



Praying the Scripture - a few simple steps at home

Sunday 26th January 2020



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 - Matt 4:12-23

Now when Jesus heard that John had been arrested, he withdrew to Galilee. He left Nazareth and made his home in Capernaum by the lake, in the territory of Zebulun and Naphtali, so that what had been spoken through the prophet Isaiah might be fulfilled:

'Land of Zebulun, land of Naphtali, on the road by the sea, across the Jordan, Galilee of the Gentiles the people who sat in darkness have seen a great light, and for those who sat in the region and shadow of death light has dawned.'

From that time Jesus began to proclaim, 'Repent, for the kingdom of heaven has come near.'

As he walked by the Sea of Galilee, he saw two brothers, Simon, who is called Peter, and Andrew his brother, casting a net into the lake—for they were fishermen. And he said to them, 'Follow me, and I will make you fish for people.' Immediately they left their nets and followed him. As he went from there, he saw two other brothers, James son of Zebedee and his brother John, in the boat with their father Zebedee, mending their nets, and he called them. Immediately they left the boat and their father, and followed him.

Jesus went throughout Galilee, teaching in their synagogues and proclaiming the good news of the kingdom and curing every disease and every sickness among the people.

A THOUGHT

Jesus begins his public ministry. However, where? Not in Jerusalem, which would be normal. Contrary to logic and expectations he stays housed in a remote pagan Galilee. Why didn't Jesus start his public activities in the land of his growing up? In this passage Matthew tells us about two aspects of Jesus's ministry. First, he preached the Good News about the Kingdom and healed people of all kinds of illness. Secondly, he calls ordinary people, from their ordinary situations and trusts them with being his disciples. Matthew gives us very little detail about Jesus's encounter with these four fishermen. Jesus must, however, have made a remarkable impression on them because they were willing to leave their jobs so they could follow him.

SOME POINTERS FOR PRAYER

- Why do you think Peter, Andrew, James and John were prepared to leave their jobs to become Jesus's disciples? What qualities do you think Jesus saw in these four men that led him to choose them to be his disciples?
- Where do you encounter Jesus today? What is he calling you to?
- What is the Good News of the Kingdom? What does it mean for you personally? How would you feel if Jesus appeared in your workplace, your home or met you on the street? In what ways is Jesus calling you to follow him? Are you prepared to take the risk, like the disciples, whatever the cost?

Prayer

*Loving God, you know me through & through. Let me notice you when you come before me. May I respond generously to your call. May fear not stop me from taking the risk to follow you. I make this 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***