



Touching base (5 minutes)

Open in prayer as is helpful for your group.

If this is your first session take time to introduce yourselves and set any ground rules you want to for your time together.

If you met previously take the opportunity either as a group or in pairs to check in with each other about how your response from last time has gone.



Opening question(s) (5 minutes)

Why does leadership matter?



Understanding the information (25 minutes)

Share these thoughts in your own words or read them together:

Before reading a definition of leadership, let's start by thinking why human beings need it.



Our general human experience. Michael Harvey in “Leadership and the Human Condition” builds a simple argument as to how leadership will always emerge. He starts with the fact that human life has generally been experienced as corporate – people live in community. They do this because societies realize early in their development that we can meet common threats better together than alone. Our basic needs for survival and well-being are best met by working together. But in order to do this we need to share skills and resources and different members of a community will have different levels of skills and qualities. Harvey suggests “leadership” comes from making sure those with particular skills can use them for the good of the whole. Later theorists see leadership as providing the environment in which people’s individual aspirations can be contained within the wider community.

Living in a fast-changing world. James Burns writes, “One of the universal cravings of our times is a hunger for compelling and creative leadership.” The fast pace of change in our world means we cannot face challenges merely with the wisdom that has gone before. At a time of great adaptation the need for leadership, as opposed to management (which assumes a fairly stable environment), becomes more acute.

Research shows that leadership affects the health of an organisation Frederick Laloux explores organizational structures and health and states that leadership is a decisive factor:

“What determines which stage an organisation operates from? It is the stage through which its leadership tends to look at the world. Consciously or unconsciously, leaders put in place organisational structures, practices, and cultures that make sense to them, that correspond to their way of dealing with the world. This means that an organisation cannot evolve beyond its leadership’s stage of development.”

Research shows that leadership affects the growth of an organisation. In terms of church growth, the Natural Church Development Institute describes empowering leadership as its first of eight qualities. Although God grows the church, empowering leaders can curate conditions in which growth is more or less likely, like gardeners who can’t grow plants, but can, for example, till soil. Similarly, the Church Growth Research Programme from 2014 shows that clergy who motivate and inspire to action, empowering all people, are much more likely to see growth.

The visibility of “bad” leadership! Finally, while good leadership can actually be something that is invisible and assumed, we can all rather quickly see the fruit of bad leadership! The question isn’t whether we have influence over others, but rather how is that influence to be shaped?

Having looked at why leadership matters, how might we define it? Here is a definition by Ian Parkinson. Leadership is:

A relational process
Of social influence
through which people are inspired
Enabled and mobilized
to act in positive new ways
towards the achievement of God’s purposes.

As a final thought, what is the difference between ministry and servant-leadership? We say that those who exercise leadership in the church are called into the ministry. How can we understand the meaning of these two words? Ministry may be defined as anything done for God, or in response to God, with the intention of serving other people and being a blessing. Leadership can be distinguished from this as anything that enables or mobilizes the ministry of others. Simon Walker defines leadership as, “enabling people to take responsibility.” The more we release the ministry of others through leadership, the wider the ministry impact (whether in church, school, business etc.) will be. In the life of Christ we see Him both ministering to many, but also enabling a small group to take on His ministry.

Discuss: Which words in Ian’s definition would you give particular emphasis to?

Reading the Bible (15 minutes)

Read Deuteronomy 1: 9-17 in which Moses appoints other leaders.

Discuss the Discovery Bible Study questions:
What does this passage teach me about God?
What does this passage teach me about people?
How does this passage call me to obey God?
What might I do in response to this this week?

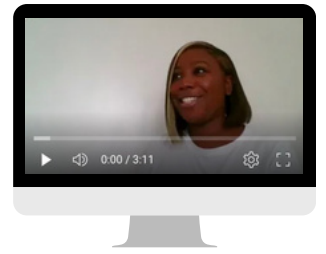


Seeing how it looks in real lives (10 minutes)

Watch the video at:

<https://youtu.be/Z1DfbQkMBpY>

What struck you as important in the video?



Responding to God's leading (5 minutes)

Give people an opportunity to think about, "What might God be showing me and how might I respond?" They may like to write this down and/or share it with the group and/or share it with one other person. A friendly question is to ask each other, "Is there anything that would be helpful to ask you next time?"



Group prayer (5 minutes)

Dear Father,

I pray for all leaders of Your people.

I pray that they will not lead selfishly, for personal ambition or vain conceit.

I pray that You help leaders to realize that leading is really a task that requires them to serve.

So, Father, raise up servant leaders, in Jesus' name.

Help them to work in humility.

Make them selfless vessel of You, in Your image.

Remove any selfish desires.

Amen.

Found on:

Connectusfund.org





Leading: What is leadership?



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