

# Lectio Divina: Small Group Guide

**Purpose:** This guide is designed to facilitate a small group discussion and an interactive practice of **Lectio Divina**, helping participants move from information-gathering to soul-listening.

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## Welcome & Icebreaker (10 minutes)

- **The "Favorite Letter" Question:** Do you remember receiving a handwritten letter or a special email from someone you love? Did you read it differently than you read a textbook or a news article? How so?
  - **Information vs. Formation:** On a scale of 1-10, how much do you feel like you "study" the Bible for facts versus "listen" to the Bible for your soul? Why is the "fact-finding" approach so much easier for us?
  - **The "Cud" Question:** Have you ever had a song lyric or a quote from a movie "get stuck" in your head for days? How did that repetition change how you felt about the message?
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## Opening Discussion (15 minutes)

1. The video defines Lectio Divina as "Divine Reading." What is your initial reaction to the idea that God has a specific word or phrase for you today?
2. The word *Hagah* (to meditate) means to "growl" or "mutter" like a lion over its meat. How does this "active" image of meditation differ from the "quiet/emptying" meditation we often see in culture?
3. Read **Psalm 1:1-3** aloud. What does the imagery of a "tree planted by water" suggest about the long-term effects of Lectio Divina on a person's character?
4. Why is it important to read the Scripture *out loud* during this practice?
5. How does reading Scripture *with* God change the experience compared to reading it *about* God?

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## Key Insights (15 minutes)

- **The Four R's:** Briefly review the movements: **Read, Reflect, Respond, Rest.** Which of these feels most natural to you? Which feels the most difficult?
- **The Shimmering (stand out) Word:** How do we tell the difference between a word that "shimmers" because God is speaking, and a word we just happen to like? (Hint: Does it challenge you, comfort you, or stay with you?)
- **Chewing the Cud:** How can a single word from Scripture stay with you during a busy workday? What are practical ways to "ruminate" on God's Word throughout the day?

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## Practice Together (20 minutes)

- **Group Practice:** Lead the group through the following exercise using **Psalm 23:1-3** or **John 15:1-5**.
  1. **Read (2 mins):** Read the passage aloud slowly. Ask everyone to listen for one "shimmering" word.
  2. **Silence (1 min):** Let the word sit.
  3. **Reflect (2 mins):** Read the passage again (perhaps a different translation). Ask: "God, why this word for me today?"
  4. **Respond (2 mins):** Read a third time. Invite everyone to silently "talk back" to God about that word.
  5. **Rest (2 mins):** Read a final time. Spend two minutes in total silence, just resting in God's love.
- **Debrief:**
  1. What word or phrase shimmered for you?
  2. Was it hard to stay focused during the silence? How did it feel to "rest" at the end?

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## Application and Closing (10 minutes)

- **The "God" Calendar:** How can you schedule 15 minutes of Lectio Divina this week? Will you write "God" on your schedule to remind you it's a meeting?
- **Group Challenge:** Choose one book of the Bible (like the Gospel of Mark) and try this method with one small story each morning this week.
- Reflect on the idea that "we learn to pray by praying." Don't worry about doing it perfectly; just start.

**Closing Prayer:** Lord Jesus, You are the Living Word. Thank You for speaking to us today. Help us to not just be 'readers' of your Word, but 'listeners.' May Your truth ruminate in our hearts all week long. Amen.