

## Introduction

Session 4: Developing character considers the importance of Christ-like character in the life of the Christian leader. It makes the distinction between personality and character.

Personality is focused around preferences (we all have different ways we prefer to do things) and is value neutral. Character is about qualities that are value based. You can be a person of good character (i.e. faithfulness, humility, truthfulness, integrity) or bad character (i.e. lying, arrogance, quick to anger).

This session focuses on the qualities of character that are modelled for us by Christ, and that help us to be trustworthy as a leader. It also recognises that many of the deeper character qualities are formed in the crucible of difficult times, suffering, pushing through quitting points.

We suggest the participant might like to explore the following areas with you:

- What aspects of Christ's character do you sense that God is longing to form in you?
- What is the next step in the development of your character?
- Who will you invite to hold you accountable and to encourage you to fulfil your commitments?
- Which quality may God be asking you to 'make every effort to add to your faith...' over the coming months (2 Peter 1:1-11)

This is also the final session of the first part of Growing Leaders. You may like to review with them how the course has gone so far, and take some time to review your times with them. Go back to your original expectations conversation and see how things are working out.

## Questions

Good questions are at the heart of effective mentoring. And in this update we want to return to this core mentoring skill and offer a few thoughts on how we ask good questions.

### PREPARING QUESTIONS

A mentee had asked if I would meet with him and his wife on this occasion, as they had some particular issues they wanted to reflect on in their leadership together. I was more than happy to do this, but was feeling a little unsure how it would work.



In my preparation time beforehand I tried to identify two or three questions that might open up the areas they wanted to discuss. As usual, I borrowed two of the questions from mentoring resources, and then made up the third. At the end of our time, I was amazed at the power of three simple questions. I had hardly had to do anything other than ask those questions at the right time.

It reminded me once again of the value of thinking and praying about which questions to ask both before a session, and then to be open to promptings as to further questions during the session.

### REFLECTION

Asking good questions is a crucial part of mentoring, and we can easily slip into poor practice, unless we keep on reviewing our sessions. What we hear as mentors is very much the result of the questions we ask and how well we listen.

In most of the updates we include questions you could ask. You might like to review them. Here are a few of my favourites:

- What has brought you joy and hope over the last month?
- (If married) How does your spouse feel about your ministry at this time?
- What is your greatest challenge and what are you doing to meet it?
- Where is there opposition and how does that make you feel?
- What is your greatest personal need for which I could pray? (Now and later.)
- If your spouse or a close friend was sitting here right now and I asked them about this issue, what would they say?
- What would God say is your greatest need at this time?
- What do you think you can't do? Why? What difference would it make if you could?

- If you were guaranteed success, the support of your friends, God's divine approval, and the time and resources to do it, what would you most like to do for God in the next three years?
- What is the one question you don't want me to ask you?
- What will prevent you from fulfilling that action point? Why? And what can you do about it?
- How has this meeting gone for you? What was good? What could we do to improve it next time?

Enjoy asking good questions.

'THE POWER OF MENTORING IS IN LONG TERM INVESTMENT NOT SHORT TERM GAINS.'

MARTIN SANDERS



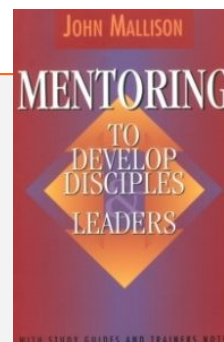
### Resource recommendation

#### MENTORING TO DEVELOP DISCIPLES AND LEADERS, JOHN MALLISON (SU)

I've found this one of the most helpful books for my own mentoring, often dipping into it for some of his excellent ideas. The book is worth buying just for the wonderful lists of good questions to ask.

Not easy to buy, you may find it in the second hand bookshop on Amazon, or order it through this website [www.johnmallison.com](http://www.johnmallison.com). There are also numerous articles that will be of interest on the site.

Worth a look.



Growing Leaders  
[www.cpas.org.uk](http://www.cpas.org.uk)  
[admin@cpas.org.uk](mailto:admin@cpas.org.uk)  
 0300 123 0780

