



Praying the Scripture - a few simple steps at home

Sunday 6th Oct 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 17:5-10

The apostles said to the Lord, "Make our faith greater." The Lord answered, "If you had faith as big as a mustard seed, you could say to this mulberry tree, 'Pull yourself up by the roots and plant yourself in the sea!' and it would obey you. "Suppose one of you has a servant who is ploughing or looking after the sheep. When he comes in from the field, do you tell him to hurry and eat his meal? Of course not! Instead, you say to him, 'Get my supper ready, then put on your apron and wait on me while I eat and drink; after that you may have your meal.' The servant does not deserve thanks for obeying orders, does he? It is the same with you; when you have done all you have been told to do, say, 'We are ordinary servants; we have only done our duty.' "

A THOUGHT

Jesus packs a lot of teaching into these few short sentences. There are two themes: the first two verses concern faith and the later verses are about servanthood. Jesus calls his disciples to forgive as often as is needed. The disciples realize that following Jesus will demand far more than they are able to give so they ask for more faith. Jesus replies that what is important is to have a genuine faith in God. It doesn't matter how small this may be; whenever genuine faith is present remarkable things can and do happen. Jesus then talks about the idea of servanthood. The heart of his teaching is that God deserves our service simply because of who He is. God owes us nothing. We owe Him everything. To be servants of God means above all to be people of faith. Love is faith in action – Our faith compels us to be servants of love.

SOME POINTERS FOR PRAYER

- Faith can move mountains...well it can certainly get us moving. Recall a time when you were full of self-doubt, scepticism about a project, or lacking trust in God. What was that like? Contrast this with times when you believed in yourself, or in the value of a project you had undertaken, or when your faith and trust in God were strong. What kind of faith have you found enriched your life?
- It is interesting and comforting that Jesus was not at all disappointed that his disciples admitted to not having enough faith. He challenged them, instead, to have courage and trust His word. How do I strengthen my faith? Does my faith compel me to bring love, forgiveness and compassion to others?
- What type of seeds are we planting through the example of the faith that we live? Is it that the deepest reality in life is profit rather than human relationships based on care, understanding and love? Economics is quantifiable and love is not

Prayer

*God, the rock of our salvation, whose gifts can never fail, deepen the faith you have already bestowed and let its power be seen in your servants. We make our prayer through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, God for ever and ever. **Amen***