

An Aural Method of Experiencing Scripture (The African Model)

Three important principles govern this method of experiencing scripture:

- Confidentiality is always strictly observed. Whatever is said in the group of a personal nature is not to be repeated outside the group. It is not even a topic for subsequent conversation with the individual involved. “What is said here, stays here.”
- Participants are free to “pass” at any time if they cannot think of a response or do not wish to share it.
- When a person is speaking to the group, the group simply listens with no response. No one is to discuss what someone else has said, though sometimes another person’s response may trigger a similar thought.

Step 1. Each person shares his or her experience in the area of prayer since the previous session. (For the first session, begin with Step 2).

Step 2. A person appointed reads the passage slowly. Before the reading, allow a minute or so of silence as the leader reminds people to listen for the word or phrase that catches their attention.

Step 3. Participants take a minute to recall in silence the word or phrase that caught their attention.

Step 4. Beginning with the leader, each person says the word or phrase with the group (no more than just a word or phrase).

Step 5. Someone else reads the passage (opposite sex of first reader).

Step 6. Participants think about: “Where does this passage touch my life today?” (3-5 minutes of silence)

Step 7. Each person shares these: “For me,”

Step 8. Someone else reads the passage out loud again.

Step 9. Participants think about: “From what I have heard and shared, what does God want me to do or be this week? How does God invite me to change?” (3-5 minutes)

Step 10. Each person to share these: “For me,” Leader reminds the group that each person will pray for the person on their left, naming what they share in this Step, so they will want to listen carefully and remember any specifics the person names.

Step 11. Ask each person to pray for the person on their left, naming what was shared in Step 9, and to pray that prayer daily until the group meets again. (Or a general form prayer; for example, “Christ, may your blessing go with _____. Fill her/him with your love and grace.”)

Step 12. Say the Lord’s Prayer together.

For variety, the following questions may be used:

- After the first reading, “What does this reading say to you about God?”
- After the second reading, “What does this reading say to you about who you are?”
- After the third reading, “What do you hear God asking you to do or be this week?”