



Praying the Scripture - a few simple steps at home

Sunday 8th Sept 2019



1. Start with stillness and quietening down; then gently read the passage, noticing any feelings and connections to your own experience.
2. Read the passage again and spend understand. *The notes in your Bible may be of help at this point.*
3. Read the passage a third time - wondering how you yourself might pray the text over the next few days.
4. Over the next week, set aside times to come back more than once to the passage. You could read it all or part of it again, slowly. Perhaps there is a special word for you in this passage of Scripture? Keep this word or phrase in your thoughts and gently repeat it, bringing it to mind and allowing God to speak to you in your heart.
5. Finally, come back to the text to conclude: What is God in this scripture asking of you this week? What is the one challenge, one little change you are asked to make or the thing you have been asked to do? Then say a prayer of thanksgiving for the good news in the passage. End in quiet prayer.

THIS SUNDAY'S GOSPEL - Luke 14:25-33

Anyone who does not carry his cross and follow me cannot be my disciple

Great crowds accompanied Jesus on his way and he turned and spoke to them. 'If any man comes to me without hating his father, mother, wife, children, brothers, sisters, yes and his own life too, he cannot be my disciple. Anyone who does not carry his cross and come after me cannot be my disciple. 'And indeed, which of you here, intending to build a tower, would not first sit down and work out the cost to see if he had enough to complete it? Otherwise, if he laid the foundation and then found himself unable to finish the work, the onlookers would all start making fun of him and saying, "Here is a man who started to build and was unable to finish." Or again, what king marching to war against another king would not first sit down and consider whether with ten thousand men he could stand up to the other who advanced against him with twenty thousand? If not, then while the other king was still a long way off, he would send envoys to sue for peace. So in the same way, none of you can be my disciple unless he gives up all his possessions.'

SOME POINTERS FOR PRAYER

- The passage is a call to both radical and practical discipleship and presumes that following Christ is demanding? Do I find it demanding? In what ways? Is giving up 'all your possessions' realistic and if not what does the passage mean for me? Speak to the Lord about the points of difficulty in this passage.
- Jesus jolts us into thinking about the freedom we need; He wants us to resist anything that causes us to settle, to nest, to preen or plump for comfort. Ask God to help you to grow in freedom. Notice where you opt for security - am stuck or have begun to put down roots?
- Jesus wants us to know the scale of the task ahead of us; when it seems too much for us, what are we to do? To whom can we turn for help? Do I have the humility and trust always to seek help?
- What cross are you asked to bear as you follow Jesus?

Prayer

Lord we thank you for the people who accompany us on our journey as disciples of Jesus helping us to keep our commitment to Him. Forgive us Lord when we went in the wrong direction being subjected to materialism, consumerism and pressure from peer groups. Keep us from apathy! Help us to give up the desire for quick results and realise that the journey to mature discipleship is truly a wonderful adventure and takes a lifetime. Amen