

## **Lectio Divina**

### Listening to God in Scripture

This ancient practice is a way to listen to God through Scripture. Personal copies of the Bible have only been available to us for roughly the last 400 years. Before that, corporate worship readings of Scripture were people's primary access to the Scriptures. *Lectio divina* (literally meaning "divine reading") was often a group spiritual discipline to help people maintain a relational listening posture to the Scriptures as they were read together.

Choose a passage of Scripture that you want to meditate upon as a way of listening to God speaking through his Word. (There are three passages on the next page that may lend themselves to this kind of listening-reading.) Then pray through the passage using these traditional listening steps:

- *Silencio* - Begin by offering your heart and thoughts to God's leading, and spend a moment in silence quieting yourself.
- *Lectio* – read the passage slowly, and perhaps out loud. If a word or phrase captures your attention or interest, stop reading and reflect on what God may be saying to you here.
- *Meditatio* – Meditate on the passage a second time. Again, pay attention to overall impressions that God may be speaking to you. Imagine how God's heart, this passage, and your life intersect.
- *Oratio* – Respond to God in prayer about the impressions you've had so far. Dialogue with him. Be fully honest, as he knows your heart fully. Notice any ways you feel resistance to the passage and the impressions you are hearing, and talk to God about how he may be inviting you into a deeper way of living with and for him there.
- *Contemplatio* – contemplate and wait on God here, trying to focus on his presence to you and his love for you. Allow this time of listening to sink in fully, and surrender to God's continuing work. Consider some type of reminder from this time that you can carry with you throughout the rest of your day.

This traditional way of listening to God in his Word takes practice and repetition – and it can be hard and distracting. Stick with it.