

# Discipleship Groups – November Practice

## Lectio Divina – Divine (Sacred) Reading

Lectio is a way to read the Scriptures that helps move us from information gathering to a more intimate encounter with God. It is rooted in the belief that the Scriptures are alive and active and can be at work in our lives. (Heb 4:12) Lectio is not meant to replace the practice of studying the Scriptures, but to come alongside as a different way of opening up space for the Holy Spirit to speak. Richard Foster says, “Lectio is a way of allowing the mind to descend into the heart.”

### The Practice

1. Silencio - Find a quiet place. Begin with silence. Be Still. (Psalm 46:10) You may pray young Samuel’s prayer, “Speak, Lord, for your servant is listening.” (1 Sam 3:9)
2. Lectio – Read the Scripture slowly with a listening heart. Listen for a word or phrase that catches your attention. Pause and read the passage for a second time for confirmation that God is stopping you at that same place.
3. Meditatio – Spend time with the Lord meditating on his word to you. Ask God why he stopped you there. What does he want to say to you? Often God will draw your mind to other Scriptures to confirm what he is saying. Spend some time reading and reflecting on them.
4. Oratio – Our meditation naturally spills over into prayer (Meditatio and Oratio often blend together.) Continue to pray for as long as God holds you there. Thank him for his intimate presence and his Holy Spirit guidance.
5. Contemplatio – A true encounter with God transforms us at a deep soul level. Take the words God has given you into your day. Spend time with them (contemplate on them) after all, the living God has spoken to you at an intimate level. (Phil 4:8)
6. Incarnatio – The deep work of the Spirit in our lives brings soul transformation, and we then live out of that place. We are becoming more like Jesus because our living is being shaped by the Spirit of the living God. (John 14:6)

The practice of Lectio may be new for you. Don’t worry if it is difficult at first to hear God – that is why we call it a “practice.” If you don’t sense God stopping you at any specific word or phrase, simply ask yourself, “What word or phrase caught my attention?” You don’t need to be certain that God stopped you there in order to meditate on that verse (Meditatio) and

pray (Oratio) and reflect on what the Holy Spirit is teaching you (Contemplatio). And be sure to put into practice what you are learning (Incarnatio).