

# LEADER GUIDE — FORMED BY THE GOSPEL

## SESSION 2:2 | THE BODY

---

### Overview for Leaders

This session centers on Colossians 1:15–20, Ephesians 4:11–16, and Colossians 2:18–19. Paul shows the church is not merely an organization or a gathering around shared values, but the Body of Christ under Jesus as Head. Christ’s authority is cosmic and practical: He gives the church direction, equips it through leaders, matures it through the ministry of every member, and keeps it growing as it remains connected to Him. This session guards against two dangers: 1) suspicion of authority, and 2) passivity, speculation, or division that disconnects people from Christ and His Body.

### Big Idea

The church is the Body of Christ, united under Jesus as our living Head. His authority gives the church direction, leaders equip the saints, and every member contributes as the Body grows in truth and love.

### Your Role as Leader

Create space for people to process authority honestly, especially if they carry wounds from flawed, self-serving, or harmful authority. Keep pointing back to the character of Jesus’ authority: crucified, risen, supreme, and life-giving. Help the group see that Christ’s headship does not create passivity, it creates participation. Leaders equip, saints minister, every part matters, and maturity happens as the whole Body stays connected to Christ and builds itself up in love.

### Session Flow – *Adjust as Needed*

- Icebreaker
- Scripture Engagement (reading + context)
- Discussion (10 questions) — 40–45 min
- Application Challenge — 5 min
- Prayer & Reflection — 10 min
- Announcements — 2 min

### Key Scriptures

- Colossians 1:15–20
- Ephesians 4:11–16
- Colossians 2:18–19
- 1 Corinthians 12:12–27
- Romans 12:4–8
- 1 Peter 4:10–11

## LEADER NOTES, GROUP QUESTIONS, & COMMENTARY

*(Use these notes to frame discussion and connect themes)*

**Icebreaker** Purpose – Surface assumptions about authority, trust, dependence, and how the Body functions together. Suggested options:

- What is one part of the human body you rarely think about until it stops working?
- When you hear the word “authority,” what feelings or experiences tend to come up first?

### DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

#### 1. **The Head of the Body** – Read: Colossians 1:15–20

Question: *How does Paul describe Jesus’ supremacy, and why does this matter before we talk about the church as His Body?*

Leader Insight: Jesus is not a symbolic head, local leader, or teacher we merely admire. He is Creator, Sustainer, Redeemer, and Head of the church. The kind of Head determines the kind of Body.

Cue: Begin with worship before church mechanics. Let the passage enlarge the group’s view of Jesus.

#### 2. **More Than a Metaphor** – Read: Colossians 1:18

Question: *What difference does it make that Jesus is not merely a teacher we admire, but the Head of the church?*

Leader Insight: The Head gives direction, identity, purpose, and coordination. The church belongs to Jesus, so He defines how the Body moves and works.

Cue: Draw out practical implications for preferences, decisions, unity, and mission.

#### 3. **Cross-Shaped Authority** – Read: Colossians 1:19–20; Mark 10:42–45

Question: *How does Jesus’ cross-shaped authority challenge our assumptions about power, leadership, and trust?*

Leader Insight: Jesus’ authority is not self-serving. It was established through the cross and vindicated in the resurrection, which means His authority gives life rather than taking it.

Cue: Handle authority wounds tenderly. Do not dismiss pain; re-center trust on the character of Christ.

#### 4. **Leaders Equip, Saints Minister** – Read: Ephesians 4:11–13

Question: *According to Paul, why does Christ give leaders to His church? How is that different from leadership that controls or performs everything?*

Leader Insight: Leaders are gifts from Christ to equip the saints, not replace them. Healthy leadership strengthens the Body so the whole church grows toward maturity.

Cue: Guard against both leader cynicism and celebrity-church passivity.

### **5. From Passive Crowd to Participating Body** – Read: Eph. 4:12; 1 Peter 4:10–11

Question: *What does it mean that the saints are equipped for works of service? Where do you see yourself tempted to be passive in the Body?*

Leader Insight: Under Christ's headship, ministry is distributed across the whole Body. The goal is not a few strong leaders and a passive crowd, but every member serving.

Cue: Move from vague guilt to one concrete next step.

### **6. Growing Up Together** – Read: Ephesians 4:13–16

Question: *What does Christian maturity look like in this passage? Why can't we grow into that maturity alone?*

Leader Insight: Maturity looks like unity in the faith, knowledge of Christ, stability, love, and each part doing its work. We need the whole Body to grow up and be built up.

Cue: Emphasize dependence, not weakness. No lone rangers in the Body of Christ.

### **7. Truth in Love** – Read: Ephesians 4:15

Question: *The manuscript says "speaking the truth in love" is more than blunt correction. How should truth and love shape the way the Body relates to one another?*

Leader Insight: Paul's phrase carries the idea of living or practicing the truth. Truth guards the church from error; love guards the church from arrogance. Taken together, the Body grows.

Cue: Challenge both loveless truth and truthless love. Keep the Gospel central.

### **8. Every Part Matters** – Read: Ephesians 4:16; 1 Corinthians 12:12–27

Question: *Why does every member matter in the Body of Christ? What happens when some parts stop doing their work?*

Leader Insight: The Body grows as each part does its work. No member is insignificant, and no member is meant to carry the whole Body alone.

Cue: Help people name ordinary contributions: presence, prayer, encouragement, hospitality, generosity, service.

**9. Disconnected from the Head** – Read: Colossians 2:18–19

Question: *What kinds of “puffed-up” or overly spiritual distractions can pull people away from holding fast to Christ the Head?*

Leader Insight: Speculation, prideful spirituality, and fascination with minor things may sound humble or impressive but fail to strengthen the Body or lead people back to Christ.

Cue: Keep this non-gossipy. Talk about categories and temptations, not specific people.

**10. Holding Fast to Christ** – Read: Colossians 2:19; Ephesians 4:15–16

Question: *What would it look like for our group and church to stay more visibly connected to Christ as the Head this week?*

Leader Insight: Connection to Christ produces direction, purpose, life, unity, and ministry in love. The church grows from the Head as God causes it to grow.

Cue: Land the plane with concrete practices: prayer, Scripture, obedience, service, reconciliation, and humility.

## **APPLICATION**

*(Leader Version)*

**Application Focus:** This application is about examining how we relate to Christ as the Head and to one another as members of His Body. The goal is not vague inspiration or guilt-driven busyness, but one concrete act of staying connected to Jesus and building up His people in love.

**Leader Tip:** Ask: “What is one concrete way this week you will stay connected to Christ the Head and build up His Body in love?”

### **Examples:**

- **Submission:** Surrendering one preference, fear, or opinion to Jesus’ authority
- **Participation:** Serving, encouraging, or initiating instead of consuming passively
- **Truth and Love:** Practicing truth in a way that is humble, patient, and clear
- **Unity:** Moving toward someone in the Body rather than pulling away in frustration
- **Discernment:** Letting go of a distracting issue that does not lead back to Christ or build up people
- **Equipping:** Receiving leadership as a gift without making leaders do all the ministry

### **Group Prayer Time at End:**

- Worship of Christ as the supreme and living Head
- Healing for those who carry wounds from unhealthy authority
- Humility to receive Christ’s order for His church
- Courage for every member to do their part in love
- Protection from error, arrogance, distraction, and passivity

Close with: “Jesus, You are the Head of the Body. Keep us connected to You. Teach us to receive Your authority, serve one another in love, and grow together into Your fullness. Amen.”

### **Leader Follow-Up Midweek**

1. **Stay Connected:** Ask how they are holding fast to Christ through Scripture, prayer, and obedience.
2. **Do Your Part:** Invite one specific act of service, encouragement, hospitality, or reconciliation.
3. **Gospel Reframe:** Remind them that the Body grows from the Head, not from pressure, hype, or speculation.