

Growing in Wholeness Session 2 – Alternative Guide

Session 2

You will probably want to go round the group, sharing names and giving each person a chance to talk about what practical work they've done since the last session. Allow people to say "pass" without shame. In fact, where several group members seem to be feeling bad, you may wish to remind them of the forgiveness of God; this feeds nicely into the subject of the day. Find a confident participant to read the Bible reading

2.1: Read out the words on the handout. Show slide 3.

2.2 On a large piece of paper – perhaps a flip chart – write the word *homologeō*. Explain that it is the New Testament Greek word for 'confess'. Circle the "homo" bit – this means the same – so homosexuality is attraction to people of the same sex. Then circle "logeō". This is from the same root as *logos*, the word. So *homologeō* is to say the same as God, to agree with God – about ourselves, others and God.

Ask the group: what does it mean to say the same as God about ourselves? (Make sure that people say that there are many good things God says to us, as well as bad; to confess includes saying how loved and valued we are – but it does also mean facing up honestly to what we've done wrong).

Ask the group: what does it mean to say the same as God about others? (Again, make sure that participants point out that it doesn't mean condemning others, but speaking the truth of them – they too are much-loved by God, but have fallen short of God's glory)

Ask the group: what does it mean to say the same as God about God? (Participants may wish to speak quite deeply about God, and may even feel that they have been let down by God. Don't evaluate, just listen and hold what is being said)

Mention the need to discern the reasons for suffering – sometimes we suffer because we've done a good thing, sometimes because we've done a bad thing, sometimes it's just the context and the random effects of evil. There are no easy formulas here.

2.3-2.5 Show the slides. Don't read them out loud (unless you have a participant with visual impairment unable to read the screen, or you suspect literacy is an issue); just pick out one or two ideas on each slide. Remember, participants have their guides to take away, so they don't need to take notes on each slide – 30 seconds is the maximum time any one slide needs to be displayed. You certainly do not have time to ask participants to look up verses in bibles.

2.6 Ask participants what the terms "true guilt" and "false guilt" mean to them. (True guilt relates to a specific thing we have done wrong; it can be dealt with by confession to God, and sometimes the person we've harmed. False guilt is an indistinct feeling of guiltiness which does not relate to any one thing we've done – it is entirely useless to everyone, and not the result of the action of the Holy Spirit. It can blight lives).

2.7 Form a "fish bowl"; that is, get two volunteers to sit in the middle, facing one another, with everyone else round the outside of the room, watching. Keeping the mood light, suggest a scenario;

maybe Person A has got so frustrated with their course on healing that they kicked person B's car tyre on their way home, and it's been costly to fix the damage to the hub cap.

First Person A gives a non-apology (eg 'I'm sorry if you were offended, but you made me) and Person B responds badly.

Then Person A confesses what they've done in an appropriate way, Person B practices being gracious.

Point to the practical work and linkwork. Say that at the beginning of the next session there will be a chance to feed back what has been discovered; but tell people they'll be welcome, whether they've done this work or not!

Finish the session with the prayer under the "practical work".