

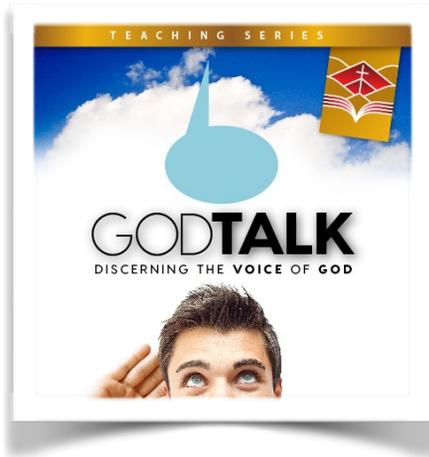
Meditating on Scripture *to hear the voice of God*

Sometimes we read the Bible for information, seeking to learn its stories and what it teaches so that we know God better. Other times, we can & should read the Bible to submit to transformation. Both methods are valid and equally important.

When reading to meditate on Scripture, whether already familiar with the passage or not, the goal is to read it a few times, not once, with the hope and expectation of discerning the voice of God for the day.

To better hear God talk to you through Scripture, try this process:

- **Choose a single passage of Scripture** — maybe a few verses, but no more than a single chapter or story.
- **Decide in your heart that you are going to meet God there.** Slow down, find a way to block out the distractions in your mind or in your environment that would hinder you from being fully present with God for a few minutes.
- **Read and reread the same passage a few times, slowly and thoughtfully.** At least once, read it out loud, so you can hear the words and let them sink in. Perhaps read it in a different Bible translation or two, to see the message using different words. Pause during and between your reading times to meditate and reflect on your life, and be open to however God might direct your thoughts.
- **Try to have a conversation with God in your heart,** asking Him humbly & openly to speak to you about what's going on in your life.
- **Don't be in a hurry.** Remember, when you aren't reading to learn a lot of information but to submit to transformation, you don't want



to rush God. Be patient and comfortable in the silence, the stillness. Sometimes it takes our hearts a little longer to settle in order to be in a posture to fully listen to God.

As you read the passage each time, consider asking God (and yourself) one or two of these questions:

1. What do I think about, what do I see, as I fully enter into this story? Can I see myself as a person or object in this story? Why, what draws me there?
2. Is there a word, a phrase that stands out to me? Perhaps something God is wanting me to notice?
3. How might this passage connect with the circumstances in my life today? This week? What does it lead me to think about, and why? What is God showing me about myself?
4. What does this passage lead me to think or feel about God right now?
5. What feelings has the text aroused in me? Where am I resistant or wanting to push back? Talk to God about those feelings.
6. What is it that I need to know, or be, or do?
7. Is this something that perhaps God has been trying to speak to me about before? Is there something that I have been missing?

Not sure which passage to choose today? There are no right or wrong choices, necessarily, but perhaps try one of these:

- A chapter from Psalms, or a few verses from Proverbs
- A story from Jesus' life, like Matthew 11:27-30, Matthew 16:24-27, Luke 12:22-31 or John 15:13-15
- A New Testament instructional passage, like Romans 8:14-17, 2 Corinthians 5:17-21, Colossians 3:1-17 or 1 Thessalonians 5:16-24
- A story or instructional passage from the Old Testament, like 1 Kings 19:2-18, 2 Kings 6:11-17, Isaiah 43:1-13 or Hosea 6

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