



# TRANSITION

*Starting work as a Christian*



**GRADUATE  
IMPACT**





## CONTENTS

<b>Session 1</b>	The big opportunity .....	<b>4</b>
<b>Session 2</b>	Growing trust .....	<b>14</b>
<b>Session 3</b>	Consistent Christlike character .....	<b>21</b>
<b>Session 4</b>	Don't go it alone! .....	<b>30</b>
<b>Session 5</b>	Getting straight on money .....	<b>38</b>
<b>Session 6</b>	Antidote for anxiety .....	<b>49</b>
<b>Session 7</b>	Godly ambition .....	<b>59</b>
<b>Session 8</b>	Seeing work God's way .....	<b>66</b>
<b>Session 9</b>	Witness at work .....	<b>80</b>

**Throughout this workbook you will find talks available online and as text fully written into this workbook - we recommend that you watch or listen whilst reading the text. You will also find Bible texts and reflection questions. Take time to write down what you learn.**

We recommend that you use this material with friends and share answers with each other to learn from other people's inspiration. If you are studying alone and would like to join an online cohort, please email us at [admin@graduateimpact.org](mailto:admin@graduateimpact.org).

When studying the Bible texts, always try to read with a pen in hand and mark anything in the text that

- a)** seems relevant,
- b)** seems uncertain or
- c)** just seems brilliant!

And please pray as you use this material that the Lord would help you to lay great foundations for a working life serving him.





## USING TRANSITION

### Starting work is a time of great change...

It's the beginning of the rest of your life. New people, new places, new priorities, new opportunities, new pressures. And never enough time to think!

Wouldn't it be great to have a heads-up as you begin working life to see what God thinks of your work?

*Transition* is a resource to help you get ready to live for Jesus in the working world. The material is designed to be used one to one, or in a Bible study group, or even on your own. It is based on Jesus' teaching in the Parable of the Sower in Mark 4. In Mark 4:20 Jesus describes the ideal response to the Good News: after hearing it, people multiply its impact wherever they are. However, before he gets there, he mentions two other types of believers—some with shallow roots who fall away from Jesus and some whose lives are so full of distractions that they never get around to being fruitful.

As you begin working life we want to help you grow deep enough roots and a sense of focus that by the Lord's grace you find a way to fruitfully multiply the influence of the gospel for the rest of your life.

We have structured the flow of this course to follow Jesus' thought flow. It starts by looking at what it means to be deeply ROOTED in the Lord and how to grow those roots. Then we examine the distractions in life that Jesus refers to—money, anxiety, and ambition—and study how we can keep a Christ-inspired FOCUS despite these distractions. Finally we look at how we can be FRUITFUL, particularly in our working lives.



## ROOTED PART 1:

## GROWING TRUST



**“But since they have no root, they last only a short time. When trouble or persecution comes because of the word, they quickly fall away.” Mark 4:17**

### BIBLE STUDY: Jeremiah 17:5-13



<sup>5</sup>This is what the Lord says: ‘Cursed is the one who trusts in man, who draws strength from mere flesh and whose heart turns away from the Lord. <sup>6</sup>That person will be like a bush in the wastelands; they will not see prosperity when it comes. They will dwell in the parched places of the desert, in a salt land where no one lives.

<sup>7</sup>But blessed is the one who trusts in the Lord, whose confidence is in him. <sup>8</sup>They will be like a tree planted by the water that sends out its roots by the stream. It does not fear when heat comes; its leaves are always green. It has no worries in a year of drought and never fails to bear fruit.’

<sup>9</sup>The heart is deceitful above all things and beyond cure. Who can understand it? <sup>10</sup>I the Lord search the heart and examine the mind, to reward each person according to their conduct, according to what their deeds deserve.’

<sup>11</sup>Like a partridge that hatches eggs it did not lay are those who gain riches by unjust means. When their lives are half gone, their riches will desert them, and in the end they will prove to be fools.

<sup>12</sup>A glorious throne, exalted from the beginning, is the place of our sanctuary. <sup>13</sup>Lord, you are the hope of Israel; all who forsake you will be put to shame. Those who turn away from you will be written in the dust because they have forsaken the Lord, the spring of living water.



Take note of the contrasts found in Jeremiah 17:5-13. What do they reveal about being rooted in the Lord or being rootless?



Which of these represent Jeremiah's idea of a 'rooted' life? ↪

- Trusting in my network of good friends
- Trusting in the skills, gifts, resources and opportunities I have
- Rushing through life but remembering the Lord's goodness
- Living as if I have forgotten what the Lord has done for me
- Building habits that allow me to draw on the Lord for strength
- Falling into patterns of self-reliance
- Asking the Lord to show us when we have gone wrong
- Living as if God's throne is the centre of our lives
- Focusing on making the best for myself 'here and now'

The ideas of "trusting in man" and "drawing strength from mere flesh" speak of a human autonomy, where the gifts, skills, opportunities and connections that we have take the place of dependence on God.

List examples of ways you see these patterns in your society. Do any of these represent danger points for you? ↪





## PERSONAL REFLECTION



Define 'belief' and 'trust'. Explain the difference between them. ↪

Belief is:

Trust is:

What is the difference?

In the New Testament, the word 'pistis' translates as belief, trust and faith. These related words in English have different nuances, and the Bible makes it clear that there is a world of difference between believing in the existence of God and actually trusting him. For example, Adam and Eve believed God was real but chose not to trust him.

When you can't sleep at night, what is on your mind? Where do you find it difficult to trust in the Lord in your life? ↪





TRANSITION: STARTING WORK AS A CHRISTIAN

How could you grow your confidence that the Lord is fully trustworthy in all the areas you get concerned about? ↪

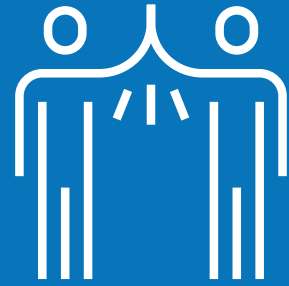
How do you experience God's care in your daily life? ↪

**CLOSING PRAYER**



*You will keep in perfect peace those whose minds are steadfast, because they trust in you. Trust in the Lord forever, for the Lord, the Lord himself, is the Rock eternal. Isaiah 26:3-4*





## FRUITFUL PART 2

### WITNESS AT WORK

**“Teach slaves to be subject to their masters in everything, to try to please them, not to talk back to them, and not to steal from them, but to show that they can be fully trusted, so that in every way they will make the teaching about God our Saviour attractive.”**

**Titus 2:9-10**

#### WATCH OR READ: “Signposts to Jesus”



<https://vimeo.com/manage/videos/683342036>

Your future workplace will be one of the great unreached mission fields. Pastors can't go there, but every day you will be paid to spend your life surrounded by people who know very little about Jesus. Amazing. It's the place where you can “shine like stars in the sky”, a place where you can be an ambassador for Christ.

Our witness to Jesus is about pointing those around us to him - like being a whole-life signpost to Jesus. A signpost needs three things: WORDS clearly pointing in the right direction; a SUPPORT that keeps the words high up and visible; and a FOUNDATION to stop the signpost from being knocked over or turned the wrong way.

In his first letter, the apostle Peter suggests a lifestyle of whole-life-Christian-witness to the church. In 1 Peter 3:15 he tells Christians to “be ready to give a reason for the hope” they have in Jesus (the



**Note anything you find particularly helpful in the talk.**




**SESSION 9**

WORDS); but before that, in 2:12, he tells the same Christians to “live such good lives among non-believers that they see your good works and glorify God” (that is, lives which SUPPORT the WORDS). For Peter, living for Jesus and speaking for Jesus are two sides of the same coin.

Peter expects that followers of Jesus will be people who take time for others, who respect authority, who don't live only for themselves, who act with integrity, who do not repay evil with evil or insult with insult, who bless those who make their lives hell. The people we work with face the same pressures as us, and the way we choose to live alongside them has the potential to cause even the hardest atheists to glorify God!

Peter expects that if we live in this counter-cultural way, sooner or later some of those around us will start to ask questions that we can answer by explaining our hope in Jesus.

And what about the FOUNDATION for our signpost? Well, Jesus is everywhere in this letter, but here are some highlights: through Jesus' death you have been redeemed (1 Peter 1:18) - that was God's decision even before creation; through Jesus' faithfulness you have been restored (2:24); and through his suffering you are reconciled to God (3:18). Jesus is the foundation for the signpost and he is the foundation of our lives. Back to the WORDS: “But in your hearts, set apart Christ as Lord.



**THE BIG IDEA:**  
Is my life—including  
the way I act at work—  
inviting people to ask me  
about my faith?





Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give a reason for the hope you have. But do this with gentleness and respect (fear)” (1 Peter 3:15). Six things to notice about how we tell others what we believe:

1. We are not all evangelists, but these words are written to every member of the church. All of us should be ready and able to explain our hope in Jesus.
2. We should live with a real expectation that people will ask us about our faith.
3. We are called to explain our hope - which is not the same as winning an intellectual battle. What would you say if people asked you what hope Jesus brings to your life?
4. We must speak with gentleness, not defensiveness, aggression, or moral superiority. Be respectful; people immediately recognise when they are not respected. It’s not about how they will see us; it’s about how they will see Jesus after interacting with us.
5. When people ask us about Jesus we should be a little afraid (the Greek word here is phobos) because of the opportunity and responsibility we have in sharing Jesus’ love with those who don’t yet know him.
6. We need to “set apart Christ as Lord”. Treasure his presence in your life. Always remind your soul who Jesus is, what he did for you and what he called his followers to do. Why not begin by making your daily witness at work a matter of prayer?

