



cpas

Making Mission Possible



GROWING LEADERS

- **Introductory Video**
- **Leaders' Guide**
- **Handouts 1-5**
- **PowerPoint**
- **Activity 1**
- **Additional Handout 1**
- **Project 2 Handouts 1-3**



2

**ESTABLISHING
IDENTITY**

SESSION 2: ESTABLISHING IDENTITY

'We are not primarily called first to do something or to go somewhere; we are called to Someone. We are not called first to special work but to God. The key to answering the call is to be devoted to no one and to nothing above God himself.'

Os Guinness

Session Overview

- Aim (10 mins).
- Way in (10 mins).
- Bible, John 15:1-17 (25 mins).
- Activity on cycles of grace and grief (20 mins).
- Refreshments (10 mins).
- Activity on spiritual disciplines (33 mins).
- Worship/prayer (10 mins).
- And finally (2 mins).

Session Aims

- To deepen relationships between participants.
- To help participants base their life and leadership on God.
- To identify obstacles to growth and provide means of overcoming them.

B Bible Base

John 15:1-17 emphasises the priority of the person, action and call of Christ. As we explore our first 'Firm foundation' we root ourselves in Christ. His call to 'abide in him' for 'apart from me you can do nothing' needs to inform and influence every Christian leader.

Background

Many approaches to leadership start by identifying skills and methods. Growing Leaders believes that it is more important to start where God starts, with our relationship with him.

Christian leadership flows from God's grace and his sovereign call. The pattern was set by God throughout the Old Testament time, as he called a people to witness to his grace. Jesus continues this call to all who have faith in him. It is not that we chose God, but that he chose us. This session encourages participants and leaders to see God's choice, not our skills, as the starting place for life and leadership.

In our consumer society we place a high value on individual choice, so this contrasting emphasis may not come easily to all participants. When we talk about God's sovereign choice, people often raise objections centred around God's apparent favouritism: if he chooses me, then what about those he does not choose? You will need to be careful to keep the session on track. Listen carefully to people's questions and direct them to other resources to follow up specific issues.

Once again, stress the centrality of grace. God chooses us because he loves us. Emphasising grace reminds us that our leadership is in God's hands. Change and development may seem unlikely from a human perspective. Let's take heart from knowing that God can and does transform the most unlikely materials. Think potter and clay.

Much of this session's material focuses on discipleship issues. Identify this at the start of the session, as some may be wondering why we're not thinking about leadership issues per se. Explain that Christians recognise that to be a safe leader one must first be a follower of Jesus. If we aren't, all the rest is worth very little because we will model inappropriate things in our leadership. We will also be in danger of seeking to manipulate people to gain things from our leadership role that should be found in our relationship with Christ.

Central to our discipleship is our response to God's grace at work in our life, and how we continue in his grace through the exercise of spiritual disciplines. Our experience is that many people struggle with accepting God's grace. In the



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material the cycles of grief and grace present a visual way of helping people identify where their motivation lies. Present them clearly and positively, not in any way 'running down' those who are full of energy and drive, but rather highlighting the importance of a right confidence in our 'identity' (there is nothing we can do to make God love us any more than he does) and a right motivation in our leadership (gratitude for all that he has done rather than desperation in trying to make ourselves acceptable to him).

The second half of the session focuses on spiritual disciplines as a God-given means of growing in grace. These aren't very fashionable, but are vital for a healthy Christian life. We've included an additional handout which gives a little more detail about the disciplines. If you want to recommend further resources (or even have them available to buy on a bookstall), we'd suggest the following:

- How to Live the Life You've Always Wanted, John Ortberg (Zondervan)
- Celebration of Discipline, Richard Foster (Hodder)
- The Spirit of the Disciplines, Dallas Willard (Harper Collins)

The mentor meetings that follow this session will focus on a spiritual health check. This is an opportunity for each participant to discover where they are in relationship with God and to identify which spiritual discipline(s) would be most helpful to them. It is a little like going to a gym and being assessed by a personal trainer (an analogy we pick up again in session 9). The trainer creates a personal exercise programme to help you get fitter. So too, the mentor aims to help the participant identify the most helpful spiritual exercise regime for his or her growth.

The start of this session may find participants in a different frame of mind from at the start of the recent time away – perhaps some have had to rush in from work, or have had to make special childminding arrangements. They may not be as perfectly prepared as they might wish. So do try to set a relaxed, welcoming atmosphere. And – whatever you do – if Bill rushes in five minutes late, don't glance at the clock.

- You may want to create an arrival time ahead of the start time (e.g. 7.45 for 8.00pm) indicating that there will be refreshments and an opportunity for people to catch up with one another.
- Play some appropriate background music as people arrive.
- Display photos of the time away.
- Create a little quiz of both fun and serious things that happened on the weekend, with a small prize for the winner.

Your Own Preparation

- **Meditate** on John 15:16 and reflect on how much you have embraced the truth that God has chosen you.
- **Collect** a range of practical resources which might be available to help people grow in their practice of spiritual disciplines. Perhaps be willing to share those which have most helped you.
- **Read** chapter 3 of Growing Leaders.

'The central question is, are the leaders of the future truly men and women of God, people with an ardent desire to dwell in God's presence, to listen to God's voice, to look at God's beauty, to touch God's incarnate word and to taste fully God's infinite goodness?'

Henri Nouwen

Materials

- Refreshments, whatever you plan to have.
- Blu-Tack.
- Flipchart or large paper.
- Marker pens.

HANDOUTS

- Handout 1 Bible focus.
- Handout 2 Swedish Bible study.
- Handout 3 Cycle of grief/cycle of grace.
- Handout 4 Spiritual disciplines.
- Handout 5 Feedback form.
- Project 2 Spiritual health check handouts 1-3.

ADDITIONAL MATERIAL

- Introductory video.
- Activity 1 Human rainbow.
- Additional handout 1 Overview of spiritual disciplines.
- Session 2 PowerPoint.



SESSION 2: ESTABLISHING IDENTITY

Outline



Aim
0-10 MINS

Slide 1

ARRIVAL

Welcome people as they arrive. This will be the first session since the day away so think about how the room should be arranged. This might set a precedent for your future sessions.

Slide 2

INTRODUCTION

Offer a warm welcome and thank people for coming. Briefly review what you covered in session 1, offering an opportunity for comments and questions.

Slides 3-4

Introduce session 2 and explain the aims. Remind people of the model of leadership development on which Growing Leaders is based (they were first introduced to this on the exploratory evening). The PowerPoint slide introduces each element.

Slide 5

- **Chosen** Our relationship with God is at the heart of a Christian understanding of leadership. Our leadership flows from our discipleship. That is what this session is all about.
- **Call** This is not simply about the big things (am I called to be a factory manager or teacher?), but also about how we decide to spend the hours and days of our time on earth. Realising that we are called helps us to know how God wants us to use our time, energy and talents.
- **Character** Along with call, character is foundational to a Christian understanding of leadership, which is why the lists for leaders in 1 and 2 Timothy major on character issues. Christian leaders need to be growing in Christ-like character.
- **Competence** On the foundation of call and character we can build competence in leadership. There are some basic skills and knowledge to be learned.
- **Community** Leadership in the New Testament texts is never a solo operation. Out of all the references to leaders in the New Testament, only two are in the singular. The biblical expectation is that we lead in teams.

Explain that Part 1 of Growing Leaders focuses on 'Firm foundations for Christian leadership', beginning with 'establishing identity'. This is at the heart of our understanding of leadership.

Central to this is our relationship with God. Explain that in this session, and the meeting with their mentor following it, we're going to focus on an aspect of our discipleship that affects everything we do as a leader – the motivation for our ministry (grace) and how we can appreciate the reality of grace in our lives day by day (spiritual disciplines).



Way In
10-20 MINS

OPTION 1: AMAZING GRACE

Invite participants to work in triplets to share an experience of 'grace' that has affected them (either a personal experience, or one they have witnessed in another's life). What response do the stories of grace draw from us (feelings, thoughts and longings)?

OPTION 2: TELLING STORIES

Invite participants to form pairs and tell each other their story of how they came to faith. Give them two minutes each, letting them know when they need to swap over. Then ask them to reflect briefly on the role of grace in their stories.



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When they have completed the exercise, reflect on the nature of grace and of God's work in our lives. The fact that God chose us is of central importance. This is what we want to explore further through a study of John 15.



Handout 2

Try to vary your styles of engaging with the Bible over the course: up-front teaching, buzz groups – or the 'Swedish method' (no, not flat-pack furniture) described on handout 2 (you could use this at any point during Growing Leaders). Aim to keep everyone involved and, if working in groups, to provide opportunities for whole-group feedback.

Slide 6
Handout 1

Use John 15:1-17 as the focus for the Bible input. The passage is rich and there will be particular points to emphasise in your situation. Here is one way of looking at the passage:

- **Abiding in Jesus (15:1-7)** Effective discipleship and leadership are rooted in 'abiding' in Jesus, which finds its distinctive character only when the words of Jesus are actively heard and lived. We're going to explore how we continue to abide in Jesus in the second half of this session (spiritual disciplines).
- **Loving each other (15:8-13)** Genuine love for each other and those we lead comes from the love-defining death of Christ.
- **Chosen for relationship (15:14-17)** Abiding 'in Christ' and loving 'in Christ' are only possible because in Christ God has chosen us for this intimate relationship. The appropriate response to his choice is gratitude and obedience to his commands. The word 'if' occurs five times in these verses; there is a conditional element in our covenant relationship with God. We cannot do anything to make him love us, but we can choose to remain in his love through obedience to his commands. Give an example of what this means for you.
- **Fruitful in knowing and growing (15:16)** The outcome of abiding is bearing fruit. In John's terms this means people knowing and loving Christ, obeying his commands, and living a distinctly Christian life that witnesses to others of Christ's way.

As you prepare this section, it is worth noting two aspects of this passage that are often missed:

- It is corporate in nature. Jesus refers to 'those', 'you' (plural), 'one another'. Discipleship and ministry are primarily corporate and communal. Much of Western Christianity is influenced by a modern and post-modern individualistic viewpoint.
- The language of choosing/chosen in the NT (Greek *periousios*) is defined by a theology of salvation, not the philosophy of consumerism. Non-Christian society understands choice as being a decision both of acceptance, and, necessarily, of rejection: 'I choose between two or more alternatives'. However the biblical emphasis is more about expressing the saving purposes of God. The root of the word carries meanings like 'gaining for oneself' or to 'get possession of'. Thus many of our objections that God choosing person 'x' or 'y' shows favouritism or capriciousness are not appropriate. Jesus' prior choosing (John 15:17) is God's intention for all people, to be received or rejected, and is thus a sign of grace. For leaders this secures the cycle of grace as being God's safe place from which to live and lead.

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Slide 7

You could summarise this section as follows. The most important choices we make in leadership are actually not those of technique, for example 'what should I do in this situation?' These are important (as are the experience and skills to handle them wisely) but secondary. The primary choice is the decision to follow God and be motivated by his grace and will. So many of the choices and decisions people make in leadership are actually driven by things other than grace and God. For instance, the desire to be accepted can influence choices and lead to flawed decisions.

The crucial point to convey is that destructive living and bad leadership are linked to our attempts to work *for* God's love, to gain his, or other people's, favour. The first intentional choice Christian leaders should make is to work *from* God's love. You will, of course, want to point out that this choice can only be made because God first chose to love human beings, because he is in the business of choosing a people for himself and his purposes.

The next activity explores the place of grace in our lives.



Activity 1 45-65 MINS

CYCLE OF GRIEF

In preparing this section you may like to read *Growing Leaders*, pages 59-66. (The material in this section is from the work of Frank Lake and used with permission of the Bridge Pastoral Foundation, www.bridgepastoral.org.uk).

Slide 8
Handout 3a

Use the handout to explore the 'cycle of grief'. In this cycle people's identity is ultimately based on their achievements. This then leads to 'drivenness' and a fragile sense of acceptance. If it would be helpful, give an example of an occasion when this cycle has caused difficulties for you.

Slide 9
Handout 3b

CYCLE OF GRACE

Now explore the contrasting cycle on handout 3b, the 'cycle of grace'. It teaches that our 'Christian life cycle' is based on God's gracious acceptance of us, not on our achievements for him. In all of this, Jesus is our exemplar.

Slide 10

'The identity of Jesus is related to the identity of his Father. The initiative and execution of the whole salvation event was in conversation with his Father. If we are to lead well, our identity has to be shaped by similar forces; otherwise we will become victims of our own gifting, a liability to others and ourselves.'

Viv Thomas

Slide 11

Give participants an opportunity to ask any questions of clarification. Ask them to form pairs in order to share responses to the following questions:

- What strikes you about these cycles?
- How might leaders behave wherever they lead if their lives are driven by (a) the cycle of grief or (b) the cycle of grace?
- Which element do you find most challenging in your walk with God? (No need to say more than you wish.)

Ask participants to feed back onto a large sheet of paper any reflections on the



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questions, and then explore together 'How can we as leaders break out of the cycle of grief and live by the cycle of grace?' Record the answers on the paper. Before refreshments, invite participants back into their pairs to pray silently for each other for one minute, offering one another to God and asking for his grace to abound.

To explore further some of the 'drivers' which influence the choices we make and ways we live, see *Growing Leaders*, pages 61-63.



Refresh
65-75 MINS

Now what yummy things can you conjure up this time? And don't forget those who don't drink tea or coffee. Fruit juice? That would be perfect.



Activity 2
75-108 MINS

Slide 12

INTRODUCING THE DISCIPLINES

In this section we shall answer the question: 'How can I experience the reality of grace in my daily life?' Throughout the centuries the answer to this question has been 'exercise spiritual disciplines'. You may find it helpful to read the summary of four reasons why people fail to embrace change: *Growing Leaders* pages 74-77.

Using the handout, introduce the participants to the idea of spiritual disciplines. Describe them as tools to help them receive God's transforming power in their lives.

Handout 4a

OPTION 1: TALK TIME (10 MINS)

Invite people to get into groups of four to:

- Brainstorm a list of spiritual disciplines (handout 4a).
- Talk about their experience of any of the disciplines.
- Consider the question 'what makes exercising the disciplines difficult for you?'

OPTION 2: A HUMAN RAINBOW (10 MINS)

This exercise gets people moving about. Although some might think it a little childish, it will get people mixing and talking. Ideally move to a separate space, perhaps the back half of the room or hall. Be sensitive to the needs of any with mobility problems.

Activity 1

Explain that you are going to invite people to create a human rainbow. In response to each of the statements you make, you'd like people to place themselves somewhere on the continuum you identify. Use the posters in Activity 1 to mark the two ends of the continuum. If you want you can use a fun thing as an example — if one side of the room equals 'agree' and the other equals 'disagree' where would you place yourself in response to the statement 'Football is the most exciting sport in the world?'

Here are a variety of statements you could use. Or you could draw up your own list. For those getting a mixed spread across the rainbow, you may like to invite people to turn to those nearby and briefly chat about why they placed themselves where they did. Then get some feedback as a whole group. The idea is to use this as a means of drawing out some of the insights that will help people to understand the place of spiritual disciplines.



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- 'I would like to grow as a Christian in the grace of God.'
- 'I find spiritual disciplines relatively easy to exercise.'
- 'I believe spiritual disciplines are unrealistic for busy people in the 21st century.'
- 'Surely disciplines are a thing of the past.'

Follow up the exercises with some input on the spiritual disciplines. This may involve summarising what has already come out, or clarifying some points.

Slide 13

- Disciplines are not about trying harder, but are better thought of as wise training. You can use the analogy of running a marathon. If we set out to run a marathon tomorrow without any training, it wouldn't matter how hard we tried, we probably wouldn't succeed. However, if we knew we were going to run a marathon in six months' time, we could establish a training routine that might enable us to succeed. Through training we can achieve what we can't through simply trying (1 Timothy 4:7-8). Spiritual disciplines make the theory of faith take personal, psychological and practical shape in our daily lives.

Slide 14

'Discipline: any activity I can do by direct effort that will help me to do what I cannot now do by direct effort. Spiritual discipline: any activity that can help me gain power to live as Jesus taught and modelled it.'

John Ortberg

Slide 15

- The PowerPoint includes a quote from Dallas Willard which will help identify the focus on a godly life in Christ.

Slide 16

Handout 4b

- The list on slide 16 breaks the disciplines down into two helpful categories. Invite participants to think about any headings that they feel do not apply to them.
- It's helpful to hear first-hand stories from people who practise spiritual disciplines. Interview two or three people from your church who actively practise a discipline. Ask how it fits with their life and energises their faith.

Be ready for any questions that will help clarify the spiritual disciplines.

Project 2
Handouts
1,2,3

Additional
Handout 1

At this point guilt often rushes in. Be sure to encourage people to start from where they are, not from where they wish they were. Explain that their next meeting with their mentor will include a spiritual health check, and part of that will be to identify which one or two disciplines they may work on over the coming months. Then at the beginning of Growing Leaders Part 2 and 3 they will review where they have got to and identify another discipline to take up. There is an additional handout that further explains the variety of disciplines.



Worship

108-118 MINS

Finish the session with prayer/worship in a style appropriate to your group.

Remind participants of the original concept of this session. To be a safe person to follow, one must be a close follower of Jesus. Our relationship with God is at the heart of Christian understanding of leadership. God chooses us to bear fruit.

Slide 17

Here are some suggestions for your time of worship/prayer:

- Invite participants to take seven or eight minutes to be quiet with God, reflecting on the session and praying through any issues it raises.



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- You could sing a couple of worship songs that focus on God's choice of us or on his amazing grace.
- Use John 15:1-17 meditatively, perhaps reading it slowly through and inviting people to pray in response to each section.

Remember to keep encouraging people to pray for those whom they lead, leaders in the wider Church, and those who lead them.



Finally
118-120 MINS

Slides 18-19
(add your
details)
Handout 5

Thank everyone for coming. Remind them of the date and content for the next session and encourage them to have a word with you if there are any issues with their mentor that need addressing. You can also remind them that if they want to explore this topic further they can look at Growing Leaders chapter 3. Distribute the feedback form and ask people to return it to you.

End with prayer. You may like to use the collect (special prayer) set for the fifteenth Sunday after Trinity.

God, who in generous mercy set the Holy Spirit upon your Church in the burning fire of your love: grant that your people may be loved in the leadership of the gospel that, always abiding in you, they may be found steadfast in faith and active in service; through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord. Amen

Pause to say goodbye before rushing to tidy up. There may be one or two who would like to discuss things with you – this can be a good time for some gentle pastoral tying up of loose ends.

Before Next Time

Preparation

As leaders of the course there are several things you will need to do **before** session 3.

- Send the mentors the mentor bulletin.
- Session 3 includes the Develop Personal Life Statement Project. It will be really helpful if you have started this project yourself before you lead the session, so you can both offer your own examples of life statements.
- The PowerPoint includes a reflection using words and music. We suggest you line up a musician to play the song 'I'm giving you my all' or choose an appropriate track (for example, track 1 Officium, Jan Garbarek/Hilliard Ensemble, ECM).
- Pray and prepare for session 3. Don't forget to watch the video introducing the session.

