

# Leaders Introduction.

## Fivefold Ministry: Background and Session shape

Hello everyone and welcome.

This series of studies and discussions are aimed to help us further discover and develop our personal fivefold ministry understanding and explore the interaction of these with outworking the vision of Bridge Church. They are intended to both inform and encourage us to better understand and embrace our kingdom identity, to seek unity together, to strengthen each other and to strengthen His Church. (Please hold this lightly and be inquisitive about yourself and each other – please have fun together and lean into God, our loving heavenly Father who has given us these gifts to use and enjoy, to be fruitful in the kingdom).

## Context

Our personal ministry journey is a mixture of personal identity, God's calling on our lives (Jeremiah 29:11), the Spirit's gifting (John 14:26), community discernment and individual engagement. We will only really know our personal ministry impact from how others experience our actions and conversations.

Therefore, if we are activated, faith filled Christians (or desire to be), we should both be seeking to live out our grace gifts in our worldly walk and recognise their impact on those around us. This is the basis of being salt and light (Matthew 5:13) in the world and atmosphere changers wherever we are. To do this well, we should be confident in our natural selves; this being our kingdom identity which God has lovingly created us to be while also living a teachable life to help us press in to becoming more like Jesus. What's so good about being part of Bridge Church is that we're all in the mix together, so, if we can allow and encourage each other within our house groups and ministry teams to be operating out of our natural God given identity, capabilities and capacities, in partnership with the Holy Spirit, we will be amazed at the growth and fruit that flows through us.

So please continue to encourage all group members to spend time with our Lord – to press into the secret place that is just me and God, Father Son and Holy Spirit. Lets also try and really see each other more through our Fathers eyes; fearfully and wonderfully made (Psalm 139:14) – in His image! (Genesis 1:27).

As we are going to look at how the fivefold ministry grace gifts impact us personally and help us build His church, we will spend some time both with the church journey and our own journeys. Thinking of this as a journey of transition can be helpful. Good journeys have a starting point with a direction of travel toward a destination and with good places to enjoy along the way. They can be challenging at times, however, always with learning experiences, a deepening of relationships and new revelations along the way.

## The Sessions

So, this series of studies will start in session 1 with our Bridge Church and where we are today. Recently we've heard a lot around who we are and what we do as a church. This is an opportunity to spend a little time reflecting on our church today and where we are headed – that is, where we believe we are being called to be in the future. This will give an opportunity for everyone in groups to

reflect and consider, both individually and together, the future direction and share anything that resonates or sparks an interest. To share hopes and concerns so we might understand where support or further help may be given. We don't want to leave anyone outside the family as we make this journey together.

We will then move into session 2 and enquire where we are today, as individuals, and take a little time to explore the grace gifts we already know we carry, then look at the grace gifts that others see in us, then what God has said over us in our lives ending our with a short questionnaire which will we can use alongside the other three enquiries to help us discern our fivefold ministry shape – not as labels or badges but as an understanding and celebration of our God given grace gifts.

Session 3 will give time to explore the interaction of our Bridge Church journey and where we, as individuals, might find a role which aligns into and supports the development of our grace gifts; where we can explore fivefold ministry gifts working together to realise kingdom fruitfulness.

Therefore sessions 1, 2 and 3 will look like:

1. Session 1 – Bridge Church today and looking forward.
2. Session 2 – Exploring my fivefold ministry grace gifts.
3. Session 3 – My Bridge Church journey today and looking forward.

In our recent home group leaders and hosts meeting, we talked about planning to create this as an increasingly interactive series. To this end, we will be asking for your feedback on how the sessions are going. This is important as we would like the follow-on sessions to be shaped by your feedback. The themes for the next three sessions will include exploring the practical side of engaging with our spiritual grace gifts both internally within Bridge Church and outwardly, through our lives and ministries in the world. Therefore sessions 4, 5 and 6 are still “in the mix” awaiting your feedback. So please note down how the sessions land and reactions to it all. Any difficulties that we need to pay attention to. We don't want or need to know who anyone is, it's the content that is helpful as we take this series forward.....thank you!

Each session will be made up as follows and will be available on the church website.

1. A work sheet including activations and question for each session.
2. PDF files of supportive information or additional resources for each session.

As group leaders you will shape and manage the conversations, encouraging everyone to participate and have their voice heard. Please listen well – you are aiming to facilitate what God is doing in the members of your group. As such, please pay particular attention to each of your group members. What are they saying verbally? What is their body language saying? What does this suggest might be going on for them? Do they need some re-assurance and prayer. It's ok to stop and take a little time to understand what's going on – remember the Elephant in the room; Elephants can be there in the background and are very camouflaged sometimes...Be close with the Holy Spirit and discerning your group.

As ever time usually passes quickly. Try not to cut off rich discussions, the key is not to rush and see each section through. If the content is not complete within a session, then look for a good ending wherever you are that will still allow time for personal and group prayer. You can then pick up in the following session. Feedback to us where you are and we'll adjust sessions 4, 5 and 6 to allow for catch up. It is important that we cover sessions 1,2 and 3 well. Thank you!