

DARE WE SPEAK ABOUT HOPE?



RHYTHM 1: LISTENING TO GOD



LISTENING TO GOD

DAY 1

We're so used to reading and studying the Bible. Very often we do this to get new information or to learn about God. These are extremely important.

In another way, however, we need to learn to listen to God speaking to us through the Bible.

Luther used to say something in the line of "the church is there where the gospel is purely preached and the sacraments administered properly."

The Word is central to our faith and our understanding of what the church is. It is interesting, however, that John Calvin famously added to the phrase "and heard" so that it'd read: "the church is there where the gospel is purely preached *and heard*, and the sacraments administered properly." In church life we're good at nailing the first part.

We love a good sermon. We love new ideas, understanding, questioning. It is evident, however, that we do not always *hear*. We do not take time to listen to what God is trying to tell *us* through the Scriptures. We analyse and criticise, but never allow God to penetrate our own hearts and minds.

This rhythm, therefore, invites us into *hearing* the text.

Today we will follow five movements.

So, when you're ready, turn to the next page and start with movement one. You can spend as much time as you'd like on each movement.

It is totally okay to struggle through each.

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DAY 1

MOVEMENT 1: SILENCE

Find a quiet spot. Try to silence all the noise in your life. It might help to close your eyes, listen to the sounds around you, and simply breathe in and out.

You will have many thoughts dwelling around in your mind, try to move through them into real silence.

You can even light a candle if that helps you to become silent.

MOVEMENT 2: READ

Read the text, slowly and out loud.

Be sensitive to the movements of the Spirit.

Stay with words or phrases that affect you and catches your attention.

Do not analyse but listen and wait.

1 Peter 1:3-9

3 Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! In his great mercy he has given us new birth into a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, 4 and into an inheritance that can never perish, spoil or fade. This inheritance is kept in heaven for you, 5 who through faith are shielded by God's power until the coming of the salvation that is ready to be revealed in the last time. 6 In all this you greatly rejoice, though now for a little while you may have had to suffer grief in all kinds of trials.

(...)

7 These have come so that the proven genuineness of your faith—of greater worth than gold, which perishes even though refined by fire—may result in praise, glory and honor when Jesus Christ is revealed. 8 Though you have not seen him, you love him; and even though you do not see him now, you believe in him and are filled with an inexpressible and glorious joy, 9 for you are receiving the end result of your faith, the salvation of your souls.

MOVEMENT 3: REFLECT

Read the text aloud for a second time.
Think about and reflect on the words or phrases that the Spirit has placed on your heart.
What phrase or word stands out for you?
Spend time with that phrase or word.
What is the Spirit telling you or doing in you?

MOVEMENT 4: PRAY

Read the text a third time.
Talk to God about your deepest emotions and feelings.
What discomfort or resistance does this word create in you?
How does this word comfort you?
Toward what is God inviting you?

MOVEMENT 5: CONTEMPLATE

Bring your mind to God and rest in the presence of the living God. Allow the Word to sink deep into your heart and body. Choose a symbol or sign to remind you of this Word throughout the day. Continually remember it as you continue with your day and life.