

SMPL

Study. Meditate. Pray. Live.



Prepare

Find a quiet place where you can be alone with the word. Minimize all noise and external distractions, and put your phone on Do Not Disturb. Set a 30 minute timer (or go without one). Close your eyes and breathe deeply. Allow your body to relax, and quiet your mind. As distractions come, acknowledge each one. You might say, "I trust you with this, Jesus."

Study

As you begin your SMPL time, one of the first steps is understanding the text. You can use the following questions to help you:

- What does this mean? Why would he have said this? What if he hadn't said this? How would I paraphrase this section?
- Is there an example to follow, a promise to claim, a command to obey? Are there contingencies to notice? (e.g. if you ____, then you will__.)

Meditate: Imagine

Imagine Jesus within you. Look into his eyes with love and see him looking into your eyes with love. Consider looking back at one thought of the passage at a time, as you keep bringing your awareness back to his spirit inside you. Your imagination is infinite-- as you read through the options below, sit with the text and let your mind dwell on it. Remember, these are just a few possible ways to explore this.

- Self in the story - Picture yourself as a character in the story, a bystander, or as Jesus or God himself (if applicable). What do you say that isn't written? What do other people say? How do you feel? (Do your feet hurt from walking a long way? Are you nervous? Excited?)

- Present day story - Imagine if this happened in the present day. Who is there? What does Jesus do? Where are you?

- Your life - Imagine a teaching or idea from this section applied to your life. What would you do differently? What would change? How would you feel about it?

Meditate: Thought

Use any of the following questions to promote your Bible meditation (not as a worksheet-- there is no need to "get through" them), as you ponder prayerfully through the passage.

- TACS (Teaching, Adoration, Confession, Supplication):

Teaching: What does this tell me about who God is? About humanity or yourself? (Who we are? Who we should be?) Adoration: What can I adore about God in this? Confession: What can I confess? (Be specific, think of the last 24 hours.) Supplication: What can I ask for related to this?

- Reality and vision:

Reality: What does my life look like when I am not living or believing this teaching? (Identify specific attitudes, beliefs, behaviors, and emotions.) Vision: What if this teaching or belief were explosively true in my life? What would that look like? Comparison: What is your reaction when you compare your reality and vision?

- Implications:

If this truth is truly real, or this teaching was a reality in my life, what would the implications be? List them out. Consider and think about the specifics of each one.

- Truth and lies:

What are the truths this text teaches you? What are the lies you have been believing?

- Why now:

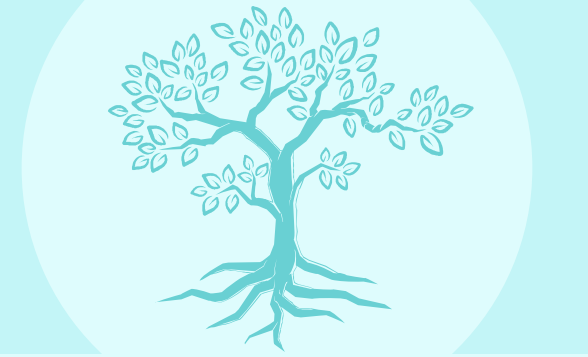
Why might God be bringing this to my attention now?

Pray

When practicing SMPL, you can experience meditation as a gateway from Bible study into prayer. There are a couple of ways you can approach this. One way is to address God or Jesus directly as you are thinking and journaling. For example if you are adoring Jesus, you might say or write your adoration to him, “Jesus, I see that you are totally trustworthy.” You may also pray back over your thoughts as you close the practice.

- Many people also find the end of their SMPL time to be a good time to pray through any normal daily requests that they may typically pray, or would like to pray. The way you pray for the situations of your life can change in light of your meditations and what God has shown you. You can even write down these prayers, and come back to them at the end of the month or the year to see how God has answered them.

- It is a wonderful thing to build on your thoughts from meditation to fill your day with prayer to him. As you are getting to know him and love him more, you can keep bringing your mind back to him throughout the day. You may pause to re-collect yourself quietly and periodically throughout the day, revisiting your prayers and meditations.



Live

Bring your imagination back to the Jesus you have seen today. Allow your mind to think deeply about him inside of you. Invite him to come with you in the moments of your day, staying in your heart and your awareness. As you return to the whirlpool of activity and distractions of your life, encourage your heart to trust him. You might use a phrase like, “You got this, Jesus.”

- During your day create times to be intentional about bringing your mind back to him and these meditations. You can even look at the verses again throughout the day.

- If you have tasks during the day that allow freedom of thought, (driving, cleaning, exercise, etc.), you can bring each verse back to your mind one at a time, remembering this Jesus within you and appreciating him!

- Take this a step further to bring Jesus in this scripture more deeply into your life by bringing one verse at a time to mind even while doing even thought intensive work-- for example, you can set a five minute timer and move from one verse to the next, imagining this Jesus inside you as you work.

- Throughout your day, as you engage with different activities and routines-- such as reading the news, making breakfast, driving to work, or playing a game-- you can bring Jesus with you. Talk to him; consult with him; invite him to participate in these activities with you.

- When you interact with people in your life, try asking God to bless them. You can do so by speaking words that will be a blessing to them, or praying a silent prayer. Watch how God works in these situations. Every person that you see or activity that you do can give you a chance to bless someone.

- At the end of your SMPL time, consider identifying a “gem” that captures thoughts from your meditation. It could be a word or phrase, or even a verse. Bring this gem back your mind throughout the day, using it to guide your thoughts towards Jesus. Use your daily gems (all of them, or a smaller selection) as a “mosaic” of thoughts that will guide your mind to connect with Jesus (such as at the beginning of your SMPL time, before you go to sleep, or when you feel anxious or distressed). Consider memorizing your mosaic.

Remember: The instructions on this sheet are just suggestions! Feel free to try new things and discover what works best for you.