

DISCIPLESHIP COURSE

An Invitation to Follow

PART 5 | FORMATION | REFLECTIVE READING

"The Bible was not given for our information, but for our transformation." - D.L. Moody

"Meditation is talking to yourself about God in the presence of God." - Timothy Keller

THE BIG IDEA

Think of the show American Pickers - two guys who dig up old, rusty, neglected items and restore them to their original worth. That's exactly what God wants to do in us. He doesn't look at our broken, worn-down lives and give up. He says: I can see what this was meant to be. Let me renew it.

As disciples of Jesus, we are on a journey of renewal - being transformed back into who God designed us to be. And one of the most powerful ways that renewal happens is through reflective reading of Scripture.

KEY SCRIPTURES

Colossians 3:10

"Put on your new nature, and be renewed as you learn to know your Creator and become like him."

Romans 12:2

"Do not conform to the patterns of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind."

WHAT IS REFLECTIVE READING?

There are many ways to read Scripture - but one ancient and powerful practice is called Lectio Divina (Latin: "divine reading"). It's a way of reading that goes beyond accumulating knowledge, drawing you into an encounter with God and the renewal he wants to bring.

The goal of Lectio Divina is not to fill your head - it's to renew your life.

LECTIO DIVINA: FOUR STEPS

Choose one short passage of Scripture. Read it slowly, 3–4 times, and work through each step:

1
Lectio

Read It

Slow down and open Scripture with intention. Read your chosen passage 3–4 times in a row - not to rush through it, but to let God's word land. Approach it with the awareness that this is God communicating directly with you.

2

Meditatio

Reflect On It

Biblical meditation is not about emptying yourself - it's about filling yourself. Chew on the words like food, drawing out meaning and nourishment. Engage God in the reading: what is He showing you about Himself, about yourself, about life in Christ?

3

Oratio

Respond To It

Knowledge alone won't transform you - application will. Ask yourself three questions as you respond to what you've read:

Key question: *What examples do I need to follow? What commands do I need to obey? What do I need to avoid?*

4

Contemplatio

Rest In It

God never gives you something to do without giving you the power to do it. Don't walk away relying on your own strength. Rest in the Holy Spirit - invite Him to fulfil the Scripture in and through you.

A FINAL THOUGHT

When Jesus talked about building a house on the rock, he said the person who builds on the rock is the one who hears his teaching and obeys. Not just knows it - obeys it. Reflective reading is how we move from knowing Scripture to being shaped by it, daily.

"Be renewed as you learn to know your Creator and become like him." - Colossians 3:10

REFLECTION & DISCUSSION

1. When you read the Bible, do you tend to approach it for information or transformation? What would it look like to shift that?
2. Which of the four steps of Lectio Divina (Read, Reflect, Respond, Rest) do you find most natural - and which do you tend to skip?
3. Think of a Scripture you know well. If you applied the "respond" step - what example would you follow, what command would you obey, what would you avoid?
4. What would it look like practically to build a daily habit of reflective reading into your week? When and where could that happen?