OPENING QUESTIONS
Take some time to think about and answer these questions:

1. Who is the most influential person in your life?
2. What difference has their influence made in your life?

WHAT THE BIBLE HAS TO SAY ABOUT LEADERSHIP

Ever wonder why we don’t go to heaven right away after we become a Christian? For a lot of us, we have several decades ahead to follow Christ and grow as His disciples. But we don’t go to heaven right away because we have a mission to do on earth, a huge one. It’s actually kind of overwhelming, even somewhat impossible. Have you checked out the state of the world lately? It’s in bad shape. There’s an orphan crisis, starvation, war, addiction, apathy—and if what’s going on in the world isn’t bad enough, it gets worse. People are dying every day and not going to heaven, never getting to be near God. Truthfully put, our friends who don’t know Jesus and aren’t following Him are headed toward being eternally separated from Him. This is pretty serious business. Our first reaction is often to wave our hands in the air frantically to get the attention of Jesus and tell him to “do something!” But it doesn’t take us long to realize that he already has done something. He’s offering saving grace, a different kind of life, a way through the broken glass of this world to the wholeness of him. He laid down his life, making this all possible. But we are the other part of the equation. Jesus has an answer to the broken state of the world—it’s a restored life in Him. But we have to get the word out. We not only have to tell people, we have to show them, invest in them, influence them. In most cases we have to take them by the hand and LEAD them to the only answer that will work for this world.

Remember Jesus’ parting words as he went up into the sky and ended his time on earth with the disciples?

“Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you.”

– Matthew 28:19-20a

What will this do? This will change the world. This will turn it upside down, not only in eternal ways, but it will create nations of people living under a new set of rules. People choosing humility over pride, forgiveness over revenge, compassion over corruption, love over hate. Imagine what would happen to this earth if people started living like this, as disciples of Christ. What would happen to your school? Your town? Your friend group?

When Jesus set our mission in front of us, he was calling us to a life of leadership. It’s inescapable. If we are going to make disciples and change this world, we are going to have to be influencers. And to influence means to lead...there’s no way around it. The only question is, how will you influence? How will you lead this mission that Christ has left us? We have some time left here on earth, and we have been given a great mission.
Read

I Thessalonians 2:1-14 about Paul, Silas, and Timothy leading others and living out the Great Commission in a city called Thessalonica.

Discuss / Answer

1. What are some of the things that Paul, Silas, and Timothy did to influence the people in Thessalonica? Make a list of at least 10 things (think about their attitudes, heart, actions and words).
   
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2. Was Paul living out the Great Commission in Thessalonica? How?

3. What difference did Paul’s leadership make in Thessalonica? (Vs. 13, 14)

4. Could Paul have lived out the Great Commission without being a leader?

LIVE IT OUT

1. Take a few minutes and write down all the areas in your life that you are a leader. Another way to say this: write down all the areas that you are having an influence on others (whether or not you’re in an official position of leadership or not). Come up with as many as possible.
2. Now choose the 5 most important areas from the previous question (the areas you spend the most time in or have the most responsibility) and write them down the left side of the Leadership Growth Chart (pg. 4).

3. Now go back to the questions after the Bible study, and look at the very first question where you listed 10 things that Paul, Silas and Timothy did to influence the people in Thessalonica. As a group (or as an individual if you did this on your own), decide on 5 items from your lists that you agree are the most important things that they did to lead well. Write these five things across the top of the chart.

4. Now spend some time reflecting on how you are doing as a leader, in each of the five leadership areas you wrote down the left side of the chart. Think about how well you are applying the things Paul, Silas, and Timothy did (the list across the top) to each area of your leadership.

   - In each square, give yourself a rating of 1 through 5 (1 being lots of room for improvement and 5 being I’m doing well at this). For any squares that might not be applicable, just leave them blank.
   - In each row, take a look at the square that has the highest number. Well done! Write down in those squares why you think you are doing well in those areas.
   - Now take a look at the squares that have the lowest numbers. Pick two of them and write ways that you could grow in those areas underneath the chart. Be specific and ask yourself: What is something I could do this week to grow in that area? When am I going to do it?

* For an added challenge, share this answer with a friend or with the group, and ask them to keep you accountable this week!

**PARTING THOUGHT**

Think about the last part of the Great Commission:

“And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age.” – Matthew 28: 20b
LEADERSHIP GROWTH CHART

THINGS PAUL, SILAS, AND TIMOTHY DID TO LEAD WELL

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