

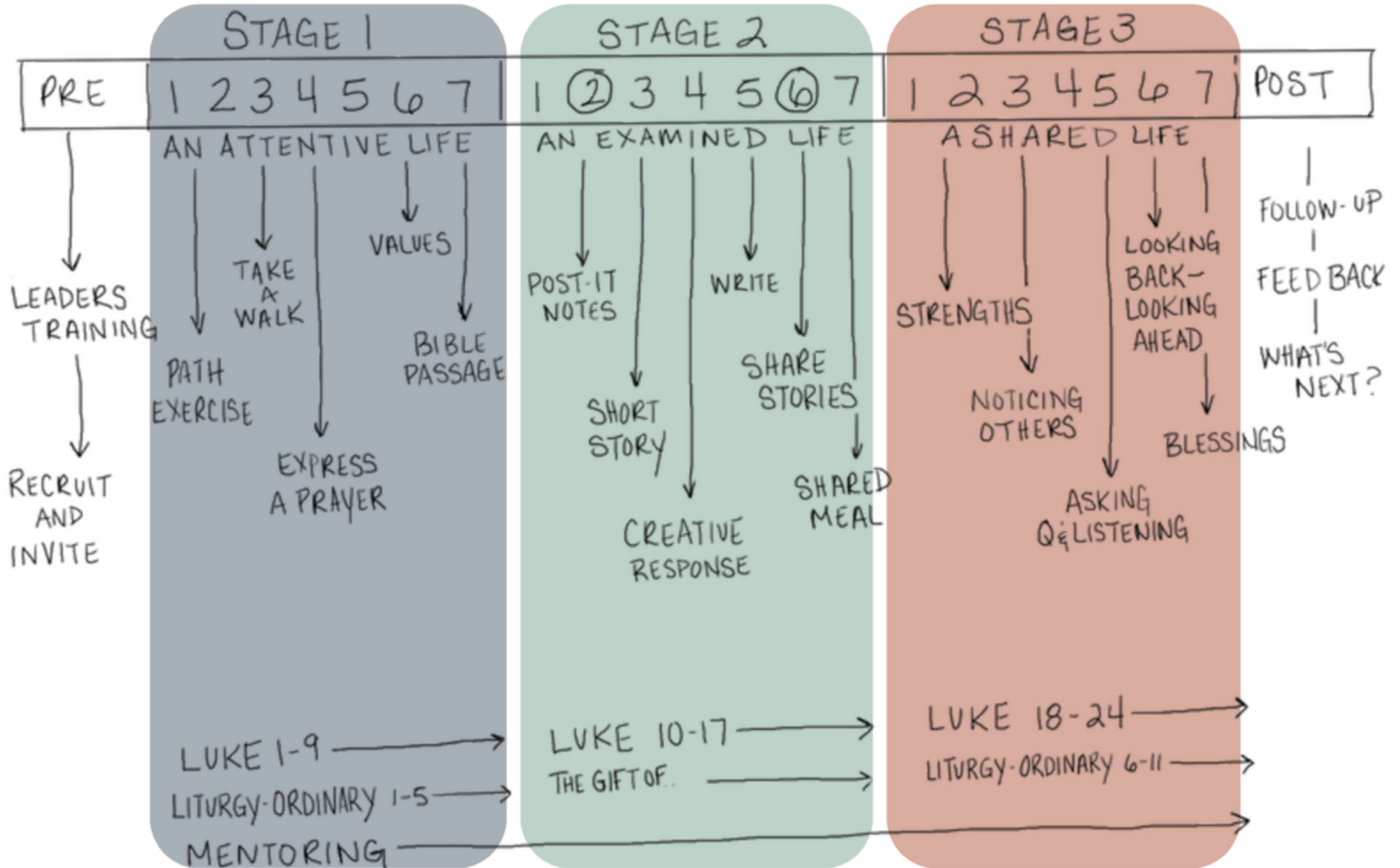
The Journey:

AN ATTENTIVE LIFE

FACILITATOR GUIDE

1

THE JOURNEY





How to Use This Resource

There's no one "right" way to use this resource—just choose the format that works best for you! Below are a few simple options:

Printed Guide (What you are holding)

- This booklet is designed to be a simple, easy-to-use companion during your sessions or preparation time.

Prefer Digital?

A PDF version of each stage is available on **Leaders+** and can be used on a tablet or computer.

Many facilitators find it helpful to:

- View the guide on a tablet during sessions
- Highlight or take notes directly in the document
- Easily access links and additional resources

Use on Your Computer

- Download and save the PDF
- Open with a PDF reader (like Adobe Acrobat)

Helpful Note

When using the digital version, you can click links directly within the guide. If using a printed copy, scan the QR codes with your phone or tablet to access videos and additional resources.

How to use this *Journey* Facilitator Guide

This guide is designed to be a helpful companion to you as you facilitate *The Journey*.

Whether you are just beginning or have led several groups, you are learning to pay attention—to your own life, to the lives of those in your group, and to the ways God is at work among you. Over time, you will find your own voice and grow in confidence as you lead. Trust what you are learning.

This facilitator guide is not a step-by-step instruction manual. It has been carefully created with you in mind—to support you as you prayerfully prepare, often on your own. Every sentence and suggestion carries purpose and possibility, inviting you to discern what is most fitting for your group in each session.

This guide is meant to serve you as a companion—something to walk alongside you as you listen, prepare, and lead.

In addition to this printed guide, you will find many helpful resources on **Leaders+**. Leaders+ is a growing toolbox of practical support, insights, and downloadable materials for each stage of *The Journey*.

If questions arise, or if you have ideas or feedback, we would love to hear from you. We are grateful for your partnership in this good work.

Contact us at coaches@vantagepoint3.org

Leaders+





Our Mission:

We are committed to helping adults discover more deeply who God is, who they are, and what God desires to do through them for kingdom purposes.

Our Vision:

We are an organization that is a catalyst for adults growing toward depth and maturity in Christ. As a result of our efforts in cooperation with the Spirit's leading and work we see:

- Individuals awakened, deepened, and ignited toward kingdom life and influence.
- Christian leaders embracing a mentoring way of life and ministry (leadership of companionship).
- Communities becoming vital places of discipleship and development.
- A VP3 network of Christian leaders bound together by a more relational way of life and ministry.

VP3 The VP3 Story

Along a 210-Freeway morning commute to Pasadena, California in the spring of 1996, a seed was planted which would grow into the work of VantagePoint3. As Randy Reese sat in Los Angeles traffic that spring morning, he considered the legacies of Charles Simeon (1759-1836) and Henrietta Mears (1890-1963), two people who had brought significant depth and renewal to the Church by paying close attention to the development of others. While pondering their lives that morning, Randy's heart was grabbed by the Apostle Paul's words in Ephesians 2:10; "For we are what he has made us, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which he prepared beforehand to be our way of life." He sensed the Lord inviting him to participate in a similar movement as Simeon and Mears, a movement of fostering depth and renewal in the Church through the development of others. In 1998 Randy began researching and designing the model which would over time develop into the VP3 Pathway—*The Journey, A Way of Life, Walking with Others*.

This seed has grown and we at VP3 today are so grateful for the ways in which our ministry has intersected with so many people. Since VP3's founding in 2000 more than 16,000 people have participated in *The Journey*. We got a glimpse into the significance of the many lives impacted in August 2016, when Randy Reese suddenly passed away from a heart attack. A flood of emails and letters, phone calls, coffee conversations and gatherings, reminded us of the ripple of this VantagePoint3 ministry. Themes like making space for God, embracing our identity as beloved children of God, and becoming "a first-class noticer" were expressed again and again and again. In so many ways the high level of support and communication that surfaced after Randy's untimely death have been catalytic for us as an organization.

After 25 years of ministry, we are more focused and more compelled than ever to join our hands and hearts in the kingdom work God is doing to deepen and develop adult believers in Jesus' name for such a time as this. We seek to knit together a like-minded network of friends to pray, learn, and serve others. We remain alert to the stunning reality that God is always and already up to something good in the world.

Let the ripple continue... Let the name of Jesus live out...



Listen to this *short explanation* of how we got our name from VP3's president, Rob Loane.

We Believe

We have developed *The Journey*, believing the following to be true:

- You are ready to be challenged to grow deeper in your faith.
- You possess a high level of motivation as an adult learner.
- What is going on deep inside you, what you care about, matters.
- You are “the expert” on your own life and your many life experiences.
- Your learning will happen best in a community of other learners.
- We all benefit from leaders who befriend, mentor, guide, and come alongside us.
- We can learn much from other wise voices who have finished the life of faith well.
- In particular, we believe that God is already up to something good in your life and community, something that calls forth from you a response with the whole of your life (Ephesians 2:10).

Blessings on the journey,
The VantagePoint3 Team

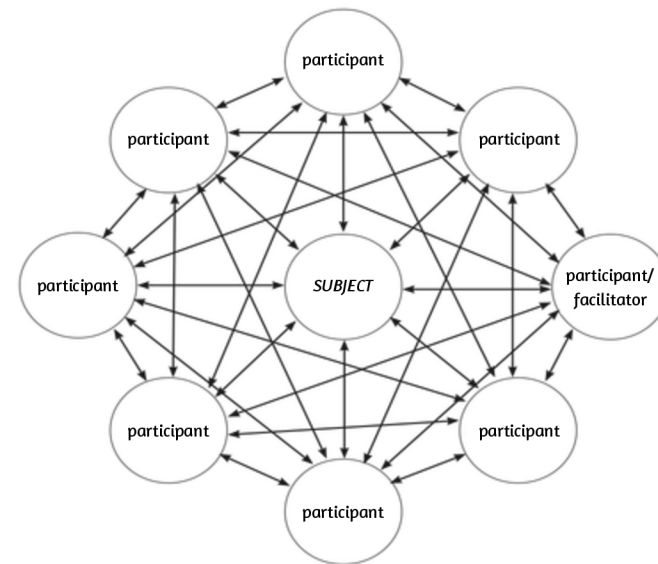
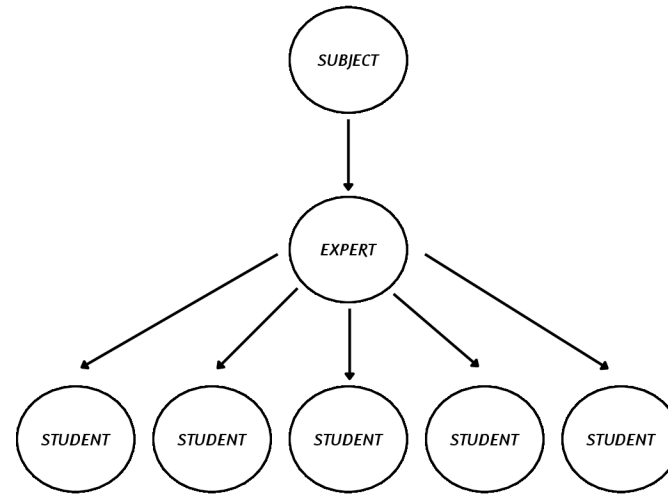
Dialogue

Study the two paradigms for learning.
Which have you had the most experience with?

What does this mean for you as a facilitator?

How will this impact your preparation and your time together as a group?

Paradigms for Learning*



*Adapted from Parker Palmer, *The Courage to Teach* (Jossey-Bass, 1998), Chapter IV.

The Land of Fools

Once a man strayed into the world known as the Land of Fools where he saw a number of people fleeing in terror from a field where they had been trying to harvest wheat. "There is a monster in that field," they told him. Upon close examination the man saw that it was a watermelon.

The stranger offered to kill the monster for them. He walked into the field, cut the melon from its stalk, took a slice and began to eat it. Now the people were more terrified of him than they had been of the melon. They drove him away with pitchforks crying, "He will kill us next, unless we get rid of him."

Years later a second man strayed into the Land of Fools and the same thing happened to him. But, instead of offering to help them with the monster, he agreed with them that it must be dangerous, and by tiptoeing away from it with them he gained their confidence. He spent a long time with them in their houses until he could teach them, little by little, the basic facts, which would enable them not only to lose their fear of melons, but even to cultivate them.

Discovery

What in the world does this story have to do with facilitating adults?

At VP3 we often say, "The answers are in the room." What does this mean for you as a leader?

How will this impact your preparation and time together as a group?

Application

ADULTS RETAIN WHAT THEY DISCOVER
FOR THEMSELVES.

Jesus was a master of the kind of questions that took a conversation deeper. Moreover, he deflected many questions, realizing that the issue behind the seeker's question needed to be explored, rather than an answer provided. In fact, he often directed a similar question back to the individual. Jesus' questions pushed his followers and friends beyond where they had been to honest before God and themselves that was vulnerable, and risky. Yet he knew that the right question could open the seeker to transformation, a new experience of grace, and greater congruity of life and faith.

Stephanie Ford

Kindred Souls, Connecting Through Spiritual Friendship,
Upper Room Books, 2006

Building trust, vulnerability, and connection

- What's something you're passionate about?
- What's a fun fact about you that most people don't know?
- What is something you are looking forward to?
- Share a high and a low from the week.
- On a scale of 1-10, how are you? (1= really struggling, 10= doing great)
- What's something you're currently working on improving?
- What's something that has encouraged you or that you are grateful for?

Stage manual/Scripture discussion questions

- Look at pages Let's read it together again to refresh ourselves. What stands out to you now?
- What do you find yourself thinking about? Tell me more....
- Our reading this week has been about Do you recall a time when you ...? What do you remember about your experience?
- What excites you about ...? What concerns you?
- What or who do you find yourself identifying with?
- Is there something specific God is speaking to you about?
- How might the Spirit be leading you to apply what you are learning to your daily lives?
- What are some potential next steps you could take?
- What are you taking home with you tonight/today?

Accountability questions:

- What is helping you keep company with God?
- What do you find yourself praying about?
- When do you best hear God?
- How are you experiencing God these days?
- What is shaping you?

Mentoring check-in questions:

- How is your mentoring experience going?
- What is something you are learning about yourself in this mentoring process?
- Does sharing with a mentor feel easy or challenging? Say more about this.
- What has been most valuable about the time spent with your mentor so far?
- Are there any areas where the mentoring hasn't been as helpful as hoped?
- Are there any aspects of communication that could be improved in the relationship?

Things to Know About Facilitating Adults

Ninety percent of the adults who participate are motivated. That means that you can EXPECT them to show up prepared and ready to participate. Their “readiness” to learn and grow is high.

Adults want to participate well. Set desired expectations from the very beginning. The reason adults don’t like surprises is because they don’t want to look foolish. How can you help them participate well? How can you prepare them over the whole experience, from week to week, and even within each session gathering? What could that look like?

Remember, the answers are in the room. Your responsibility is to create a safe space for dialogue and discovery and application.

Trust us—every adult has something to say or add. But every adult learns differently. What does this mean for you as a facilitator?

Adults like to move around ... physically and mentally. When crafting a session, consider adding movement in the *way you have a conversation* and *how you have a conversation*.

The physical space matters. What will fit your group best? From lighting to minimal interruptions ... at the church? At home? What will be most comfortable and inviting?

From your experience in small groups which one of these do you appreciate the most? Who modeled this well?

Which of these do you desire to do well? Why?

Which of these will stretch you? What steps will you take knowing this about yourself?

The Journey process was purposefully designed with many educational elements. We do not intend for you to get to review all of these elements during a session gathering. Session gatherings provide a trusted space to dialogue, discover, and apply a synthesis of the elements that were completed ahead of time.

Crafting Session Gatherings

Many facilitators have benefited from planning their session gatherings around the symbolism of a restaurant menu. When we look over a full restaurant menu we can be dazed by all the choices. As a facilitator, you too, have a lot of choices in what to include and how to lead your *Journey* gathering. Continuing with the restaurant metaphor, it's easy as a facilitator to "order too much" or to "try and eat from the whole menu." This leaves everyone feeling poorly.

We recommend crafting a "menu of choices of places to land" based on your preparation and thoughtfulness to the group and the Spirit's leading. What menu items are for sampling? What menu items are appetizers? What menu items would be best to chew on for more substantial discussion? What menu items provide dessert?

You will want to be responsive to questions and to what your group is "hungry for" at any given time. You may elect to share the menu with the group at the beginning of each gathering. Having a menu in front of the group can be helpful if the conversation is getting off track. You may also ask the group to refine the menu or share what they hunger for. Don't be surprised; there will always be leftovers.

Places to land

- getting started
- stage manual
- Bible reading
- extra book
- mentoring check in
- building trust and friendship
- giving space to talk
- where to deep dive
- closing well

Jazz and Curry

I'm not really a recipe girl. My mom always teases me about it, knowing that when I say I used a recipe, all it means is that at some point, some list of ingredients and techniques were involved as I threw things in pans, as I sliced, poured, salted, and peppered with seeming randomness. She does not particularly appreciate this cooking style, and sometimes she has to leave the kitchen because my loopy-goosey approach makes her nervous.

There are, of course, some times when recipes are more important than others. When you're baking bread, for example, if you were to decide the yeast wasn't important, you'd have something between pita and a paper plate. In cooking as in life, there are some nonnegotiables, but not nearly as many as you think. Learning to cook is all about learning those nonnegotiables and then playing around with the rest. Recipes are how we learn all the rules, and cooking is knowing how to break them to suit our tastes or preferences. Following a recipe is like playing scales, and cooking is jazz.

In one of my favorite *Food & Wine* articles, Daniel Duane writes about cooking with Thomas Keller of the *French Laundry* in Napa Valley. Keller was, of course, one of the great American chefs, known for his obsessive pursuit of perfection and fanatical attention to detail. You can imagine, then, that when Daniel Duane had the opportunity to cook the chef's recipes with the chef himself, he was expecting to be instructed on the tiniest of details.

Instead, though, Keller told him to make the recipe once according to the instructions. The second time, he told Duane to rewrite the recipe in his own terms, adjusting for his taste, cutting out or adding steps according to what made sense to him. The third time, Keller said to make it without any recipe at all, just by his memory and tastes and hands. And at that point, he said, "The recipe is yours."

I adore this approach. This makes sense to me. Recipes are the scales, the training wheels, the paint-by-numbers that lead us to jazz, the two-wheel riding, and our very own blank canvas.

We learn by doing, and there's no way around it. There is no stand-in for standing in your own kitchen, a trial by fire, literally. You can buy it in a box; you can watch someone else make it for you on TV. But there's no replacement for what happens when we make something with our own hands, directed by our own senses, motivated by our own love for people we're serving.

Shauna Niequist, *Bread and Wine: A Love Letter to Life Around the Table With Recipes*. (Zondervan, 2017), pp.100-101.

What does this have to do with facilitating
The Journey: An Attentive Life?

Invitation and Recruitment

TOP 5 REASONS WHY ADULTS SAY YES TO JOINING A JOURNEY GROUP

Before people say yes to *The Journey*, they often need to be personally invited. Public promotion can help create awareness, but a personal invitation carries a different kind of weight. A simple “I see something in you” or “I would love to have you in my group” can open a door that a general announcement cannot. Shoulder-tapping, personal notes, messages, and coffee conversations often matter more than a sign-up sheet at the back of the church. Invite as personally as possible.

#1 - Growing Closer to God

Adults say YES because of what the Lord is already stirring inside of them. Your invitation gives them an opportunity to respond to what God is already doing in their lives.

#2 - Trusting the Person

If you think *The Journey* would be good for a specific person, invite them to join you. Chances are, they will trust you.

#3 - Reawakening

Some adults are secretly saying, “There’s got to be more to the Christian life than this.”

#4 - Discovering Life Purpose

Many adults are searching for God’s direction and greater alignment and use of their gifts and strengths.

#5 - Timing Matters

Your invitation can be well-timed with a life transition. A new job, new life role, moving toward retirement, and adjusting to loss are all transition times when an adult is much more likely to be looking for God’s direction.

Recruitment Facts:

- Not everyone will be ready right now.
- Some may hesitate because of time or cost.
- Many will feel encouraged simply by being invited.
- You may invite many more people than will say yes.
- Some groups form quickly through God’s timing and deep hunger for growth.
- Do not take rejection personally.
- Keep trusting and inviting those God brings to mind.
- In smaller churches, be sensitive to who is asked and who is not.

Recruiting Tools in Leaders+

Videos to help you:

- Inviting: Top 5 Reasons Adults Say YES by Pam Edwards (5:26)
- Best Practices for Inviting by Pam Edwards (10:11)

← Listen to Pam unpack the top 5 reasons adults say YES to The Journey.

Videos to share:

- *The Journey* white board (2:32)
- Is there Something More? (5:00)
- Testimonials (various lengths)

Other recruiting resources:

- An Exercise in Identifying and Inviting
- Invitation Sample Emails
- Host an Informational Gathering
- 4 Ingredients for Deeply Formed Lives
- Finishing Well – What's Next?
- Participant Application Sample

← Great resource for helping you write personal emails/notes to people!

← This resource has a full agenda to follow or adapt it to fit your time.

Pathway Invitations:

We created invites you can share with potential group members. Share the PDF in an email or text. For a shipping fee, we can send you printed invitations. Contact us at coaches@vantagepoint3.org

- *The Journey*

Also available for:

- *A Way of Life*
- *Walking with Others*

← You should have received one of these with your training materials. Let us know if you want some sent to you.

Leaders+



The Journey

Stage 1: An Attentive Life

As the facilitator and leader of *An Attentive Life*, your primary role is to set the table for adults who are looking for more in their life with God and others.

What happens does not depend on you. However, you have a valuable role to play in cultivating the conditions for adult dialogue, discovery, and application. May you be prayerful and expectant. God is up to something good through you for the good of others.

In these seven sessions, we hope to cultivate:

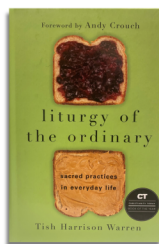
- a sense of Jesus' presence and stunning character—Jesus' with-ness all the time.
- a heartfelt engagement with God's word as a story that includes us.
- an integration between God's mission in the world and our unique response or calling within God's mission.
- a trusted space where strangers are becoming friends and God's spirit is at work among us.

BIBLE READING & JOURNALING

Luke's Gospel and the Story of Jesus—chapters 1-9

Throughout each session of *The Journey*, we will read a chapter from Luke's Gospel.

TEXT



Liturgy of the Ordinary

Tish Harrison Warren
InterVarsity Press, 2016



A Mentoring Guide

VantagePoint3, 2019



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Session 2: Engaging The Biblical Story

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Session 6: Uncovering Our Core Values

Session 7: Key Scriptures In Our Lives

Exploring Further

- Part 1 - The Practice of *Lectio Divina*
- Part 2 - The Practice of Retreat
- Part 3 - Applying the Scriptures: A Parable

Stage One Facilitating Considerations

The previous pages were designed to give you a feel for your facilitating “posture” with your group. You are a guide. Not an answer-person. Your role is to open up the space and time you have together. Not to occupy the space and time yourself.

Dialogue...cultivate space for discussion.

Discovery...ask questions and create space for quiet pause and reflection.

Application...invite participants to engage their own lives and stories with the process material.

During this first stage, pay attention to everyone feeling invited, respected, and safe.

In the pages that follow, a great deal of care has been given to coaching you as a facilitator from a distance. Our suggestions are just that...suggestions. You will know your unique group best. Our suggestions are provided as best practices and encouragement when you are crafting your session alone.

And remember, **Leaders+** is at your fingertips with much more!

SESSION ONE:

An Invitation to Discover

Overview:

This session introduces participants to *The Journey: An Attentive Life*, through the Road to Emmaus story, helping us discover together God's presence in everyday life. Session One also introduces Luke's Gospel, the companion text, and mentoring as key ongoing elements in *Stage One: An Attentive Life*.

Focusing Question:

Why did you say "yes" to the invitation to be a part of this?

Crafting My Group Time: *Sample Menu*

Welcome

- Introductions, expectations, and hopes of participants.
- Be mindful of fears and uncertainties around the table.
- Remember that this is an opportunity to "lay out the welcome mat" for the group.

Review Stage One Elements

- *The Journey Stage One: An Attentive Life*
- *A Mentoring Guide: Christ • Conversation • Companionship*
- *Liturgy of the Ordinary*

Read Aloud

- An Invitation to Discover (p. 10). Take turns reading.
- Discuss the Reflect and Respond question on page 11.

Facilitator Leadership Notes

- Your role is to be a guide, not a teacher.
- Your care is more for the participants themselves than the material.
- You hope to cultivate dialogue, discovery and application in their lives.
- Accountability, honesty, and respect for each other is of high value.
- Introduce a sample Group Covenant (available in **Leaders+**).
- Consider introducing the Listener-Talker Continuum as a tool to encourage shared talk time (Leaders+).

Luke's Gospel Reading (p. 12)

- Perhaps share a word or two on what you appreciate about Luke's Gospel.
- Let them know they will read about one chapter each session.
- This is not a Bible study. But you may do more Bible reading than you have ever done.

Mentoring Relationship (p. 13)

- Introduce the mentoring relationship.
- Discuss *A Mentoring Guide* resource.
- Lead a discussion on "what makes a good mentor?" (video in Leaders+ to help you prepare for this discussion).

Details

- Discuss individual gathering start and stop times.
- Discuss the overall calendar for scheduling longer-term.

The Path Exercise (Leaders+)

- Leave plenty of time to guide the group through this exercise.
- Process the experience thoughtfully.
- Pay attention to each participant. Take a note or two on what you notice and want to pray about.

Prepare for Next Group Gathering

Close in Prayer

Pay attention:

- There is no preparation for this session. It is meant to be introductory and inviting and serve to engage the group with the material and each other.
- Notice who engages the most and who seems hesitant or unsure. Pray about this.
- Begin to cultivate a tone of safety and openness that you'll build on in Session 2.

Moving on to Session 2→

- Encourage prayerfulness toward finding a mentor.
- Assign Session 2 (pp. 18-31).
- Session 2 will add reading Luke chapter 1. Bible reading will continue every session.
- Suggest that a time investment of 2 to 4 hours per week will be required for each session.
- Suggest how to prepare well for the next group gathering.

What I Notice About the Group:**Prayers for Those in the Group:**

SESSION TWO:

Engaging The Biblical Story

Overview:

Participants will be invited into a deeper engagement with the Bible as the living Word of God, not merely as a source of information but as a heartfelt conversation with God that may shape and transform us. It seeks to introduce Bible reading methods that will cultivate a relational and reflective approach to God's word.

Focusing Question:

How can Scripture become a living conversation that forms us rather than just informing us?

Crafting My Group Time:

Dialogue • Discovery • Application

- *Keep company with me and you'll learn to live freely and lightly.* (p. 21)
- **A Different Sort of Book**- Reflection questions (p. 23)
- **Reading with Heart** - What bullet stands out to you? (p. 26-27)
- **The Story of Scripture in Four Phrases** (p. 29)

Pay attention:

- Often, two or three well-crafted questions can guide a session. You can find examples on page 10 in this guide and also in *A Mentoring Guide*.
- Is everyone participating? How might those more quiet be included?
- On page 27 of *An Attentive Life*, the practice of lectio divina is introduced briefly. **The *Exploring Further* section of the manual (p. 124) has a very helpful guide for engaging this practice.**
- ***Exploring Further* (p. 136-137) *Applying the Scriptures: A Parable*, adds another exceptional way of thinking about engaging God's word and the story we find ourselves in.**

Moving on to Session 3→

- Keep the search for a mentor in front of the group. Leaders+ has a good video conversation about this.
- How are you including discussion of the Gospel reading of Luke? What will work well for your group?
- Session 3 will begin with the *Liturgy of the Ordinary* Chapter 1 reading.
- Session 3 includes a *Walking Exercise* (pp. 46-47). It would be helpful to have experienced this yourself ahead of time. Allow your experience to help participants enter into this well themselves.

What I Notice About the Group:

Prayers for Those in the Group:

SESSION THREE:

The Story We Find Ourselves In

Overview:

Participants will be invited to explore God's mission as revealed in the Old and New Testaments and discover for themselves God's desire to be with people. Through Scripture, reflection, and a guided walking exercise, the session encourages deeper awareness of God's presence, purpose, and invitation to participate in his ongoing work of renewal and reconciliation.

Focusing Question:

What sort of things, on a small scale and a large scale, do you believe God is up to in the world today?

Crafting My Group Time:

Dialogue • Discovery • Application

- **What Sort of Tale Have We Fallen Into?** Reflection questions (pp. 36-37)
- **How does the Spirit include us in God's purposes?** (pp. 42-45)
- Quote from Juan Martinez and Jamie Pitts in the margin (p. 43)
- **Walking Exercise** with Luke 15. Hear from each member of the group. (pp. 46-47)

Pay attention:

- Bible reading will be assigned in every session. What rhythm do you want to develop for discussing and savoring the Scripture readings?
- Continue to check on how people are connecting with a mentor. Move toward those who need more help.
- Watch for signs of people “backing away from the table.” Reach out to them individually and see what’s going on for them. Be prayerful and encourage them to “trust the process.”
- The companion text, *Liturgy of the Ordinary*, Chapter 1, is introduced in this session.

Moving on to Session 4→

- At the end of every session, there is a reflective prompt to consider. “What are you taking away from our group time together?” This is a precious conversation to tend to as you see fit.
- Session 4 introduces more ways of understanding God’s calling. For some, this is entirely new, for others not so much. The concept of calling is integrated throughout the entire three stages of *The Journey* process. Show much grace and patience as people find their way with this concept and how it integrates into their lives.
- It can be helpful to collect things you hear and notice about each participant in a way that fits you and helps you recall these details (stories they tell, significant scripture, their values, strengths, life concerns and longings.) These collected notes can guide your prayer and blessings for them later on.
- Begin to think about how you would like to include *Liturgy of the Ordinary* in your discussions. This text is meant to be a “conversation partner” to the full *Journey* experience. Are you noticing the author’s “voice” impacting your discussions? There are discussion questions at the end of the book to get your conversation started.

What I Notice About the Group:

Prayers for Those in the Group:

SESSION FOUR:

A God Who Calls Us

Overview:

Participants will be invited to consider the biblical and deeply personal nature of calling—not as a one-time event or a career-oriented idea, but as a lifelong relational response to God's ongoing work. It will provide an opportunity to reflect on God's general, specific, and immediate call as well as a framework for discerning and listening for direction in our lives.

Focusing Question:

How is God calling you—right now—to offer your life in response to God's grace?

Crafting My Group Time:

Dialogue • Discovery • Application

- **God is already up to something good:** Explore the concepts of spectators vs participants in the action of God's work in our lives (p. 54)
- Brueggemann's Prayer (p. 55)
- **Three Expressions of God's Calling** (pp. 59-61)
- **Expressing a Prayer.** Encourage people to share their creative work as they feel comfortable (pp. 68-69)

Pay attention:

- The concluding activity in Session 4 on pages 68-69 invites participants to express a prayer in a creative way. This is a new way of responding, inviting more imagination. This will be easy for some and difficult for others.
- Pay attention, best as you are able, to how participants seem to see God seeing them. Do they feel loved? secure? distant? fearful? hurt? This is not for you to fix. This is for your prayers. Trust the process.
- Notice stories that are shared that may give you insights to each person's sense of calling. This is precious. Some are saying things they have never considered before.
- Gently encourage personal reflection without pressuring people to define their "life purpose."

Moving on to Session 5→

- Introduce the idea that formation happens from the inside out, not just by behavior change.
- Encourage reflection on who they are becoming, not just what they are doing.
- Be prepared to model honesty around your own character formation journey.

What I Notice About the Group:**Prayers for Those in the Group:**

SESSION FIVE:

Formed From The Inside Out

Overview:

This session explores how lasting spiritual transformation begins within, as God forms Christlike character in us through intimacy with him, shaping our identity as his beloved children. It invites participants to consider that true spiritual growth happens from the inside out, not through external achievements but through God's transforming work in the heart.

Focusing Question:

If someone were to ask you, "How's your inner life?" What would you say? What does that even mean?

Crafting My Group Time:

Dialogue • Discovery • Application

- Chuck Swindoll quote in the margin (p. 73)
- **Identity as God's Beloved Children.** Reflection questions (p. 83)
- Rob Loane's **A confession and invitation** (pp. 83-85). Discuss the questions on page 85.

Pay attention:

- Notice who resonates with the language of inner life and who seems uncomfortable.
- Listen for shifts in how people describe themselves—especially signs of vulnerability.

Moving on to Session 6→

- Sessions 6 and 7 shift to a laboratory-style experience, which the group will welcome. These sessions can require more than one gathering. You may want to adjust your schedule to fit your group. Have fun with these sessions!
- Session 6 is a hands-on discovery of what we actually value by the way we spend our time and make decisions. Participants will be asked to select a few recent life experiences to work within their own values discovery. Give some of your own examples. Get them thinking about possible experiences they can work with ahead of time.
- A best practice is to have each participant share their selected core values with the group in the next group gathering. Depending on group size, this can be time-consuming. Model your expectations and plan accordingly for managing the group's time.

What I Notice About the Group:**Prayers for Those in the Group:**

SESSION SIX:

Uncovering Our Core Values

Overview:

In this session, participants will explore stories, patterns, and personal motivations to help them discover for themselves the core values that drive our behavior, often beneath our awareness. Naming these values deepens our understanding of who we are and invites alignment between what we truly value and how we live as followers of Jesus.

Focusing Question:

Recall a specific decision time in your life when you were keenly aware of multiple options or alternative paths. What beliefs or convictions guided your decision?

Crafting My Group Time:

Dialogue • Discovery • Application

- **What are core values?** (pp. 92-93)
- Brainstorm Exercise. What did you choose and why? (p. 96)
- Naming Core Values. Plan for each participant to share their core values (p. 103)
- **Aspirations and Ideals.** How has the tension between ideals and core values actually lived out confronted you during this session? (pp. 104-105)

Pay attention:

- **Uncovering our Values** (pp. 93-94). This is an exploratory exercise. There is no need to answer all of the questions.
- Selecting personal experiences will be a primary hurdle in this exercise (p. 96). Help participants find their examples so they can proceed well with the remainder of the session.
- How participants TELL their stories and uncover their values should fit the person. Some will love writing. Others will want to talk it out with a friend. Encourage what fits the person so that they complete the assignment.
- Some people will love this session; others will struggle. Values are uncovered and evolve as we mature. Be gracious while encouraging honesty, especially when naming tensions.

Moving on to Session 7→

- The laboratory style feel continues in Session 7 when participants will be asked to choose key Scriptures that have shaped them. Consider sharing your own examples and a brief story about why a passage is significant to you.
- A best practice in Session 7 is to plan for each participant to share their passages with the group. Model what you are looking for, and recognize that this can be a time management issue for the group.
- You will likely have a wide variety of familiarity with Scripture among your group. Make appropriate allowances and adapt. A perfectionist approach to this session will be frustrating for the participant.

What I Notice About the Group:

Prayers for Those in the Group:

SESSION SEVEN:

Key Scriptures In Our Lives

Overview:

By identifying key Scriptures that have significantly impacted our lives, we begin to notice how God's word has guided, challenged, and sustained us in our unique journeys of faith. This session helps surface themes and patterns that reveal God's ongoing work of formation in and through us.

Focusing Question:

What Scriptures have formed you, and what might they reveal about God's ongoing work in your life?

Crafting My Group Time:

Dialogue • Discovery • Application

- **The Goodness of God** song reflections (p. 112)
- **Key Biblical Passages Exercise.** Make time for everyone to share the Scripture they chose (pp. 114-115)
- **An Attentive Life Review** (pp. 117-118)

Pay attention:

- Watch for the emotions or memories tied to participants' chosen Scriptures.
- Help the group see connections between Scripture, calling, values, and identity. No need to solve or fix anyone. Hold what you notice and allow the Spirit to lead.
- Encourage participants to engage in **An Attentive Life Review** on pages 117-118.

Moving on→

- It is ambitious to try and complete a sharing of the key passages and a thoughtful review of the whole stage. Consider adding an additional retreat day. In the *Exploring Further* section, there is a template for a half-day retreat experience (p. 128).

What I Notice About the Group:

Prayers for Those in the Group:

WRAPPING UP:

The Journey: An Attentive Life

As a facilitator closing out the 7-session experience, your leadership now helps participants not only look back but also look forward. These final movements matter in helping individuals name their growth, commit to ongoing formation, and leave with a sense of blessing and encouragement.

Pay Attention

- Where has transformation quietly occurred—through language shifts, emerging practices, or newfound clarity?
- Do participants feel equipped or eager to continue to the next stage, *The Journey: An Examined Life*?
- Who might benefit from a personal word of encouragement or affirmation?
- Who might be a candidate for leading *The Journey*?

Suggestions for the Final Gathering of stage one:

- Make space to reflect. Allow 15-30 minutes, or much more if you add an additional session, for journaling and group sharing around:
 - What's changed for you?
 - What has God stirred in your heart?
 - What spiritual rhythm do you want to carry forward?
 - Who will walk with you from here?
 - How will you continue to pay attention to God's presence?
- Celebrate the courage to have trusted the process. Remind participants that formation is slow, sacred work, and that simply showing up with honesty is a sign of spiritual maturity.
- Suggested blessing to close: The prayer on page 9 at the beginning of Session 1, Ephesians 3:14b-19.

Facilitator Self-Reflection Questions

As you conclude *An Attentive Life*, take a few moments to reflect on your own experience as a leader.

- In what ways have I seen God at work in me as I've led this group?
- What was especially life-giving or stretching about facilitating these sessions?
- Which moments felt most sacred or significant during our time together?
- What next step is God inviting me to take in my own journey of formation and leadership?
- Who do I want to thank, encourage, or walk with in the season ahead? Find a trusted friend or mentor to help you process the good work that God is doing in you as you lead others. We at VantagePoint3 welcome this conversation and count it an honor to be a small part of what God is doing in and through YOU.

A Liturgy for Resting in God

Grant me, O most loving Lord,
to rest in you above all else—

above all creatures,
above all health and beauty,
above all glory and honor, above all power and dignity,
above all knowledge and cleverness,
above all riches and art,
above all fame and praise,
above all sweetness and comfort,
above all hope and promise,
above all gifts and favors that you can give,
above all happiness my mind can feel;
above all that is not you, O God.

Anything you bestow on me
or reveal to me or promise to me
is too small and unsatisfying
if I do not see or meet you in it.

For surely my heart cannot truly rest,
or ever be fully contented,
unless it rests in you.

Amen.

— by Thomas À Kempis (1380–1471)
Excerpt from *Every Moment Holy, Volume III*

The Journey

Stage 2: An Examined Life

As the facilitator and leader of *An Examined Life*, your primary role is to continue to pay attention to the adults who have chosen to grow in maturity toward Christ with you, versus seek to master the educational material. The content is important, but it is not what matters most.

Continue to pay attention to how adults best learn and grow by experimenting with methods to enhance dialogue, discovery, and application. Continue to be prayerful toward the group as a whole, as well as individual nuances and circumstances. The Spirit of God is at work far beyond what you can see. Trust the process.

In these seven sessions, we hope to cultivate:

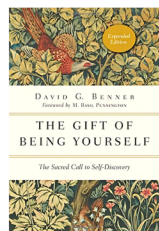
- an increased familiarity with our own life stories from the time we were born to the present, seeking to become more aware of God's presence with us along the way.
- the notion that knowledge of God and knowledge of self are inextricably linked together and this is a good thing.
- a trusted space with increased authenticity, intimacy, and discovery.

BIBLE READING & JOURNALING

Luke's Gospel and the Story of Jesus—chapters 10-17

Throughout each session of *The Journey*, we will read a chapter from Luke's Gospel.

TEXT



The Gift of Being Yourself

David G Benner
InterVarsity Press, 2004



CONTENTS

Session 1: A God Who Shapes Us

Session 2: Remembering Your Story:
A Timeline Exercise

Session 3: Early Shaping Experiences

Session 4: Twists and Turns Along the Way

Session 5: Writing Our Spiritual Narratives

Session 6: Sharing Our Spiritual Narratives

Session 7: A Shared Meal

Exploring Further

- Part 1 - Remembering Your Story: A Timeline Exercise
- Part 2 - Big Picture: Gaining A Lifelong Perspective
- Part 3 - Learning from Others
- Part 4 - Twists and Turns Along the Way: A Playlist

VP3's A Mentoring Way

The gospel plays out best in relationships. If you are looking for another resource to guide your more relational ways of life and ministry, we strongly endorse these amentoringway.org resources:



Thoughtful words. Meaningful Conversations. Formation that shapes how you live and lead.

At the Table is designed for those eager to grow, deepen, and learn how to be companions for others in creating space for God.

We invite you to subscribe to the *At the Table* blog. Invest in your own formation and the formation of those you walk alongside in Jesus' name.

If you are looking for a quick one-to-three-minute daily read with tips, quotes, short videos, encouragement, and free downloads all on mentoring, then sign up for **30 DAYS OF MENTORING**.



3-2-1: Following Jesus in Threes by Soo-Inn Tan (GraceWorks.sg, 2013)

"Three friends meeting over a meal is an achievable way to experience spiritual friendship. '3-2-1' is a simple summary of the concept— three friends meeting two hours one time a month over a meal.... This short book contains all you need to understand and practise a 3-2-1 approach to spiritual friendship."
— Soo-Inn Tan.

Many *Journey* alumni have found this book to be a valuable model for continuing to cultivate the spiritual companionship they experienced in *The Journey* process.

3•2•1 GROUPS

TAKE A DEEP DIVE INTO YOUR LIFE IN LIGHT OF THE STUNNING STORY OF JESUS

