

ENCOUNTERING THE RISEN JESUS

THIS SUNDAY: HIS GRACE
FOR OUR MISTAKES



The following document is a rough copy of Pastor Drost's sermon notes
of his message, preached April 22nd, 2018

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I want to invite you to join me in doing a devotional together... We have been looking at different passages that talk about encounters people had with Jesus after He rose from the dead by using **different devotional methods** you can use to read your Bible and spend daily prayer time with God.

“Daily” → Lord’s Prayer **“Give us this day our daily bread”**

What if you never ate food for seven days? You would be very weak.

In the same, if you want your spiritual life to be healthy, you need to spend time with God daily.

“Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path.” Psalm 119:105 (NKJV)

Don’t walk through your day spiritually in the dark!

“Give heed to the voice of my supplication, my King and my God, for to You will I pray, O Lord. In the morning You shall hear my voice; in the morning I will stand before You, and I will watch”.

Psalms 5:3-4 (LXX)

The word here for "watch" is a beautiful expressive word that means "to lean forward with expectation attentive to what He will show you. Attentive to what He will say".

Each morning, we are called to stand before our King and God, and let Him hear our voice in prayer, and then watch and listen with expectation to what He has to say.

Not only is it important to read your Bible, but **we want to help you practice listening to what God would speak to your heart** as you spend quality time listening to Him.

- The first week Pastor Chad used the **“Picture It” Method** and the passage was from **John 20** where Jesus FIRST appears to Mary Magdalene.
- Then last week Pastor Wayne used **the Bible Study Method called S.O.A.P.** (Scripture, Observation, Application, Pray).

The passage was from **Luke 24** where Jesus appears to two disciples walking from Jerusalem on the Emmaus Road.

Both Sundays God opened some wonderful life-giving truths in those two passages by using those two study methods.



Today we are going to look at a scriptural reading, meditation and prayer method that began in the 6th century with Saint Benedict of Nursia in Italy (*Nothing to do with Eggs Benedict*)

He was a patron saint of Europe – held in high esteem by the Eastern Orthodox Churches, the Roman Catholic Church, the Anglican /Episcopal Churches and many Protestant Evangelical churches.

The method for scriptural reading, meditation and prayer that he taught is called **Lectio Divina** (Latin for "Divine Reading") This Benedictine practice aims to treat Scripture as a way of listening to God and to open our hearts to the voice of Jesus. Traditionally, Lectio Divina has four steps:

- 1) READ (*Lectio*)
- 2) MEDITATE (*Meditatio*)
- 3) PRAY (*Oratio*)

4) CONTEMPLATE (*Contemplatio*)

Let's take a minute and unpack these four steps:



Lectio ("read")

(a) Find a quiet place with no distractions.

Get rid of the gadgets (Cell phone, music, technology)

– I prefer paper (Kindles or Tablets are not bad as long as they are not “dinging” at you)

(b) Pray a short prayer inviting the Holy Spirit to guide the reading of His Word.

“Open my eyes that I may see wonderful things in your law.” Psalm 119:18 (NIV)

(c) Read the selected passage of scripture slowly.



Meditatio ("meditate")

(a) After reading the passage meditate (ponder) on the scripture passage. I often re-read the passage!

(b) Try not to assign a meaning to it at first but wait instead for the Holy Spirit to illuminate something out of the passage.

IT WILL STAND OUT!

- Avoid the temptation to slip into “study mode”.
- It is very helpful to write down in a journal the things that start coming to you from the passage.
 - Show my journal (Avoid little quotes, verses, etc. Just a simple lined paper.)
 - I use a fountain pen so it slows me down.



Oratio ("pray")

Take a few minutes and turn the things you have felt in your heart from the passage into a prayer back to God.



Contemplatio ("contemplate")

Rest silently in His presence letting go of your own agendas, ideas, impatience, plans, words and thoughts, and listen at the deepest level for that still small voice of His whisper.

This is when you “stand before Him, and you watch” with anticipation and expectation! **WAIT!**

“Those who wait on the Lord shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings like eagles, they shall run and not be weary, they shall walk and not faint.” Isaiah 40:31

Wait (Heb. קָוָה = qee-vah) – *Look patiently with eager anticipation*

Illustration: Eagle catching the up-current...

If your mind starts to wander, learn to bring it back to quiet stillness. We live in a world of constant distractions. Our minds are like an untrained dog walking on a leash!

Work your way up... start with 5 min and work your way up.

A good starting goal for this contemplative section is 5 - 10 minutes.





So our **Lectio** (Reading) is from **1 Corinthians 15:1–11...**

- In Lectio Divina you would now find a quiet place with no distractions... this isn't the time to chat, look it up on your phone, check out what someone is wearing...

We want to focus our mind and heart on the passage at hand!

- Pray, inviting the Holy Spirit to guide the reading of His Word
"May the Holy Spirit that inspired Paul speak to us now..."

"Moreover, brethren, I declare to you the gospel which I preached to you, which also you received and in which you stand, by which also you are saved, if you hold fast that word which I preached to you—unless you believed in vain. For I delivered to you first of all that which I also received: that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, and that He was buried, and that He rose again the third day according to the Scriptures, and that He was seen by Cephas, then by the twelve. After that He was seen by over five hundred brethren at once, of whom the greater part remain to the present, but some have fallen asleep. After that He was seen by James, then by all the apostles. Then last of all He was seen by me also, as by one born out of due time. For I am the least of the apostles, who am not worthy to be called an apostle, because I persecuted the church of God. But by the grace of God I am what I am, and His grace toward me was not in vain; but I labored more abundantly than they all, yet not I, but the grace of God which was with me. Therefore, whether it was I or they, so we preach and so you believed." 1 Cor. 15:1–11 (NKJV)

- Now **meditate** over the passage for a couple of minutes.
- Read it over yourself.
- What catches your attention? What stands out?
- Write down any thoughts that come to you from the passage.



PRAYER

Turn the things you have felt in your heart from the passage into a prayer back to God.



Contemplate

Just be silent in His presence letting go of your own ideas, impatience, plans, words and thoughts, and listen at the deepest level for that still small voice of His whisper.



Let me close with **a Bible lesson** that came out of my early morning prayer time on **April 2** while reading this very passage

- After Jesus rose from the dead he appeared to hundreds of people. Most of the time while they were in groups: The eleven, in the upper room, on the beach he made them breakfast. He was seen by over 500 at a time...
- But the Bible tells us that only 4 people had a one-on-one with Jesus; in other words, 4 people received personal visitations that turned their lives upside down! But also, these 4 people had serious past blunders or mistakes!

- 1) When Jesus first met **MARY MAGDALEN** he had to cast seven demons out of her. A checkered past indeed! **But yet she becomes the first person to see the risen Jesus.**

Paul says in this passage...

“But by the grace of God I am what I am”. 1 Corinthians 15:10a

The Grace of God takes a messed up past and turns her into **the first person to tell the world, “He is risen!”** **His Grace for our mistakes!**

- 2) **PETER** is the second person that received a personal visitation from Jesus. Three days before he swore and cursed and denied that he knew Jesus. The Bible tells us that when he realised what he had done he ran outside and wept bitterly.

Yet Jesus comes to him and makes him into the lead Apostle of the Christian Church. He preached the first sermon after Pentecost (3000 are saved) and he was the first to preach to the Gentiles the Gospel.

His Grace for our mistakes! He turns failures into victories!

Mistakes into testimonies of His forgiveness and love!

- 3) **JAMES** is the third person that received a personal visitation from Jesus. He was the half-brother of Jesus, the oldest son of Joseph (Mary’s husband). When Joseph married the Virgin Mary he was a widower with several children.

Yet during Jesus’ ministry it says that his brothers turned on him and did not believe in him. And while he was on the cross all his relatives, including the eldest James, abandoned him... all his family except his mother Mary. Jesus was abandoned by his family.

Yet the forgiving Jesus comes to him after the resurrection and makes him the Senior Pastor of the Jerusalem Church. **A pillar in the early Church!**

His Grace for our mistakes! He turns betrayal into faithfulness!

- 4) **PAUL** is the fourth person that received a personal visitation from Jesus on the road to Emmaus, on his way to abuse, persecute, imprison and kill Christians. **But Jesus appears to him!**

Here’s what he says in the passage:

“Last of all He was seen by me also, as by one born out of due time. For I am the least of the apostles, who am not worthy to be called an apostle, because I persecuted the church of God. But by the grace of God I am what I am!”

Paul was embarrassed by what he did to Christians, but Jesus appeared to him and made him the great Apostle Paul that wrote a huge chunk of the Bible and spread the Gospel all over the Roman world. **His Grace for our mistakes!**

He turns offenders into Apostles

Criminals into preachers - Drug-addicts into Evangelists

Haters into lovers - Bitterness into kindness

BY HIS WONDERFUL GRACE



I close with this thought...It does not matter what your checkered past has been, or if you denied or turned your back on Jesus, or if you treated your family poorly or if you did things in your past you're embarrassed about (or even this week!)

Amazing Grace how sweet the sound that saved a wretch like me...