

SESSION 2:

MODELLING GODLY CHARACTER

'I pray that your love will overflow more and more, and that you will keep on growing in knowledge and understanding. For I want you to understand what really matters, so that you may live pure and blameless lives until the day of Christ's return. May you always be filled with the fruit of your salvation – the righteous character produced in your life by Jesus Christ – for this will bring much glory and praise to God.' Philippians 1:9-11, NLT

Key Question: How might I model godly character on my frontline?

Aim: To see that our frontlines are important places where godly character can be both developed and displayed.

Core Text: Galatians 5:13-26

Materials: Bibles

Thinking Back (5 mins)

Before we look at modelling godly character in detail, it would be good to take a moment to reflect more broadly on what has been happening on our frontlines since the last session.

Were there moments of fruitfulness on your frontline this week, or a new awareness of the potential for fruitfulness?

Pre-Film Discussion (10 mins)

When you think of godly character, who is the first person that you think of? Can you think of a time when they responded to a situation in a particularly godly way?



PLAY FILM (8 mins)

Questions to Discuss after the Film (15 mins)

- In the story of the ogre-like boss, Louise wasn't aware that she was being fruitful. She felt like a total failure, but in fact she had modelled outstanding godly character. How does her story make you feel about the way you might be modelling godly character on your frontline?
- Louise was in an uncomfortable place, yet she was able to be remarkably fruitful. Can you think of an instance when you grew in godly character during an 'uncomfortable' time on your frontline?
- Louise recognised her fruitfulness because her former colleagues pointed it out to her. Why can we sometimes find it hard to encourage one another when we see God at work in each other's lives?

Bible Reflection (20 mins)

GALATIANS 5:13-26

In this well-known passage Paul lists nine characteristics of a life lived in the Spirit: love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control. These qualities of new life in Christ stand in direct contrast to the 'sinful acts of the flesh' associated with the old way of life. Rather than being a list of qualities that we must strive to attain, the fruits of the Spirit are outworkings of the Holy Spirit at work in our lives and spring from our identity in Christ.

- Look at the list of the fruits of the Spirit. Are there particular situations on your frontline where the rubber hits the road and these characteristics are tested?
- The fruits of the Spirit are characterised by inner assurance and selfless love. What can stop us from being others-orientated on our frontlines?
- Paul tells us that these fruits come from a life 'led by the Spirit' (v.18) and so are not a 'to-do' list, but rather characteristics of walking with God. What might it mean for us to 'keep in step with the Spirit' (v.25) on our frontlines?



Praying Forwards (10 mins - in pairs)

- Having reflected on some of the good things about our weeks at the beginning of this session, thank God for these things and ask him to show more of his love for others through you in the week ahead.
- Maybe you feel regretful about a time when you failed to model godly character? Ask for God's forgiveness for these times and thank him that he promises to continue to be at work in us.
- Pray that God would shape your character on your frontline this coming week. You may like to ask for prayer for a particular situation coming up this week where you might find it more difficult to respond in a godly way.



Takeaway Action

Read through Galatians 5:13-26 again a few times this week and use it as a launch pad for praying for your frontline.

May the Lord shine through you this week.

**THE CHRISTIANLY VIRTUOUS PERSON
IS NOT THINKING ABOUT HIS OR HER OWN MORAL
PERFORMANCE. HE OR SHE IS THINKING OF JESUS
CHRIST, AND OF HOW BEST TO LOVE THE
PERSON NEXT DOOR.**



Theologian Tom Wright, *Virtue Reborn*, 2010