



AS THE FATHER HAS SENT ME, SO I AM SENDING YOU
AMBASSADORS
fostering a new generation of spiritual leaders



MODULE 5

LIFESTYLE AND VOCATIONAL TRAINING
PARTICIPANT

AS THE FATHER HAS SENT ME, SO I AM SENDING YOU

AMBASSADORS

fostering a new generation of spiritual leaders

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AMBASSADORS

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AS THE FATHER HAS SENT ME, SO I AM SENDING YOU AMBASSADORS



Welcome to Ambassadors.

Ambassadors is a new level of youth ministry designed to equip you to be the best that you can be and to be part of a new generation of youth that will take on the challenge to be the hands, feet, and voice of Jesus in your local church and community.

An ambassador generally represents a country or a cause. A Christian ambassador is a representative of another kind; they represent the values, principles, culture, and laws of the kingdom of God. They stand for the character and purpose of the King of this kingdom—Jesus Christ, Himself.

The Ambassadors training is based on seven foundations designed for your development. They include:

1. A Christ-centered discipleship plan
2. Leadership development
3. A personal, public, and small group based mission lifestyle
4. Character and personality development, including outdoor, high adventure programming
5. Lifestyle and vocational training
6. Nurturing godly relationships
7. Community outreach development through service projects and emergency preparedness training

Each of these seven foundations will be taught in the form of seven modules, and you will acquire certification for each module completed.

Each module contains four elements that will be consistently present throughout the course:

- First, the concept of a spiritual companion. At the beginning of each module, you will choose a friend who will be your companion for the duration of the module. You will meet with that friend during each meeting for mutual encouragement and support towards your growth as an Ambassador. Groups of spiritual companions will also join for certain activities. This will foster the concept of community, interdependence, and accountability into the Ambassador's experience.
- Second, an Individual Discipleship Plan (IDP). At the beginning of every module, you will make a simple plan of how you would like to grow spiritually and acquire the practical skills, knowledge, and experience proposed in the module. Your spiritual companion will be there throughout the module to help and encourage you to accomplish your plan. The IDP helps to emphasize

- the continuing nature of discipleship and that learning is a continual part of life. It stresses the need for interdependence on each other as we learn, grow, and work for God. (See guidelines for creating your IDP on the next page.)
- Third, projects. Each module will have a project that will integrate the core concepts from the module into a service learning activity focused on helping others. This will be an opportunity for your group to work together as a whole.
- Fourth, social activities. A social activity will be planned for the group at least once a month. Make sure that you always participate.

Participant's Guide

A participant's guide for each module has been prepared for you. You hold one in your hands.

- The Participant's Guide is essentially your workbook, which contains all the lessons for each module that you will engage with.
- In the back pages of each module you will find the following: a page to create your IDP, and a list of the sessions of the module that your leader will sign and date upon completion.
- You will be required to complete 75 percent attendance and participation to receive your certification or award at the end of each module. Participants can make up for missed lessons to achieve the required 75 percent at the discretion of their leader.

Fostering togetherness is at the heart of a model for discipleship, which the General Conference is focusing on; it is known as "Together Growing Fruitful Disciples." This model emphasizes understanding, connecting, equipping, and ministering—but doing all of this "together." For God did not design us to grow or minister alone, but in community. Paul writes that growing in Christ is achieved as everyone uses the gifts God has given to them, "until we all reach unity in the faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God and become mature, attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ" (Ephesians 4:13).

Thank you for accepting the call and challenge to become an Ambassador of Jesus Christ and His kingdom. May this experience enrich your life and assist you in discovering God's greater purpose for you.

General Conference Youth Ministries Department



Gilbert Cangy
GC Youth Director



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Associate GC Youth Director



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CREATING YOUR IDP

As a human being with a nature that naturally tends to move away from God, growing to reflect Jesus as an Ambassador will rarely happen by chance or without much thought. That's why for each of the Ambassador's modules, you will be creating your own IDP. The focus of each IDP will relate to the theme of your current module and last for the duration of that module.

Here is an example of what an IDP will look like. Fill in your own IDP on the form provided.

1. IDP Module Name:

CHRIST-CENTERED DISCIPLESHIP

2. Spiritual Companion: Who is the spiritual companion who will encourage and support you in the next stage of your spiritual journey of growing as an Ambassador of Jesus? They will remain your spiritual companion throughout the current module.

JOHN WILCOX

3. Personal vision statement: This includes two parts: (a) What do you see in your life today that you would like to change in order to become more effective as an Ambassador for Jesus? (b) Describe how you would like to see yourself in the future. Before you start writing, take a moment to pray for God to guide your thoughts.

- CURRENTLY, I DO NOT HAVE A REGULAR OR VERY MEANINGFUL DEVOTIONAL LIFE.
- I WOULD LIKE TO DEVELOP A DEVOTIONAL LIFE THAT CAN EQUIP ME SPIRITUALLY TO BE AN EFFECTIVE AMBASSADOR FOR JESUS.

4. Expected evidence of change: After looking at your personal vision statement, list the evidence you might expect to see that reveals you are growing in Christ.

- I THINK AN EFFECTIVE AMBASSADOR IS SOMEONE WHO IS ALWAYS PRAYING FOR OPPORTUNITIES TO REVEAL THE CHARACTER OF JESUS WHEREVER THEY GO. THAT IS WHAT I WANT FOR MY LIFE.

5. Next steps: List the practical steps you will take to accomplish your personal discipleship vision. Think about how these steps will also shape your daily devotions with God.

- SET MY ALARM CLOCK FOR 7AM TO START MY DEVOTIONS
- SPEND 30 MINUTES IN PRAYER AND BIBLE READING
- REPEAT BEFORE I GO TO SLEEP
- FIND A BOOK TO READ THAT TEACHES DIFFERENT WAYS TO STUDY THE BIBLE
- PRAY EACH DAY FOR OPPORTUNITIES FOR GOD TO USE ME AS HIS AMBASSADOR

6. Reflection: How did I do? This is completed at the end of the module. It gives you a chance to reflect on what worked well and what you would like to improve in the future. You can compare your expected evidences of change to what actually happened.

- I REALLY ENJOYED THESE LAST FEW WEEKS. THE MORE I READ AND UNDERSTOOD, THE MORE CONFIDENT I BECAME TO PRAY FOR OPPORTUNITIES FOR GOD TO USE ME. I THINK I WILL EXPAND THE TIME FOR DEVOTIONS I HAVE IN THE EVENING, AND NOW THAT I HAVE READ A BOOK ON BIBLE STUDY, I WOULD LIKE TO READ ANOTHER ON INTERCESSORY PRAYER. I HAVE FOUND THAT I REALLY ENJOY PRAYING FOR OTHERS.

basic template for teaching sessions

This template will be used during most in-house teaching sessions. There will be variations in the format depending on the focus for the day.

welcome & activity

2+ min

1. General welcome and opening prayer.
2. A short getting-to-know you activity. As friendships continually deepen, so the ability to encourage and support each other spiritually deepens.

did you know?

13 minutes

An activity that introduces the theme for the day.

mission briefing

10 minutes

A simple Bible study that gives the biblical foundation for the theme done in groups of two or three. It will be helpful for leaders to circulate around the room to listen in on conversations to see that participants are going in the right direction and to answer questions.

thinking it through

5 minutes

A personal reflection time where each participant writes down what they have personally learned from the Bible study and how this applies to their own life as an Ambassador. To be shared briefly with their spiritual companion who will be a spiritual encourager during the curriculum.

reflecting Jesus & His kingdom

40 minutes

An activity that expands on the main theme for the lesson. This section is called “reflecting Jesus and His kingdom” because an ambassador’s main task is to represent who Jesus is to others, as well as what the kingdom of heaven stands for.

next steps

15 minutes

An ambassador for Jesus will grow spiritually and will witness in everyday life beyond the training sessions. Therefore, each participant will develop an individual discipleship plan that will help them grow as an ambassador for Jesus when they are outside of the learning environment.

At the beginning of each module in the curriculum, participants will develop an individual discipleship plan (IDP) that will guide their personal spiritual journey during that section. Each IDP will focus on the theme of that section. “Next Steps” is a time for participants to reflect on how their IDP is working and to pray for each other in what they aim to do next. This will be done with their spiritual companion. A spiritual companion is a friend who prays for and encourages their own companion over a set period of time.

summary

5 minutes

As a whole group, this is an opportunity to summarize what participants have learned during the session. It is a time for the leader to generally review what has been done and to ask for volunteers to briefly share what they have learned.

SESSION 1

first things first



SESSION 1

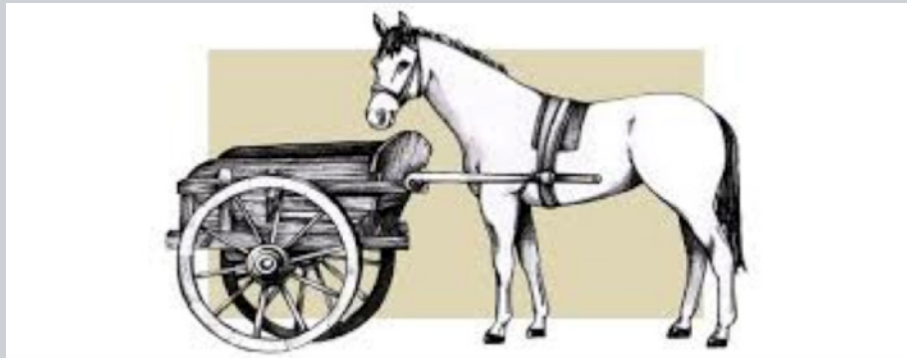
first things first



did you know...

Ninety-five percent of all returned gadgets still work but are returned because consumers don't read the manuals (www.gadget.com).

What's Wrong With This Picture?



“Seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you”

Matthew 6:33





mission briefing

1. If you could get God's direct guidance on questions you have about your future, which would be the most important question for you? Which is the least? (Rank the following in order of importance with "1" being the most important and "6" as the least.

- _____ What career/job should I pursue?
- _____ Who should I marry?
- _____ What should I do with my free time?
- _____ Where should I live?
- _____ What specific skill do I need training in that will make me successful?
- _____ In what area of my life should I just take a leap of faith?

2. Agree or disagree with the following statement: "God does not reveal His will for us to consider it; He reveals His will as we commit to follow Him wherever He may lead." Explain your answer.



thinking it through

1. When you look at your own life now, are there things that seem out of order or prioritized in a way that is not healthy?
2. Reflect on some of your hopes and dreams for the coming years. What are some tangible things you would like to achieve? Write your answers on the 3x5 cards provided. (Use one word on each card to describe what you hope to achieve.)





reflecting Jesus & His kingdom

1. In your groups, briefly share about someone you know who has “put the horse in front of the cart” or exemplified the premise “first things first.” Describe someone you know who prioritizes their life well.

2. Throughout the Gospels there are sayings from Jesus about ordering your life in a way that is wise. In the verses below, what specific challenge is made and how do you see those types of challenges embraced and ignored in your culture today?

- a. Matthew 7:24-27

- b. Matthew 23:23-25

- c. Matthew 6:28-34

- d. Mark 8:34-36

3. According to the following passages of Scripture, what does God explicitly say He wants, wills, or wishes for His people?

- a. Matthew 18:12-14

- b. Colossians 4:12-13

- c. Ephesians 5:17-21

- d. Ephesians 6:5-8



e. 1 Thessalonians 5:16-18

f. 1 Peter 2:15-16

4. Read the following quotes some have made about priorities and share in your group which comment speaks to you personally. Why?

“Things which matter most must never be at the mercy of things which matter least.” Johann Wolfgang von Goethe

“Most of us spend too much time on what is urgent and not enough time on what is important.” Stephen R. Covey

“Desires dictate our priorities, priorities shape our choices, and choices determine our actions.” Dallin H. Oaks

“The will of God is not something you add to your life. It’s a course you choose. You either line yourself up with the Son of God...or you capitulate to the principle which governs the rest of the world.” Elisabeth Elliot

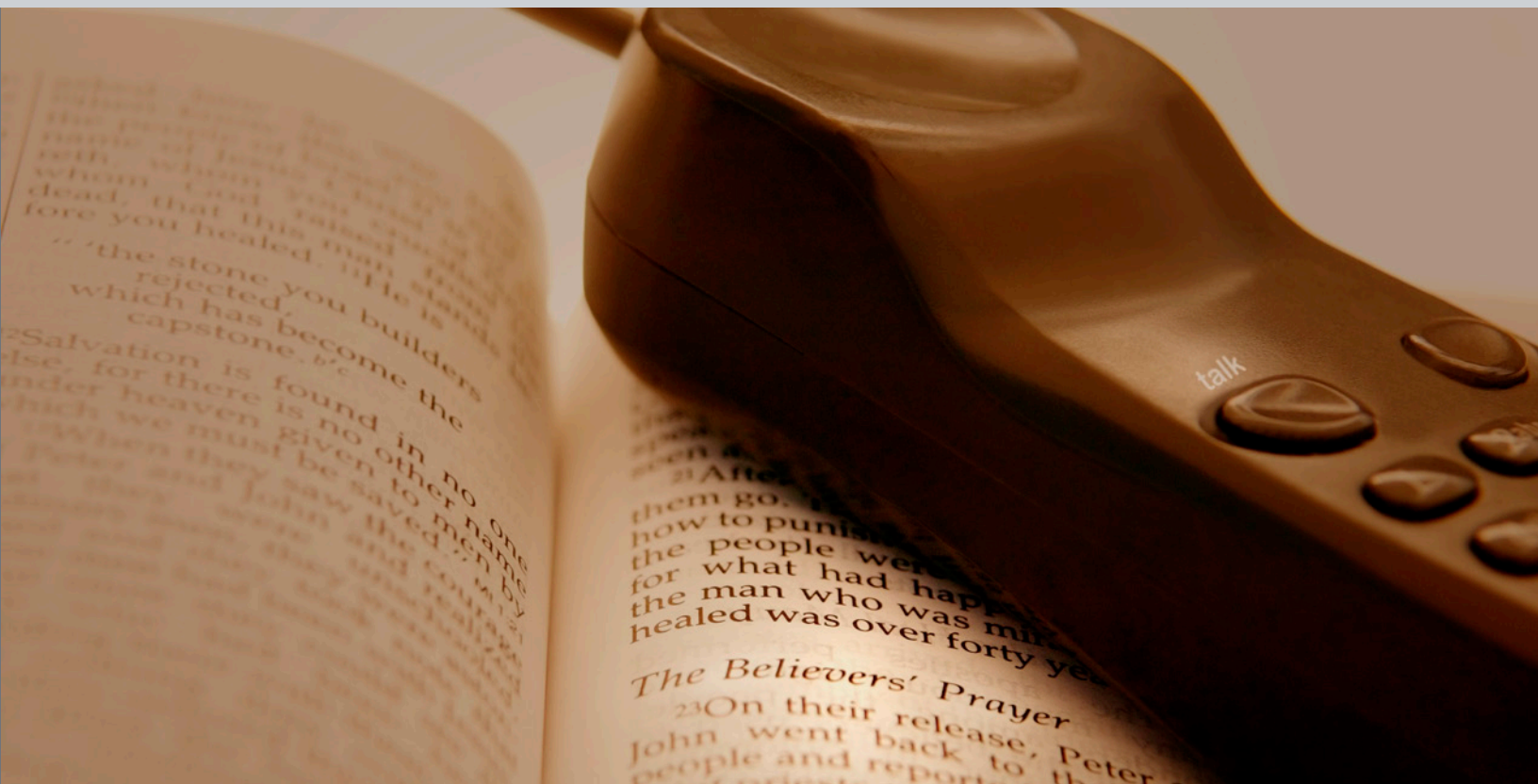
“A simple life is not seeing how little we can get by with—that’s poverty—but how efficiently we can put first things first. . . . When you’re clear about your purpose and your priorities, you can painlessly discard whatever does not support these, whether it’s clutter in your cabinets or commitments on your calendar.” Victoria Moran

5. Brainstorm in your group the various people in Scripture and in history who have worked effectively for God. Make a list of the top ten people who put “first things first” into practice and made a difference in the world.



SESSION 2

hearing voices and guidance from the gut



SESSION 2

hearing voices and guidance from the gut



did you know...

Of all the questions young adults have about life, what God wants them to do as a vocation is found in the top five.

In today's workforce, young adults are likely to make significant shifts in their field of work as many as 3-5 times.



“I pray that the eyes of your heart may be enlightened in order that you may know the hope to which he has called you, the riches of his glorious inheritance in his holy people, and his incomparably great power for us who believe”

Matthew 6:33





mission briefing

1. Does God have a specific vocation in mind for each of us? If so, how do we discover what it is? If not, how do we choose wisely?

2. How much does God really have to say in the Bible about what you choose to do for work?

3. Read through a day in the life of Jesus found in Mark 1:21-39 and respond to the following questions:

- How would you describe a day in the life of Jesus?

- Throughout this day is Jesus doing what He is supposed to do, or simply what everyone wants Him to do?

- To what degree does His season of prayer help Him know what to do next?

- Is His decision to “move on” callous or insensitive? Explain.



thinking it through

1. Think about the list of vocations you are interested in (that you wrote on the 3x5 card earlier). Can you see yourself being fully committed to Christ and doing this kind of work at the same time?

2. What are some of your core beliefs and principles that you will not compromise if they arise in certain occupations?





reflecting Jesus & His kingdom

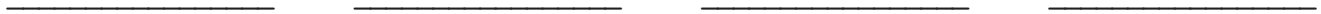
1. On the continuum below, indicate where you are on the spectrum of knowing what you want to do for work (5 min).

Certain

Pretty Sure

Thinking but Uncertain

In the Dark



2. Jesus declared, “My sheep know my voice and they follow me” (John 10:4). Read the passages below and consider what they say about hearing God and standing firm in your convictions. In five words or less, summarize the message of each verse and then share your summaries with the rest of your group (12 min).

a. John 8:47



b. Isaiah 30:21



c. Luke 11:28



d. Hebrews 2:1



e. Philippians 4:6-7



3. Consider the stories below of people who heard God speak to them about their future. To what degree did their relationship with God affect their ability to hear, understand, and follow His leading in their life? (15 min)

a. 1 Samuel 3:1-21



b. 1 Kings 19:1-18



c. Acts 1:1-30



4. How did their core beliefs enable them to overcome their own humanness and do what God was calling them to do? (5 min)

5. If you had to make a decision in seven days as to which vocation or type of work you would pursue, what would you do differently this week? (5 min)

SESSION 3

as iron sharpens iron



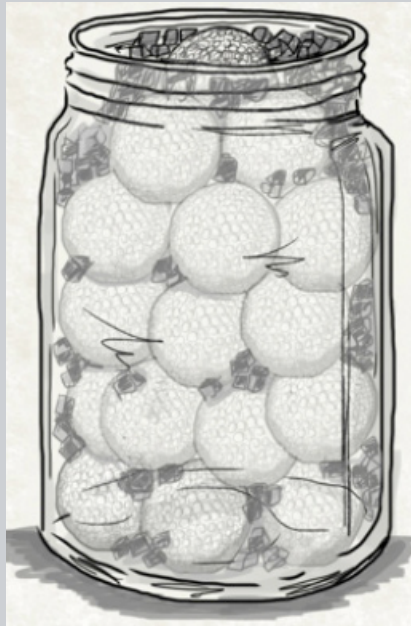
MENTOR

SESSION 3

as iron sharpens iron



did you know...



“Where there is no counsel, the people fall; But in the multitude of counselors there is safety”

Proverbs 11:14, NKJV





mission briefing

1. It is known that listening to wise people is healthy. It is one of those “core beliefs” or “first stones” of life. It is also known that learning from personal experience can be meaningful. Question: When is it best to listen to wise counselors and learn from their experience? When is it best to experience life lessons personally?

2. In your list of core voices that you listen to, which has the most influence? Rank the following in order of influence:

_____ Parents and Family Members

_____ Significant Other

_____ Peer or Friend

_____ Direct Counsel from the Bible

_____ Your Conscience or Intuition

_____ Spiritual Leader or Teacher



thinking it through

1. What are some reasons you can think of that cause young people to resist inviting someone for honest, direct advice?



2. Reaching out to a respected person for their observations can be painful but can also be insightful. One has to be prepared to learn no matter what they hear. Consider the following prompt for dialogue—written or in person: “Share with me your observations about what you think I do well, what my gifts might be, and where you think I might be a helpful contributor. Share with me some observations where you think I have room to grow.”



reflecting Jesus & His kingdom

1. Survey the passages of Scripture that have brief insights about the role of wise voices in your life. Which passage do you find most meaningful? Why?
- Proverbs 18:1: “A man who isolates himself seeks his own desire; He rages against all wise judgment.”

 - Proverbs 11:14: “Where there is no counsel, the people fall; But in the multitude of counselors there is safety.”

 - Proverbs 27:17: “As iron sharpens iron, so one person sharpens another.”

 - Hebrews 10:24-25: “And let us consider how to stir up one another to love and good works, not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another, and all the more as you see the Day drawing near.”

 - Psalm 145:4: “One generation shall commend your works to another, and shall declare your mighty acts.”

 - Genesis 2:18: “Then the Lord God said, “It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him a helper fit for him.”



2. What are some healthy mentoring relationships in Scripture? What makes their interaction helpful to you today?

3. If you could ask anyone in Scripture for advice about the big choices you have to make for your future, who would you choose? Why? (Let's assume Jesus would be our first choice—but choose someone else.)

4. How should you ask/invite someone to speak truth or insight into your life? What manner and with what words would you use to initiate the conversation?



SESSION 4

God-given gifts, talents, and tendencies



SESSION 4

God-given gifts, talents, and tendencies



did you know...



The collective effort of many parts is greater than the sum of those parts individually.

“And whatever you do, whether in word or deed, do it all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him”

Colossians 3:17





mission briefing

1. What is the difference between a spiritual gift, personal talent, and a skill? In your groups, make a short list of examples of each.

2. Read 2 Timothy 1:6. What has God gifted you with that you need to “fan into flame”?



thinking it through

1. As the 3x5 card is returned to you, take some personal time to reflect on the words others have declared about you. How do your own perceptions of yourself compare to what others see in you?

2. Take time to pray about the wide array of possibilities that are before you.



reflecting Jesus & His kingdom

1. As the sanctuary was being constructed there were already certain professions and skills displayed in the lives of the Israelites. Read Exodus 36:1, 8–38 and discuss what kind of training they might need and how they might have received that training. How is it different for you today?

2. Survey the various vocations in Scripture and choose examples that are primarily a skill, a calling, or a talent.

Baker (Genesis 40:5)	Carpenter (2 Samuel 5:11)
Butler or cupbearer (Nehemiah 1:11)	Feller (Isaiah 14:8) and hewers (Joshua 9:21)
Cooks (1 Samuel 9:23–24)	Metalworker: coppersmith (2 Timothy 4:14), goldsmith (Nehemiah 3:8), silversmith (Acts 19:24), founders (Judges 17:4), and smiths (1 Samuel 13:19).
Grinder—or miller (Matthew 24:41)	Merchant (Genesis 23:16; Isaiah 24:2)
Fishermen (Isaiah 19:8; Matthew 4:18)	Potter (Jeremiah 18:2; Romans 9:21)
Hunters (Jeremiah 16:16)	Mason (2 Kings 12:12)
Shepherds (Luke 2:8; Genesis 4:2,20)	Tanner (Acts 9:43)
Farmer (Genesis 4:2; Isaiah 17:5)	Tent-making (Acts 18:3)
Judges (Judges 2:16; Luke 18:2)	Apothecary/modern chemist (Nehemiah 3:8)
King(1 Samuel 8:5)	Banker or lender (Proverbs 22:7)
Governor (Genesis 42:6; Daniel 6:2)	Fuller or laundry person (Malachi 3:2)
Deputy or administrator (Acts 13:7)	Host or inn-keeper (Luke 10:35)
Soldier (1 Chronicles 7:4)	Master or teacher (James 3:1; Romans 2:20)
Jailer (Acts 16:23)	Singers and players (Psalm 68:25; Revelation 18:22)
Publican or tax collector (Matthew 9:10)	Priest (Exodus 31:10)
Scribe (Matthew 5:20)	Prophet (Genesis 20:7)



3. As you consider the list of vocations above, how have occupations changed over time and in what ways are they the same?

4. The Bible seems more emphatic about how our abilities are used rather than what our abilities are. Read the following passages and briefly discuss the purposes of our gifts, talents, and skills.

- Colossians 3:17

- 1 Peter 4:11

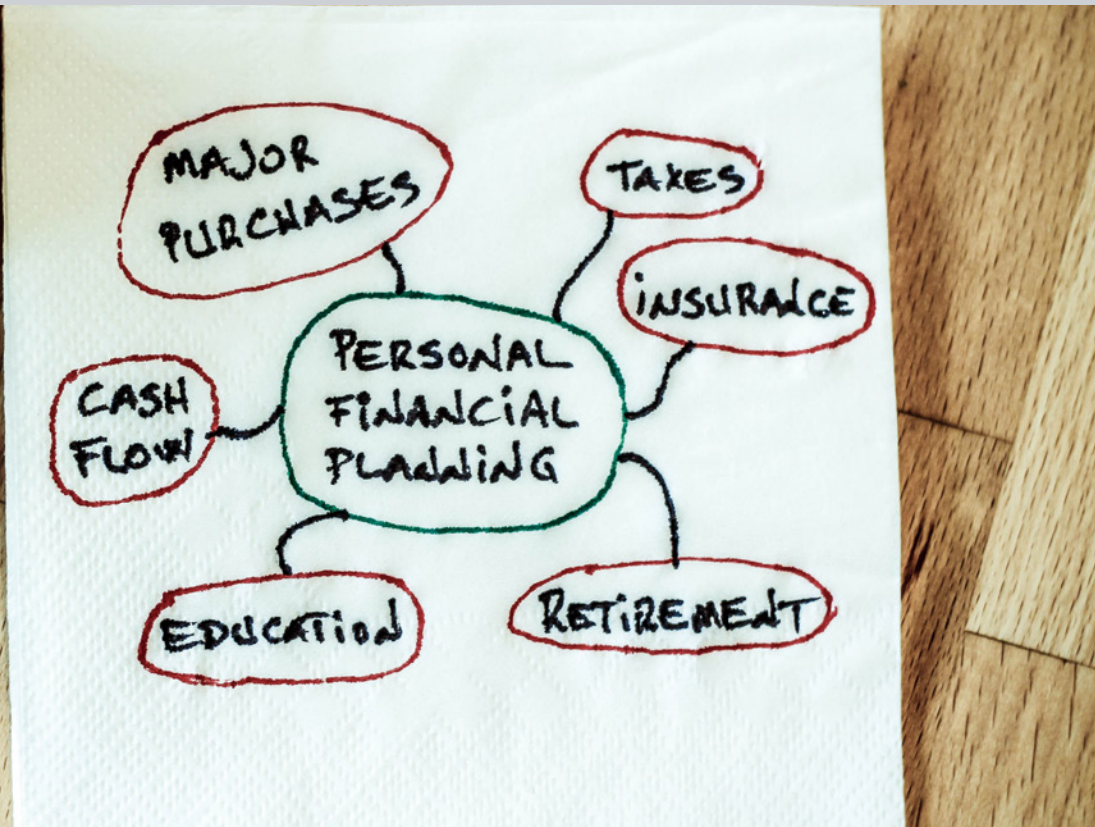
- Titus 3:14

- Ephesians 4:11-13



SESSION 5

financially wise



SESSION 5

financially wise

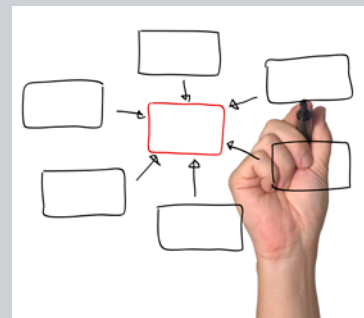


did you know...

Preventing



Planning



“Suppose one of you wants to build a tower. Won’t you first sit down and estimate the cost to see if you have enough money to complete it?”

Luke 14:28





mission briefing

1. What do you think is the most effective skill/quality necessary for being a believer who manages their resources well? (Circle two and be ready to say why you think this is true.)

Discipline

Faith

Talent

Opportunity

Hard work

Time management

Self-control

Patience

Single-mindedness

Courage

Generosity

Gratefulness

Decisiveness

Carefulness

Contentment

2. When it comes to being financially wise, planning is key. Consider the series of parables Jesus told in Luke 14:25-33 about being prepared. What do the illustrations teach about our approach to personal finances?



thinking it through

1. When you think about the list of qualities for wise money management, which do you struggle with the most?

2. If you were to commit one aspect of your financial life to God in prayer, which area would you want to start with? (Work, school, spending, saving, giving, wasting, etc.)





reflecting Jesus & His kingdom

- 1. Recognize that God is the Source of all.** What do Philippians 4:19 & 2 Corinthians 9:8 declare about the Source? How can Ambassadors keep in the forefront of their minds that God is good and in control?

- 2. Living simply on the margin** (flexible tension where there is room for increase and decrease) is planning for the unplanned surprises along the way. Planning wisely means allowing a margin for income and expenses. “Be prepared” is a common command in Scripture. Recall and share the many ways in which we are supposed to “be ready” and discuss how that relates to living on the margin financially.

- 3. Intentionally saving money** is not just for the rich but for all who desire not to be taken off balance by trouble. Read the wisdom in Proverbs 22:3 and briefly share why you think saving money is worth doing and why it is so hard to do.

Consider the following formula for saving money: If your income is \$12,000 a year and you save \$1,000 a year and earn six percent interest compounded annually, you would have \$24,672.56 at the end of fifteen years.

If at the end of fifteen years of saving faithfully you had a child that needed to go to college or you wanted to purchase a house, you could draw \$2,000 a year for ten years and still have \$15,322.17 set aside at the end.

The principle is to make saving money (no matter how much you make) a part of your planning so that when emergencies come (and they will) you are prepared.

- 4. Avoiding Debt.** Psalm 37:21 and Proverbs 22:7 describe the problem of incurring debt. Read the passages and discuss the following example as a group. Using the same scenario we used for savings, take a look at the problem of debt.

Let’s say you make \$12,000 a year and, instead of saving \$1,000, you go into debt to buy a car, computer, or some furniture. If you did not pay it back but continued the debt at ten percent interest, in fifteen years you would owe \$34,949.74. Many feel trapped, depressed, and like they are in a vicious cycle with no eminent end to their trouble. The problem is not the economy, debtors,



unemployment, or capitalism. The problem has to do with our desire to have something now and pay later. The rain falls on both, so we know that trouble can be around the corner, but the same trouble can either ruin your day or ruin your life depending on your choices.

5. Those who **budget, plan, and execute** their intentions find ways to face the hardships that inevitably come. Proverbs 23:23 says, “Buy the truth and sell it not; also wisdom and instruction, and understanding.” Knowing what to do when married to actually doing it produces a good result. What are some specific aspects of your financial life that you should plan?
-
-
-

6. Practice contentment. What does it mean to be content? Read 2 Corinthians 6:4-10 and try to imagine the diverse experiences the apostles had throughout the course of their life. How does this challenge from Paul resonate with the culture you live in today?
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-

SESSION 6

materialism and the heart



SESSION 6

materialism and the heart



did you know...

The rate of materialism among young people grows in direct proportion to the efforts of advertisers targeting them. When advertisers promote products or services to consumers, the most responsive audience is young people between the ages of 15 to 25. Why do you think this is the case?



“Whoever loves money never has enough; whoever loves wealth is never satisfied with their income. This too is meaningless”

Ecclesiastes 5:10





mission briefing

1. Below is a spectrum of words that show the progression of materialism. Read the progression words from left to right and identify common areas in your culture where people are preoccupied or obsessed with “things.”

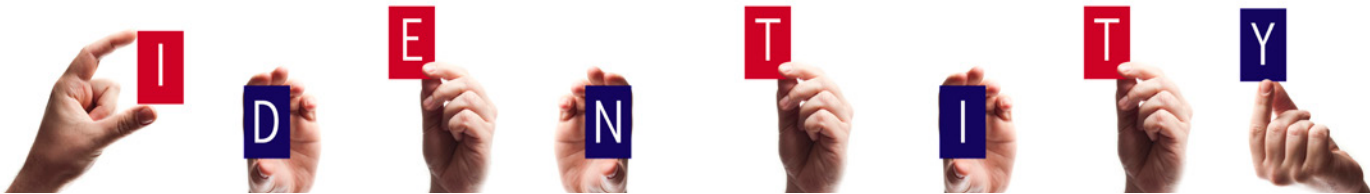
Obsession Preoccupation Fascination Infatuation Appreciation

2. Compare the messages of Deuteronomy 6:5 and Matthew 22:37-38 with the warning given in Luke 12:15.

- How does an innocent appreciation for a material item turn to a dangerous affection?

- How can a healthy appreciation for things be balanced with gratitude and a deep love for God?

- Is it possible for believers to like their things and still love God? Explain.



thinking it through

1. What are some of the “things” you treasure that may be problematic? What are some of the things you treasure most of all that are sometimes easy to forget because they are not material?

2. Reflect and make a short list of what you are grateful for. What items on the list are material or temporary? What items are eternal? What can you do this week to practice some distance from the “things” that preoccupy you?





reflecting Jesus & His kingdom

1. Read 1 Timothy 6:2-10 with fellow Ambassadors (first by yourself, and then as a group) and ask the following questions of the passage.

- When you read this section of Scripture, what problems do you see Paul trying to address? Why?

- Is the tendency toward materialism a specific choice or the result of many small choices?

- How do you know when you have cultivated a “love of money”?

2. Read the following verses that counsel believers about the nature of material desires. Summarize each verse in seven words.

- Proverbs 28:20

- Proverbs 23:5

- Proverbs 11:4

- Matthew 6:24

- Matthew 6:19-22

3. Based upon the passages of Scripture and personal experience, compose three rules or life principles to live by that will help you avoid preoccupation with material things.

a. _____

b. _____

c. _____



4. Sometimes we are more impressed or enamored by material things because they seem more real than spiritual blessings—you can touch them, own them, use them. But the kingdom of God offers things that are hard to touch, taste, and see. How might you develop a sense that eternal things are, in fact, very real?

SESSION 7

work ethic



did you know...



“If anyone forces you to go one mile, go with them two miles”

Matthew 5:41





mission briefing

1. Rank the following qualities in order of their importance to the workplace. If you were to hire someone, which qualities would you desire most? (1—most desired, 10—the least)

Desired Qualities of Employees

_____ Dependable

_____ Punctual

_____ Self-Starter

_____ Trustworthy

_____ Problem Solver

_____ Considerate

_____ Attentive

_____ Positive

_____ Conscientious

_____ Honest

2. Read the story of Joseph in Genesis 39 and underline or highlight the parts that describe Joseph's work ethic or the effects of his work ethic.

3. In spite of unfair circumstances, Joseph was able to succeed. What lessons can you draw from this story that might help someone who is working hard but being treated unfairly?





thinking it through

1. Think of your work history and your work ethic in your most recent job. What could you have done better? What did you do well? What witness did your work make on those around you?

2. What quality in the list you discussed previously do you want to practice this week?



reflecting Jesus & His kingdom

1. True or False: Work is a by-product of sin. Read and discuss the origin of work in Genesis 1:28 and 2:15. What words or phrases denote God's plan for work?

2. Read Colossians 3:22-25 and make a list of the specific counsel Paul gives to workers.

3. Read Ephesians 6:5-8 and discuss the motivation for an exceptional work ethic according to this passage.



4. One report showed that the top three skills employers are looking for are teamwork, problem solving, and communication. Jesus told His disciples that “if someone in authority asks you to carry their pack one mile, carry it an extra mile” (Matthew 5:40,41). What would it look like in your work place to go the extra mile in:

- Teamwork

- Problem Solving

- Communication



SESSION 8

dealing with disappointment and
unemployment



SESSION 8

dealing with disappointment and unemployment



did you know...

When the going gets rough, we sometimes wonder if we made a wrong turn. Why do people think doing God's will should be problem free?



**ROAD
AHEAD
CLOSED**





mission briefing

1. When have you faced a roadblock sign to your future aspirations?

2. On 3x5 cards, write the type of roadblocks your friends, peers, associates have experienced in the last year. Write one roadblock per card (Such as: unemployment, sickness, relationship trouble). Write it large enough so you can read it when it is pasted on the wall.
3. Read 1 Peter 1:3-9 and discuss Peter's challenge to the church. How might this passage encourage or strengthen someone facing unemployment or misfortune?



thinking it through

1. Reflect on the times in your life when it seemed like everything went wrong. No matter how hard you tried, your circumstances seemed to bring trouble to you rather than good opportunities. How did you make it through?
2. What are some attitudes and behaviors you would like to practice when life does not seem to go your way?





reflecting Jesus & His kingdom

As God calls Ambassadors to prepare for a life of meaningful work and witness, there are seasons where obstacles will block the free flow of life. Some will face unemployment. Others may face an accident or illness. Still some might just miss opportunities and struggle to achieve their goals. Scripture is filled with those who emerge victorious from dark and disorienting seasons of life. How did they do it?

Read the following passages and examine the way to prepare, how to proceed, and when to proclaim God's goodness while we are weak.

1. Prepare: Read Ephesians 6:10–20 and discuss the various ways to prepare for problems that will come. How do the different parts of the armor of God prepare you for emergencies?
 - The Belt of _____
 - The Breastplate of _____
 - The Shoes of _____
 - The Shield _____
 - The Helmet of _____
 - The Sword of _____
2. Proceed: Read through Psalm 73 and listen to the song written by Asaph, a worker in the temple. Whether he was a priest or musician is not known for sure, but his road took an interesting turn.
 - What is Asaph's problem? (Psalm 73:2–14)

 - Where does Asaph proceed to? (Psalm 73:16,17)

 - What do you think happened in the sanctuary?

 - Even though his circumstances hadn't changed, what changed his mindset? (Psalm 73:21–28)

3. Proclaim: In 2 Corinthians 12:1–10 Paul faced a moment in his ministry where he couldn't work. He couldn't travel. He couldn't do what he was called to do. He faced some kind of affliction.
 - Even though Paul prayed three times for God to take away the problem, the answer was "no." Is Paul's prayer for relief a reasonable request?



- What is the upside of God's response? What is the obvious downside?

In what ways has God done more through your weaknesses than He has done through any skill or strength?

- Paul proclaims that whatever God chooses to use for His glory is good (strength or weakness). How does the praise we give God while we are in trouble become a beautiful witness to the world?

4. Prepare for trouble. Proceed when you can't see clearly. Proclaim God's grace in your brokenness. When have you witnessed someone overcoming disappointment in a similar way?



SESSION 9

true blue honesty and integrity



SESSION 9

true blue honesty and integrity



did you know...

The word “sincere” or “pure” in the New Testament means sun-tested or tried by the light of the sun. Another way to say something is sincere or true is to say it is “made without wax.” Dishonest merchants would repair broken pottery and art with melted wax and sell it shortly after it had been painted or whitewashed. When the sun would bake the pottery, it would fall apart. If it could stand in the sun, it was “pure” or “sincere”—sun-tested.



“And this is my prayer: that your love may abound more and more in knowledge and depth of insight, so that you may be able to discern what is best and may be pure and blameless for the day of Christ, filled with the fruit of righteousness that comes through Jesus Christ—to the glory and praise of God”

Philippians 1:9–11





mission briefing

1. Which quality in the list below should be first in a leader?

2. Which quality, if it is not present in a person, compromises them as a Christian leader?

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Communication | <input type="checkbox"/> Vision |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Organization | <input type="checkbox"/> Courage |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Resourcefulness | <input type="checkbox"/> Attentiveness |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Decisiveness | <input type="checkbox"/> Honesty |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Charisma | <input type="checkbox"/> Perseverance |

Kouzes and Posner (two leadership authors) surveyed thousands of people around the world and identified the qualities most desired in a leader. In almost every survey, honesty and integrity were identified more frequently than any other quality. Is this surprising? If people are going to follow someone, whether in service, business, or ministry, they want to know that their leader is trustworthy.

3. If you had to choose five people from Scripture who are examples of integrity, who would you choose and why?



thinking it through

1. Take a few moments and reflect on the areas of your life and practice and ask: Are there parts of my life and character that aren't always true, honest, and sincere? Why? Take some time to pray and search your heart as you confess to God your need for integrity.



2. Write down one or two areas of your life where you want to be devoted to integrity. Be specific. Place this commitment in the envelope and seal it.



reflecting Jesus & His kingdom

1. As you survey the insights from a wise guy (Solomon), what advice seems to be the most meaningful for you today?

- Proverbs 10:9

- Proverbs 28:6

- Proverbs 11:3

- Proverbs 19:1

- Proverbs 12:22

- Proverbs 20:7

2. How are the words honesty, integrity, and sincerity different and in what way are the words very similar?

3. Read and compare the story of Ananias and Sapphira (Acts 5:1-11) with the story of the Hebrew captives (Daniel 1:1-20).

- What is the nature of their temptation?

- What is the short-term benefit of being dishonest?



- What is the short-term possibility of telling the truth or being true?

- What is the long-term result of being honest?

- What is the long-term result of being dishonest?

4. Read 1 Samuel 12:1-4 and note Israel's regard for Samuel.

-
- Looking at the questions Samuel asks, what are the various ways in which a person can operate with integrity?

- What is their reply?

- Can a similar statement be made about you today?

5. Who do you know that operates with biblical integrity? Write them a note indicating your observation and your appreciation of their honest way of living/working. Either send the card or give it to them in person.



SESSION 10

tithing and giving

GIVE





SESSION 10

tithing and giving



did you know...

Albert Camus said, “Too many have dispensed with generosity in order to practice charity.”

Charity vs. Generosity



“Each of you should give what you have decided in your heart to give, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver”

2 Corinthians 9:7





mission briefing

1. For the following quiz, indicate whether you think the statement is true or false.
 - True or False: In the four Gospels Jesus spoke about money more than He spoke about heaven or hell combined.
 - True or False: One out of every four parables has to do with money.
 - True or False: Since Jesus referred to money, treasure, and wealth so often, it means that we should be preoccupied with becoming rich.
2. The “Widow’s Mite” reading captures the heart of the giver and how generosity transcends charitable contributions. As you heard the reading, what part or idea was particularly helpful to you? Why?



thinking it through

1. Do you see yourself as someone who is generally grateful for what you have and have the opportunity to do? When have you thought, “If I had more money, I would definitely give more than I give today”? Is your giving/returning to God based upon whether you have plenty? Are you reluctant to return tithe and offerings when you have little?
2. What kind of changes do you need to make in the way you relate to God with your finances?





reflecting Jesus & His kingdom

1. Read Genesis 1:28 & Genesis 2:1-3, 15. Why do you think God wrote into our lives the need to work?

2. Read and discuss the very basic beginnings of systematic generosity in Leviticus 19:9,10 & 19:23-25. What do these passages say about God's plan for sustained giving and gratitude, as well as help for the poor? (Also read Proverbs 3:9-10.)

3. Read Malachi 3:8-12 and answer the following questions.

- Why do you think a "return to God" begins with a call to return tithes and offerings?

- How is not returning tithe "robbing God"?

- What is the challenge? What is the promise?

4. Read the key verse from 2 Corinthians 9:7 that describes the motivation or the heart of the giver. Ask: do you agree or disagree? "God is more concerned with the heart of the giver than the size of the gift."

- What does it mean to give "according as he purposed in his heart"?

- Is giving "without necessity" or "not grudgingly" an automatic emotion you feel or something you learn over time and experience?

- Can you give cheerfully and still feel a little anxious about giving?

5. Read the following stories and describe how the individuals practiced generosity over charity.

- Mark 14:1-9

- Matthew 20:1-16



- Luke 7:1-10

- Luke 8:1-3

- Acts 4:32-37



SESSION 11

discipline





SESSION 11

discipline



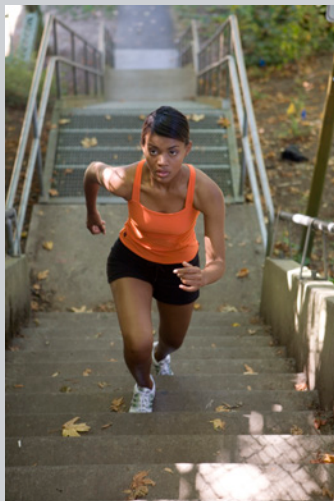
did you know...

Guess the seven most sought after habits

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____
6. _____
7. _____

Guess the seven habits people most want to quit

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____
6. _____
7. _____



Definition of self-discipline: Self-discipline is that quality that allows a person to do what needs to be done when he or she doesn't feel like doing it.

“God did not give us a spirit of timidity, but a spirit of power, of love and of self-discipline”

2 Timothy 1:7





mission briefing

1. What are the seven most sought after habits? What did you expect? What surprised you? Why?

2. What are the seven bad habits people most want to quit? What did you expect? What surprised you? Why?

3. Read 2 Timothy 1:6-8 and answer the following questions:

a. How is self-discipline a gift?

b. How is it a different kind of gift from “love” and “power”?



thinking it through

1. Reflect on your life this year and consider the things you wanted to do but somehow did not follow through on. Which area of your life do you want to have more self-discipline in?

2. Who do you know that you can reach out to as an accountability partner? Consider what you might say to someone to invite them to help you.





reflecting Jesus & His kingdom

1. Read 1 Corinthians 9:24-27 and discuss what insight this passage gives to forming good habits through self-discipline.

2. What biblical characters can you think of who model self-control?

3. Divide the following passages among the members of your group and read and examine what Scripture says about those who practice self-control.

- Proverbs 16:32

- Proverbs 25:28

- Galatians 5:23

- 1 Timothy 3:2

- Titus 1:8

- Titus 2:2

- Titus 2:6

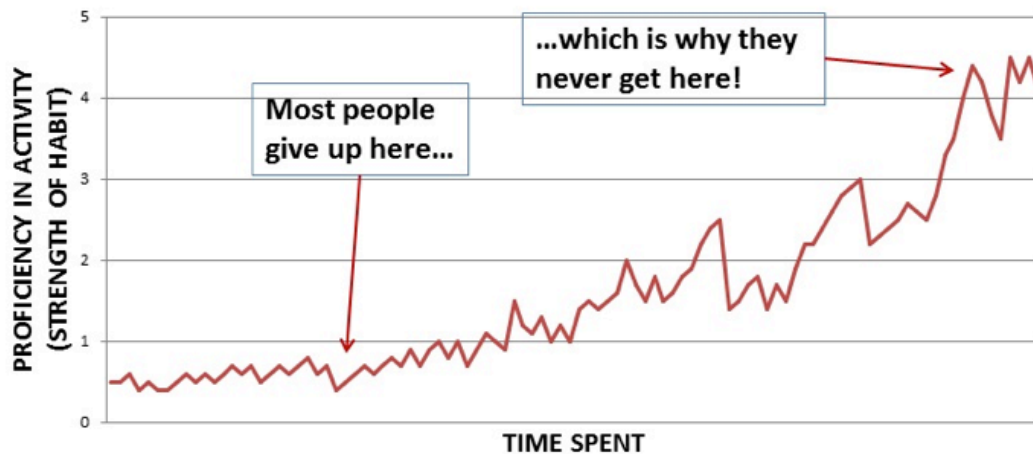
- Titus 2:12

- 2 Peter 1:5-7



4. Developing a new habit requires the following:
- Thoughtful planning**—what you choose to work on needs to be made accessible and repeatable. If it is jogging, have your shoes ready in front of the door. If it is Bible study, put your Bible in the way where you can see it or have to pick it up to start the day.
 - Resolve**—there are challenges, speed bumps, and obstacles along the way. Knowing this and knowing what to do will increase your success. When you know to expect a struggle, inconvenience, or unpleasant activity, it helps focus your attention on overcoming rather than on why there might be challenges.
 - Patience**—inasmuch as obstacles will challenge your progress, so will the time it takes to see significant progress. As you will see, knowing that the results will not come immediately allows you to focus on being faithful instead of looking for results.
 - Vision**—to do what is hard to do when you don't always feel like it is a matter of planning, resolve, and patience. Knowing why is about vision. Seeing the end goal and the reason this habit is important empowers the will.
- Which of the four parts of the process are the most challenging for you?
-
-

5. Look at the chart on the timeline of habit formation. Some say you have to repeat an action or thought 20-30 times in order for it to become a habit. What can this chart teach us?
-
-



(chart: <http://kayleadershipacademy.com/2013/04/how-to-practice-selfdiscipline/>)



SESSION 12

peer pressure





SESSION 12

peer pressure



did you know...

Even a dead fish can swim downstream, but it takes courage to go against the flow!



“Do not conform to the pattern of this world but be transformed by the
renewing of your mind”

Romans 12:2





mission briefing

1. Think about the caption above the picture of the turtles and the fish that reads, "Even a dead fish can swim downstream, but it takes courage to go against the flow." How is this statement true in your world today?

2. Answer the following survey questions:

- a. There are things I do because my friends do it, but I would choose otherwise were it not for the pressure.

Almost Always

Often

Sometimes

Rarely

- b. There are things I would say/not say if I knew my friends would not look down on me.

Almost Always

Often

Sometimes

Rarely

- c. What do you think is more severe—peer pressure or media pressure? Why?

3. Read the opening passage from Romans 12:1,2 and reflect on the pressure you feel to conform and the call you hear to be transformed.



thinking it through

1. Standing up against peer pressure of any kind requires clarity of thought and courage. In what aspect of your life would you like to experience more clarity and courage?



2. What can you do to make it easier for your peers to be true to their convictions? How can you be someone who alleviates peer pressure and adds a positive support for good choices?



reflecting Jesus & His kingdom

1. Read and discuss the following counsel from Scripture and say whether the counsel is advice/suggestion or command/directive.

- Exodus 23:2

- Proverbs 1:10

- Proverbs 22:24,25

- 2 Corinthians 6:14,17

- 2 Peter 3:17

2. Peer pressure is rarely about whether someone knows right or wrong; it is usually about what they are willing to do about it. Read the following passages and stories and share which story is speaking to you personally. Why?

- 1 Kings 18:16-21

- John 6:66-68

- Daniel 3

- John 18:15-18, 25-27



3. Being an Ambassador for Christ means that you are not moved to destructive words, thoughts, or actions by the pressure of friends, the crowd, or the pull of the world. Read and discuss the five anchor points for responding to peer pressure.

a. Conviction (Ephesians 4:14; Joshua 14:7; 1 Thessalonians 1:5; Jude 1:15)

b. Courage (Joshua 1:6-8; 1 Corinthians 16:13; Acts 4:27-31; Daniel 3:16-18)

c. Strength (1 Corinthians 16:13; Ephesians 3:16 & 6:10; Philippians 4:13; Psalms 73:23-28)

d. Endurance (Hebrews 10:36,38; Hebrews 12:1-2; 1 Corinthians 4:12; 2 Timothy 2:10)

e. Heavenly Goals (Colossians 3:1-2; Hebrews 11:26; Matthew 6:19,20; 2 Peter 3:10-14)

4. The following are “one another” statements from Scripture that state how we might influence each other in a positive way (positive peer support). Of those given below, which type of support do you think is most needed today?

- John 13:34 – “A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another”
 - Romans 12:16 – “Be of the same mind toward one another”
 - Romans 15:7 – “Therefore, accept one another”
 - Galatians 5:13 – “Through love, serve one another”
 - Galatians 6:2 – “Bear one another’s burdens”
 - Ephesians 4:25 – “Therefore, laying aside falsehood, speak truth to one another”
 - Ephesians 4:32 – “Be kind to one another, tender-hearted, forgiving each other”
 - Ephesians 5:21 – “And be subject to one another in the fear of Christ”
 - 1 Thessalonians 4:18 – “Therefore comfort one another”
 - Hebrews 3:13 – “But encourage one another day after day”
 - Hebrews 10:24 – “Let us stimulate one another to love and good deeds”
 - James 5:16 – “Therefore, confess your sins to one another, and pray for one another”
 - 1 Peter 4:9 – “Be hospitable to one another without complaint”
-
-
-
-



SESSION 13

Sabbath and work

A man and a woman are standing in a field of flowers, holding hands and raising their arms in a gesture of praise or joy. The man is on the left, wearing a white t-shirt and jeans, looking upwards. The woman is on the right, also in a white t-shirt and jeans, looking upwards. The background is a soft, hazy sky. The text "SABBATH CREATION" is overlaid on the image, with "SABBATH" in a smaller font and "CREATION" in a larger, bold font.

SABBATH **CREATION**





SESSION 13

Sabbath and work



did you know...

Questions and Comments Employers Make About Your Willingness to Work:

“I know this is your day of rest, but we just need to train someone in so they can work that shift. If you can compromise some on this we will eventually be able to let you have Saturdays off.”

“You are going to do very well at this company. Are you willing to make this job your first priority?”

“Are you willing to work anytime or any day of the week?”

“Are you able to make an exception this time for someone who has an emergency?”

“If I allow you to take Saturday off, I have to do it for everyone.”

“All the other employees are flexible with their work schedule and they are Christians too; why are you asking for what they are not asking for?”

“You knew when you were hired that this establishment is open on Saturday and employees work whenever they are needed. I’m sorry the previous supervisor thought it was O.K. to accommodate you, but we can no longer make that concession.”

“Those who succeed in this kind of work have to work on Saturday—there is no way around it.”

“It is your right to believe whatever you want. It is my right as an employer to choose who I hire and don’t hire.”

What Should I Do?



“I am the Lord your God; follow my decrees and be careful to keep my laws. Keep my Sabbaths holy, that they may be a sign between us. Then you will know that I am the Lord your God”

Ezekiel 20:20





mission briefing

1. What are some of the key forms of identification you own? What do these forms of I.D. say about you? What can these forms of identification not say about who you are?

2. Read Ezekiel 20:20 and discuss what you think it means that the Sabbath is a “sign” between God and people.

3. Read the following passages on the Sabbath and review their meaning and purpose as believers.

- Genesis 2:1-3

- Exodus 20:8-11

- Deuteronomy 5: 12-15

- 1 John 5:2-4



thinking it through

1. Reflect on the potential conflicts that are in the work world—especially in your chosen field. How can believers prevent some of the conflict? How will you negotiate the conflict?



2. Get together and pray for friends and fellow church members working in your community. Pray for their continued witness and courage as they remain faithful to God in uncertain times.
-
-



reflecting Jesus & His kingdom

1. Review the faithfulness of each the believers that stood faithful although their lives were threatened. Choose one verse in each story that captures how faithful they were.
- Genesis 39

 - Daniel 6

 - Daniel 3

 - Matthew 11:1-11 & 14:1-12

 - Acts 5:12-42

2. In post-biblical days, many groups of people and countless individuals paid dearly to be true to their convictions. Read and discuss the stories below and answer the questions that follow.
- a. John Hus refused to retract his convictions about the teachings of the papacy. He taught that the Bible alone is God's rule of faith. John was convicted of heresy and burned at the stake in 1415.
 - b. More than one hundred years later a young English woman, Anne Askew, was arrested for refusing to say that the communion bread and wine were the actual body and blood of Christ. She was mercilessly interrogated, tortured almost to death to gather names of others who shared her beliefs, and was sent to the stake.
 - c. Joan Bocher of Kent went to the stake for refusing to retract her questions about the Incarnation. She pointed out to her persecutors that just a few years ago they burned Anne Askew for believing a teaching they now embraced.
 - d. About the same time, Michael Servetus was condemned for two heresies: Unitarianism, and rejection of infant baptism. He refused to recant and was chained to a stake and burned alive.



- e. During the twentieth century, Jehovah's Witnesses, Seventh-day Adventists, and others who refused to go to war for Hitler were put in concentration camps or executed. Lutherans who refused to accept the Nazi domination of the church were fired from their jobs, imprisoned, and many were put to death.

Questions:

- Do you believe in something that is worth sacrificing your life for?

- Is the Seventh-day Sabbath really worth losing your friends, job, or life?

- Is there anything on earth worth more than your love and loyalty to Christ?

3. Read Isaiah 58:13,14 and pay special attention to how our hearts follow our feet. Compare this passage to Matthew 6:21. According to this passage, what is the first step toward enduring faithfulness to God?



SESSION 14

volunteering versus volunteerism





SESSION 14

volunteering versus volunteerism



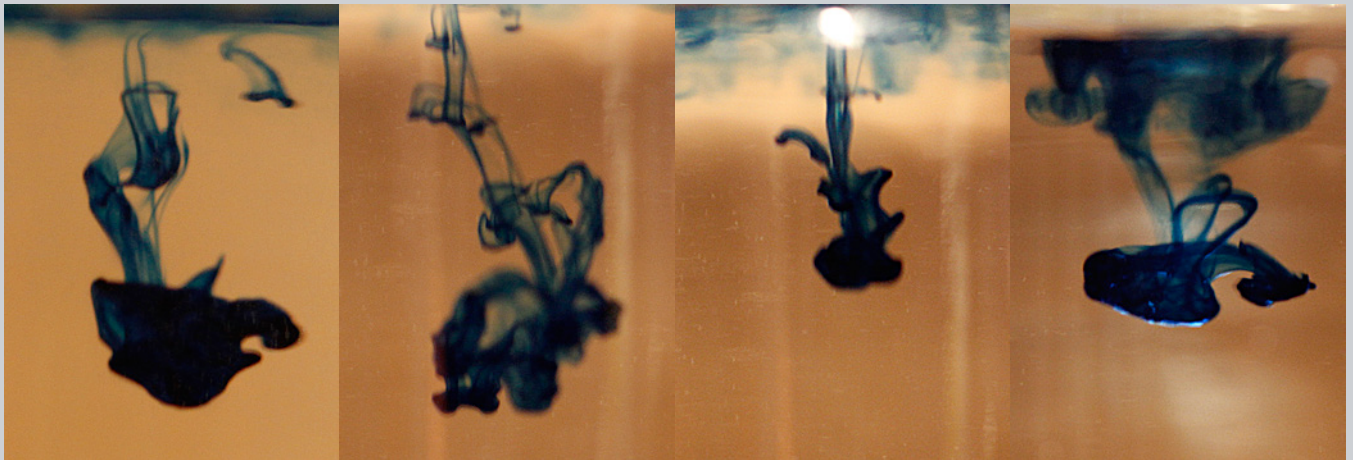
did you know...

Below are close-up images of one drop of coloring in a glass of water.

Each drop has the same amount of color.

Each glass has the same amount of water.

The temperature, volume, space, and time of each drop are the same, and yet . . .



After repeating this experiment hundreds of times, still every drop has a different splash.

“Let your light shine before men that they may see your good works and glorify God”

Matthew 5:14





mission briefing

1. In the pictures of color dropped in water there is a simple message to those who are followers of Christ. In light of this truth, complete the statements below in your own words, then compare your answers to others.
 - All are _____
 - Everyone is _____
 - Anyone can _____
 - No one is _____
2. Read Matthew 9:35-38 and discuss the following questions:
 - a. What does it mean and what does it look when people are “harassed and helpless like sheep without a shepherd”?

 - b. When Jesus “saw them,” what was His response? Is it possible that we can see people in need and not really see them? How have you experienced this in your life?

 - c. What solution does Jesus offer?



thinking it through

1. As you reflect on your journey thus far, in what ways have you made yourself available to God? What part of your life do you resist making available to God? Consider the well-known expression, “God does not need people who are able, He needs people who are available.”



2. One of the ways we can give God access to our life is by making ourselves available to help others. How can you avail your services to someone as a gesture of gratitude or kindness this week? Pray for an opportunity, insight, or a providentially opened door.



reflecting Jesus & His kingdom

1. Read Acts 1:6–8, the final words of Christ to His disciples, and answer the following questions:

a. What does it mean to be a witness?

b. The disciples were commanded to bear witness in Jerusalem, Judea, and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth. How are these three territories different?

c. Which do you think is the hardest territory to reach today? Why?

Jerusalem (church people) _____

Judea and Samaria (people who live closely but are divided by hate) _____

Ends of the earth (foreign, culturally and religiously different) _____

2. When it comes to volunteer work, why should we be helping organizations, communities, and individuals in ways that are not overtly religious? Isn't it a waste of time and energy?

- Mark 9:41
- Galatians 6:9,10
- 1 Corinthians 3:6
- 2 Corinthians 2:14,15
- Which verse speaks to you personally today? Why?



3. How do you begin to find a project or a cause to volunteer for? Consider the following steps:

a. Pray for eyes to see opportunities (Psalm 119:118; Ephesians 1:18).

b. Wander through your local community and observe what the needs are (Matthew 9:36; Luke 7:13).

c. Ask leaders in the community and explore opportunities with service-oriented people in hospitals, clinics, and schools (Acts 2:42-47; Acts 4:32-35).

d. Start immediately (Acts 3:6,7; Mark 2:2-5; 1 John 3:18).



My Journal: vocation

Session 1

first things first

Session 2

hearing voices and guidance from the gut

Session 3

as iron sharpens iron

Session 4

God-given gifts, talents, and tendencies

Session 5

financially wise

Session 6

materialism and the heart

Session 7

work ethic

Session 8

dealing with disappointment and unemployment

Session 9

true blue honesty and integrity

Session 10

tithing and giving

Session 11

discipline

Session 12

peer pressure

date

leader's signature

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My Journal: vocation

Session 13

Sabbath and work

Session 14

volunteering versus volunteerism

date

leader's signature

AS THE FATHER HAS SENT ME, SO I AM SENDING YOU
AMBASSADORS