



# Letting God Speak, Part 2: How to Meditate with Scripture

KNOWN: EXPERIENCING GOD IN DAILY PRAYER  
SESSION 04



## Overview:

Prepare by revisiting last session's video: [Session 3, 15:36-21:58](#)

This session does not have videos. After each session that is guided by videos, you will have another session that is video-free and will give you an opportunity to practice prayer together. This series is not simply a lesson on prayer, rather it is an apprenticeship. Before we launch them into the wild to pray on their own, teenagers must first try it with a guide.

You, dear leader, are that guide. You will notice that these non-video sessions have a new section in addition to our usual "CONNECT, DISCUSS, COMMIT" and that is "DO". After you go through the discussion, it is critical that you DO the prayer you are discussing.

Reach out to your group to remind them to bring a Bible. You will be using it A LOT in this session. If they don't have one, offer to get them one!

## Theme Scripture:

HEBREWS 4:12A

Indeed the word of God is living and active.



## A Key to Using this Guide:

**ANYTHING IN ITALICS:** Important information for leaders. Not necessary to share with the group.

**REGULAR FONT:** To be shared aloud with the group.

**LEADER TIPS:** Check out the “Leader Tip” boxes in the margins for helpful hints.

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# Connect

## 1. Recommended Activity

### BIBLE TABS

**Supplies:** BYOB (Bring Your Own Bible), Printed Bible Tabs for each member (see pages 11-12), Glue sticks, Scissors

**OR** purchase self-adhesive YDisciple exclusive Bible Tabs designed by Ali Hoffman [YDisciple.shop](http://YDisciple.shop)

In the last session, Dan talked about how he uses Bible tabs to more easily locate the individual books of the Bible. Ali, the presenter from the first session is an artist and hand-lettered Bible tabs just for this study for you to place in your Bible!

*Watch the video of Ali explaining the tabs on the YDisciple YouTube Channel.*

You can either print, cut them out, and glue them on from the attached PDF or purchase self-adhesive tabs from [YDisciple.shop](http://YDisciple.shop)

*Limit this activity to 10 minutes. If they are not done, allow them to continue to place the tabs as you continue check-in and accountability time. If your group is good at multitasking, let them do this activity through the DISCUSS section as well. It will be important to cut the activity short by the time you get to DO.*

## 2. Check-In

*It is always good to check-in and ask, "How was your week?" demonstrating that you care about what is going on beyond your small group. You can ask generally or have them share "Highs and Lows." (High - best part of your week; Low - worst part)*

### Leader Tip

Our activities are usually optional but this one is strongly recommended. Taking time to put in Bible tabs in everyone's Bibles will help them become more comfortable actually using their Bible.

### 3. Accountability

*In the last session of The Invitation, your group was introduced to the concept of “The 5 S’s of Accountability.” These are 5 things that a disciple should be striving toward. Check-in each time you meet to see how everyone is progressing.*

The 5 S’s of Accountability: Service, Praying with Scripture, Sacraments, Overcoming Sin, Sharing Jesus with Others.

After every session, teens are encouraged to make a commitment. Last week they committed to **read 1 Kings 19:11-13 every day. Ask God what he is trying to say to you.** Ask them how that commitment went.

## Discuss

- **HOW DO YOU KNOW SOMEONE LOVES YOU? TELL ME A STORY ABOUT HOW SOMEONE SHOWED YOU HE OR SHE LOVED YOU.**

The Scriptures are a constant source of showing us how much God loves us. Because God is all-powerful, He could have just forgiven our sins without the need to send His Son to live. He proves His love for us that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us (Romans 5:8). The Scriptures, particularly the Gospels and the life of Jesus, prove to us that God is kind, merciful, loving, and compassionate.

Meditation with Scripture above all, “is a quest. The mind seeks to understand the why and how of the Christian life, in order to adhere and respond to what the Lord is asking.” (CCC 2705)

In meditation, we try to understand a particular truth or mystery to make it our own or internalize it. The more we read and just “sit” with a particular passage, the more we allow God to speak to us through the Scriptures.

### Leader Tip

This session has several moments in which you, not a video, will be the source of important information. Be prepared. Your teens will receive it better if you are sharing naturally instead of reading a script.

The goal of meditation is love -- as I learn more about the truth of God, I will discover more about God's love for me, which fuels my desire to meditate.

We cannot love someone we don't know and this includes God. When we meditate with Scripture, we learn the Truths of God's love for us through His Son, Jesus, who is 100% God, 100% man. We learn how Jesus lived and acted and interacted with people on this earth, thus being able to learn how God does the same with us now, 2,000+ years later.

- **HAVE YOU EVER HAD THE EXPERIENCE OF "HEARING" GOD SPEAK TO YOU? IT IS VERY RARE THAT YOU HEAR GOD SPEAK IN AUDIBLE WAYS, BUT AS DAN SHARED IN THE VIDEO LAST TIME WE MET, GOD CAN SPEAK THROUGH A FRIEND, MENTOR, AND IN THE STILLNESS OF OUR HEARTS. SHARE YOUR EXPERIENCE IF YOU HAVE ONE.**
- **WHAT HAS BEEN YOUR EXPERIENCE READING THE BIBLE?**

We are going to review one method of meditation before we try the other.

- **WHO REMEMBERS WHAT LECTIO DIVINA MEANS?**  
*Divine Reading*
- **WITH LECTIO, ARE WE ATTEMPTING TO READ A LOT OF SCRIPTURE?** *No, the purpose of Lectio Divina is to read a very small amount of scripture slowly and let it sink in.*
- **IN THE LAST SESSION'S VIDEO, DAN LAID OUT A SIMPLIFIED VERSION OF LECTIO: THE CAR METHOD. DO YOU REMEMBER WHAT THE ACRONYM CAR STANDS FOR?** *Consider, Apply, Resolve.*

The traditional steps of Lectio Divina can be remembered as the 4 R's. Read, Reflect, Respond, Rest.

## • WHO CAN SUMMARIZE HOW ONE DOES LECTIO DIVINA?

- *Choose a short passage.*
- *Read it at least 3 times slowly.*
- *Pay attention to the words and phrases that stand out to you.*
- *Ask God what he is trying to speak to in those words and phrases.*
- *Resolve to put it into practice in your own life.*
- *Be still and rest in God's presence.*

# Do

Since we tried Lectio Divina last time, now we are going to try a more specific way of praying with the scripture related mostly to just the Gospels - Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John that detail the life of Jesus.

But first I want to tell you the story of a young man named Iñigo Lopez. From a young age, he desired military glory, but shortly after beginning his military career, he was in battle and a cannonball shattered his right shin...and his lifelong dream. During his long, painful recovery, he was unable to get any of the books about knighthood and battles he preferred. All that was available were stories of the lives of the saints. At first, these stories were nothing more to him than a distraction from his pain and boredom, but as he read more and more these stories began to change him. These saints inspired him to rethink his life, his ambitions, and his definition of glory. By the time he recovered, he had given his life to Christ and desired to live the life of a saint. Even after his conversion he still struggled with his self-worth, depression, and even thoughts of suicide. One day, he had a vision of Mary holding Jesus as a child. This encounter filled him with hope and peace and he longed to continue to encounter Jesus. He continued to grow in holiness and eventually overcame many of these struggles. He went on to become a priest, and started a religious order of priests called the Society of Jesus or the Jesuits, who were known for bringing the message of Christianity all over the world. This man is who we now know as St. Ignatius of Loyola.

Maybe you are like me: while the stories of Jesus are compelling, they can feel distant or even irrelevant to our lives. How does a person living 2000 years after he lived, encounter Jesus? How do we hear him speak?

St. Ignatius addressed this very question as he desired to continue that encounter with Jesus. He recommended a form of prayer and reading the Bible that engages our imagination, draws us into the story, and meets Jesus. This is called Gospel Meditation or Imaginative Prayer. You don't have to have supernatural visions of Jesus to really encounter him.

**Here's what St. Ignatius tells us to do:** Select a scene from a Gospel story (maybe the Sunday gospel) where Jesus is interacting with other people. Usually, these are just a few verses long. Ask God to be present and to guide you. Read through it once.

Go back and read it again, just like with Lectio but now imagine yourself in the story. Which character are you? Now imagine yourself there and the details of the scene using your senses.

- **SIGHT:** What do you see? Where is Jesus? What is the expression on his face?
- **HEARING:** What are you hearing? What does Jesus' voice sound like? What about the environment you are in? Can you hear the waves coming in on the shores of the Sea of Galilee? The sound of a busy marketplace?
- **SMELL:** What do you smell? The incense in the temple? The smell of the fragrant oil poured on his feet? The sheep in the pasture? People? (Remember this is a hot climate. It may not smell great!)
- **TASTE:** Are there any tastes involved? The bread at the Last Supper? The fish when Jesus feeds you and 4999 others?
- **TOUCH:** What are you touching or feeling? Is there a crowd? What is the weather like? Are you gripping the side of the boat to steady yourself in the storm?

Pay attention to the internal and emotional reactions you have to certain details, to Jesus' words. Ask God what he is trying to say to you.

Before we imagine scripture, which might still be a little confusing to us. Let's just practice using our imaginations generally. Let's stretch our imagination "muscles". Close your eyes and picture yourself at the beach. What do you hear? What do you see? What do you smell? Is there anything to taste? What do you feel?

- *Allow them to answer in as much detail as possible for several minutes. This exercise will pay off once you start using the Gospel story.*

## Open your Bible to John 4:4-29.

Now, we studied this scripture in an earlier session. We are revisiting it now for two reasons:

1. Scripture never gets old. If it is familiar to you open your heart to hear it afresh.
2. The last time we studied this scripture. But studying is not the same as praying. This time is going to be about letting God speak.

### • **WHAT DO YOU REMEMBER ABOUT THIS PASSAGE FROM WHEN WE STUDIED IT?**

- *Jews and Samaritans didn't interact with each other.*
- *The woman was an outcast. She went to the well at noon, the hottest time of day, to avoid other women.*
- *It was highly irregular in this time and culture for a man to just start talking to a woman he did not know.*

With that in mind, let's pray. I will ask some questions, but these are not meant to be answered out loud. They are just to help direct your prayer.

### Leader Tip

Do you have a story you can share about hearing a God speak from a familiar passage as if it was new? Share it with them!

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1. In the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.
  2. *Start with a simple prayer like, "Come Holy Spirit, please meet us here and speak to our hearts."*
  3. *Encourage everyone to take 3 deep breaths in and out. Remind them to relax and still their bodies.*
  4. Say : "As I read this passage, imagine that this is the first time you have heard this story."
  5. *Leader, slowly read the passage out loud one time.*
  6. *Pause for 10 seconds.*
  7. Say : "As I read the passage again, imagine the location. Create an image in your mind that is as vivid as possible. What sensations would you experience if you were there? Imagine the time of day and the weather. Experience and observe the sounds, smells, sights, sensations, and tastes. "
  8. *Pause for 10 seconds.*
  9. Say : Place yourself in the story. Are you the woman? Are you an outside observer?
  10. *Pause for 10 seconds.*
  11. *Read the passage again.*
  12. *Pause for 30 seconds.*
  13. Let your imagination, guided by the Holy Spirit, fill in the gaps. Don't be critical of your thoughts, but allow yourself to freely experience the way the Holy Spirit leads your imagination, trusting in God.
    - What are you wearing?
    - What are the sights? Smells? Textures? Sounds?
    - What is going on around you?
    - Who else is there? Do you recognize those around you?
  14. As I read the passage one last time, imagine interacting with Jesus. What is the expression on his face? What does he sound like? How do you feel when you see him? Do not try to control the prayer -- just surrender and allow the Holy Spirit to guide you.
  15. *Read the passage again.*
  16. *Pause for 30 seconds.*
  17. Say : In the silence of your heart, tell him what you are thinking and feeling. Thank him for his presence and his love.



18. Conclude the time of meditation with a simple vocal prayer like, “Jesus, we praise You for Your goodness to us and for this opportunity to encounter You in the Scriptures. Give us the grace to respond to Your love. We give you all the glory, as we pray, Glory be...”

- **DID YOU FIND THIS METHOD TO BE A HELPFUL WAY TO PRAY WITH THE GOSPELS? WHY?** *Not everyone will find this method of prayer helpful or easy, but it can be enlightening for those who do. It’s always worth trying a new method of prayer a few times to see if the Lord wants to use this prayer to speak to you.*
- **LET’S TALK ABOUT THE EXPERIENCE. WHAT SIGHTS, SOUNDS, ETC. DID YOU EXPERIENCE?**
- **WERE YOU SURPRISED BY ANYTHING?**
- **DID YOU FIND YOURSELF EXPERIENCING ANY EMOTIONS IN PRAYER TODAY, WHETHER IT WAS JOY, ANXIETY, PEACE, INTIMIDATION, FEAR, OR SADNESS?** *Remember that the purpose of Imaginative Prayer is not to experience emotions, but to enter into the Gospel passage and recognize the presence of Jesus in prayer. However, the feelings that people experience may be reflective of their relationship with Christ, either on a day-to-day basis or regarding this particular context. It is important to notice and consider these emotions, but not to focus on them.*
- **DO YOU THINK THAT IMAGINATIVE PRAYER HELPED YOU EXPERIENCE THE PRESENCE OF CHRIST TODAY? HOW AND WHY?** *Resting in the presence of Christ can be experienced in many different ways. It rarely means tangibly hearing a voice or seeing a vision, but it means knowing Christ’s presence in the heart. By inviting Him in and vividly picturing the situation of encounter, we open our hearts to receive Jesus. Some participants may struggle with differentiating what comes from God and what is “all in my head.” In the end, we can place our trust in the promise of God that “the Spirit helps us in our weakness, for we do not know how to pray as we ought, but the Spirit Himself intercedes for us with sighs too deep for words” [Romans 8:26].*



# Commit

Commit to doing Lectio Divina or Imaginative Prayer at least once on your own before we meet again. Using the daily Mass readings is a good place to start.

We recommend journaling some of your experiences so we can discuss them with one another next time.

# Follow-up Checklist

- Send the Parent Sheet.
- Remind them to bring their Bible back next week.
- Consider sending them a reminder between sessions of the COMMIT.
- Did you know we have a Prayer Journal designed to go with this series? They aren't required but will greatly benefit your students. Check them out at [YDisciple.shop](http://YDisciple.shop).
- Pray! As you are helping them build a habit of prayer, take time to deepen your own prayer life.

*Genesis*  
GENESIS

*Joshua*  
JOSHUA

*1 Kings*  
1 KINGS

*Nehemiah*  
NEHEMIAH

*2 Maccabees*  
2 MACCABEES

*Song of Songs*  
SONG SONGS

*Lamentations*  
LAMENTATIONS

*Joel*  
JOEL

*Exodus*  
EXODUS

*Judges*  
JUDGES

*2 Kings*  
2 KINGS

*Tobit*  
TOBIT

*Job*  
JOB

*Wisdom*  
WISDOM

*Baruch*  
BARUCH

*Amos*  
AMOS

*Leviticus*  
LEVITICS

*Ruth*  
RUTH

*1 Chronicles*  
1 CHRONICLES

*Judith*  
JUDITH

*Psalms*  
PSALMS

*Sirach*  
SIRACH

*Ezekiel*  
EZEKIEL

*Obadiah*  
OBADIAH

*Numbers*  
NUMBERS

*1 Samuel*  
1 SAMUEL

*2 Chronicles*  
2 CHRONICLES

*Ester*  
ESTHER

*Proverbs*  
PROVERBS

*Isaiah*  
ISAIAH

*Daniel*  
DANIEL

*Jonah*  
JONAH

*Deuteronomy*  
DEUTERONOMY

*2 Samuel*  
2 SAMUEL

*Ezra*  
EZRA

*1 Maccabees*  
1 MACCABEES

*Ecclesiastes*  
ECCLESIASTES

*Jeremiah*  
JEREMIAH

*Hosea*  
HOSEA

*Micah*  
MICAH

|              |       |
|--------------|-------|
| <i>Nahum</i> | NAHUM |
|--------------|-------|

|                |         |
|----------------|---------|
| <i>Malachi</i> | MALACHI |
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|             |      |
|-------------|------|
| <i>Acts</i> | ACTS |
|-------------|------|

|                  |           |
|------------------|-----------|
| <i>Ephesians</i> | EPHESIANS |
|------------------|-----------|

|                  |           |
|------------------|-----------|
| <i>1 Timothy</i> | 1 TIMOTHY |
|------------------|-----------|

|              |       |
|--------------|-------|
| <i>James</i> | JAMES |
|--------------|-------|

|               |        |
|---------------|--------|
| <i>3 John</i> | 3 JOHN |
|---------------|--------|

|                 |          |
|-----------------|----------|
| <i>Habakkuk</i> | HABBAKUK |
|-----------------|----------|

|                |         |
|----------------|---------|
| <i>Matthew</i> | MATTHEW |
|----------------|---------|

|               |        |
|---------------|--------|
| <i>Romans</i> | ROMANS |
|---------------|--------|

|                    |             |
|--------------------|-------------|
| <i>Philippians</i> | PHILIPPIANS |
|--------------------|-------------|

|                  |           |
|------------------|-----------|
| <i>2 Timothy</i> | 2 TIMOTHY |
|------------------|-----------|

|                |         |
|----------------|---------|
| <i>1 Peter</i> | 1 PETER |
|----------------|---------|

|             |      |
|-------------|------|
| <i>Jude</i> | JUDE |
|-------------|------|

|                  |           |
|------------------|-----------|
| <i>Zephaniah</i> | ZEPHANIAH |
|------------------|-----------|

|             |      |
|-------------|------|
| <i>Mark</i> | MARK |
|-------------|------|

|                      |               |
|----------------------|---------------|
| <i>1 Corinthians</i> | 1 CORINTHIANS |
|----------------------|---------------|

|                   |            |
|-------------------|------------|
| <i>Colossians</i> | COLOSSIANS |
|-------------------|------------|

|              |       |
|--------------|-------|
| <i>Titus</i> | TITUS |
|--------------|-------|

|                |         |
|----------------|---------|
| <i>2 Peter</i> | 2 PETER |
|----------------|---------|

|                   |            |
|-------------------|------------|
| <i>Revelation</i> | REVELATION |
|-------------------|------------|

|               |        |
|---------------|--------|
| <i>Haggai</i> | HAGGAI |
|---------------|--------|

|             |      |
|-------------|------|
| <i>Luke</i> | LUKE |
|-------------|------|

|                      |               |
|----------------------|---------------|
| <i>2 Corinthians</i> | 2 CORINTHIANS |
|----------------------|---------------|

|                        |                 |
|------------------------|-----------------|
| <i>1 Thessalonians</i> | 1 THESSALONIANS |
|------------------------|-----------------|

|                 |          |
|-----------------|----------|
| <i>Philemon</i> | PHILEMON |
|-----------------|----------|

|               |        |
|---------------|--------|
| <i>1 John</i> | 1 JOHN |
|---------------|--------|

|                  |            |
|------------------|------------|
| <i>Zechariah</i> | ZECCHARIAH |
|------------------|------------|

|             |      |
|-------------|------|
| <i>John</i> | JOHN |
|-------------|------|

|                  |           |
|------------------|-----------|
| <i>Galatians</i> | GALATIANS |
|------------------|-----------|

|                        |                 |
|------------------------|-----------------|
| <i>2 Thessalonians</i> | 2 THESSALONIANS |
|------------------------|-----------------|

|                |         |
|----------------|---------|
| <i>Hebrews</i> | HEBREWS |
|----------------|---------|

|               |        |
|---------------|--------|
| <i>2 John</i> | 2 JOHN |
|---------------|--------|