

DEVOTIONS

BACK HOME



Your mission trip is over, but your relationship with Jesus goes on. It can be challenging to find time with Jesus regularly. Plus, reading Scripture without a guide can be difficult. Hopefully this resource can encourage you to keep up your devotional practices with tools you can use again and again. The following are three different methods of thinking through a passage of Scripture. These aren't the only options, but they can get you started.

BASIC INTERPRETATION

Great for any passage of Scripture.

Carefully read the passage, then reference the passage again as you answer these questions:

1. What is the main storyline or theme?
 2. Who are the characters? Or who is the speaker and audience?
 3. What does this passage tell me about who God is? (Father, Son, Holy Spirit)
 4. What insights does this give me into my own life?
 5. What can I do as a result of that insight?
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CONTEMPLATION

Great for Psalms, Proverbs, any passage full of Jesus' words and most books after Acts in the New Testament.

1. Read the entire passage.
 2. Pick a section (maybe 3–4 verses) that stands out to you. Read it very slowly 3 times.
 - Be still and quiet. Close your eyes if you want. Think about what you just read.
 3. Pick one verse or sentence from the section you just read. Read it quietly over and over to yourself for more than a minute.
 - Be still and quiet. Close your eyes if you want. Think about what you just read.
 - What is God saying to you through this passage?
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PERSPECTIVE READING

Great for any stories with multiple characters; also works for Psalms when taking the perspective of the writer.

To begin, read through the passage once.

Choose a character in this passage. Read the story from that character's perspective.

1. As you read, what sights, sounds and smells stand out to you?
2. What are you feeling? How do those feelings change throughout the story?
3. What changes in you from the beginning of the story to the end? Why?

Now be yourself again:

1. What drew you to choose this character?
2. How are you like this character? How are you different from this character?
3. What do you better understand about God (Father, Son, Holy Spirit) after reading this passage?
4. What do you better understand about yourself after reading this passage?
5. What is this passage inviting you to do to better follow God with your life?

WHAT TO READ?

If you're uncertain where to begin, read the stories of Jesus and the early Church in Luke and Acts. You might also check out other accounts of Jesus in Matthew, Mark and John and, for variety, read some Psalms or Proverbs. After that you might go back to the very beginning in Genesis and Exodus.

WHEN YOU PRAY

Another important part of your relationship with God is prayer. When you pray, think "ACTS" to remember the four types of prayer. As you talk to God, make room for each of these types of prayer.

Adoration – Expressing worship and praise for who God is. "God, you are strong, powerful, full of grace and incredible!"

Confession – Seeking forgiveness for sin that separates us from God. "God, here's how I messed up, and I need your grace and forgiveness."

Thanksgiving – Giving gratitude for what God has done. "Thank you for what you've done in the world and in my life."

Supplication – Asking God for what you need and for what others need. "God please help me in this area, and please help others in these areas."