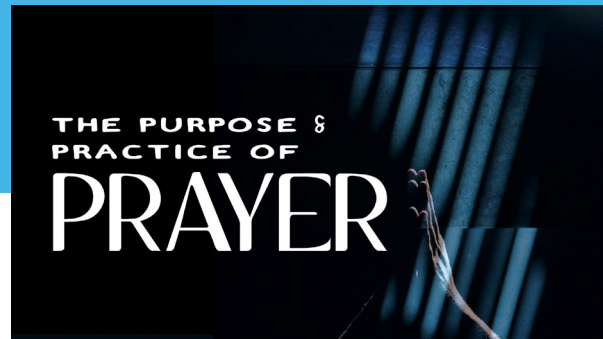


Discussion Questions

October 23, 2023



Practicing Prayer: An Interactive Prayer of John 15

1. Share your own experience with Bible Meditation.
2. Discuss the difference between Bible Study, Bible Reading, and Bible Meditation
3. Go through a Group Bible Meditation of Psalm 23 following the instructions below:

*The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want.
He makes me lie down in green pastures.
He leads me beside still waters. He restores my soul.
He leads me in paths of righteousness for his name's sake.
Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death,
I will fear no evil, for you are with me;
your rod and your staff, they comfort me.
You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies;
you anoint my head with oil; my cup overflows.
Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life,
and I shall dwell in the house of the Lord forever.*

READ

Read the passage out loud (if possible) a few times slowly
Listen for any phrase that stands out to you
Spend a minute or two in silence, see which phrase or verse resonates

REFLECT

Read slowly through it again a couple times
Spend a few minutes in silent prayer reflecting upon the verse/phrase
Be listening for what God is speaking to you through this verse/phrase

RESPOND

Take what has been highlighted to God in prayer
This may involve repentance or an action step or praise
Prayerfully apply whatever truth you have been focusing on to your life

REST

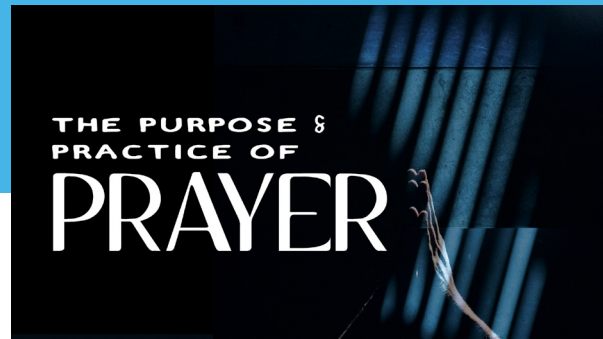
Take a couple minutes with your eyes closed & enjoy God's presence and marvel at His love
In the stillness He may invite you to dialogue further
If not, just rest in God for a few minutes

RECALL

Throughout the day/week recall the phrase you reflected upon
Let the Lord remind you of what He is speaking to you whenever you do

Prayer Practice

October 22, 2023



Prayerfully Meditate on a passage of Scripture this week using the following steps:

Choose whichever passages you prefer, but here are some recommended passages to start with:

John 15:9-13

John 17:20-23

Psalm 23

Matthew 5:3-9

Ephesians 2:4-10

Psalm 46:1-7

Psalm 121

Lamentation 3:21-25

READ

Read the passage out loud (if possible) a few times slowly

Listen for any phrase that stands out to you

Spend a minute or two in silence, see which phrase or verse resonates

REFLECT

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Let the Lord remind you of what He is speaking to you whenever you do

John 15:1–5 (NIV)

I am the true vine, and my Father is the gardener. He cuts off every branch in me that bears no fruit, while every branch that does bear fruit he prunes so that it will be even more fruitful. You are already clean because of the word I have spoken to you. Remain in me, as I also remain in you. No branch can bear fruit by itself; it must remain in the vine. Neither can you bear fruit unless you remain in me. I am the vine; you are the branches. If you remain in me and I in you, you will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing.

Joshua 1:7–8 (NIV)

*Be strong and very courageous. Be careful to obey all the law my servant Moses gave you; do not turn from it to the right or to the left, that you may be successful wherever you go. Keep this Book of the Law always on your lips; **meditate** on it day and night, so that you may be careful to do everything written in it. Then you will be prosperous and successful.*

Psalms 1:1–3 (NLT)

*Oh, the joys of those who do not follow the advice of the wicked, or stand around with sinners, or join in with mockers. But they delight in the law of the Lord, **meditating** on it day and night. They are like trees planted along the riverbank, bearing fruit each season. Their leaves never wither, and they prosper in all they do.*

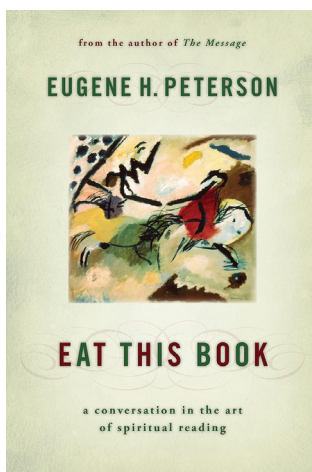
Psalms 119:14–16 (NIV)

*I rejoice in following your statutes as one rejoices in great riches. I **meditate** on your precepts [instructions] and consider your ways. I delight in your decrees; I will not neglect your word.*

Hagah - Growl, groan, mutter, meditate, ponder

Isaiah 31:4 (CSB)

As a lion or young lion growls over its prey



Hagah is a word that our Hebrew ancestors used frequently for reading the kind of writing that deals with our souls. But "meditate" is far too tame a word for what is being signified. "Meditate" seems more suited to what I do in a quiet chapel on my knees with a candle burning on the altar. Or to what my wife does while sitting in a rose garden with the Bible open in her lap. But when Isaiah's lion and my dog [hagah] meditated they chewed and swallowed, using teeth and tongue, stomach and intestines: Isaiah's lion meditating his goat; my dog meditating his bone. There is a certain kind of writing that invites this kind of reading, soft purrs and low growls as we taste and savor, anticipate and take in the sweet and spicy, mouthwatering and soul-energizing morsel words - "O taste and see that the LORD is good!" (Ps. 34:8). Isaiah uses the same word (hagah) a few pages later for the cooing of a dove (38:14). Baron Friedrich von Hugel compared this way of reading to "letting a very slowly dissolving lozenge melt imperceptibly in your mouth."

Isaiah 8:19 (NLT)

Someone may say to you, "Let's ask the mediums and those who consult the spirits of the dead. With their whisperings and mutterings, they will tell us what to do." But shouldn't people ask God for guidance? Should the living seek guidance from the dead?

Proverbs 24:1-2 (CSB)

Don't envy the evil or desire to be with them, for their hearts **plan** [Hagah] violence,

Luke 10:25 (NLT)

One day an expert in religious law stood up to test Jesus by asking him this question: "Teacher, what should I do to inherit eternal life?"

Luke 10:27 (NLT)

You must love the Lord your God with all your heart, all your soul, all your strength, and all your mind. And, Love your neighbor as yourself.

READ**REFLECT****RESPOND****REST****RECALL****READ**

Read the passage through several times SLOWLY

Listen for any phrases that stand out to you

REFLECT

Read slowly through it again

Spend a few minutes reflecting upon the verse/phrase

Listen for what God is speaking to you through this verse/phrase

RESPOND

Take what has been highlighted to God in prayer

Prayerfully apply whatever truth you have been lingering on to your life

This may involve repentance or an action step or praise

REST

Sit & Enjoy God's presence and marvel at His love

In the stillness He may invite you to dialogue further


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RECALL

Throughout the day/week recall the phrase

Let the Lord remind you of what He is speaking to you whenever you do

<https://www.cslewisinstitute.org/resources/overview-of-lectio-divina/>

By J.I. Packer on January 1, 2010  Fellows Resources, J.I. Packer




Overview Of Lectio Divina

The classical practice of Lectio Divina- the prayerful reading of the Bible, the book Christians believed to be divinely inspired-is being rediscovered and renewed in our time. At the same time a number of ways of practicing it have sprung up leading to a certain confusion it's regarding relationship to the distinct practice of centering prayer. A few distinctions may be helpful.

First of all, we need to distinguish Lectio Divina from Bible Study, which is very useful at another time and provides a solid conceptual background for the practice of lectio Divina...

[Click here to read the full article \(READ PDF\).](#)



J.I. Packer

J.I. Packer, Author, (1926 – 2020), known for his best-selling book, *Knowing God*, as well as his work as an editor for the *English Standard Version* of the Bible. He was a signer on the 1978 Chicago Statement on Biblical Inerrancy, a member on the advisory board of the Council on Biblical Manhood and Womanhood, and also was involved in the ecumenical book *Evangelicals and Catholics*

Adele Ahlberg Calhoun - Spiritual Disciplines Handbook

..lectio divina is not so much about 'mastering the text', but rather 'being mastered by it.'

Eugene Peterson - Eat This Book

[Lectio Divina is] a way of reading that guards against depersonalizing the text into an affair of questions and answers, definitions and dogmas. A way of reading that prevents us from turning scripture on its head and using it to justify ourselves like that pathetic religion scholar was trying to do with Jesus... A way of reading that intends the fusion of the entire biblical story and my story. A way of reading that refuses to be reduced to just reading but intends the living of the text, listening and responding to the voices of that "so great a cloud of witness" telling their stories, singing their songs, preaching their sermons, praying their prayers, asking their questions, having their children, burying their dead, following Jesus.