

A MODEL FOR BIBLE STUDY & PRAYER

As you practice this regimen, start with invocation and work your way to contemplation.

The following is a suggestion. Use it to create a practice that works for you.

INVOCATION	<p><i>Begin with a brief prayer:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Thank God for something from the past, present, and future (his promises given to you in his Word). • Ask God to open your heart and mind to his Word and to focus your attention on it.
MEDITATION	<p><i>As you read a portion of Scripture ask yourself these questions:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What does this teach me? • <i>About God? About the human condition? About human behavior? About Christ and Salvation? About life among the people of God (the church)?</i> • What does this show me about God's character for which I can praise him? • What does this show me about myself for which I can repent? • What need does this show me for which I can pray to God?
PRAYER	<p><i>Based upon your meditation of his Word, pray to God using either of the two methods:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review your answer to the questions. • What can you praise God for? • What can you thank him for? • What can you ask forgiveness for? • What needs can you bring before him? <div style="display: inline-block; vertical-align: middle; border-left: 1px solid black; padding-left: 10px; margin-left: 20px;"> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Paraphrase each portion of the Lord's Prayer and add your own requests or whatever is on your heart that day. </div>
CONTEMPLATION	<p><i>If prompted by your study you begin contemplating God's truth, don't stop!</i></p> <p>Martin Luther once commented that sometimes when he studied the Word he would get lost in contemplation about God:</p> <p><i>"It often happens that I lose myself... in one petition of the Lord's Prayer, and then I let all the other petitions go. When such rich good thoughts come, one should...listen to them in silence and by no means suppress them. For here the Holy Spirit is preaching and one word of his sermon is better than thousands of our own prayers... If the Holy Spirit should come and begin to preach to your heart, giving you rich and enlightened thoughts... be quiet and listen to him."</i></p>