

LIFE GROUP LEADER GUIDE

Seeking is a six week study that is a practical journey in learning about six spiritual disciplines, with discussions that equip and motivate each person in your group to give them a try. Spiritual disciplines can help us seek God and know him more intimately. Our hope is that engaging with the disciplines can help our people develop a hunger for God that results in a growing and lifelong passion to pursue Him.



The discussions will include several references to Richard Foster's book, Celebration of Discipline, which is the main resource for the Sunday morning messages. Quotes appear in italics and include the chapters where they can be found.

Each week will contain three sections for discussion and then a fourth for sharing and praying. The times given are assuming a meeting duration of 1.5-2 hours. You may have to shorten something if you meet for less.

1. SEEKING... THE SPIRITUAL DISCIPLINES

20 minutes

This section starts your discussion time. It will consist of two parts.

- First, each week your group members will be encouraged to choose an activity to help them practice the spiritual discipline you've discussed. When you come back together each week allow 10-15 minutes for people to share their experience with the activity.
- Second, there will be a question about spiritual disciplines in general, based on a quote from Foster's book.

2. SEEKING... (the spiritual discipline for the week)

45 - 60 minutes

This is where your group will wrestle with concepts on each discipline. There will be biblical text to build principles on. There will be quotes from the book to focus the conversation.

The discussion is intended to be very practical: addressing what the discipline is, exploring what the Bible says about the discipline, what could motivate someone to practice it, what barriers people may encounter practicing it, etc.

3. SEEKING... TO RESPOND

10 minutes

This is where your group members will take what you've discussed and make it real for themselves. They will each choose how they will give the Spiritual Discipline a "trial run" during the next week. There are three levels to choose from:

SEEKING HIGH: an introductory experience for a novice in the discipline

SEEKING HIGHER: a stretching experience for someone familiar with the discipline

SEEKING HIGHEST: a challenging experience for a veteran of the discipline

This is a crucial part of your group's time together! Manage your discussion so you have time to do this. Encourage your group members to choose an activity and make a good effort to try it during the week.

It might work well to form smaller groups of 3-4 when people review and discuss these. We want everyone to actively participate in this and you won't have time to hear from everyone in a large group.

4. **SEEKING... TO PRAY FOR EACH OTHER**

15 minutes

There are many ways to do prayer times together in your group. Consider these principles when you plan this time:

- Focus more on praying than on sharing details of requests. You may even consider limiting each person to one request.
- Focus on praying for the group members themselves or the people close to them.
- Focus on prayer for living out our faith in circumstances more than prayer for something specific to happen in circumstances.
- Focus on prayer for group members to respond to how the Holy Spirit has been working in them and prompting them during the discussion time.

TIPS FOR LEADING:

- Read through the week's guide before your meeting.
- Consider how you will manage the group's time. Determine which questions are setting up the topic and so just need a few answers to establish a focus, and which are the heart of the topic and so need time for people to share and wrestle with different thoughts.
- When the question includes looking up scripture, decide whether you'll have everyone look up the passage (recommended for a single passage) or divide passages up among the group (recommended when there is lots of scripture to cover).
- Plan how you might form smaller groups for some of the questions so you can provide opportunities for everyone to speak, especially the quieter members of your group. The guide has some recommendations for this.
- Remember to leave enough time for the RESPOND section.
- Encourage your group to attend the weekly services or listen to the messages before they come to the meeting.
- **Bonus Tip:** Read the corresponding chapters from Celebration of Discipline and encourage your group to do the same. (including chapter 1 on spiritual disciplines in general)

IF YOU HAVE A SHORTER MEETING TIME:

Focus your discussion on the **Seeking... (the spiritual discipline for the week)** section. You might consider pairing people up to discuss the Respond section. It's not ideal but if it's necessary you could encourage the pairs to connect after your meeting time - but within a day or two. As a leader you may have to follow up with people to be sure they are working on their response activity.

If you have any questions about leading this study, please don't hesitate to contact Roni Flischel at 513-515-4266.