

the
lectio
 course

Session 4

Pray: Responding to God in prayer and prophecy

A note for leaders:

Welcome to session four of The Lectio Course.

Each session of the course is designed to take around an hour and features:

- A teaching video with Pete Greig and a special interview guest
- Discussion questions for groups
- A practical activity to do together

It can be tempting to linger on the questions or keep the discussion going, but we really recommend prioritising the practical activity; it will help you as a group to practise what's being explored in each video session.

You might find that there are more discussion questions than you have time for: if that's the case, choose the ones that feel most appropriate and helpful for your group context.

Hearing God is a concept that many Christians are familiar with, and others are brand new to. We recommend paying attention to the dynamic of your group and being aware of the varying levels of understanding and experience. Unfortunately, some people have negative experiences in this area too, and we recommend being sensitive and aware of this as you lead through the session.

We'd love to hear how you're finding the course: please do share your experiences with us at www.24-7prayer.com/contact



How to Hear God book chapters for this session:

Chapter 4 (Hearing God's word in prophecy)

Chapter 6 (Hearing God's whisper in dreams and the unconscious)



Learning objective for this session

To understand how the Bible can equip us to pray, and to understand how the prophetic can encourage others.

1. Intro: set the scene

5 MINS

In this session, we'll explore the third step of Lectio Divina, **prayer**, and prophecy, turning our inward meditation upwards into conversation with God, and outwards in declaration of God's word to the world.

Intro questions

What is your experience or understanding of prayer and prophecy? How are they linked?

Bible passage / verse

"Ask me for anything in my name, and I will do it." – John 14:14 (NIV)

2. Watch the video

15 MINS

Summary

- **The Bible is meant to be prayed and lived, not just read and understood**
- **When we read the Bible, we're invited into conversation and prayer is our response**
- **Our prayer lives are at their best not when we talk to God about big things occasionally, but little things continuously**

"Prayers never die, they just accumulate. If I'm praying in the will of God, the fact that something doesn't happen instantaneously doesn't mean that He doesn't want to answer."

– James Aladiran

3. Discussion questions

25 MINS

What did you find most helpful or most challenging in the video?

What are some of the different ways that people in the Bible hear God's voice? (Including the more unusual ways!)

Pete says that our prayer lives are at their best not when we talk to God about big things occasionally, but little things continuously. Have you experienced the conversational kind of prayer with God that Pete describes in his tree story? What did God's voice sound like?

Are there situations in your life where you need to pray the scriptures? What situation are you currently facing and what scripture could impact your current situation?

James shared his surprise when his prayer for healing was answered. Have you, or has anyone in your community, ever experienced a miraculous answer to prayer? How did this experience impact you?

What are your concerns or fears around the prophetic? What do you think Christians get right, and what do you think Christians could do better when talking about or sharing the prophetic?

James said that our prayers never die, they just accumulate. What practical steps could you build into your routine to ensure you keep persevering in prayer?

What one thing will you do differently because of this session?

4. Go Deeper

15 MINS

Practical prayer activity:

Practise hearing God's voice for others as a group. Remember Pete's ABC guide:

Affirming – does it fulfil the criteria of 1 Cor. 14, by being strengthening, encouraging, comforting, edifying and uplifting?

Biblical – Is it consistent with the broad teaching and witness of scripture?

Christlike – does it sound like the kind of thing Jesus would have said and feel like the kind of person he was?

Depending on your group, there are different ways you might like to do this:

1. Split into smaller groups (3-4 people) and spend 5-10 minutes listening to what God might want to say to each individual. As you pray, note any Bible verses, words, phrases or pictures that come to mind and share them with the group. Remember Pete's ABC guide as you listen and pray.
2. Lay out assorted pictures cut from magazines and newspapers. Invite each person to select one that they're drawn to. Welcome the Holy Spirit and ask God to speak to each of you through this image.

Once everyone's ready, take it in turns to share what you sensed God saying, whether it was for you or someone else. If a word feels like it resonates with someone, take time to pray for them.

For some people in the group, this way of listening to God might come naturally and feel easy. For others this could feel harder or take longer. Don't rush the experience, and don't pressure anyone in the group to share if they're not comfortable to do so.

This week

Practise regular prayer and listening to God by setting aside 15 minutes each day to pause, pray, and listen. You might like to pray intentionally for the same thing every day, or choose different things to pray for.

Each time you pray, also spend a moment in silence, welcoming God's presence and asking if there's anything God wants to say about the situation, person or people you're praying for.

Additional resources

 **More on listening**
www.24-7prayer.com/prayer_guide/listen-to-god

 **Get the book**
How to Hear God

 **Download the Lectio 365 app**
www.24-7prayer.com/lectio365