

HELP FOR DISCOURAGED LEADERS

Lectio Divina Guides by Bill Gaultiere

Lectio Divina Process

Hearing God's voice with confidence takes practice. A great way to learn is through Lectio Divina, a method of Scripture meditation developed by Benedict in the sixth century. Three times we read the Bible passage and then pray or journal quietly for a few minutes to help us listen to the Spirit. Each reading is guided by a focus question listed below. In a group context follow the leader's instructions to know when you can share your responses. Be sure to protect people's confidentiality.

Introduction to the Text

David fled from the jealous rage of King Saul to live in the wilderness for about eight years. He hid in caves from Saul's armies and policed the wilderness, protecting nomadic shepherds in return for food and supplies. Many other outlaws and misfits were there too and six hundred of them came under David's leadership. By deceiving the King of Philistine David found extended refuge in the town of Ziklag for himself and his followers. (This was a lot better than living in caves!) But one day when David and the men were out in battle enemies raided their camp, taking their wives, children, and possessions! David's men blamed him and wanted to kill him! In his distress "David encouraged himself in the Lord" (1 Samuel 30:6, KJV). He sought God's guidance with the help of Abiathar the priest and then he was able to lead the people confidently.

1 Samuel 30

David and his men reached Ziklag on the third day. Now the Amalekites had raided the Negev and Ziklag. They had attacked Ziklag and burned it, 2 and had taken captive the women and everyone else in it, both young and old. They killed none of them, but carried them off as they went on their way.

3 When David and his men reached Ziklag, they found it destroyed by fire and their wives and sons and daughters taken captive. 4 So David and his men wept aloud until they had no strength left to weep. 5 David's two wives had been captured—Ahinoam of Jezreel and Abigail, the widow of Nabal of Carmel. 6 David was greatly distressed because the men were talking of stoning him; each one was bitter in spirit because of his sons and daughters. But David found strength in the Lord his God.

7 Then David said to Abiathar the priest, the son of Ahimelek, "Bring me the ephod." Abiathar brought it to him, 8 and David inquired of the Lord, "Shall I pursue this raiding party? Will I overtake them?"

"Pursue them," he answered. "You will certainly overtake them and succeed in the rescue" (NIV).

Prayer / Journaling / Soul Talk Prompts

1. What is one word or phrase the Holy Spirit impresses on you? In silence meditate on that.
2. What situation has been discouraging to you in your relationships or ministry recently? (Or what situations in the future might leave you vulnerable to discouragement?)
3. What would help you to find encouragement in the Lord so that you can shepherd and lead people in God's way and with confidence?