

Pastor's Class  
February 25 & 28, 2010  
Opening Your Bible: How to Read Scripture with Spiritual Focus  
Rev. Dr. Arthur Bergren

Welcome/Prayer

Last Time: How Lutherans Approach the Bible

- Book of Faith Initiative
- Five Key Lutheran Principles
  - Law and Gospel
  - What Shows Forth Christ
  - Scripture Interprets Scripture
  - The Plain Meaning of the Text
  - Public Interpretation

Four Ways to Read the Bible

- Devotional Reading
- Historical Reading
- Literary Reading
- Lutheran Theological Reading

Lectio Divina – Latin for sacred reading

Method developed during early Church 100-450 ad

4 Steps

Step One: Lectio – reading/listening to the text

Step Two: Meditatio – meditating/reflecting/ruminating on the text

Step Three: Oratio – responding with prayer

Step Four: Contemplatio – contemplative prayer

Step One: Lectio

- Read aloud or listen
- Careful and deliberate
- Read multiple times
- Silence

Matthew 20:1–16

For the kingdom of heaven is like a landowner who went out early in the morning to hire laborers for his vineyard. <sup>2</sup>After agreeing with the laborers for the usual daily wage, he sent them into his vineyard. <sup>3</sup>When he went out about nine o'clock, he saw others standing idle in the marketplace; <sup>4</sup>and he said to them, 'You also go into the vineyard, and I will pay you whatever is right.' So they went. <sup>5</sup>When he went out again about noon and about three

o'clock, he did the same. <sup>6</sup>And about five o'clock he went out and found others standing around; and he said to them, 'Why are you standing here idle all day?' <sup>7</sup>They said to him, 'Because no one has hired us.' He said to them, 'You also go into the vineyard.' <sup>8</sup>When evening came, the owner of the vineyard said to his manager, 'Call the laborers and give them their pay, beginning with the last and then going to the first.' <sup>9</sup>When those hired about five o'clock came, each of them received the usual daily wage. <sup>10</sup>Now when the first came, they thought they would receive more; but each of them also received the usual daily wage. <sup>11</sup>And when they received it, they grumbled against the landowner, <sup>12</sup>saying, 'These last worked only one hour, and you have made them equal to us who have borne the burden of the day and the scorching heat.' <sup>13</sup>But he replied to one of them, 'Friend, I am doing you no wrong; did you not agree with me for the usual daily wage?' <sup>14</sup>Take what belongs to you and go; I choose to give to this last the same as I give to you. <sup>15</sup>Am I not allowed to do what I choose with what belongs to me? Or are you envious because I am generous?' <sup>16</sup>So the last will be first, and the first will be last."

### Step Two: Meditatio

Meditate/reflect/ruminate

T.R.I.P. Method

Thanks - What in the verse makes me thankful?

Regret - What in the verse makes me regretful?

Intercession - What does the text lead me to pray for?

Plan of Action - What action does the text encourage me to take today?

African Model

Place yourself in each character of the text

And examine your feelings and responses

Other Good Questions

What does the passage say to me, the church, the community, the nation, the world?

What images come to mind?

What feelings did I have?

What person or situation would I see differently than I do now?

What new possibilities is God offering me?

What scares, confuses or challenges me in this text?

What delights me in this text?

What stories or memories does this text stir in me?

What is God up to in this text?

### Step Three: Oratio

Prayer

Scripture directs the prayers

Petition: Wisdom, Insight, Direction and Faith

Step Four: Contemplatio

Listening to God

Contemplative Prayer

Find a quiet space

Time for breathing and silence

Repetition of a key word

Listening for God's Voice

Questions

Next Time

March 4 or 7

Opening Your Bible: How to Read Scripture with a Historical Focus