



# *Ignatian Meditation*

## **THE METHOD**

In Ignatius' 16th-century approach to Scripture, instead of analyzing a text, you use your senses to imagine yourself as a character in the story. Then, you have a short, personal conversation with the Lord. We have outlined the 4 steps below.

In the first reading of the passage, we enter into the visual story in our mind. Instead of analyzing the text or seeking insights, Ignatius directs us to stay in the imagery of Scripture by re-playing its story. We ask the Spirit to guide us to identify with a character or to be a bystander and then read the story again. If you are drawn to part of the story, you can camp out there. It's important not to over-structure this. Rather, we are wise to ask the Spirit to guide us on a journey inspired by the Scripture. Keep your mind open to God. If you see an image or memory that's not in the text, you can sit with that.

In the second reading of the passage, we focus on how it feels to be in the role of the character God led us to accompany, continuing to avoid intellectual analysis. Instead, rely on the Lord to use the story to evoke your emotions, images, or sensations. Be open to the Spirit of the Lord changing your focus point. Then Ignatius directs us to have a "colloquy" (short/personal conversation) with the Lord about how you feel or what's going on in your life that the Scripture has touched. Then, listen for what the Spirit is saying to you.

A person is standing on a small rock in the middle of a waterfall, looking out. The water is cascading down a rocky cliff. The background is a lush green forest.

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## **THE STEPS**

### **1. Learn the Background**

First, familiarize yourself with the passage. Usually, looking at the chapter as a whole will give this context. We will provide the background each week.

### **2. Ask for Grace**

Say a short prayer before you begin. It can be in your own words, or you can use ours:

Divine Majesty, I desire the grace that you move my will to choose what will bring the greatest glory to Christ and will further your salvation for myself and others.

### **3. Imagine Scripture**

The first time you read the passage, visualize yourself in the Gospel. Don't seek intellectual insights—stay with the imagery. Use your senses to see, touch, feel, and hear. What part of the story are you drawn to? Which character do you identify with, or are you a bystander?

### **4. Prayer and Journaling**

The second time you read the passage, experience the story in the role of the character God led you to. Then talk with the Lord. What do you feel? How does this relate to something in your life today? What is God saying to you?