

Formative Spiritual Reading Is an Essential Discipline in the Christian Life

Try to follow these steps:

1. Set aside a portion of uninterrupted time.
2. Find a private and comfortable space.
3. Begin by praying a prayer that asks God to make this time and space sacred.
4. Linger for a few minutes in quietness.
5. Pray to God asking that the Holy Spirit would guide your reading.
6. Begin reading and pay special attention, not only to the details or thematic content, but to "holy intuitive nudges."
7. When something inside "clicks" or causes you to have an "ah-ha," moment, stop reading ... at least for now.
8. In a notebook or journal briefly write down what thoughts or feelings arise. Wonder how God might be using these words or this book to shape or form your life.
9. Return to your reading, continuing the same prayerful process.
10. End your reading with prayer.

This discipline of spiritual reading will not only be formative, but transformational in your life and spiritual journey.

(This guideline is from "Certificate for Spiritual Formation-Reading & Writing" provided to students of the Spiritual Formation Certificate course at CTS, Decatur, Georgia.)