

Reflection Guide

The Way of Love with Bishop Michael Curry: Learn

Letting the Word master us

How to Use This Guide

For personal devotion

Listen to the podcast episode one or two times. Next, set aside 20 minutes of quiet time to reflect on the following Scripture and questions. Consider writing your responses to the prompts in a journal. Close your time in prayer.

As a group

Before you meet, ask members to listen to this episode. Open your meeting by sharing the Scripture. Next, you may either listen to the episode again as a group or move on to the Questions for Reflection. As a group, discuss your thoughts about and answers to the questions. Finally, close your time together with the prayer.

Scripture

Take a moment to read this passage (aloud if possible). What words or phrases jump out to you?

Deuteronomy 6:4-9

⁴Hear, O Israel: The LORD is our God, the LORD alone.

⁵You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your might. ⁶Keep these words that I am commanding you today in your heart. ⁷Recite them to your children and talk about them when you are at home and when you are away, when you lie down and when you rise.

⁸Bind them as a sign on your hand, fix them as an emblem on your forehead, ⁹and write them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates.

Questions for Reflection

Use these questions for personal reflection, group discussion, or both.

1. Bishop Curry recommends that when we begin reading the Bible, we start with a short passage, focusing on the Gospels – the words and life of Jesus found in Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John. He also recommends that we read the passage aloud, one to three times, following the form of *Lectio Divina*, as modeled in the podcast by hosts Kyle and Sandy. Whether you are by yourself or in a group, take a few moments to try this simplified method, using either the Scripture provided or another passage:

- Read the passage aloud, listening for a word or phrase that stands out.
- Read the passage a second time, asking God to show you how that word or phrase relates to your life today.
- Read the passage a third time, asking God to show you how to respond to this passage.

What did you notice? What was revealed?

2. In our personal encounters with the Bible, Bishop Curry encourages us toward an experiment that is “less studying the Scripture, which can be us mastering it, and more listening to Scripture, and maybe letting the Word master us.” This approach creates an invitation in which Scripture can impact not just our minds and our intellect, but also our hearts. Is the idea of reading Scripture for yourself a new idea, or a comfortable one? Do you tend to approach the reading of Scripture from a place of mastering the passage or letting the passage master you? How do Bishop Curry’s words challenge or encourage you?

3. *“Take your Bible and take your newspaper, and read both. But interpret newspapers from your Bible.”* - Karl Barth

Citing this quote, Bishop Curry points out that when you read Scripture and pay attention to current events, a conversation can begin – internally or with others – exploring, “How does this word of God connect to the reality of the world?” Have you had an experience where you have seen Scripture come alive in your eyes, when something you witnessed triggered a verse or phrase from Scripture to rise up in your memory? If not, have other important words from your life (another piece of writing, song lyrics, a quote from a friend) ever come to mind in this way? Share or journal about that text. How might this kind of experience change how you will approach Scripture – or the news?

Prayer

Oh God, be present to us as we gather with others before you to worship. Open our hearts and minds to hear the Good News of Jesus Christ. Help us give thanks, confess, and offer the brokenness of the world to you. As we break bread, may our eyes be opened to the presence of Christ and the power of the Holy Spirit among us, making us into one body, the body of Christ, being sent forth to live the Way of Love. Amen.