

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOP- MENT THROUGH GOSPEL FRIENDSHIP

PRESBYTERY OF EDINBURGH AND PERTH
(COURTESY OF PRESBYTERY OF INVERNESS, LOCHABER AND ROSS)

FOUR ACTIONS



Our goal in the mentoring scheme is **to serve one another as brothers in Christ so that we will grow as approved workmen with no need for shame, rightly handling the Word of truth (2 Tim 2:15)**. We will seek in every way to be governed by God's Word in our thinking about life, doctrine and ministry, and to take seriously our privilege and responsibility as fellow workers to encourage and build one another up in this work God has entrusted to us. Broadly, we will help one another with

- i) Growth in our love for and likeness to Christ
- ii) The guarding of and progress in our private and public holiness of life
- iii) Continuing to faithfully engage in the ministry of Word and prayer, in and out of season

The various questions below are intended as discussion starters, but each one hopefully reflects, implicitly or explicitly, biblical areas of both normal discipleship and Christian ministry. As such, it is good to work through them with a trusted brother and to prayerfully reflect on these areas together. While this may seem uncomfortable in some ways, God has given his people one another to help them in their following after Christ. As a presbytery we have a great opportunity to serve one another and the wider church by engaging in this well.

1st MEETING: DISCUSS THE QUESTIONS BELOW

Personal walk with Christ

- Am I finding delight and satisfaction in Christ? If not, why not?
- Am I still growing personally as a disciple of Jesus and a spiritual leader? Where specifically have I seen growth over the last year?
- How is my prayer life?
- What are my biggest struggles right now with the world, the flesh and the devil?
- Are there any particular sins that are “clinging closely” right now that I need to put to death?
- Am I excited to study and share God’s word? Am I rejoicing in the simplicity and depth of the gospel?
- What particular truths in Scripture have I most been meditating on?
- Are there any areas of doctrine that I am wrestling with/questioning at the moment?
- Am I making time for Christian friendship? Do I have people in my life who challenge me, inspire me, encourage me, and who know the struggles that I hide from other people?
- Am I being a good Christian friend to others? Am I in danger of an unhealthy professionalising of normal Christian relationship and service?
- Am I engaging in good relationships with unbelievers? How is my own personal evangelism?
- Do I have a healthy and God-honouring balance in life? Am I taking one full day off per week?

Marriage and family (if applicable)

- How is my marriage? Is my wife growing in her love for and likeness to Christ?
- Is my marriage suffering due to ministry? Where are the pressure points?
- Are we working together as a partnership in ministry?
- Negatively, is an unfair burden of ministry falling on my wife?
- Am I leading my family well as a household under God?
- Are we practising hospitality as a family?
- Am I raising my children in the discipline and instruction of the Lord?
- Am I provoking my children to anger in any way, especially due to the demands of ministry?

- Are there any particular things I can/need to do to prove the quality of our family life?

Ministry

- Read Acts 6:4, 2 Timothy 2:14-15 and 4:1-5. To what extent does my ministry reflect these priorities?
- Am I working hard to prayerfully teach the truth to all?
- Am I both teaching truth and guarding against error?
- Does my diary reflect this priority of word and prayer? Am I guarding a sufficient quality and quantity of time for preparation to preach?
- Do I have someone who can regularly give me encouragement and constructive criticism on my preaching and teaching?
- To what extent am I consciously seeking to train up others to join in this ministry (2 Tim 2:2)?
- Are there any men who the Lord might be raising up for full-time service in ministry?
- How is my relationship with my fellow elders, and other church officers?
- Am I fostering a culture of mutual encouragement and training in gospel ministry, at every level of church life?
- Does my ministry extend beyond the pulpit? Am I meeting people 1-1, in small groups, in their homes?
- Am I above reproach in my relationships with the church family? Am I wise and transparent in my meetings with men and women?
- Am I thinking strategically about the current state of the church in both edification and evangelism?
- Is the church family engaging in mission, individually and corporately?
- What signs of fruit are visible within the life of the church?
- Is the church growing, spiritually and numerically? If not, why not (as far as can be discerned)?

Professional training and ministry goals

- What are my strengths and weaknesses?
- Where in the coming year do I want to see growth, in character, conviction and skills?
- How can I grow as a preacher in the coming 12 months?
- What can be done to assist growth in these areas?
- What are my primary ministry goals for the coming year?

- How can I enable and equip my officers to grow and progress in their own walk with the Lord and personal ministries?
- What needs to be done for the church family to grow in their speaking of the truth in love to one another and in their evangelism?
- Devise a personal ministry plan for the next year that addresses the needs and furthers the mission of the local church, and your own spiritual progress.

2ND MEETING: SHARE MINISTRY ACTION PLANS

Having reflected on the questions above, each minister will devise a plan that outlines how he will develop and improve his ministry over the next year. Thought will need to be given to how this personal plan fits into and promotes his vision for the congregation as a whole, yet reflects the Biblical non-negotiable of personal and corporate ministry. The purpose of this exercise is to move from reflection to planning, and to seek to put in place manageable time-scales for addressing these areas. This then will provide a template for the final discussion, not a rod with which to beat one another! Below is an *example*, not a prescriptive template.

PERSONAL OBJECTIVES	TARGET DATE	DATE COMPLETED (or reasons why not completed - both personal or structural. Discuss updated objective/drop
Preaching 1. Attend one training course. 2. Improve illustrations	1. 12 month Year End. 2. Review Quarterly: submit sermons to mentor	
Pastoral Visiting 1. Introduce systematic visiting programme	1. Two months -liaison with elders required	
Improved use of media. 1. Put sermons on web 2. Ensure more facebook communication		
Develop more disciplined pattern of study 1. Pick subject matter for part year.		

Develop social interaction beyond congregation for mental well being/ evangelism 1. Join a club		
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THIRD MEETING: REVIEW MINISTRY

What were the primary ministry goals for the last year?

Was any progress made toward these goals? If so, what progress? If not, why not?

What were the big hurdles to your ministry plan?

Over the last year what effort was made to improve skills, strengthen weaknesses, and increase aptitude for gospel ministry?

Describe your spiritual wellbeing over the last year? What were the big struggles, personally and pastorally? What were the blessings?

What gospel truths were you most excited to share with your congregation over the last year?

What feelings do you have as you think about the next year of ministry: exhaustion, excitement, fear, uncertainty...? Explain your feelings.

How is your wife doing? How are your children doing?

How are you doing, personally and professionally?

Pray together.