

Lectio Divina for Small Groups

Group Rules

- Confidentiality—everything said in the group stays in the group
- Group members need to be honest when they talk—but are always free to “pass.” There should never be any pressure to share publicly. People will share as their level of trust increases.
- This is not a discussion group or counseling session and should not become one. The purpose is to meet the Lord and hear him.

Here is a possible procedure to follow with groups:

Remember, doing the Lectio process on a Scripture passage that group members know already is a better choice. Lectio is not for discovering the meaning of a passage; it is for soaking in God’s Word, letting it become a part of our lives.

Step One - Preparation

Have someone pray for the group that they would be open and receptive to God.
Be silent in your group for a 1-2 minutes

Step Two - Reading

- Have some read the passage slowly out loud. Have a time of silence for 1-2 minutes.
- Have a second person read the passage slowly out loud.
- Work your way through the four sections below leaving equal time for each (these questions work best for narrative passages):
- Ask God to enable you to enter into the passage with your mind to grasp the facts of the passage: the who, what, where, when, why, and how.
- Ask God to enable you to enter into the scene with your own senses: what would you have heard, what would you have tactilely felt, what would you have smelt, what would you have seen?
- Ask God to enable you to enter into the scene with your emotions. Is there one particular character or group of characters with whom God is inviting you to identify? Is God inviting you to enter into the emotions of

each person in the passage? What would that person have felt emotionally—happy, sad, confused, angry, joyful, contented, surprised?

- Be silent for a brief period of time.

Step Three - Meditation

- Have everyone read the passage to themselves for a third time.
- Pick out a word, idea, or phrase that strikes you in a personal way; something that might jump out to you—perhaps a particular metaphor; you don't have to finish reading the whole passage.
- Once you've found a word or phrase that catches your eye or moves your heart, slowly repeat it, linger over it, give it your attention. Ask your group members to think about, "Where does the content of this reading touch my life today?"
- Be silent for a few minutes for group members to be able to reflect on how the word or phrase connects to their lives.
- Meditation is the discipline we give to keeping the memory active in the act of reading. (things slip out of our minds so quickly)
- Repetition is needed here, but not a mechanical mantra thing. Just keep remembering the phrase
- Invite the group members to state out loud to the rest of the group (or to just one other person), in just a few sentences, the connection between the word/phrase and their lives.
- Share briefly the story why you stopped where you did (there is always a story!). Do not elaborate too long!
- You can always "pass"

Step Four - Prayer

- Now take any thoughts, feelings, actions, fears, convictions, and questions you have meditated on and offer them to the Lord in prayer.
- Praise God for who he is.
- If you feel convicted about a poor relationship, simply apologize, request forgiveness, and ask for guidance on restoring the relationship.
- If you feel thankful for something that God has done for you, then pour out those feelings of thanksgiving.

- If you feel a specific anxiety about something in your life, present it to the Lord and pray for the guidance and peace to be able to submit to God's will.

Step Five - Contemplation

This final stage (though frequently overlooked) is one of vital importance. The “task” in this stage is to simply be silent in the presence of God (Psalm 46:10). This is one of the most essential aspects for building a growing relationship with the Lord. One of the most valuable things that we can do with this feeling is to relax and embrace it. Just “be” with God. We don't need to always be talking at God.

Step Six - Living

Part of contemplation is to commit yourself, with the help of God, to “do” the truth that he has implanted in your heart. It is our submitting to God's Word, our living it out, that God is calling us to (e.g., James 1:22-25, Matthew 7:15-27, Romans 2:12-16). Living out our faith is a following of Jesus that happens naturally as we know Christ and become like him.

Have each person pray for their partner or the person to their right that they will be able to respond appropriately to God.

Note: Anyone may “pass” at any time.

If instead of sharing with the group you prefer to pray silently, simply state this aloud and conclude your silent prayer with Amen.

Miscellaneous Information on Group Lectio Divina

The group lectio is a little different from the individual lectio process mainly in that contemplation process is replaced with prayer for one another. Group lectio also includes an invitation to action. There is great power in asking God what is required of us and in sharing what we hear with others. Doing the lectio process together is helpful in that hearing from others will often expand your own insights, and sharing with others will gently strengthen your resolve to follow-through on personal response plans.

It is possible for group members to have a passage a scripture (perhaps one Bible chapter) that each member uses the individual lectio divina process on during the week for as many or as few times as they are able. For the weekly small group meetings the leader could pick one section of the chapter and go through that passage using the group lectio divina process.

Lectio divina small groups can also be run without weekly home-work.

<https://www.biblegateway.com/resources/scripture-engagement/lectio-divina/small-groups>

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