

Leadership Development Program

Module 4 – Mentoring



In this module, we will broaden the focus of development to be wider than improvement of skills. A leader not only needs coaches to help them to improve in specific skills, they also need mentors for their overall development who have a more holistic view of and access to the leader. Mentors address other areas such as unrealised potential, blind spots, character weaknesses and potential opportunities.

Proverbs 5:13 (The Message) *“Why didn’t I listen to my mentors, or take my teachers seriously? My life is ruined! I haven’t one blessed thing to show for my life!”*

The preceding Scripture reminds us of the importance of having people in our life who are helping us to grow. The key is that we listen to them!

Three “directions” of mentoring relationships

As we seek to be transformed to be more like Jesus and help the people in our lives to do the same, we can think of three different directions of relationships that we have. We have relationship with people *“above”* us, in a relationship of accountability with mentors of greater maturity and wisdom, who are functioning at higher levels of leadership than us. We can also be in a two-way mentoring relationship *with peers* inside or outside the church. We can also be in an active two-way relationship, though primarily a giving one, with emerging leaders at *earlier stages* of growth in their leadership. All of these directions in relationships can help us to grow.

Paul related “upwards” to the Apostles in Jerusalem. Acts 15:22 and other Scriptures show us the Paul had a sense of responsibility towards the Apostles in Jerusalem. So in that regard he was ‘under’ their authority.

Paul related on a “peer” basis to Barnabas. Barnabas was Paul’s ‘son of consolation’. (Acts 9:26-27, Acts 11:25). Barnabas was a source of comfort and consolation to Paul.

Paul related “downwards” towards Timothy. Timothy was Paul’s disciple. 1 Timothy 1:2 and other Scriptures demonstrate this, and show that Paul was ‘over’ Timothy in the Lord.

As we consider the role of mentors in our life, we should consider all three directions, as all three help us and others to develop. The practicality of mentoring relationships is that one single person may be further ahead of us in some things (therefore, we are learning from them in these things), at the same place with some things (therefore, we are learning together in these things) and behind us in other things (therefore they are learning from us in these things).

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Levels of relationship

It is not just pragmatism of time and personal preference that causes people to have differing levels of relationship in the kingdom. We are actually called to have different levels of relationship with different people, as the Lord has different purposes for our different relationships. Jesus himself had at least different four “levels” of relationship.

He related to the multitudes

Everyday Jesus healed sick people who He never related to again. He had many one off encounters of teaching and prophecy. The same is for us. There will be many people that we give one-off help to that it is just not possible to have an ongoing relationship with.

He trained the 70 for ministry

Luke 10:1-2 *“After these things the Lord appointed seventy others also, and sent them two by two before His face into every city and place where He Himself was about to go. Then He said to them, “The harvest truly is great, but the labourers are few; therefore pray the Lord of the harvest to send out labourers into His harvest.”*

Jesus selected and released seventy people to prepare the way for Him. He gave them some training and sent them out. They went out and did as He had told them to do and *“Then the seventy returned with joy, saying, “Lord, even the demons are subject to us in Your name.” (Luke 10:17)*. Jesus taught them a little more and then there is no record of Him having any further relationship with these seventy.

He had 12 disciples

Jesus had twelve whom He invested His life into for three and a half years. He didn't allow any other people become His disciples. It was a closed group. Jesus's group was formed by the voice of the Father. Jesus spent the whole night in prayer before He made His approaches to people that he wanted to disciple. Similarly, we also need to put aside our own personal agendas and who we think is important or popular and discover who the Father wants us to connect with for the purposes of the kingdom.

He had 3 closer disciples

Jesus is reported as taking Peter, James and John with Him to many places that He didn't take the other nine disciples. Some examples are:

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Luke 9:28 “Now it came to pass, about eight days after these sayings, that He took Peter, John, and James and went up on the mountain to pray.”

Luke 8:51 “When He came into the house, He permitted no one to go in except Peter, James, and John, and the father and mother of the girl.”

Matthew 17:1-2 “Now after six days Jesus took Peter, James, and John his brother, led them up on a high mountain by themselves; and He was transfigured before them. His face shone like the sun, and His clothes became as white as the light.”

Imagine being one of the other disciples who was not invited to the transfiguration! However, Jesus' time was well spent with these three men. Along with Paul, they formed the basis for the start of the church. Peter was the Apostle to the Jews, James the leader of the church at Jerusalem, and John wrote at least five books of the Bible. Jesus has a reason for His focus on these three - the leadership of the church that would emerge after He left the Earth. We also should consider whether we should have a more limited group of people that we spend most of our time with to help develop.

Action Points

Consider your current relationships that are helping others to grow.

- 1. Consider who are or should be the three (or two or four) people that the Lord has called you to connect with most closely for growth purposes? These may be predominantly “peer”, “upward” or “downward” relationships.***
- 2. Consider what the Lord is asking you to help these people with and discuss this with them, if you haven't already.***
- 3. Now consider a broader group of a dozen or so people whom you are or should be journeying with. How are you helping them to grow? You can revisit this question as you do the next section.***
- 4. Now consider an even larger group whom you are helping. In what way are you helping them? Again the next section may also help you here.***

Different types of mentoring relationships

There are not only different levels of mentoring relationships but there are also different types of mentoring relationships that can help us and others to grow. Moses mentored Joshua differently to how Elijah mentored Elisha, Barnabas and Saul mentored each other. Paul mentored many people - Timothy, Titus, Philemon, Luke; Philemon, Silas, Priscilla and Aquila in different ways.

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You will never find the “perfect mentor” that has every facet that you need to grow in. And you will never be a mentor who can provide everything that a person needs. The different functions of a leader will never be embodied in one person. Rather, look for the Father to manifest the many-faceted wisdom of Christ through many different people. The different types of mentoring relationships you can have to grow your leadership include:

Hero

A hero-mentor can impact us through their lives and the values they have embodied and modelled for us, even if we never meet them. They may be from the past or live somewhere else in the world.

Hebrews 11:4 *“By faith they still speak, even though they are dead.”*

We can learn so much from those that have gone before us. People of faith in the Bible and in subsequent history can help us to apply the truths of Scripture to our lives and our times. We can save ourselves from experiencing some failure first hand. I am sure that King David learnt a lot from the failures of King Saul, who went before him. We also can learn from those who have gone before us as well as those in another part of the world who we may never meet. Just because we don’t have a relationship with them, this does not mean they cannot have a transformational influence on us. We should read and listen to these people and allow their example to inspire and change the way we live our lives.

Model

Hebrews 13:7: *“Remember your leaders, who spoke the word of God to you. Consider the outcome of their way of life and imitate their faith.”*

There are people we can observe from a closer perspective. We may never be in relationship with these people, but we can look at their lives, see the outcomes they have in their life and imitate them as they imitate Christ.

1 Corinthians 4:16-17 *Therefore I urge you to imitate me. For this reason I am sending to you Timothy, my son whom I love, who is faithful in the Lord. He will remind you of my way of life in Christ Jesus, which agrees with what I teach everywhere in every church.*

These people have embodied the values we highly value. They are living showcases, or “working models” of what we want to be. The key difference between a hero and a model is that a hero tends to be historical or remote to us, while a model is contemporary, usually living and observable to us. We can dialogue with and

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learn from them. Paul the apostle constantly challenged those he was leading to imitate him. A model provokes you to desire, “I want to be like him/her!”

Coach

As we discovered in the previous module, a coach helps us do tasks better. They are committed to us for a period of time in specific areas where we need help. They can give feedback on how we are doing and help us to take on new responsibilities. A coach needs to know how to keep the right distance, and just how much help to offer. Paul is an excellent example of the coach-mentor as he instructs Timothy exactly what he should be saying to the people in his church

1 Timothy 4:6 *“If you instruct the brethren in these things, you will be a good minister of Jesus Christ, nourished in the words of faith and of the good doctrine which you have carefully followed.”*

Counsellor

A counsellor is a sounding-board, especially when important decisions must be made. The counsellor can help us sort our thoughts out, or offer insights from another perspective. Mordecai filled this role at a crucial time in Esther’s life. Leaders should seek “preventative maintenance” sessions of sound, incisive counsel from an older counsellor who has wisdom and maturity. Jethro, who was Moses’ father in law, stepped into a counsellor role into Moses’ world.

Exodus 18:17-19 *“So Moses’ father-in-law said to him, “The thing that you do is not good. Both you and these people who are with you will surely wear yourselves out. For this thing is too much for you; you are not able to perform it by yourself. Listen now to my voice; I will give you counsel, and God will be with you: Stand before God for the people, so that you may bring the difficulties to God.”*

There is no record of Jethro continuing to give Moses advice, however the advice that Jethro gave to Moses at this point was extremely helpful. It helped Moses to spread his workload, restore his marriage and help the people of Israel have their needs attended to. Likewise, we have opportunity to both seek out and give help at crucial times to people without the requirement of ongoing relationship.

Father

There are certain people in our journey that God calls us to have a closer, more nurturing type of relationship. A spiritual fathering relationship is where the son commits themselves to openness, teach-ability and honesty, and father commits themselves to prayer, giving of time, resources and favour to the son. In this

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relationship, leadership growth of the son is accelerated at a much greater rate. Both father and son must agree to this relationship. A father will often co-labour with the son. This increases the son's confidence, credibility, status, and prestige. It also legitimises an emerging leader's authority in ministry.

1 Corinthians 4:15 *“For though you might have ten thousand instructors in Christ, yet you do not have many fathers; for in Christ Jesus I have begotten you through the gospel.”*

Teacher/ Resourcer

At key points in their life, an emerging leader needs a teacher-mentor, to provoke, instruct, or equip him or her on particular subjects. A teacher/resourcer can help a person's faith and understanding of Scripture by personal times of conversation. Also, as we live in such an information rich world, a teacher/ resourcer can help get the right information in front of another. The resourcer can give books, articles or other materials that open up a new perspective.

1 Corinthians 4:17 *“For this reason I have sent Timothy to you, who is my beloved and faithful son in the Lord, who will remind you of my ways in Christ, as I teach everywhere in every church.”*

Linker

Experienced leaders develop higher level contacts and have broader spheres of influence than the average person, so a leader can link a newer leader with their contacts. Barnabas made a massive contribution to the kingdom of God when he linked Saul to the suspicious apostles at Jerusalem.

Acts 9:26-30 *“And when Saul had come to Jerusalem, he tried to join the disciples; but they were all afraid of him, and did not believe that he was a disciple. But Barnabas took him and brought him to the apostles. And he declared to them how he had seen the Lord on the road, and that He had spoken to him, and how he had preached boldly at Damascus in the name of Jesus. So he was with them at Jerusalem, coming in and going out. And he spoke boldly in the name of the Lord Jesus and disputed against the Hellenists, but they attempted to kill him.”*

A linker should be free to release and promote other leaders to rise beyond their own leadership level. As John the Baptist said of Jesus - “He must increase, I must decrease.”

Action Points

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Write down the relationships that you have with people in the different types of mentors in the table below. For each “I am mentoring” place consider who you are presently mentoring in this way as well as who you could potentially mentor. Also for each “I am being mentored” place consider who is currently helping you to grow as well as who could potentially help you to grow in that manner. In this column consider what key areas in which you wish to grow through this relationship

<i>Mentoring type</i>	<i>I am mentoring</i>	<i>I am being mentored</i>
<i>Hero</i>		
<i>Model</i>		
<i>Coach</i>		
<i>Counsellor</i>		
<i>Father</i>		
<i>Teacher/ Resourcer</i>		
<i>Linker</i>		