



cpas

Making Mission Possible



GROWING LEADERS

- **Introduction to Part 3**
- **Introductory Video**
- **Leaders' Guide**
- **Handouts 1-4**
- **PowerPoint**
- **Activity 1-2**



8

**EMBRACING
COST**

PART 3: INTRODUCTION

Part 3 Contents

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A Prayer

Loving Father,
as we explore faithfulness in
Christian leadership, please help
us to be honest about struggles,
and aware of past hurts.

We long to run faithfully the race
you set before us. Grant us your
strength, courage and resolve to
serve you for the rest of our days,
that we may be led more by
Jesus, lead more like Jesus and
lead more to Jesus.

Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

For Help

Please contact us at:

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Welcome to Growing Leaders Part 3

Well done. You've completed two parts of Growing Leaders. We pray that God will give you wisdom as you lead Part 3, and that you may be able to look back through the first two parts with gratitude for what he has been doing in people's lives.

Whereas Parts 1 and 2 looked at the firm foundations and key skills of Christian leadership, Part 3 focuses on keeping faithful in leadership. We want to address honestly the costs involved in being a leader, and explore some ways to stay fresh in leadership over the long haul.

Paul wrote: 'Therefore my dear brothers and sisters, stand firm. Let nothing move you. Always give yourselves fully to the work of the Lord, because you know that your labour... is not in vain.' (1 Corinthians 15:58). That is our longing, that the people on Growing Leaders may stand firm in the great victory that Christ has won for us (see verses 54-57), and fully devote themselves to the work in hand, knowing it is not in vain.

In some senses these sessions could be seen as a little esoteric, but we believe they are vital for the long-term health of leaders. Many of us will know leaders who have burnt out, or become disillusioned or frustrated, or who have stayed in their role but have become stuck or stale. We may also know leaders who have entered a leadership role full with enthusiasm but completely naïve about the real costs and struggles of leadership. They are often hurt quite quickly. We long for leaders to run the race to the end, and to keep themselves healthy as they do so.

- **Session 8** explores embracing cost, and considers the realities, struggles and cost of Christian leadership.
- **Session 9** focuses on staying fresh. It explores leadership as a marathon and not a sprint.
- **Session 10** offers material for a final session and/or commissioning service. It is important to make sure that the course ends well for people. This will include leaving some things behind (perhaps the camaraderie of meeting together) as well as embracing new things (perhaps changes in leadership responsibilities). Give some thought as to how the end of the course should connect with the rest of your church programme and worship, and how it might pave the way for the next time you run Growing Leaders.

At this stage in the course, you may want to plan for how you are going to end it. Some churches find that meeting with each of the participants for a one-to-one conversation with one of the course leaders works really well. There are a variety of materials to help with this in session 10. Now might be a good time to look at these to think through how you might best facilitate participants in getting the most out of their experience of being on Growing Leaders.

The leaders' guide includes:

- **Introduction** A two-page summary identifying the session aims, the biblical material behind the session, the background to the session's construction, a list of required materials, and a section for you to use in your own preparation.
- **Session outline** These are the notes that guide you through how to run the



PART 3: INTRODUCTION

session, including timings, and columns identifying which PowerPoint slides and handouts to use.

You'll also find:

- **Handouts** These can be printed off for the participants.
- **PowerPoint presentations** There is at least one for each session.
- **Videos** Some short introductory videos explaining the thinking behind each session. Do watch these ahead of running a session.
- **Activity masters**

If we can be of any help, please don't hesitate to contact us.



SESSION 8: EMBRACING COST

'I want you to know how much I am struggling for you...'

COLOSSIANS 2:1 (NRSV)

Session Overview

- Aim (5 mins).
- Way in (15 mins).
- Bible input (15 mins).
- Activity (55 mins).
- Refreshments (during activity).
- Reflection (8 mins).
- Worship and prayer for course members (20 mins).
- And finally (2 mins).

Session Aims

- To engage with the costly reality of Christian leadership.
- To identify ways of facing these realities.
- To pray for one another in the context of 'costly leadership'.

Bible Base

This session is based on Colossians 1:21–2:7. We're going to explore Paul's honest reflection on the struggles and costs involved in leadership. It is filled with reality and hope, with privilege and responsibility, with certainty and concern. Take some time to reflect on your own experience of the cost, struggles and realities of Christian leadership in the light of Colossians.

Background

In our work around the country we hear many stories of people in leadership 'giving up', 'burning out', or 'getting stuck'. Inevitably there are a variety of reasons for this, but we want to address two common ones over the next two sessions of Growing Leaders – being honest about the 'sufferings' of Christian leadership, and pacing ourselves for the long haul.

This session considers the inevitable 'sufferings' that are a part of leadership. We need to be honest about these. Sadly they are often ignored, and then people who are relatively new to leadership are surprised or discouraged by how tough it can be. Alternatively those who have been involved for quite a while may be struggling with some of these issues, but haven't had a context to address them.

This session isn't designed to depress people or put them off before they even start. Rather, it is a frank look at some of the things we are likely to come across as Christian leaders. We've decided to make a distinction between:

- **The realities of leadership** These include hard work, the spiritual battle, pressure and loneliness.
- **The struggles of leadership** These include expectations, disappointment, attachment and detachment, and the dark side of leadership.
- **The cost of leadership** These include criticism, sacrifice, persecution and privacy.

Of course there aren't hard lines between these areas, they fuse one into the other. However we want to be open about the differences between these areas, so that people can apply an appropriate label to what they are experiencing.

At the heart of this session is an exercise that will take about 55 minutes. We have designed this on the basis that:

- The group should know and trust each other reasonably well by now.
- The nature of this session's material means that people will have very different experiences and thoughts, so we want to give them a way of exploring these without being too prescriptive.

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We are also aware that this session may raise some important pastoral issues. Please alert the mentors to this, and ensure that you have your pastoral antennae 'up' throughout the session. Some of the issues raised may be related to leading as a Christian in a 'secular' context where the person is struggling to work out how to be a person of faith, or has found themselves persecuted for their faith. These situations can be complex and it can be helpful to set up some specific opportunities for people to explore scenarios like this. For example, peer-mentoring triplets or a coach working one-to-one with someone.

A letter-writing activity forms the main part of this session. If appropriate, encourage participants to use a tablet or laptop for this task – for many, this will be the easiest way of editing their text as they go along, and it should also ensure a legible result. If taking this option, give participants plenty of notice – and, if necessary, borrow further tablets or laptops so that there is one per group.

Your Own Preparation

Read Colossians 1:21–2:7.

Take some time to reflect on the passage and its implications for your leadership. Reflect (in your journal, perhaps) on the following questions:

- What have been your greatest struggles in Christian leadership? Please reflect on the causes of these problems.
- What has resourced you through these struggles?

Be sure to identify any personal hurt, disillusionment or bitterness within yourself, and work this through with God. If necessary seek the help/counsel of someone else. This is vital, because otherwise you may unconsciously project these feelings on to others as you lead them through the session.

'Unfortunately much of the thinking about rewards and fulfilment in ministry today are more secular than biblical. They do not take into account the indispensability of the cross for the fruitful Christian life.'

Ajith Fernando

Materials

- Refreshments.
- Laptops or pen and paper.
- Labelled envelopes with cards inside.
- Song books or slides for sung worship.
- Stopwatch/alarm clock.

HANDOUTS

- Handout 1 Cost/benefit analysis.
- Handout 2 Colossians 1:21-2:7.
- Handout 3 Letter template.
- Handout 4 Feedback form.

ADDITIONAL MATERIAL

- Introductory video.
- Activity 1 Sufferings cube.
- Activity 2 Labels and cards.
- Session 8 PowerPoint.



SESSION 8: EMBRACING COST

Outline



Aim

0-5 MINS

Slide 1

ARRIVAL

Spring is in the air. At Easter we reflected on the cross and resurrection of Jesus Christ as our Lord and Saviour. How about some sign of hope and new life to get this term off to a good start?

- More special refreshments at the start (Cadbury's creme eggs).
- Display a verse from the Bible to remind us of our resurrection heritage (for example, 2 Peter 1:3).

Go on. You know it will make a difference.

Slide 2

INTRODUCTION

Welcome people to the first session of Growing Leaders Part 3.

Take a little time to review what the course has covered to date, perhaps using the 'Firm foundations for Christian leadership' and the 'Key skills of Christian leadership' as the two main headings. Where possible, connect and illustrate your comments with what has happened within your group (perhaps interview one participant for a brief comment about something they have learnt). Then review session 7.

Slide 3

Slide 4

Explain that over the next three sessions we're going to explore aspects of 'Keeping faithful in Christian leadership'. You may want to give a brief reminder of the model we're working with and an overview of the sessions ahead.

Slide 5

Slides 6-7

Introduce this session, and then pray.



Way In

5-20 MINS

Slide 8

Each of the following exercises is a way to connect with the ups and downs of leadership. Introduce this using slide 8: sometimes things are blossoming and beautiful and it is great to be a leader; other times things are cold and barren and it is tough being a leader.

Handout 1

OPTION 1: COST/BENEFIT ANALYSIS

Give each person handout 1 and invite them in pairs to make a cost/benefit analysis of Christian leadership. You may want to play some music as they do this.

Activity 1

OPTION 2: CASE STUDIES

Divide into small groups of three or four, and ask each group to identify the excitement and struggle of leadership for a particular biblical leader. For example, Moses, Gideon, Esther, Peter, Paul.

OPTION 3: SUFFERINGS CUBE

Cut out enough cubes for small groups of three or four. Make the cubes up before the session. Give each group a cube, and invite them to roll the cube and respond to the instruction on the upward face.

Reflect briefly on these exercises and the insights gained from them. Explain that this session is designed to explore the likely 'sufferings' (Colossians 1:24) of Christian leadership. This is crucial, otherwise we become leaders with unrealistic expectations, and can quite quickly become disillusioned or embittered.



SESSION 8: EMBRACING COST

Outline



REJOICING IN SUFFERING

In this passage Paul describes the focus of his ministry: To 'present everyone mature in Christ' (1:28), the energy of his ministry: 'I toil and struggle with all the energy that he powerfully inspires in me' (1:29), and the attitude of his ministry: 'I became its servant' (1:25).

He also explores the 'sufferings' of his ministry (1:24,29; 2:1). You may want to teach this directly or study the passage in small groups. It is printed on handout 2 with space around it for notes. The key themes to draw out are:

Slide 9
Handout 2

- **The cost of his ministry** 'Rejoicing in my sufferings' (1:24). Note that sufferings is plural. Paul is referring to a variety of different ways he suffers – physical, emotional, mental, spiritual (see 2 Corinthians 1:8-11; 2:1-4; 4:8-10; 6:3-10; 11:23-29). Why is this? Because if we are following Christ we will care for those we lead, 'for your sake' (1:24). Paul is prepared to suffer for others because he loves them and longs for them to 'continue securely established and steadfast in the faith' (1:23). In this way he is 'completing what is lacking in Christ's afflictions for the sake of his body, that is, the church'. This does not mean that Christ's death on the cross was somehow insufficient. Rather that the church is not yet perfected, so Paul is participating in the process of helping it become mature in Christ (1:28). This process involves him in 'sufferings', just as Christ predicted. If you are able, give some examples of 'sufferings' from your own leadership to indicate that the basis of the sufferings is love for people.

Slide 10

- **The struggle of his ministry** 'For this I toil and struggle... For I want you to know how much I am struggling for you...' (1:29; 2:1). The word used here for struggle is the root of our word 'agonise'. Paul agonises for the Colossians. So too will we for those we lead and long to present mature in Christ. Paul knows nothing of 'detached leadership', where we remain aloof or separate from the people we lead. Again, give some examples of the ways you 'agonise' in leadership (for example, when you are concerned for people's situations, when you have to confront someone, when you invest in someone and they continue to make poor decisions, when you've prepared an event carefully and it all goes pear-shaped).

Slide 11

- **The sustenance of his ministry** Three things seem to help Paul along.
 - ⇒ Love for the people (1:21 – 2:7). The whole passage is infused with his longing for them to be 'mature in Christ'. His concern for them is deep and therefore lasting.
 - ⇒ Servant-heartedness. Note that either side of verse 24 he speaks of being a servant (of the gospel in 1:23 and of the church in 1:25). This servant-heartedness is a direct reflection of Christ, and means that Paul is prepared to sacrifice himself for others.
 - ⇒ The power of Christ. As we've previously identified, Paul toils (a word taken from athletics where the runners strive with all their strength to finish the race) and struggles 'with all the energy that he powerfully inspires within me' (1:29). This ministry can only be done in Christ's power (the original Greek links to our word for dynamite).

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Outline



Activity
35-90 MINS

Slide 12
Activity 2

'DEAR...'

This activity aims to help people explore the realities, costs and struggles of leadership. It works best when people are encouraged to be honest and open. Although the discussion is problem-oriented it is important to keep the focus on identifying ways to address the issues raised.

The activity involves using three envelopes per group containing cards outlining various struggles, costs and realities. As the group opens each envelope they discuss the issues and gradually write a letter to a younger Christian leader. Before the session you will need to prepare enough envelopes for each small group, three envelopes per group clearly labelled and with the relevant cards inside (see Activity 2 sheet). You may also need other equipment (laptops, see below) depending on how you choose to run the activity. Be sure that you've explained the activity clearly and that people have understood what they are expected to do.

Ask the participants to get into groups of three or four. If you've been using small groups through the course, now would be a good time for them to work in these groups. Ideally people need to be with those they know reasonably well.

You could use the following instructions to explain the activity to the groups.

Imagine you are mentoring a younger Christian leader. You've come to the point where you want to tell him/her about some of the likely things they are going to face as a leader. Remember they may be leading in gathered church life or another context in their daily life. Choose one envelope to start with and take out the cards inside. For each of the areas listed on the cards identify what you think is at the heart of the issue. Then work out what you would say to your leader to help them handle this well. Be creative and think big. To capture your thoughts, assign a scribe and write a letter to the younger leader. If you want to add areas for consideration within each envelope, you have two blank cards to fill in. You have fifteen minutes for each envelope, and then a final five minutes at the end to complete your letter. I will keep time for you and will indicate the end of each 15-minute period.

Handout 3

Encourage the groups to be honest about their own perspective on each of the issues they discuss. Explain that at the end of the activity you would like them to have completed the letter which will then be photocopied and distributed to others on the course so that we may all learn from one another. You can either resource the exercise by ensuring each group has a laptop or tablet, or good old-fashioned pen and paper (but make sure they choose someone who can write clearly).

Also mention you will bring refreshments to them half way through the activity, and that you will keep time for them, giving them 15 minutes per envelope. They must move on even if they haven't finished when you call time.



Refresh

Have a flexible coffee break where you take drinks (and something nice to eat) to the small groups during the activity.



SESSION 8: EMBRACING COST

Outline



Activity
80-90 MINS

After 45 minutes call time again and give them five minutes to complete the letter. Then take the last five minutes to invite each group to read out their letter to the other participants.



Reflection
90-98 MINS

Slides 13-14

Invite each person to take a few minutes to reflect on how they respond to the 'sufferings' of leadership. Explain that at the end of this time there will be an opportunity for prayer around these areas. There may be concerns in their lives that it would be helpful to acknowledge. This could be concern about future 'sufferings', hurt from past 'sufferings', or struggles with present 'sufferings'.



Prayer
98-118 MINS

Slides 15-32

Create a conducive environment for people to pray with one another. How you do this will obviously depend on the number of people on your course and the place you meet. It may mean moving to a different room/place. You may want to arrange for some sung worship together (we've included some slides of songs you could use; you will need to add your copyright licence details). Some groups will find this an ideal time to receive Communion (as a reminder of the sufferings of Christ and that by his wounds we are healed), although this will affect your timings. We've given a range of options below, but the key is to enable participants to bring these 'sufferings' to God, asking for his healing and help. It may be worth having a box of tissues to hand.

OPTION 1: PRAY WITHIN GROUPS

You could invite them to pray for one another within their groups. If you choose this option, be sensitive to those for whom this may be a new experience.

OPTION 2: PRAY AT THE FRONT

You could invite people to come forward for prayer in a slightly more formal fashion. The advantage of this option is that it means people are under less pressure than in the small groups. They can easily choose not to come forward for prayer. Either you as leaders of the course could pray for anyone who wants prayer, or if you felt it necessary/appropriate/helpful you could invite those with gifts in prayer ministry within the church to attend this part of the evening and to pray for people.

OPTION 3: PRAY ON YOUR OWN

You could give people space to pray quietly on their own. We suggest you do this as part of the session, otherwise the danger is that it won't happen.



Finally
118-120 MINS

Slides 33-34

Handout 4

Thank people for coming. Remind them that their mentors are there to discuss issues that may have been raised by the session. Inform them of the date and time of the next meeting. You may like to encourage them to learn Colossians 1:28-29 and use the journalling questions on handout 1. Distribute the feedback form and ask people to complete and return it to you.



SESSION 8: EMBRACING COST

Before Next Time

Preparation

As leaders of the course there are several things you will need to do before session 9.

- As part of session 9 we set up a running track. If you have someone creative in your group you may want to task them with this. The more over-the-top you go the better it will be! You may also like to use a clip from Chariots of Fire.
- Pray and prepare for session 9. Don't forget to watch the video introducing the session.

Additional Material

Wisdom of Years

There are people in most churches who have been leading in one way or another for many years: they will be experienced in the ups and downs of leadership. Sometimes in our youth-focused culture, their wisdom and experience are sadly overlooked and underused. If possible, invite one or two such people to take part in this session. (Some may already be course participants.) Interview them using questions agreed in advance between you and your guests.

If your church has problematic 'issues' regarding leadership, you may wish to invite a guest from another church – someone independent of your set-up.

What matters above all is the quality of your interviewees. Their gracious manner and attitudes may communicate as much as what they actually say. As someone commented: 'Integrity talks.'

You could try:

1. Interviewing an experienced leader as part of your session (or recording it on video to play back in the session). Make sure that you give enough time for this as it is in the exchange of questions that the real gold is discovered. Here are some suggested questions:
 - What has been the hardest thing you have ever faced in leadership?
 - Thinking how leaders responded to trials and problems in your 'younger days', can you comment on any differences between approaches then and now?
 - What has been most helpful to you in coping with the costs of leadership?
 - What one piece of advice would you give to a new Christian leader when it comes to the cost of leadership?
 - What two things do you wish you had been told when you started out in leadership?
 - What are the things that you think have made you most effective in leadership?
 - Are there any costs or difficulties you are facing in leadership today? How are you handling them?
 - How has your view of God and his provision changed over the years?
 - In your experience, what is the most common cause of people leaving leadership roles?
 - What has been the thing which most excites you in leadership?
2. Invite a senior leader to write an article for your church newsletter or magazine. This could be something circulated to the Growing Leaders participants.



SESSION 8: EMBRACING COST

Additional Material

Unsung Heroes Celebration

Some people drop out of leadership because of a lack of encouragement or support for their ministry. Celebrating each other and what God does through us is a key weapon to combat the cynicism, discouragement and negative views that we so often slip into. An event which a number of churches have found very successful is a special evening meal for those who serve in ministry and leadership, but who are not regularly 'up front' in church life and ministry. It should be done at church expense and can be a really fun event. You could:

- Have a red carpet like the Oscars to celebrate and welcome people as they arrive. Cheesy, we know, but it gets a smile.
- Have all the senior leaders act as waiters and waitresses.
- Give awards to everyone with short video clips of people expressing thanks for their ministries.

Leadership Prayer Chain

Many churches have prayer chains for the sick or for particular issues. Each person has a number of people to call on a list, who in turn call others. People should be invited because they are willing to (a) pray for the person or issues, and (b) keep the information strictly confidential.

You could start a prayer chain to support those in leadership roles in their Monday to Saturday lives. When things get tough they have a number to call which would immediately initiate confidential prayer support.

