



Introduction to Scripture Dialogue

There are a number of difficulties faced by most couples approaching scripture dialogue for the first time ...a fear stemming from an unfamiliarity with scripture ...a background of regarding scripture as an historical work ...for other people and other times, or as something that was mainly the province of others, particularly priests and nuns. So, approaching scripture with the aim of dialoguing on it is like a journey into the unknown. We think many couples have had the thought or question, How can we dialogue on scripture? "We're not biblical experts. We don't know anything about the Holy Land, or the way people lived then. We're also afraid we'll interpret passages wrong."

We need to accept that the scripture are love ...written to us and for us ...to reveal Jesus and ourselves in relationship with him. The books of the Bible are our books. We can respond to love letters, and our response, our feelings are neither right nor wrong. Our hope in writing this is to provide encouragement and support, and some help from our experiences to couples who have put off dialoguing on scripture because of these fears that hold us back. We have gained so much from our dialogues on scripture, that we would like everyone to experience the growing closeness that we have experienced with Jesus and our Father. Scripture dialogue is a tool, a means of responding to the love letters of our Father; it allows us to focus on our relationship with one another and the Lord, by focusing on our feelings in that relationship.

1. Hold the Bible in your hands and look upon it as you look upon the love letters of your spouse. In reading this book - this love letter - we are about to experience our Father, or Jesus, our brother. The two of you are about to have a

special meeting with our Father or Jesus in a very personal way. The Father and Jesus love you and are deeply interested in you as Jesus loved and was concerned about the married couple of Cana. They want to visit with you in this Scripture Dialogue.

2. Pray a short, simple prayer asking our Father that you will make yourselves open and that you will listen eagerly to him. Or pray in any way that helps you. It's good to pray out loud - one of you, or both of you.

3. Read out loud the passage of the Bible you have selected.

4. Put yourself in the scene with Jesus and the people there.

-trees, grass, flowers, water, sand, sky, sun, breeze, buildings, colors, shops, roads, animals, etc. (picture the things you can see, hear, touch, feel, smell)

-who is present (include yourselves):what do they look like, clothes, faces, hands, jobs, rich, poor, healthy, lame, etc.; hear them talk

-why are you there? what is your job?

-(fisherman, shop keeper, soldier on duty in this foreign land, merchant, tax collector, teacher, etc.) who are your friends?

-see Jesus, his clothes, his face, eyes, mouth, hair, his hands and feet; see him as he talks, listens, laughs, etc.

Describe "your scene" to each other so that everything and everyone is alive, especially Jesus, because he is the center of attention and he knows you and is interested in you two. (Don't spend so much time on details that you lose the purpose of the reading. Try not to quarrel as to how the scene appears.)

5. Now that you are in the scene -living, breathing, talking, belonging and feeling the presence of Jesus- read aloud the passage of Scripture again.

6. Write your love letter to your spouse describing how do I feel when Jesus says and does this? I get in touch with my feelings so I can write them in my love letter.

-don't write your letter to Jesus.

-don't explain what Jesus is teaching us (you).

-can discuss this at another time.)

-don't describe his affect on other people in the scene.

-describe how I feel when I'm there with Jesus.

-write for a minimum of 10 minutes.

7. Follow the guidelines for dialogue.

-exchange your letters and read them twice.

-pick out the strongest feeling.

-dialogue on that feeling for 10 minutes.

The purpose of Scripture Dialogue is to experience Jesus and to find out how I feel about him and to share this with my spouse.

Later you may wish to discuss the qualities you see in Jesus, Mary, the Apostles or others.

You may wish to discuss what Jesus is teaching and how it makes you see your life differently, or how Jesus may influence your values in life or your life style.

You two may wish to talk together with Jesus and make him a close friend and show your children that Jesus is a real person –alive, exciting, someone they can enjoy and relate to. Some couples like to picture the scene in a modern setting and watch and listen to Jesus in their neighborhood or parish in the 1990's. Use whatever method helps you to experience and relate to Jesus in a very real, personal way.

Readings from the New Testament

1. Wedding celebration at Cana, Gospel of John, Chapter 2, Verses 1-11.
2. The story of the farmer sowing, Gospel of Matthew, Chapter 13, Verses 4-23.
3. Jesus call's his apostles, Gospel of John, Chapter 1. Verses 35-51.
4. Peter's mother-in-law, Gospel of Mark, Chapter 1, Verses 29-34.
5. The birth of Jesus, Gospel of Luke, Chapter 2, Verses 1-20.
6. The storm at sea, Gospel of Mark, Chapter 4, Verses 35-41.
7. The Centurion's servant, Gospel of Matthew, Chapter 8, Verses 5-13.
8. Jesus' anger in the temple, Gospel of John, Chapter 2, Verses 13-17.
9. Jesus and the children, Gospel of Mark. Chapter 10, Verses 13-16.
10. The faith and trust of the blind man, Gospel of Mark, Chapter 10, Verses 46-52.
11. Jesus eats his last supper before his death:
 - he washes his apostles feet, Gospel of John, Chapter 13, Verses 1-17.
 - he predicts Peter's denial, Gospel of Mark, Chapter 14, Verses 27-31
 - he speaks of love, Gospel of John, Chapter 15, Verses 9-12.
12. Jesus' suffering in the Olive Garden, Gospel of Matthew, Chapter 26, Verses 31-35 and Gospel of Mark, Chapter 14, Verses 32-41.
13. Judas betrays Jesus, Gospel of Luke, Chapter 22, Verses 47-48.
14. Peter denies he knows Jesus, Gospel of Luke, Chapter 22, Verses 54-62.
15. Thomas doubts that Jesus has risen, Gospel of John, Chapter 20, Verses 24-29.
16. Mary Magdalene meets Jesus after he has risen, Gospel of John, Chapter 20, Verse 11-18.
17. The healing of Peter and the Apostles, Gospel of John, Chapter 21, Verses 1-17.
18. Jesus' promise, Gospel of Matthew, Chapter 28, Verses 16-20.