

SCRIPTURE ENGAGEMENT (SE) & PRAYER

_Reliance.
We ask God to help us understand his Word and hear it in a fresh way

_Preparation.
Prayer helps us enter into a relational posture and awareness of God's presence



grows/inspires/enriches
Scripture Engagement in
the following ways:

_Give up Control.

We intentionally place our engagement with the Word in God's hands and let his Spirit lead us.

_Relational:

In SE, we do not only want to talk about God, but with him.

_Mirror:

Our prayers reveal who we think God is; this leads us back to who he has revealed himself to be in Scripture

_Response in prayer to who God has revealed himself to be in Scripture. We do not pray to an unknown God.

_Connect with what is on God's heart: Through Scripture, we enter into his perspective and are invited to let this shape the content of our prayers.



grows/inspires/enriches
Prayer in the
following ways:

_Models

from Scripture show us how we can come to God in prayer e.g. lament, thanksgiving, praise, petition, silence

_Enlarges Concerns as

Scripture opens up God's big story and his passion for this world to us. Our perspective is widened and so are our prayers.

_Hope and Conviction

that God hears and answers grow in us through the Word

_Inspiration

when we are struggling with prayer; we can start with Scripture and allow it to lead us back into conversation with God;

Both are:
Interacting with God in a personal way

God's gift to us (not something we do for him)

God at work in and among us through his Spirit

An invitation to enter into a posture of openness, expectancy and humility

Some ways to strengthen elements of prayer in SE:

- _stopping during Bible studies to pray, especially when we get stuck in our conversation or sense that the passage is calling for an immediate response to God. Then continue sharing and stop again where appropriate instead of just ending in prayer.
- _O.I.R(eflect).A - include a phase of prayerful reflection in the OIA approach to SE;
- _learn and introduce meditative ways of reading Scripture - that integrate silent reflection, prayerful response, staying with a word and listening to God speaking through it...
- _Have symbols or objects as reminders e.g. an empty chair to symbolize God's presence.

Some ways to strengthen elements of SE in prayer:

- _Live with a passage for a season and let it shape our praying for that season;
- _Integrate Bible study and prayer in our personal devotions, small groups, conferences so that each one is shaped by the other;
- _pray in all the ways modelled to us in Scripture so that we grow in how we engage with God;
- _Connect prayer times in small group Bible studies with the passage studied, e.g. by asking: "How do you want us to pray for you in response to this passage?"

See also: www.scriptureengagement.ifesworld.org - particularly the section resources - formación development, small group Bible studies and retreats.