

Week 5 Boroh La-or Bit: Facilitator Guide Revised

Phase 3: Letting Go, and Men and Control

Preparation:

- Facilitator laminates prepares color hand-outs of Jesus' Spiritual Journey' or PPT Presentation of 5 Stages of Jesus Ministry
- A4 paper and markers.
- 12 slips of paper with *"90% of Christian leaders pass the adversity test, but too many fall the prosperity test."*
- Hand out of Scripture passage Matt **4: 1-11**

Purpose: Men will have a basic design for a male's spiritual journey and use that to make sense of the pain and suffering along the way to be encouraged.

Objectives:

- Recognize that Jesus voluntarily entered a desert experience.
- Name, identify, and describe transformational parts of the desert experience
- Compare their experiences of spiritual preparation for life with that of Jesus.
- Predict what might happen without a desert experience.
- Deduce that suffering is necessary part of our transformation

- I. **INTRODUCTION:** Facilitator welcomes those attending (2-3 mins) and reminds them of our rules about protecting each other's stories. "What we hear here- stays here."

Most Christian men in modern cultures have not been prepared to meet the challenges of being men. They are not told about the unique challenges and obstacles for being male in a modern culture. There are few elders who are not children themselves, who can initiate them into manhood.

- I. **BRIDGE:** CHRISTIAN LEADERS and SUCCESS

LEARNING TASK 1: Hand-out pre-prepared slip of quote below. In groups of 3 discuss the quote and questions:

"90% of Christian leaders pass the adversity test, but not many pass the prosperity test."

Questions:

- How do you feel about this quote? Is it true according to your experience?
- At least 1/3 of Jesus' ministry was spent in popularity and success. The Bible says Jesus was 100% human and experienced temptations as a normal man. As a man, how do you think Jesus knew when it was time to **"Let Go"** (of power, popularity, and success) and move onto a more difficult phase of the spiritual journey?

Discuss for 10 minutes and groups share with the big group~

II. BODY: LETTING GO. Show slide 2 and 3 of the 5 Phases

Facilitator to Participants: Jesus' experience in the desert prepared him for many things. The most important things were: 1. How to handle popularity and success. 2. How to let go of control. 3. How to handle power.

We saw how Jesus voluntarily left all his security nets, comfort, family, social and financial systems, everything he depended, to learn for a while how to depend only on God. The second great lesson he learned was through his temptation with Satan about power.

Learning Task 2a: Hand out paper with Matt 4: 1-11 scripture passage.

1. Participants read the text handout and circles words or phrases where Jesus was tempted by power.
2. Identify the three kinds of power Jesus was tempted with and with markers, draw symbols of those 3 powers.
3. Discuss with a partner: Share one example where someone you know became successful and they abused their power or became greedy.

If participants cannot identify the 3 major power temptations, facilitator may clarify with information in the box below:

Facilitator Notes:

- He is tempted with **social/economic power** to use his supernatural power to create food and solve a social problem.
- He is tempted with **religious power** to use his supernatural power to do a huge miracle for all to see to gain popularity, status and power.
- He is tempted with **political power** on the high mountain-worship me and I will give political power over all Kingdoms of the world. To control everything

He passes the power test and sets out to the next phase of his spiritual journey: success/popularity.

Learning Task 2b: Groups share their discoveries and drawings.

Facilitator summarizes to Participants: Jesus first learned to **“Let Go of Control”** when he left behind everything he normally depended on for support, that structures that we put in place to control our lives, to keep us safe . He learned he could, if he had to, live without most of what society counts as absolutely necessary. His temptation with power taught him that success and popularity are ok for a time, but one needs to know when to **“Let go of the Power”** that success and popularity bring, and move on.

When you see most of leaders clinging on to power, success and always building and adding on more social safety nets, one should wonder why so few ever notice why Jesus spent preparation time in the desert as an initiation into faith and manhood. Shouldn't we find a way to initiate our young men into faith and life like Jesus experienced so they know when and how to let go?

III. BUILD: LEARNING TO HANGLE POWER

Learning Task 2c:

Facilitator: Ask volunteers to share with us about a time they were tempted with abusing social power, political power, or religious power. How did you handle the temptation?

Facilitator Resource and info below to describe types of power and example:

1. SOCIAL POWER- Jesus was tempted to turn a stone into bread. That would have given him great social power.

Facilitator Example: *When Int'l NGOs want to work with the church, they often give a local provincial church funding and resources to help with a project in a poor village. When this happens, the church is no longer on equal status with the villagers. The church now relates to the village from a position of great social/economic power. Christians can easily abuse this power in a number of ways.*

1. POLITICAL POWER-Jesus was tempted with political power when he was shown all the kingdoms of the world.

Facilitator Example: *You are a church leader or leader of an association and you don't like what another group is doing. Instead of going to prayer or talking with them, you go to a relative or a friend in the government so they can use their political power to solve it.*

2. RELIGIOUS POWER- Jesus was tempted with religious power if he jumped off the temple and let angels save him. Then all would worship because of the miracle.

Facilitator Example: *Because you have a title as pastor or reverend, and you speak well, you can influence and persuade people to do things most leaders cannot do. You use your religious power to build your own Kingdom on the backs of your congregation, for you own fame, ambition, and advancement.*

IV. BEYOND: Letting Go of Success, Power and Popularity

Facilitator to the Participants: Is ministry or career success wrong? For young men from 18 to the mid 40s (mid-life), men need to experience success in order to know their talents, skills, natural gifts and spiritual gifts. They need to become aware of what they are good at, how they work with others, and how to develop their skills and capacities. This is necessary for men in the first half of life. It helps build the structure of the self, and helps younger men to know that have value. But, there comes a time in mid-life, where it is time to leave the benefits and approval of success behind and begin to focus on things of eternal value, spiritual things, deep things and make more time for things like fathering, mentoring, contemplation, meditation, tutoring, building community, or contributing to society, etc. From a young boy, Jesus grew in wisdom, stature, and knowledge but at the end of his year of popularity, he purposely climbed down the ladder of success and popularity to focus primarily on work that is eternal.

In modern society, **men continue to pursue the success, power and control path until the day they die.** But watching men over the last 60 years show that if you don't jump off the tower at that point voluntarily, the tower will collapse on you. For western men, mid-life is when life-changing crises happen to them, where they collapse in a heap (divorce, death of spouse or child, financial ruin or addiction). They can go two ways when this happens, change their whole way of life and begin to focus on the life of the soul, or get right back up and keep going on the success route. Ones that focus on the soul become wise old men, and ones that continue on the success and power route become bitter old fools.

In pairs, discuss

“People seem to learn much more from failure than they ever learn from success.”

V. **My Story:** Pre-selected participant tells there story if time permits.

VI. **Closing in prayer** and select next week's story teller.