

Prayer Week 3

LISTEN

Sit comfortably, away from distractions.
Listen to the sounds around you, and acknowledge them.
Deepen your breathing.
Focus on God.
Offer him your thanks and praise.
Ask Him to be part of your day.

REFLECT

When you are ready, read a passage of scripture.

24-25 “These words I speak to you are not incidental additions to your life, homeowner improvements to your standard of living. They are foundational words, words to build a life on. If you work these words into your life, you are like a smart carpenter who built his house on solid rock. Rain poured down, the river flooded, a tornado hit—but nothing moved that house. It was fixed to the rock.

26-27 “But if you just use my words in Bible studies and don’t work them into your life, you are like a stupid carpenter who built his house on the sandy beach. When a storm rolled in and the waves came up, it collapsed like a house of cards.”

28-29 When Jesus concluded his address, the crowd burst into applause. They had never heard teaching like this. It was apparent that he was living everything he was saying—quite a contrast to their religion teachers! This was the best teaching they had ever heard.

Reflect upon what you have read. Give God time to speak to you.

- *Have a scripture triple decked sandwich*

Ask: what can I learn from this passage about God’s grace and about the way that I should live my Christian life?

PRAY

Loving God,
I pray for your church

in its variety and richness
throughout the world.
Bless the work of all
who share in the proclamation
of the good news of your kingdom.
Bless all your people, and all your flock.
Give your peace, your help, your love
to us your servants,
the sheep of your fold,
that we may be united
in the bond of peace and love,
one body and one spirit,
in one hope of our calling.

Liturgy of St. Mark (2nd century)

I pray for... (any other needs)

Grant us grace, O Father,
not to pass by suffering or joy without eyes to see.
Give us understanding and sympathy,
and guard us from selfishness,
that we may enter into
the joys and sufferings of others.
Use us to gladden and strengthen
those who are weak and suffering;
that by our lives we may help others to believe
and serve you, and shed forth your light
which is the light of life.

H.R.L (Dick) Sheppherd (1880-1937)

CONCLUDE

God of grace and glory give us the mind, the heart, and the strength to live for you. Walk with us and work through us that we may be faithful in prayer, grow in holiness and draw many to you. As we walk in the power of the Spirit transform us into the likeness of Christ, to the glory of your name.
Amen.

Scripture Triple Decker Sandwich

First layer

Read the passage of scripture and imagine it as vividly as possible

- what it looks like (light, dark, colour, shape)
- it sounds like (what is being said, how loud, background noise etc)
- what there is to touch – hard, soft liquid
- movement – people and surroundings
- what people wear and do
- etc

Second layer

Imagine again, just as vividly, but this time put yourself in the story then repeat first layer but add

- how it feels to be there
- what are you doing

Third layer

Imagine the story was being repeated today (in your life)

- where would it happen?
- who would be there?
- what would you do?
- what would it mean for you?

Difficult parts

It is easy to imagine an event in scripture or a story that is told but...

Letter of Paul – imagine the letter being written or receiving the letter off Paul (you can do similar for OT Law)

Psalms and songs – imagine singing them or the author writing, why did they write

The triple decked sandwich exercise is a simple version of an old practice...

Imaginative Engagement with Scripture

This method of praying was developed in the sixteenth century by the founder of the Jesuits, Ignatius of Loyola. It asks you to imagine that you are part of the Gospel Story that you are reading:

Prepare

Sit in a comfortable chair, in a quiet place, where you will not be distracted. Relax. Open your hands on your lap and ask God to begin to open your heart and imagination.

Read

Choose a story. Read it once or twice.

Imagine

Imagine the scene as if you were standing there. Use your senses. Watch, listen, taste, smell, and feel what is happening around you.

Observe

Who else is there? What can you hear? What can you smell? What is the mood?

Interact

Allow the event to unfold. Begin to interact with other people, especially Jesus.

Receive

Be attentive to what God is saying. Allow him to speak through your thoughts and emotions.

Conclude

Offer the experience to God. This may lead you into a time of thanksgiving, petition, intercession, lament or praise.