and offer your own prayerful **response** to what you hear God speaking to you. Prayer is engaging God, even if it is a quarrel or wrestling match, knowing that he loves you and accepts you.

- The Lord listens and speaks in return with gentle whispers.
- Is there an invitation from God in this passage?

Response: “Lord, what do you want me to do with what you are showing me?”

4. **Contemplate (*Contemplatio*)** – A time to reflect more deeply and enjoy God’s presence. In your contemplation, listen for anything else the Lord may want to speak or show you.

- Be receptive to how God wants to bring his presence into your situation. Close with prayers for yourself and others.