



Soul Sisters 2

LEARNING TO HEAR GOD & SHARE GRACIOUSLY





The theme of Soul Sisters 1 was learning to listen well to each other. Soul Sisters 2 focuses on improving our ability to hear God, and learning how to encourage each other with what we hear.

We will try a few new Spiritual Formation Practices: one is called Palms Down/Palms Up and another is called Lectio Divina, which simply means divine reading. We will also gradually increase our time of silence to five minutes, as we work toward having a peaceful soul at rest.

If you haven't done Soul Sisters 1 yet, we recommend you start there. You can download your free guide at baptistwomen.com

Additional resources can be found in live magazine and at baptistwomen.com

Gather a group and let's begin!

Let us consider how to stir up one another to love and good works (Hebrews 10:24, ESV)



WHAT IS SPIRITUAL FRIENDSHIP?

Safe space

What we say in this context matters. Remember to be absolutely disciplined about not sharing anything you hear in this group outside of the group. Let us honour the vulnerability that it takes to share our souls with one another.

Grace and Compassion

We each come to this group having different backgrounds and perspectives. When we receive each other with grace and compassion we are able to learn from one another and grow.

Deep Listening

Unhurried, non-judgemental listening creates an environment that supports people and gives them space to see where God is.

What does this look like?

- We don't interrupt but instead offer the gift of our full attention.
- We don't give advice or try to fix someone's problem. Our culture has led us to think that is "helping" but in reality, our suggestions can make the person feel undermined and unheard.
- We don't evaluate (especially not to criticize or judge) but trust the Holy Spirit to do His work.

God is here

God is present with us. As we learn to listen, let us remember that we are here to bring ourselves and our sisters to Christ, and let him speak truth and life.

Session 1

RECONNECTING

Part 1: Larger Group

1. Welcome everyone

2. Reminders

Review "Sisterhood."

3. Spiritual Practice - Palms Down/Palms Up

Read Palms Down/Palms Up

Go through the practice together and go directly into silence for 2 minutes.

Part 2: Breakout Groups

1. Sharing

Share your answers to the questions for this session. For each one:

- Read the question
- Let one person answer while the others listen without comment.
- Pause: take a few deep breaths. Let what they said sink in.
- Continue until everyone has had a chance to share while the others listen, pausing after each one.

Questions for this session (share an answer to one or both):

- What are your hopes for the next few months? For the next few years?
- What is 1 question of faith you have always wondered about?
- At what point in your life was your faith strongest? Why do you think that was?

2. Pray together

Spiritual Practice

PALMS DOWN/PALMS UP

Sometimes doing something physical can help us make an equivalent spiritual change. This ancient practice is designed to help us release our worries to Christ.

1. Close your eyes and hold your hands out in front of you with the palms facing down. Silently name the fears, frustrations and burdens you are carrying one by one. Perhaps there is someone you are worried about; perhaps you have a relationship in conflict. What is causing you stress?

2. As you name each item, pray to release it. (e.g. Lord, I entrust my child to you; I give you my fear about this medical appointment.) Imagine God's hands held out and ready to receive what you are letting go.

3. Then, slowly turn your hands over. With palms up, pray to receive whatever God has for you. Sit quietly for a minute or two.

Cast all your worries on him, for he cares for you.
(1 Peter 5:7, TLV)

Session 2

CONNECTING WITH GOD THROUGH SCRIPTURE

Part 1: Larger Group

1. Welcome everyone

2. Reminders

3. Spiritual Practice - Silence

Pray and invite the presence of Christ. Ask Him to draw near. He promises that if we draw near to Him, He will draw near to us (James 4:8).

Have 3 minutes of silence.

Part 2: Breakout Groups

1. Reminder - Listening Slowly

Pause after people speak so they don't feel rushed. Perhaps they have one last thought to add. Then if one or two people want, they can ask a question to draw out more of the story. Remember not to give advice or jump in with your own experience.

2. Sharing

Share your answers to the questions for this session. For each one:

- Read the question
- Let one person answer while the others listen without comment.
- Pause, take a few deep breaths to let what they said have its moment.
- Continue until everyone has had a chance to share while the others listen, pausing after each one.

Questions for the session

(Take turns sharing an answer to as many questions as you have time for):

- Tell us about a time when God spoke to you through a particular scripture. What was the verse? What did He say?
- What questions do you have about learning to hear personally from God?
- What makes you nervous about this subject?

3. Pray together

Pray Scripture over each other in pairs. You can use Isaiah 61:3,4 or another verse if you prefer

Session 3

ALLOWING GOD TO LEAD

Part 1: Larger Group

1. Welcome everyone

2. Reminders

Remember to leave space after each person shares so their comments can sink in. This is a new habit, it takes time and practice for it to develop.

Read Learning to Notice & Learning to Reflect Back

3. Spiritual Practice - Lectio Divina

Read spiritual practice - Lectio Divina.

Follow the practice together by reading John 10:14-18.

Part 2: Breakout Groups

1. Sharing

Share your answers to the questions for this session. For each one:

- Read the question
- Let one person answer while the others listen without comment.
- Pause: Take a few deep breaths. Waiting shows we consider their thoughts valuable.
- Continue until everyone has had a chance to share while the others listen, pausing after each one. Hopefully this kind of patient listening is becoming more natural.

Questions for the session

(Take turns sharing an answer to as many questions as you have time for).

*Practice 'noticing' and 'reflecting back.'

- What words or phrases stood out to you from the passage? What might God be saying to you?
- What ways has God used to speak to you?

2. Pray together



LEARNING TO NOTICE LEARNING TO REFLECT BACK

Learning to Notice

As you listen to the stories of others (in this session and others), you don't want distorted hearing. These steps help you to notice emotions that could cause that.

1) Take some deep breaths. Waiting gives us a chance to notice something in ourselves.

2) Notice any thoughts or feelings their story stirs up in you. Later you may want to think about these thoughts and feelings some more: Where did they come from? Are they related to unresolved things in the past? Perhaps they reawaken dreams for the future?

3) Try to ask the speaker questions that are not from your own reactions, but that draw out their story.

Learning to reflect back

After each person shares, see if one person can respond in the following format:

- 1) This is what I heard you say . . .
- 2) This is what it invoked in me . . .

Spiritual Practice

LECTIO DIVINA

Lectio Divina

This is simply Latin for divine reading. It is an ancient way of reflecting on Scripture.

1. Choose a short passage from the Bible.
2. Pray and ask God to speak to you through His Word.
3. Read (or listen) to the passage slowly 3 times, pausing between each one.

First time: Imagine the scene. What does it look like?
Sound like?

Second time: Which word or phrase are you noticing most?

Third time: How could that word or phrase apply to your life? What might God be saying?

Session 4

LOOKING FORWARD

Part 1: Larger Group

1. Welcome everyone

2. Reminders

3. Spiritual Practice - Silence

4. Spiritual Practice - Lectio Divina

Follow the practice together by reading Luke 10:30-37

5. Sharing Scripture with each other

Read "Sharing Scripture with each other"

Part 2: Breakout Groups

1. Sharing

Share your answers to the questions for this session. For each one:

- Read the question
- Let one person answer while the others listen without comment.
- Pause: Take a few deep breaths.
- Let one or two people ask a question to expand or clarify (if they have one). Continue until everyone has had a chance to share while the others listen, pausing after each one, and asking questions.

Questions for the session

(Take turns sharing an answer to as many questions as you have time for):

- What is something someone has done for you that made you feel cared for?
- What are some doors God has opened for you?

As people share their answers to questions, ask God if there is a verse He would like you to share with them.

2. Pray scripture over each other

Spiritual Practice

SHARING SCRIPTURE WITH EACH OTHER

- 1) Pray and ask God to show you something to encourage another person.
- 2) As people share their answers, pay attention to a verse or phrase that comes to mind.
- 3) Filter the verse/phrase. If it blesses and doesn't break a confidence, then gently share it with them.
- 4) If no verse or phrase comes, that's just fine. Someone can reflect back what was said.

Session 5

LET'S GET REAL

Part 1: Larger Group

1. Welcome everyone
2. Reminders
3. Spiritual Practice - Silence

Part 2: Breakout Groups

1. Sharing

Share your answers to the questions for this session. For each one follow the pattern of sharing, listening without comment, pausing, and then possibly asking a few questions.

Questions for the session

(Take turns sharing an answer to as many questions as you have time for):

- What is one weakness you struggle with?
- How do you see these at play in your life? Where do you see God at work or what might it look like to invite him into this area of your life?

2. Guided Prayer

1) Read Psalm 103:10-12. Choose any translation.

2) Then as people's eyes are closed, gently read the following prompts, leaving space between each one. (Even 10 – 15 seconds is fine.)

- Think about how forgiven you are—every single sin forgiven, nothing missed.
- Think about how clean God has made you—white as snow, clothed in righteousness.
- Think about how restored you are—no matter what happened in the past, God is still able to do amazing things in your life.

3) To close say: Hear what God says in Isaiah 43:19 ESV: Behold, I am doing a new thing; now it springs forth, do you not perceive it? I will make a way in the wilderness and rivers in the desert.

Session 6

MEDITATING ON SCRIPTURE

Part 1: Larger Group

- 1. Welcome everyone**
- 2. Reminders**
- 3. Spiritual Practice - Silence**

Invite the presence of God. Spend several minutes in silence.

Part 2: Breakout Groups

1. Learning to meditate on Scripture

Take turns reading 1 Peter 2:9-10 from several translations. Look for one verse or phrase that stands out to you. Take a few minutes to individually think about the verse or phrase you have chosen.

- Repeat the phrase silently a few times, emphasizing a different word each time. What do you notice?
- If God was going to write a note to you based on this verse, what would he say?

2. Sharing

Share your answers to the questions for this session. For each one follow the pattern of sharing, listening without comment, pausing, and then possibly asking a few questions.

Questions for the session

(Take turns sharing an answer to as many questions as you have time for):

- What stood out from the meditation?
- Do you sense an invitation from God?

Session 7

LOOKING AHEAD

Part 1: Larger Group

1. Welcome everyone

2. Reminders

3. Principles for Peer Spiritual Direction

Read together. This collects the different pieces we have been learning: listening to God, testing what we think we may have heard, filtering what we say.

4. Spiritual Practice - Silence

Invite the presence of God. Spend several minutes in silence.

Part 2: Breakout Groups

1. Sharing

Share your answers to the questions for this session. For each one:

- Read the question
- Let one person answer while the others listen without comment.
- Pause: Take a few deep breaths. This time, be aware if a scripture comes to mind. This could be God speaking to you.
- Continue until everyone has had a chance to share while the others listen, pausing to listen for God after each one.

Questions for the session

(Take turns sharing an answer to as many questions as you have time for):

- What do you think it means to be called?
- Have you ever felt called to something? Describe that.

2. Pray together

PRINCIPLES FOR PEER SPIRITUAL DIRECTION

As each person speaks, try these steps of Peer Spiritual Direction all at once:

- **Notice** any memories or feelings of your own that could distort your listening.
- Is there **a question** that could bring out more of their story?
- Is there **a verse or phrase** that God seems to be bringing to mind?
- **Test** that verse or phrase.
- **Offer it as a possibility.**
- Give the receiver a chance to think briefly and respond.

"Gracious words are like a honeycomb,
sweetness to the soul and health to the body"
(Proverbs 16:24 ESV)

Session 8

WE ARE ALL CALLED

Part 1: Larger Group

1. Welcome everyone

2. Reminders

Reread Principles for Peer Spiritual Direction.

Later, after each person shares, pause, and try to respond with peer spiritual direction.

3. Spiritual Practice - Silence

Part 2: Breakout Groups

1. Sharing

Reflect on Soul Sisters 2 together.

Share your answers to the questions for this session. For each one:

- Read the question
- Let one person answer while the others listen without comment.
- Pause: Take a few deep breaths. This time, be aware if a scripture comes to mind. This could be God speaking to you.
- Continue until everyone has had a chance to share while the others listen, pausing to listen for God after each one.

Questions for the session

(Take turns sharing an answer to as many questions as you have time for):

- What is something God is calling you toward personally?
- What steps would you need to take to move toward that?
- What spiritual gift would you need in order to do that?

2. Pray together

Close by praying blessings for each individual.

3. Goodbyes and plan for SS3

PRINCIPLES FOR PEER SPIRITUAL DIRECTION

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