



Neither the one  
who plants  
or the one who  
waters is  
anything, but only  
God, who makes  
things grow.  
1 Corinthians 3:7

# GOING FOR GROWTH

Diocese of Bristol

## Session 6 Going for Growth

### 1 Getting to know one another

*This would be an appropriate time to use Icebreaker 13 as a way of affirming members of the group. After doing the exercise take a moment to thank God for one another in prayer and the particular value and contribution each person has made to the group. After this give an opportunity to share the areas where people sense God is calling them out from a comfort zone.*

### 2. Looking at the Bible together

*See Notes for Leaders section 3.*

### Key bible passage: Luke 10: 1-16

In Luke's gospel, Jesus does not only send out the Twelve but the 70 or 72. While the number 12 evokes the connection with the tribes of Israel, 70 or 72 was believed to be the number of nations in the world. While Jesus' mission starts with his own people it moves out to encompass everyone (Acts 1: 8). At the heart of Jesus' self understanding is being sent by God and for him and in this episode the disciples taste this dynamic for themselves. It is scary though - they are like lambs circled by a wolf pack!

### Pray and go!

There is a big discrepancy between the task at hand and the resources available - 'the harvest is plentiful but the workers are few'. Jesus calls the disciples to pray - and then to be part of the answer to their own prayer by going and getting on with the task.

- *What opportunities do you see but feel inadequate to take advantage of? How do we know when to pray and wait or pray and go?*

### Go as you are

The disciples are told to travel light with a minimum of baggage and money. They go as the people they are and not much else!

- *How do you react to this simplicity of approach? Is it a relief or a burden - and why? Do we make mission too complicated?*

### Do not go it alone

They went out two by two. It was not a solo affair.

- *Where can you work with others for the cause of Christ? Does it have to be with believers?*

## **Stay focussed**

The instruction is clear - don't be distracted on the way! Get to your destination.

- *What are the distractions which prevent you from doing what you believe needs to be done for Christ? What about your church community as a whole? How can you be more focussed?*

## **Building relationships**

The key to the disciples' mission seems to be establishing relationships. Clearly the cultural conventions are not the same as ours but there is something here about staying and not moving on too quickly.

- *How are you at building relationships with those who do not share your faith? What qualities should mark our relationships*

## **Heal the sick!**

The Kingdom of God is much more enjoying a meal and a bed for the night - or several nights! The disciples' task is to demonstrate what the in-breaking reign of God means and healing is specifically mentioned.

- *What is it that we are sent to demonstrate today? What might the Kingdom look like in your neighbourhood or workplace? Where is healing relevant today in our mission?*

## **Going where there is an open door**

Jesus tells the disciples to go where they are welcomed and not to worry about places or people that reject them.

- *Where is there an open door for you? For the church community? Are you worrying too much about the doors that are closed?*

This is a rich passage for thinking about the four dimensions of growth - numbers, influence, partnership and commitment. What do you need to learn from this for today?

### **3. Prayer and reflection**

See Notes for  
Leaders sections 5&6

Jesus had a very clear sense of what he had been sent to do by the Father. Give out the 'I was sent/I have come' statements of Jesus and invite each person to choose the one they find most reassuring and most challenging. Then read them all out.

Ask the members what difference this course is going to make to them and to the communities they are part of. What is the most significant thing each person has heard or learnt? What will they do in response?

Arrange to share your experiences of the course with the wider congregation(s), perhaps through a slot in a service in place of the sermon, including what you believe God is calling you to do now.

Finish by using the Collect for Growth

***Gracious God,  
Grant us the imagination  
to see fresh possibilities for growth  
and the passion to bring them to birth.***

***Deepen our commitment to your ways;  
Expand our partnership in your cause;  
Increase our influence for your purpose;  
And add to the numbers of those who  
acclaim you as Lord.***

***Lead us from the fear of failure  
to that confidence which flows from faith  
and to lives of fruitfulness and joy.***

***In the power of your Spirit  
help us create communities of wholeness  
with Christ at the centre;  
for in his Holy name we ask. Amen***

### **4. Going Deeper**

A spiritual director began working with a person by asking the question, "What is it you really want?" After the person had reflected on this and responded, the director asked a second question. "What is it you really want?" After a space, the person came up with a fresh and deeper view of what it was they were truly seeking. The director then asked a third question. You know what it was, of course. The last response got to the 'gold'. We can develop our spiritual insights by staying with a theme and a passage. The material that has been provided through this course could easily be used for a second course, perhaps with some changes such as the icebreakers and the concluding reflection. Please consider it.