

Leadership Foundations

Leaders are:

'People who influence others'

'People involved in a process of equipping a group of people to accomplish a clear cut purpose by means of supernatural power'

Leaders are servants (firstly of God, then of those they lead) and stewards of the responsibility God has given.

Read Psalm 1, Jeremiah 17.7-8

How can you be like a well watered tree?

How are you doing as a leader?

How is your heart?

How have you been growing?

What are some of your gifts and skills?

What areas do you need to develop further?

How do we grow?

1. Spending Time with God

Now that doesn't necessarily mean the traditional quiet time – this is God's world, he is evident in every fibre of creation and we need to learn to see him in that. We all connect with God in different ways.

Gary Thomas summarises some of these as following in his book 'Sacred Pathways' (see also www.garythomas.com)

Naturalists: Loving God out of doors

Sensates: Loving God with the senses

Traditionalists: Loving God through ritual and symbol

Ascetics: Loving God in solitude and simplicity

Activists: Loving God through confrontation

Caregivers: Loving God by loving others

Enthusiasts: Loving God with mystery and celebration

Contemplatives: Loving God through adoration

Intellectuals: Loving God with the mind

Practising Spiritual Disciplines – Celebration of Discipline (Richard Foster) or The Life You've Always Wanted (John Ortberg)

Meditation, prayer, fasting, study, simplicity, solitude, submission, service, confession, worship, guidance, celebration.

All of these involve putting aside time to soak in God's word and allow it to infuse us.

Nigel Pollock at Irish Conference 06 helpfully talked about 5 fingers:

[In all of these asking God to speak and reveal himself to us]



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Reading – challenge to read through whole Bible in two years

Studying – in depth grappling with it – in a small group, using commentary etc – maybe take an hour or two a fortnight

Hearing – making sure we are hearing God's word taught, even reading by listening – audio Bible on ipod etc

Memorising – learning verses and passages- start small, choose key verses

Meditating – chewing over a verse or passage, using a book like 'Enjoy the Silence' – Duffy and Maggie Robbins as a guide

In all of this we need to learn to use our time well and to develop a healthy rhythm of life – a rhythm that works for you will be different to what works for others.

What one thing will you begin to practise/put into place?

2. In Community

We don't grow on our own. We need others around us to help us grow, to cheer us on (Hebrews 12.1). We need people to encourage us when we're down, to share, and to spur us on to love and good deeds.

Someone has called it having a 'hedge of protection around us'. Those will be different people. We need close relationships with:

God – our heavenly Father

Families – obviously for some of us that is more difficult than others, but our leadership must begin at home – we need to be people of integrity.

A Mentor – someone who has travelled further than us on their spiritual journey, and can pass on what they have learned, and help us to reach our potential. It may be we have a couple of people who mentor us in different areas. Look for someone with qualities you long to have, and ask them if they would help you.

Accountability partner(s) – people who are walking along with us, who can share in our joys and sorrows, ask us hard questions about how we are following Jesus, are committed to loving and praying for us. People with whom we share every area of our lives, who we trust, these are two way relationships. You may have a list of questions you ask each other regularly.

Someone we're investing in – 2 Timothy 2.2 We are to pass on what we have received to others. Who can you invest in and help grow and develop not to become like you but to reach their potential in Christ?

Who are some of the people you could ask to mentor you/be accountable with/invest in?

3. By doing it!

Our growth involves action. It involves living out our faith. Often times of greatest growth are when we are stretched, take risks for the kingdom, when we are seeking to live out and share our faith with others. As we do this we will make mistakes, we will get it wrong, but God's grace is sufficient, we are running a race, must pick ourselves up, and get going again confident that God will finish the work he has completed.

On a specific level we also grow as we discover, develop and use the gifts God has given us. It may be worth taking time to explore different ways of serving to discover what some of your gifts are.

