




SISTERHOOD LOUNGE ROOM


From our lounge room to yours

Christian Women in Leadership Part 1 (Stories)




We are so excited you are joining us for this month's Sisterhood Lounge Room. In this episode Julie, Emma, Mary, and Rose discuss Christian women leadership with a focus on their personal stories. In Part 2, they talk about their key leadership revelations and learnings – so much gold here! As you watch this episode, we have highlighted the key scriptures, thoughts shared, as well as a few questions you can use in discussion with your group, or in your own personal devotions ...enjoy.

“For the Spirit God gave us does not make us timid, but gives us power, love and self-discipline.” - 2 Timothy 1:7



Julie began this episode by sharing that a women's qualification into leadership doesn't come via a certain background, educational status, personality type, or 'God mould'. To lead is to influence and we are all called to influence others to know Christ. If you are a mother at home, you lead the atmosphere for your family. In the board room, you lead with integrity and a godly life. In friendship groups we can lead by not participating in gossip and conducting ourselves with godliness. One of the most powerful ways we lead is by our personal example. It's not so much about what we say, but rather about what we do.

In seasons of frustration and the unseen, God is often preparing us for what he has ahead, and he won't waste anything.



Julie invited Emma, the CEO and founder of the Princess Project, to share how it came about. Emma explained that The Princess Project was birthed during the season that she was a new mum herself and working in an outreach project. She encountered teenage mums and was struck by the lack of support systems that these young women had compared to herself. What began as a befriending service now runs in multiple locations nationwide providing support to disadvantaged mums.


Emma explained that prior to this she had graduated from Cambridge and worked as a veterinary surgeon. She bravely traded this to go full time with The Princess Project at God's prompt. She received many mixed reactions, and felt totally ill-equipped, inadequate, and often questioned if she had heard God correctly. But God kindly only showed her one tiny bit of the path at a time. If she had seen all that lay ahead, she would have been too afraid to start.

Emma discovered that every time she said yes to God and saw his faithfulness in action, it got easier! She said that running with a God-given vision is primarily about trust and obedience and saying yes to God even when it's terrifying. And when we rely on God in this way, he gets all the glory!

Q - Have you felt inadequate, ill-equipped, and unqualified to step out at God's prompt or a new venture? What did you do? What could you have done better?

Q - Have you ever questioned truly hearing from God correctly? If so, what kept you staying trustful and obedient?

Q - What small steps of courage do you need to take in your leadership?



I will say to God, "You are my mountain of strength; how could you ever forget me?"
Psalms 42:9 (TPT)

Julie invited Mary to share her story. Mary was born in Nigeria and moved with her family to the UK when she was young. She explained that she always felt behind in life, in education, work, and elsewhere. In her late 20s she joined church staff working on the events team, and advancing to run events in Wembley and the O2 arena until covid bought these to an end. Mary was then asked to consider transitioning to a pastoral role, and then ultimately asked to become the location pastor for our SE London location. This was not on her radar, and it felt bigger than anything she had ever been asked to do. She cried and argued with God that she was completely unqualified. God persisted and asked her to just trust him and do her best. This she could do!

Mary explained that as she was so out of her comfort zone, that full reliance on God has not been optional and that He has proved faithful to equip and enable her, even in her daily steps, whilst still sometimes feeling inadequate. She reflected that everything she has been through and learned in life has not been wasted: God is masterfully using all - the pain and the good, and that she has experienced God's delight in her full reliance on Him.

Q - Can you relate to Mary's story of being confident in one ability but then called into another and feeling unqualified?

Q - When have you experienced vulnerability in your leadership ability?

Q - To what measure are you self-reliant and God-reliant? Where do you need to let go and trust God?

"A man's gift, given in love or courtesy, makes room for him and brings him before great men."
Proverbs 18:16

Rose shared her story which started with a fast lane career in the communications industry, but when she moved to London, she stopped working to stay at home and raise her young children. Rose shared that it was a difficult transition because her identity was wrapped up in her abilities in work. Throughout her maternity leave she continually looked for a way back into the corporate world, applying for multiple roles, but every door closed.

God finally brought her to a breaking point of surrender when she broke into tears at the kitchen sink one day. In her emptied state she could hear God speak and he asked her: "What's in your hand? She had an abandoned book manuscript. Rose embraced the unexpected, listened to the God whisper, and wrote her first novel. Her book went to number one on KOBOL and remained so for weeks! The book provided unexpected opened doors where she was then approached to work for Harper Collins Publishing. She experienced great success doubling the business revenue of the division she leads. She additionally launched the HarperCollins Author and Design Academy to assist underrepresented writers in achieving success in publishing, and she speaks on publishing platforms across the country, including Oxford University. She has since published a further five books.

Rose concluded by saying that God revealed her misplaced identity through emptying her, then used the small thing that was in her hand, to open a door for something new. She attributes her success to knowing who and whose you truly are.

"What no eye has seen, what no ear has heard, and what no human mind has conceived - the things God has prepared for those who love him."

1 Corinthians 2:9

Q - Have you been in a frustrating season of closed doors? What might God be trying to show you or prepare you for?

Q - What might you be trying to do your own way that it's now time to try doing God's way?

Q - What is in your hand right now?

Julie concluded that just as happened in these women's lives, God calls ordinary women to reliance and obedience to him, that He may do extraordinary things in and through them. This is the same for each of us.

Prayer:

God, thank you that you have created each of us uniquely and for a purpose. Please help us remember that anything significant you do in and through our lives is entirely dependent on your presence in our lives. Help us to grow in our reliance, obedience, and love for you, and in our service and love for others, that your name may be glorified.

Amen.