



FRUITFULNESS ON THE FRONTLINE.



**Making a difference
where you are**

6 week Bible study for CUs

licc.

FESTIVE

Introduction

WHAT'S IT ALL ABOUT?



Have you ever wondered:

How can I make everything I do in my place of education count for Jesus and his Kingdom?

How am I supposed to live as someone who belongs to God where I study?

Festive has teamed up with LICC to adapt their amazing Fruitfulness on the Frontline (FOFL) resource to help you bear good fruit in your college in everything you do!

The big prayer is that you will:

- 1 Spot how God has already been working in and through you
- 2 See a snapshot of what Kingdom living might look like in your place of education
- 3 Have insight into what God might do in and through you on your frontline

WHAT DO YOU NEED?

Apart from Session 1 (where you'll need a bag of M&Ms and some kind of gadget to watch the promo video) all you'll need is:

- A place to meet
- Bibles/Bible App
- You and your CU
- One of you to lead each session (or invite in a youth or church leader to help)
- A hunger to be fruitful for Jesus where you are a student

WHAT SHOULD YOU DO NEXT?

- Let your CU know when and where you're going to get started
- Pray that God brings about powerful changes in your lives
- Get in touch with www.festive.org.uk and let us know that you're giving FOFL a crack and we'll commit to praying for you and your CU!



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The Journey On

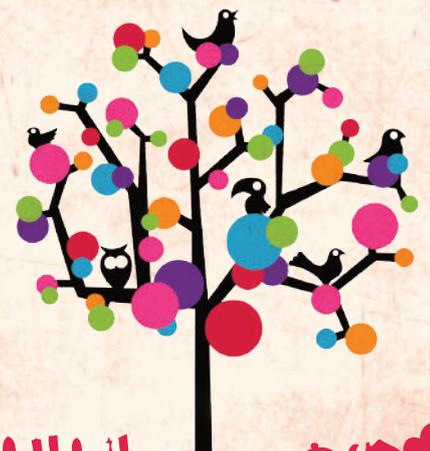
This could be done as a group over pizza after school/college, or alternatively, encourage your CU to pray and reflect on the course personally in their own time.

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BONUS* Session: Mouthpiece for Truth and Justice

(if you have an extra week, then it would be great to fit in this session too [our suggestion would be to fit it in between Session 5 and 6]. The only reason it's been added as a bonus session is due to trying to fit everything into the six weeks of half a term. The more Ms the merrier!)

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Session 1

The Big Picture

Introduction (Read to the CU)

How can you make everything you do at your place of education count for Jesus and his Kingdom? What would it look like to be truly *fruitful* for him where you study?

The big prayer of this series is that you will...

- Be enabled to spot how God has already been working in and through you
- Be given a snapshot of what living for Jesus might look like where you study
- Provide insight into what God might do in and through you on your frontlines

So what is a frontline?

- The place where you spend much of your time
- The place where you meet people who don't know Jesus
- The place God has called you
- The place of possibility and potential

One of your main frontlines is the place where you study.



Play Fruitfulness on the Frontline Promo Video

licc.org.uk/fruitfulnesspromo

Read

Colossians 1:15–20

'**reconcile**' (Colossians 1:20) – God will bring all things back together to be as they should be under his Kingship. It doesn't mean that everyone will be saved, but that everyone and everything will acknowledge that Jesus is Lord either out of joy or in shame (Isaiah 45:23–24).

'**peace**' (Colossians 1:20) – is when things flourish and there's wholeness and delight!

Glossary



Questions to Answer

1. Chat with the person next to you about what happens in a typical day for you in your place of education.
2. Which word/phrase is repeated loads of times in Colossians 1:15–20 – what does this tell us about what it means for Jesus to be Lord?
3. As Christians, we've been reconciled personally to God through Christ's death (Colossians 1:21–22). What else is God going to reconcile? See Colossians 1:19–20.
4. This passage says that Jesus made everything and died to reconcile all things to God. How does this challenge the way you view everything you do where you study?
5. So what is fruitfulness?
Crack open a packet of M&Ms and get each person to take six each. Ask someone to read out the 6Ms and munch away! These Ms are what it means to be fruitful for Jesus:

The 6Ms	What we'll explore
Modelling Godly Character	How can you become more like Jesus?
Making Good Work	How can you do all your study and activities with God and for God?
Ministering Grace and Love	How does God's love for you shape the way you treat others?
Moulding Culture	How can you shape the way things are done on your frontline?
Messenger of the Gospel	How might you speak about Jesus with God's help?
Mouthpiece for Truth and Justice	How can you speak up for what is right and fair?

Just as the M&Ms taste good, God wants to produce the fruit of his life in and through you for others on your frontlines to enjoy!

Share with the group or the person next to you which 'M' you think is one of your strengths and which is more of a challenge?

'Most Christians don't really believe that the ordinary things they do every day have anything much to do with God's purposes in time and eternity. But the reality is that God can and does work through his people... among the people they naturally meet, doing the things they normally do.' **Mark Greene**

6. Time to pray:

- ➔ Pray that you would know more and more that God is with you on your frontlines this week and that Jesus is Lord there, whatever happens!
- ➔ Pray for eyes to see where you are already being fruitful on your frontlines
- ➔ Pray for greater trust in God's promise to be at work in and through you



Recap

Our prayer is that you better see where God is working with you and through you on your frontlines (wherever he has placed you), bearing much fruit for him.



Session 2

Modelling Godly Character



Recap

Last week we looked at the fact that God wants you to be fruitful for him *wherever* he has placed you. This week, we're going to see how he wants to produce godly character in our lives, that is, how he wants to make us more like Jesus.

Atu's Story

Atupele (or Atu for short) was so excited to start college. She was looking forward to meeting other Christians and reaching out to fellow students with them, but there was a slight problem: when she got there, there was no Christian Union.

So Atu tried to start one herself. She was given access to a room and even gained permission for a local youth worker to come in – but she wasn't allowed to put up posters advertising CU.

Weeks went by and no one came. Her excitement turned to despair, as she questioned why she went to a college that wouldn't even let her advertise a CU.

But what she hadn't realised yet was how God was already advertising himself in another way.

Atu loved hanging out with her college friends, chatting and laughing in the canteen and spending time round each other's houses. They got to know each other well: who they were; what made

them tick; what they were good at; their annoying habits. Atu's friends noticed there was something different about her. Yes, they knew that she was passionate about starting a CU, but there was more...

When there was unkind gossip going around the lunch table, Atu didn't join in. When an exam was scheduled for a Monday, everyone spent Sunday cramming but Atu still went to church. When everyone else was stressing out over exams, Atu remained steady, telling her friends, 'It's okay guys – I am praying for us all!' They really appreciated that.

That's not to say that Atu never slipped up in any way, but there was clearly something that made her distinctive. Towards the end of her time at college, one friend said to her, 'I didn't know Christians were like you!'

Though it would have been great for a CU to have got off the ground at Atu's College, students were still able to encounter the beauty of Jesus. They could see him alive and working everyday in their friend.

Read

Galatians 5:13–26

Glossary

'flesh' (Galatians 5:16,17,19) – refers to our sinful nature, where we selfishly do whatever we want.

'fruit' (Galatians 5:22) – is singular i.e. like an orange, not a basket of different fruits. All of these things go together – they are one.

'...those who live like this...' (Galatians 5:21) – Paul is not talking about an act of sin but a lifestyle of sin where there is no fight going on (i.e. flesh vs. Spirit – 5:17).

Questions to Answer



1. One of Atu's friends saw the way that she lived her life and commented: 'I didn't know Christians were like you.' When you think of 'godly character', who is the first person you think of? What is it about that person that is godly?
2. Think of the fruit in Galatians 5:13–26 as like an orange with different segments. In pairs, choose one or two of the segments (e.g. love, joy...) and write down what you think these words mean. Share your answers with the group.
3. Can you think of any ways in which you have (or haven't!) shown godly character in your place of education? Maybe in: the classroom; the refectory; a sports match; relationships with students or staff. Share it in pairs or with the group.
4. Think about fruit for a moment (the actual fruit from a tree!).
 - a) How does it grow?
 - b) What do we do with the fruit that's grown and why?
 - c) What does this tell us about:
 - How the Spirit grows godly character in us?
 - What the point of bearing fruit (5:22–23) where you study is?
5. What stops you from being focused on meeting the needs of others where you study? (5:16,24)
6. To 'live by the Spirit' (5:16) and to 'keep in step with the Spirit' (5:25) means to desire what he desires (5:17) and the Spirit desires Jesus!
 - a) How can we desire Jesus more in our lives? Galatians 4:6–7 and 5:1 may help.
 - b) How will desiring Jesus produce the fruit of the Spirit?
7. Time to pray:
 - Thank our Father in heaven for the fruit he is producing in you by his Spirit
 - Ask for his forgiveness for times when you didn't model godly character
 - Thank God that he promises to continue to produce fruit in your lives
 - Pray that others in your place of education and other frontlines will taste and see that the Lord is good!

Recap

Our Father in heaven wants to make us more like Jesus, by the Holy Spirit producing godly character in our lives, so that others will want to taste and see that the Lord is good!



Session 3

Making Good Work



Recap

Last week we looked at how the Holy Spirit produces his fruit in our lives so that others can taste and see that the Lord is good. This week, we are going to see how God wants us to be fruitful *whatever* we do.

Tom's Story

Everything was looking peachy for Tom. He had a degree from a well-respected university and a job lined up at his Dad's law firm. All he had to do was finish his law conversion course and he would be set for life.

But there was a problem. The further Tom got with his studies, the less he was convinced that it was where he should be. It's not that he thought that being a lawyer was a bad thing; it's just that it didn't seem to fit the way that God had wired him.

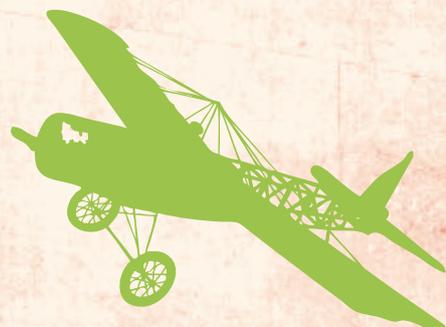
So Tom reflected on and prayed about his future. He remembered how he'd enjoyed making model airplanes as a boy. He had always found pleasure in making beautiful things, a gift his teachers noticed when he studied A level Design. Maybe this is more than just a hobby, Tom thought. Perhaps my passion for making things could serve other people. So Tom left a promising life in law and enrolled on a carpentry course at his local FE college.

There were many new concepts and terms to get his head around, from bench hooks to bandsaws, but he threw

himself into it, absorbing as much he could. Yes it was tough, but Tom knew this was where God would help him to develop the skills he needed to do the work he was called to. So he focused, he did his best, and regularly asked God for help.

This was a pattern that Tom took with him when he started working on site. Where other workers cut corners or took extended lunch breaks (so they could charge their clients more money!), Tom sought to work with excellence and integrity. After all, he was working for more than money; he was working for his Heavenly Father.

For many, work is simply what you do to pay the bills. But with Jesus, any job can be filled with worship, worth and purpose. I wonder how God is using your time of study to prepare you for the 'good works' he has in store for you!?



Read

Genesis 1:27–28, 2:15 and Colossians 3:17, 20–24

'work' (Genesis 2:15) – literally means 'to serve'.

'in the name of the Lord Jesus' (Colossians 3:17) – as your life is in Jesus (Colossians 3:1–4) it means you live a Jesus-shaped life, representing him.

'Slaves' (Colossians 3:22) – came under the authority of their masters. Some masters treated their slaves well but others mistreated them quite badly.

'inheritance' (Colossians 3:24) – you receive an inheritance when someone dies. We receive a rich welcome into a new heavens and earth because Jesus died and rose again for us.

'reward' (Colossians 3:24) – our reward will be more opportunities to serve when Jesus returns! For further info see: Matthew 25:14–30.

Glossary

Questions to Answer



1. Work is service to God that blesses everyone and everything.
 - a) What jobs has God given to humanity (see Genesis 1:27–28 and 2:15)?
 - b) Does it surprise you how much responsibility God has given to us?

2. Our work is to reflect God's work, to make the world an amazingly fruitful place! How might the following roles help make the world a place of great blessing?

Role	Makes use of...	To create...
Musician	→ Sound	→ songs that bring joy and comfort
Writer	→ Human experience	→ stories to help make sense of life
Psychologist	→ Mind	→ understanding and happiness in relationships
Carpenter	→ Wood	→
Chef	→ Food	→
Student	→ Education	→
Shop Assistant	→ Products	→
Lawyer	→ Truth	→
Jeweller	→ Precious stones	→
Engineer	→ Maths	→

3. God wants us to be creative in how we bring: goodness, beauty, truth and order into our frontlines. How can you do that: On your course(s)? At home? During the weekend?

4. Read out the following statement from Colossians 3:17 three times, each time emphasising a different word:

'WHATEVER you do' 'Whatever YOU do' 'Whatever you DO'

What part of life has God left out here?

5. a) What difference does it make to your life to do everything with and for Jesus?

b) Chat about what these verses mean for you where you study:

Colossians 3:17, 3:22 (see also 4:5–6), 3:23, 3:24 (see glossary for help)

6. Time to pray. We know that sin means that work is now hard (Genesis 3:19), but Jesus is going to bring everything 'together' again (Colossians 1:20; Ephesians 1:10). Pray for:

→ an increased sense that God is with you on your frontlines

→ eyes to see how your everyday tasks matter and play a part in God's big plans for the world

Recap

We can often think God is only interested in certain areas of our lives, but today we've seen that God is interested in every area of our lives, doing everything through and for Jesus.



Read

Luke 10:25–37

Glossary

'priest' (Luke 10:31) – priests served in various roles in the Temple.

'Levite' (Luke 10:32) – Levites were known for teaching the law of God.

'Samaritan' (Luke 10:33) – Samaritans were people who descended from the Jews and inter-married with other nations. The Jews really did not like them as they viewed Samaritans as half-breeds.

Questions to Answer



1. Jews and Samaritans really didn't like each other. Think about who your difficult 'neighbours' are where you study. What are some of the reasons we find not to minister grace and love to them (like the Priest and Levite)?
2. The expert in the law was right when he said that life is about loving God and loving people as yourself. What does it mean to love like this? (Hint: 1 John 3:16 is a great help!)
3. 'Love your neighbour as yourself.' Think back to Ed's story. What kind of thoughts and feelings would have been going through Ed's heart before he gave Daniel his Freddo? What would loving others as yourself look like in the following situations?

The Situation	How would you love them as yourself?
You notice that another student is always sitting on their own.	
There's a cleaner in your place of education or workplace who everyone ignores.	
A student on your course is really struggling to understand what the teacher has been talking about.	

4. In what ways were the actions of the Samaritan costly to himself? What can it cost us to minister generous love and grace to those on our frontlines?

5. The only way to love God and people like ourselves is to experience God's grace and love in Jesus. In this story, we are like the man who was attacked and Jesus is like the Good Samaritan. Reflect on the story. How does it reveal God's grace and love?

6. Are you up for the £3 challenge?! This week use £3 of your own money to show love and grace to someone on your frontline. You could perhaps: buy someone a bar of chocolate and a drink; or write a card to someone; or pay for their bus ticket home. When they ask "Why?" – tell them about God's grace and love in Jesus.

7. Time to pray:

- ➔ Thank God for his amazing grace and love to us in Jesus!
- ➔ Ask God to help you to 'go and do likewise' with the people you meet wherever you are.
- ➔ Pray for a great opportunity to do the £3 challenge this week and for the words to respond when someone asks you "Why did you do that?"



Recap

We encounter many different people each day and God wants us to share the grace and love that we've received from him, with those we meet.



Session 5

Moulding Culture



Recap

Last week we looked at how God wants us to share his grace and love with those we meet. This week, we're going to take a look at how we can help to *transform* the places where God has called us to live our lives.

Naomi's Story

Naomi had always felt uncomfortable with the way people treated Alice. She would see Alice walking to school on her own, sitting on her own at lunch – nobody really bothered with Alice, except to laugh at her. Everyone just knew Alice as the girl with learning difficulties; the girl who was different.

Naomi kept her feelings to herself and, inevitably, nothing changed.

But then something happened.

Naomi had recently started to follow Jesus and he was starting to change the way she saw the world around her. She began to see Alice through his eyes: yes, there were some things that were different about Alice, but a lot was the same. Just like Naomi, Alice needed love and acceptance. Just like Naomi, Alice had a contribution to make. Just like Naomi, Alice was made in the image of God.

So Naomi did something brave. She began to gently accept Alice into her group of friends. She made sure that Alice walked to school with them, even though she could tell they weren't all happy about it. But over time, Naomi's friends started to chat with Alice too. Amazingly, even when Naomi was ill, they would still walk to school with Alice.

Now, as a result of Naomi's actions, Alice was able to start her day right – in community. By the time she moved on to college, she had gained confidence and was able to make new friends there.

Jesus-shaped kindness had changed Alice's world... and it had changed Naomi's friends too. God's heart for Alice had become contagious. Other people who didn't yet know Jesus were giving of themselves, and they were tasting that his ways are good.

Read

Matthew 5:13–16

'town' (Matthew 5:14) – has more than one person in it! i.e. it describes lots of people together.

'good deeds' (Matthew 5:16) – means beautiful actions.

'In the same way' (Matthew 5:16) – in the same way a lamp is lit to give light in a house, we need to be lit by Jesus so we can give light too. That happens when you become a Christian.

Glossary

Questions to Answer



1. In the last session, we looked at Ministering Grace and Love. How did you get on using the £3 challenge to bless someone on your frontline? How did they react?
2. Culture can be defined as: 'the way we do things round here' e.g. the routines we have; the people we admire; the slogans we repeat; the way people dress and speak. Write down what is good about the culture where you're a student and what is not so good?
3. Jesus says we are 'the salt of the earth' and the 'light of the world' (Matthew 5:13-14)
 - a) What does salt do?
 - b) What does light do?
 - c) Why are salt and light powerful images of who we are as followers of Jesus?
4. Keeping in mind what you wrote down in question 2, what specifically could you do to strengthen what is good and provide a 'salt' and 'light' alternative to what is not so good? Discuss with the person next to you.
5. Read Matthew 5:11-12 and 16. What kinds of reactions can we expect when we let our light shine before others and why?
6. As Christians, having Christ in our lives means we can help to shape the way things are done where we study, work, and live. Naomi's story is a great reminder of that.

God, grant me the serenity [peace] to accept the things I cannot change, the courage to change the things I can, and the wisdom to know the difference.' **Reinhold Niebuhr**

Take a moment to read out and reflect on the famous quote above and then:

- ➔ Thank God for your frontlines.
- ➔ Pray that you will live out who you are as: 'the salt of the earth' and 'the light of the world' there.

Recap

It's easy to think, "Nothing is going to change here". However, we have Jesus, the Light of the world living in us and shining through us! God wants to use us to transform the places where we live our lives.



Session 6

Messenger of the Gospel



Recap

Last week we looked at how we can help transform the places where God has called us to live our lives. This week, we're going to take a look at how God calls us to join him in his mission to *speak out* the incredible news about Jesus!

Kezziah's Story

When you think about 'evangelism', what comes to mind?

...The overseas missionaries that your church supports?

...The last youth outreach event?

...That amazing street team that combine magic tricks with a message?

Well how about Instagram?!

Kezziah had been a Christian for two years now and in that short time she had really grown in her faith. The changes were evident to her friends; her growing confidence where she had once opted for invisibility, a security that seemed to steady her where she had once tried so hard to fit in... but how could she share that it was God's goodness she was experiencing?

She had an idea, but she felt nervous about it. As in – to the pit of your stomach nervous. Questions like 'What if I say something wrong?' and 'What if what I say is taken the wrong way?' kept on buzzing round her head.

Despite that, Kezziah had decided that every day for one whole month she

would post a picture on Instagram with a caption about her testimony with the hashtag #monthforjesus. It was tempting to back out because of her nerves but she wanted her friends to see the depths of what Jesus had done for her, so she asked the Holy Spirit to give her the words to say. She didn't sugar coat anything – this was the real God working in a real life. It was a bold move.

Incredibly, friends started liking her posts and sharing them with other friends who they felt would be helped by her words. One friend started to text Kezziah over an issue that had come up in one of the posts and Kezziah was able to overturn some misconceptions about Christianity this friend had.

Of course there is more than one way to share your faith and you never know how people are going to respond. They might like and share what you say, digitally or otherwise. They may not like what you say and 'unfriend' you, digitally or otherwise. But if the gospel really is good news for everyone, it's worth the risk, isn't it?

Read

Romans 10:13–15; 1 Peter 3:15–16

'evangelism' – to speak/announce the good news (Gospel).

'mystery of Christ' (Colossians 4:3) – is talking about how Christians are united to Jesus: Christ is in you and you are in Christ (Colossians 1:27–28) i.e. God delights in you as he delights in his Son Jesus.

'salt' (Colossians 4:6) – brings out the flavour i.e. the way we speak is to be attractive.

'reason' (1 Peter 3:15) – is giving an answer that is appropriate to the person asking you.

Glossary

Questions to Answer



- We talk about the things we love. We can see that in Kezziah's story.
 - What things do you really love in life (sport, artists, food etc.)?
 - What do you love most about Jesus?
- Christians speak a lot about 'the Gospel' – but what is it? Check out these nutshells:

Bible Passage	What is the Gospel about?
Mark 1:1	→
Romans 6:23	→
1 Peter 3:18	→
1 John 2:2	→

- God loves the people on your frontlines and so he wants them to hear and believe the Gospel. Why do we need to talk about the Gospel? Romans 10:13–15 may help!
- In what ways will we get opportunities to chat about Jesus? Read Colossians 4:2–6.
- We often feel the pressure to be silent when we don't have all the answers.
 - Read 1 Peter 3:15–16. How do these verses help you deal with that pressure?
 - How might you make sure you are 'prepared'?
 - In what ways are we to chat with people wherever we are? See Colossians 4:6 too.
- Who in particular might God be prompting you to reach out to in your place of study?
In pairs, or as a group:
 - Describe that person: what's important to them? What do they believe?
 - How could you bless that person practically in your place of education?
 - How can you best pray for that person? Check out the following:

Verse	How to pray...
Colossians 4:2	→
Colossians 4:3	→
Colossians 4:4	→

- Time to pray. Use what you have learned today to pray for the people you mentioned earlier.

Hammering it home: Why not meet up as a group in a coffee shop this week – after school/college for 30 mins – to reflect on what God has been teaching you about living for Christ on your frontline. Use 'The Journey On' session to help you. Alternatively, take some time to reflect at home and maybe set up a WhatsApp group to chat with one another?

Recap

What an honour – God calls us to join in his mission of speaking out the good news about Jesus on our frontlines! Be praying and looking for opportunities to share the life-giving news of Jesus in the conversations you have on your frontlines.





Reflection

The Journey On

It's always great to reflect on what God's been teaching you – and the questions below are designed to help you do just that!

Personal Reflection

Here's a quick reminder of the different ways we've been exploring how to be fruitful:

- Modelling Godly Character
- Making Good Work
- Ministering Grace and Love
- Moulding Culture
- Messenger of the Gospel



Jot down some thoughts to the following questions as you reflect on how God has been changing the way you see and do things on your frontlines.

1. How do I see my place of education and the people there differently?
2. How do I see myself differently?
3. How do I see God differently?

Group Reflection

1. Spend some time going around each person in the room (or table if you're in a coffee shop!) and share what has been the most significant change in the way you now see things.
2. How might you ensure as a CU that you keep focused on living for Jesus on your frontline at college?

Time to Pray

Read Matthew 28:18–20.

- Thank God that he goes with you by his Spirit wherever you are, empowering you to live for and speak of Jesus!
- Pray into what you've shared with each other.



Find out more at...

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The London Institute for
Contemporary Christianity

www.licc.org.uk/fruitfulness

FESTIVE

Inspiring Students
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Loving FE & Sixth Forms

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Bonus Session

Mouthpiece for Truth and Justice



Recap

We hope you've been enjoying exploring how you can be fruitful on your frontlines so far! Today, we're looking at being a Mouthpiece for Truth and Justice – speaking up for what is right and fair when we see injustices taking place, whether it's: bullying; people being left out and ignored; cheating; unfair selection in a sports team; stealing; gossip; harsh criticism, sexism; or something similar.

Martin's Story

Martin enjoyed working on fruit and veg... there were some perks to his role that you wouldn't find on the tills or on the cheese counter!

For one thing, it was a free work-out (who needs dumbbells when you're re-stocking the Maris Pipers!?) Working Saturdays through Sixth Form College helped to pay for driving lessons too. There was football-talk, fruit puns, and chats about life with other workers that often opened up into deeper conversations.

Everyone knew that Martin was a Christian, but what happened one particular afternoon really put his faith to the test. As Martin did a stock-check, he noticed that the honeydew melons had passed their sell-by date, so he started to remove them from the shop floor. That's when his section manager asked him to peel the stickers off and put them back so they could continue to sell them.

A knot formed in Martin's chest as he felt the pressure to do what he'd been asked.

They were only melons... they were only a little bit out of date... but he knew it wasn't right. He explained that he couldn't do what he'd been asked because it was illegal.

The section manager insisted – and Martin continued to politely but firmly refuse.

The section manager grew increasingly annoyed, Do it because I'm telling you.

But Martin was answering to someone higher than his section manager, and so he calmly reiterated, 'I am not going to do that because it's illegal.'

The section manager walked away, frustrated and cross, but strangely enough, with a greater respect for Martin too.

Standing up for truth, even in the small things, builds our courage to make similar decisions in the big things. Martin's faith had grown through his Saturday job and his section manager had a glimpse of the Kingdom – talk about a fruitful frontline!

Read

David, the King of Israel, had just slept with a woman who wasn't his wife (Bathsheba) and she fell pregnant. Having failed to cover up his sin, King David had Bathsheba's husband Uriah killed, and then he married Bathsheba. 'Phew' he thought, 'I got away with it'. After the baby was born, however, the Lord sent the prophet Nathan to bring David face-to-face with his wrongdoing.

Read 2 Samuel 12:1-13

Glossary

'sinned against the LORD' (2 Samuel 12:13 and Psalm 51:4) – hadn't David sinned against Bathsheba, Uriah and the baby? Yes, but sin is always ultimately against the LORD. The reason anything is wrong against others is because it firstly cuts against who God is in his holy love.

'rebuke' (Proverbs 27:5) – correcting someone because you love them and want the best for them.

'fitting' (Proverbs 10:32) – literally means delightful. We choose our words carefully to fit who we are talking to, so that our words are more likely to be effective.

'aptly' (Proverbs 25:11) – is all about timing. It is good to pray for the right opportunity/moment to speak and not rush in like a bull in a china shop!

Questions to Answer



1. Martin could have come up with quite a few excuses not to speak up for truth and justice. Nathan was in a similar boat. If you were Nathan, what excuses might you have given for not wanting to confront King David?
2. How does Nathan's story (2 Samuel 12:1-4) about the two men (one rich, the other poor) relate to King David and his actions?
3. What does David's reaction (2 Samuel 12:5-6) show us about how we so often view our sin compared with the sin of others?
4. When Nathan speaks the truth to King David, he does it to open up a better future for David – as Jesus says: 'The truth will set you free' (John 8:31-36). What do you think would have happened in King David's life if Nathan had not taken this step of courageous obedience?
5. On our frontlines, we may have been in situations where the person we are talking to says something unkind (whether true or not) about someone else. Are there any strategies you have used in these situations to help you stand up for truth and justice?
6. How do the following Proverbs help you to know when to speak and how to speak?

Proverb	How does it help? (n.b. Glossary may be useful)
Better is open rebuke than hidden love. Wounds from a friend can be trusted, but an enemy multiplies kisses. (Proverbs 27:5-6)	
The lips of the righteous know what is fitting, but the mouth of the wicked only what is perverse. (Proverbs 10:32)	
A word aptly spoken is like apples of gold in settings of silver. (Proverbs 25:11)	

7. Spend a minute in silent reflection thinking about the injustices you see in your place of study. Maybe they include some from the list we mentioned at the start of today's session: bullying; people being left out and ignored; cheating; unfair selection in a sports team; stealing; gossip; harsh criticism, sexism etc.

Is the Holy Spirit bringing one particular thing to your attention? Like Nathan, might there be things that God is prompting you to do about this and is there any particular wisdom you may need?

Share your reflections in pairs or as a group and pray together

