

Led by the Least

Facilitator's Guide



Developing Leaders To Fulfill The Great Commission

LeaderTreks is a student leadership development ministry using curriculum, innovative training, and trips to help students identify and develop their personal leadership skills. We are calling the church to join us in making leadership development a core of youth ministry. To that end, we partner with youth workers who are passionate about developing the next generation of leaders in the church and culture. Our resources challenge and change participants. Students gain confidence and motivation, and a new vision for how they can lead and serve others.

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Who should use the Leadership and the Least Series?

This curriculum is designed to be used in a variety of settings:

- » In a small group setting
- » With existing leadership teams
- » As part of an existing weekly program
- » To spiritually prepare a team for a mission trip
- » As a retreat curriculum

To continue studying the least, check out the other books in this series.

Introduction to the Least

LOST BROKEN SICK IMPOVERISHED

Neglected Suffering

ABUSED HUNGRY

Overlooked Discriminated

The smell of urine and filth made this teen mom nauseous as she sunk her head in exhaustion and pain. Her helpless newborn was screaming from shock as he took his very first breath in this world. Far away from a hospital, help or anything sanitary, they looked at each other for the first time. Both of them seemed pretty helpless. It would have been easy to conclude that she was just another teenager who went too far, who had an “emergency” wedding, and gave birth just a few months later. Still she couldn’t help but love this small and innocent face as she stared at him lying in a makeshift bed. How could innocence come into such a corrupt and broken world?

Jesus was too young to swat away the flies or scratch His skin, itchy from the hay. Instead of a clean hospital with animals painted in bright colors on the wall, He was in the midst of a dirty barn. The Savior of the world made His great entry via barn. It seems pretty clear that Jesus came as one of the least.

It’s hard not to see the least in the world. The media constantly brings us back to the fact that this world is broken, corrupt, poor, and needy. Hollywood calls us to take action, our churches plead with us, and books on this subject are endless. But what if we not only focused on what we could do for the least, but we also learned from the least. The Bible and history are full of great leaders who rose from humble places. David became king when he was just the youngest and a shepherd. A widow gave her all, even though she only had two coins. The disciples were not the most educated or likely leaders, but they were handed the Great Commission.

In the end, there is a lot we can learn from the least. This book is about looking at the leadership, character and faith of five different people in the Bible who the world would consider the least.

How does this curriculum work?

This book contains five sessions, each focused on a leadership principle that we can learn from the least. The objective is to uncover and learn leadership principles from the least in the Bible and in the world that Jesus cared so deeply about.

This Facilitator’s Guide contains everything in the Student Guide, plus some additional material. The table below outlines the parts of each session and provides an approximate timeframe, which you can adapt to meet the needs of your group. The shaded parts are included in both the Facilitator’s Guide and the Student Guide.

Student Guide

Session Outline	Included in Facilitator’s Guide Only	Approximate Timeframe
Leader’s Recap	A reminder to follow up on the previous week’s activity and application goals set by students	10 minutes
Objectives	A list of the things your students will learn or do	
Leader’s Intro	A way for you to introduce the topic and Bible study	5 minutes
The Least in the Bible	A passage to study based on a leadership principle lived out by one of the least in the Bible, some questions to answer, and a verse to memorize and/or meditate on	15 minutes
The Least in Life	An example of the principle lived out in culture or history with some discussion questions	15 minutes
Rate it	A self-evaluation of how you are living out the leadership principle in your own life	2 minutes
Apply it	A chance to apply God’s Word and grow in that area	3 minutes
Value Statement	An opportunity to define your value for each leadership principle	5 minutes
Activity	A way to reinforce the leadership principle and further expose students to the least	15 minutes
Additional Resources	Websites or books that give you additional information on the topic or people mentioned in the session	
Tip	Ideas to help you teach or go deeper with your group	

Introducing the least to your students

Before starting this curriculum, help your students identify who the least are. Have them brainstorm who they would consider the least in the world today, in Bible times, on their school campuses, and in their church. What are some words that describe the lives of the least?

Optional Introduction Activity

As a group, watch Sarah McLachlan's music video World on Fire at www.worldonfire.ca and facilitate a discussion:

- » Ask your group to identify some of the least in this video.
- » Ask them if they know anyone who is one of the least.
- » What are some words that describe the lives of the least?

Learning to write value statements

What we believe – our values – truly shape who we are and what we do. If you believe that you can handle driving on an icy road, you will probably try. If you believe that you can earn a 4.0 GPA, you will probably achieve it. If you believe that Christ is returning soon to take you to heaven, you will live your life differently.

This section is designed to help you examine the values that play an important role in who you are. It will also help you decide how you should live in light of them. Creating a value statement puts what you believe in writing. It says what you know. It tells what you understand. It defines your feelings. Most of all, it reflects what you are committed to doing as a result.

By defining your values, you will continue to develop a healthy view of who you are and who God has created you to be. This part of the study is your chance to rethink, respond and rejoice over what the Lord is doing in your life. As you honestly assess what you believe, you open your life to God. That's when He begins to shape and mold you into His likeness.

Neglected Overlooked Discriminated

Helping your students make specific applications

Helping your students make specific and measurable applications is a powerful step to facilitating transformational change in their lives. Simply put, applying God's Word changes lives. Measurable applications should answer the questions what, where, and when.

Example of an application that isn't measurable:

I need to trust God more.

Example of a measurable application:

I know that I need to trust God more, so I'm going to learn more about people who really trusted God with their lives.

What? I'm going to find and learn about two people in the Bible who really trusted God.

Where? I'm going to do this at Starbucks

When? In the morning before school on Tuesday and Thursday.

When students make an application they can measure, they will be able to say at the end of the week that they are beginning to live out that principle in their lives. They will be able to tangibly see their growth, and not wonder if they grew or not.

Lost Broken Suffering Abused Hungry

The Least Lead with Unwavering Commitment

A fact about the least: Gordon Conwell Theological Seminary estimates that there will be 175,000 Christian martyrs in 2008.

Before you start this session...

Be sure you understand how to write a value statement and how to create a measurable application so you can explain it to your students. Additional information is on pages 4-5

In this session, students will:

- » Study Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego as examples of unwavering commitment.
- » Discuss what unwavering commitment means to them, and write a value statement.
- » Evaluate themselves on this leadership principle, and choose one way to lead with unwavering commitment in the next week.
- » Write an encouraging letter to a persecuted Christian.

Leader's Intro

Introduce this session by saying something like:

Usually when I think about commitment, I think about a timeframe attached to it. I'll be committed to a team for a season. I'm committed to good grades until I graduate. I'm committed to my friends until new friends replace them. Rarely are we committed to something forever. Let's look at three of the least in Babylon as they teach us about the unwavering commitment of a leader.

The Least in the Bible

Royal blood flowed through their veins, coupled with a childhood of nobility and opportunity. Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah seemed to have everything going for them, until their nation was besieged and their people enslaved. The three were immediately taken captive and brought before King Nebuchadnezzar to serve in the palace as slaves. Their status quickly moved from the greatest in one nation, to the least in another nation.

The first move of the King was to try and take away their identity so he changed their God-honoring names to names that glorified pagan gods. Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego then had to enter three years of intense training to learn a new language and a new culture. But, no matter what King Nebuchadnezzar took away, he could not take away their commitment to God. As the fires roared before them, they confessed to the King, that "even if" God did not save them, their commitment to Him would not waver.

Rate it

Evaluate yourself on this leadership principle. Are you a person who demonstrates unwavering commitment?

1 2 3 4 5
Never Usually Always

Apply it

Write down one way you can lead with unwavering commitment this week by making a specific application that answers these questions.

» What are you going to do?

» Where are you going to do it?

» When are you going to do it?

Value Statement

Write out your personal value statement about unwavering commitment. (For more information on value statements refer to page 4.)

Example: I want my entire life to reflect my commitment to Christ. I know that commitment to Him will cost my whole life, what I think, say and do. I will continue to grow in my commitment to Him, by growing in each of those areas.

Activity: Prisoner's Letter

Help your students make the idea of unwavering commitment even more personal by writing a letter to a persecuted Christian. Prisoner Alert (www.prisoneralert.com) is a ministry of Voice of the Martyrs. This website provides information on Christians imprisoned for their faith around the world. After reading through some of the profiles of persecuted Christians on their website, have your group pick a person they would like to send an encouraging letter to. Prisoner Alert provides tips for writing and sending the letter; they even translate the letter for you! Your responsibility is writing the letter and mailing it.

Not only will your students learn the personal stories of people of commitment, but their understanding will deepen as they grapple with what to say in their letter.

Additional Resources

Here are some additional resources on persecution of Christians worldwide:

- » www.persecution.com (Voice of the Martyrs)
- » www.persecution.org (International Christian Concern)

Here are some additional resources on John and Elizabeth Stam:

- » <http://www.carlstam.org/familyheritage/jbstam.html>
- » To Die is Gain – The Triumph of John and Betty Stam (2004), Mrs. Howard Taylor



Tip:

Have your students tell each other their applications so the group can keep them accountable for following through. If it's a big group, have students share their application with the person next to them. You may want to discuss ways students can hold each other accountable for accomplishing the goals they set.