

Pilots Worship Resources 2016



Roots and Foundations



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Introduction

Roots and Foundations

‘ So then, just as you received Christ Jesus as Lord, continue to live your lives in him, rooted and built up in him, strengthened in the faith as you were taught, and overflowing with thankfulness. ’

Colossians 2:6-7

Trees need roots. Buildings need foundations. Human beings, it seems, need both. Everyone needs something to keep at the centre of their existence, something to guide and influence their lives, just as a house needs a foundation centre to keep it upright. From that foundation, we can gain the inspiration, energy and support we need to grow and develop, as a tree does, taking nutrients from the soil from its roots.

In offering a great mixture of Bible stories, games, activities, crafts and ideas, this resource seeks to help Pilots companies, as well as other children's and youth groups, to explore what it means for humans to have roots and foundations. These pages will also address the importance of keeping God at the centre of our lives and accepting the Lord's guidance in all we do. Serving God is not something we can easily do alone, however. As such, these materials will also consider the need for all God's people to work together in bringing about the peace, understanding and love to which we are all called.



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Aims of the pack:

to give Pilots the chance to explore the theme more deeply

to look at stories in both the Old and New Testaments of the Bible

to help Pilots get to know each other and to know God better

to give everyone the chance to worship together and pray with and for each other



Introduction

These materials contain resources which can be used:

- **as part of your normal Pilots programme**
- **at a local weekend Pilots Camp**
- **as a theme for a Pilots Away Day**

There is enough material within this resource for several sessions, each focusing on different aspects of the theme. All the sessions and theme ideas lead towards the worship that Pilots are encouraged to lead in the local church.

Please remember that this resource is here to offer suggestions and you should feel free to use your own ideas or re-shape the ones offered here. You may wish to re-organise the material in a way that better suits your Pilots, their ages and interests. It is hoped that, through their understanding of the theme, Pilots and their leaders will feel empowered to lead others in worship.

How to use these Materials

The resource has been designed to run alongside your existing Pilots programme. It is for you to decide how best to use this resource with your own Pilots and how much time they will need to reach the point of feeling comfortable enough to lead worship.

Be aware of:

- **whether or not your Pilots regularly lead or participate in worship**
- **your Pilots' level of familiarity and comfort in your church's worship area**
- **your Pilots' confidence levels in leading and facilitating worship**

Your understanding of these three points will help you plan the time-scale needed to prepare for the worship. Be fair to yourselves as leaders and offer your Pilots the best environment for learning and growing.

Before working on the material in the sessions, spend some time thinking about the worship (see Section 6). Begin by thinking about why it is that this experience

of worship is going to be shared. What does it hope to achieve? What will this worship do for those who join in as well as those who will lead it? If you can answer these types of questions, then you will be in a much better place to decide what you would like to do during worship.

Once you have an idea of the context in which your worship will take place and what you hope will happen as a result of it, consider some of the more practical aspects about what you'd like to include specifically in your worship, such as:

- **a drama**
- **a script for a sketch written by Pilots**
- **dramatised Bible readings**
- **prayers written by Pilots**
- **a new hymn to teach or old hymn to learn**
- **a display of artwork created by Pilots**

Whatever content is chosen for worship, preparation time will need to be incorporated into your weekly session programme. The Notes on Planning Worship section will give more guidance on this. The 'Resources' part of Section 6 provides contact details, web sites and suggestions for hymns and prayers. Where there is a direct relationship with the session theme, some of the above are identified in the individual sessions.

It is suggested that you use the material with a 'pick 'n' mix' approach, using enough theme material for the Pilots to really get to grips with the concept but also keeping a flexibility depending on their abilities and interests. The suggestions given in this resource may trigger other thoughts and ideas on the theme so use them as you see fit. It is always good to play to strengths. Involve your Pilots in the planning of the worship and the structuring of the theme work where appropriate. Voyagers and Navigators in particular will enjoy the involvement.

Remember, you don't have to do it all!

Introduction

Format of Resources

To aid your use of the materials, each section has similar elements within it. These are:

The Focus

A brief introduction to the content covered in the section.

Gathering Activity

A short activity or discussion to get the group going.

Read the word

Explore a Bible story together and think about what God might be saying to us through Scripture.

Games

A chance for the group to move around, play together and have some fun.

Craft

Get creative about the topic of the session with things to do and make.

Pray about it

Some ways to pray about the things you've explored together.

Voyagers and Navigators

Something for older Pilots to get involved with.

Something Different

A challenge to do something you might not normally do in relation to the topic in question.



Section 1 - Trees



The Focus

This section will explore the unique nature of individual trees and how they come to grow in such different ways. Plants and trees need good roots and good soil to grow strong and stay healthy. God compares human beings to trees, something we can learn great lessons from. Things may not always work out as we plan, but God knows what we're facing and will always lead us to where we need to be. That's why we must be sure to root ourselves firmly in the foundation which God provides for us.

Gathering Activity

Have the Pilots pretend they are seeds, planted deep in the ground, curled up on the floor with their hands and knees tucked in. It is very dark and cold, but they start to break through and sprout, slowly lifting their heads as they uncurl. They push through the darkness of the soil and see daylight, but they are firmly rooted into the soil, standing up and reaching out, but not moving from their spot. They grow bigger and stronger each day until finally they produce a flower, stretched right up, happily swaying in the wind, waving their arms from side to side.

Read the word

Explore Jeremiah 17:5-8 together:

'This is what the Lord says:

"Cursed is the one who trusts in man,
who draws strength from mere flesh
and whose heart turns away from the Lord.

That person will be like a bush in the wastelands;
they will not see prosperity when it comes.

They will dwell in the parched places of the desert,
in a salt land where no one lives.

"But blessed is the one who trusts in the Lord,

whose confidence is in him. They will be like a tree
planted by the water

that sends out its roots by the stream.

It does not fear when heat comes;
its leaves are always green.

It has no worries in a year of drought
and never fails to bear fruit."

Section 1 - Trees

Prepare two bowls or paddling pools, one filled with sand and the other with water.

Read verses 5 and 6 whilst gathered round the sand.

Has anyone been in a desert? What are they like? Can anything grow in a desert? Deserts are very dry places. There is no soil, just sand and, even at that, the sand is very fine, meaning, quite simply, that trees cannot grow there. They would just dry up like twigs. Tumbleweeds, which can often be found in the desert, blow around in the wind until they find a suitable place to grow. They may be in the desert, but even they can't survive in it. God doesn't want us to be a tree in the desert.

Read verses 7 and 8 whilst gathered around the water.

The Bible says that, if we trust in God, we will be like a tree planted by the water. What might a tree which grows by water look like? Would it be big and strong? Why would this be? Trees need water, not just to survive, but to grow and develop. Water helps to release nutrients from soil in the ground. The nutrients then give the tree energy to grow leaves, which, in turn, let them gain more energy from the sun. Even if the tree were growing in a place as hot as a desert, it would still be alright, because it would have access to water and good soil. Ask the Pilots which tree would you like to be? What type of tree does God want us to be How can we place our trust in Jesus so that we will be rooted firmly in God?

Games

In the Pond, On the Bank – Place a rope or line across the floor. One side of the rope/line is the 'Pond', the other is the 'Bank' and the rope/line itself is the 'Bridge'. When the leader shouts, 'In the Pond', the Pilots must jump, with both feet together, into the 'pond' without touching the 'bridge'. The same works, vice-versa, for 'On the Bank'. If the leader shouts, 'Bridge', then the Pilots must jump, both feet together onto the 'bridge' and balance, with both feet, on it. Any Pilots who fail to keep their feet together whilst jumping, or end up in the wrong spot after jumping, will be out.

Trees – Assign a different type of tree (e.g. Oak, Beech, Pine, Willow) to each corner of the room. Have the Pilots run round in the centre of the room and, when the leader, facing away from the group, shouts 'Stop', all Pilots should run to a corner. The leader then calls out a type of tree and all the Pilots standing in the corresponding corner are out.

Craft



Handprint Trees – Ask Pilots to make imprints of their hands using different colours of paint. Then either draw a trunk at the bottom of the imprint to create a tree, or use all of the Pilots' handprints to make one large tree.

Leaf Rubbings – Place leaves under pieces of paper and ask the Pilots to rub the design of the leaves onto the paper using wax crayons. By adding eyes and a mouth, the Pilots could turn their imprint into a hedgehog or other animal or insect.

Section 1 - Trees

Pray about it

Before praying, give each Pilot a stick. No two sticks are the same. Even if one comes from the very same tree as another, they will not be the same. They are all different because they all grew in different circumstances.

The sticks which the Pilots are holding represent every one of us. Like trees and branches, we too are unique. We all have different lives, different families, different joys, different worries, but God creates and loves every single one of us and wants us to live life to its fullest potential.

As the Pilots finish praying, invite them to place their sticks together. We are all different, but we are all united in the love of God. This we must always remember, especially when times are challenging or painful. We are never alone.

Dear Lord

Thank you for trees, big trees and little trees, apples trees and orange trees.

Thank you for roots which help trees to grow.

Help us all to look after the environment, recycle and save paper to help protect trees.

Help those who look after trees, working in parks and gardens, caring for green spaces.

Help us to be good, strong trees ourselves, learning, praying and serving all we can.

In your precious name we ask these things,

AMEN.

Voyagers and Navigators

Have a look at the story of 'The Three Trees', a tale of three trees with big dreams which end up doing entirely different things to what they originally hoped. You can watch a video of the story at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=z5qRzTOpOnk>

Does anyone have a story or experience of a tree being knocked or blown down? What things in your life haven't gone as planned? How did you deal with the situation? Has/can anything positive come out of it? What is God really calling you to do with your gifts and talents?

Something Different

Organise a walk around your local area or park to observe different types of trees. Try to identify them and take photos of them. Can the group see any roots? How far do they go? What makes each tree different? Encourage the group to find out more about the different types of tree you find on your adventure. Visit www.woodlandtrust.org.uk for more advice and information.

Visit www.christianaidcollective.org and www.christianaid.org.uk/climate for more information on the fight against climate change, including the protection of trees and plants.



Section 2 - Stones



The Focus

This section will explore the importance of foundations in buildings and how we need to watch our own foundations too. In times of trouble, neither a building nor a person will be able to remain standing unless they have a strong grounding. For buildings, this means strong, steady, firm rock. For people, this means a strong, steady, firm God. The parable of the wise and foolish men will be explored here, demonstrating that the Lord is a foundation which will never change and will always remain solid, whatever problems or worries may darken our path.

Gathering Activity

Buildings have foundation stones which are laid at the beginning of the building process. They are the starting point from which everything else will arise. Quite often, they are inscribed with messages and information about when building commenced, who was present and what people hoped the building would achieve.

Does the building in which you meet have a foundation stone? If so, challenge the Pilots to look for it. What information can they find about the building?

If there is no visible foundation stone, or if you feel an additional activity is needed, challenge the Pilots, in groups or Watches, to build towers using toy building bricks. The group or Watch which is able to build the tallest tower wins. In order to make their towers tall, the Pilots will need to ensure that they build strong foundations.



Section 2 – Stones

Read the word

The Two Builders

Explore Matthew 7:24-29 together:

“Therefore everyone who hears these words of mine and puts them into practice is like a wise man who built his house on the rock. The rain came down, the streams rose, and the winds blew and beat against that house; yet it did not fall, because it had its foundation on the rock. But everyone who hears these words of mine and does not put them into practice is like a foolish man who built his house on sand. The rain came down, the streams rose, and the winds blew and beat against that house, and it fell with a great crash.”

When Jesus had finished saying these things, the crowds were amazed at his teaching, because he taught as one who had authority, and not as their teachers of the law.’

To be wise or have wisdom is not about how smart we are, or how much we know, but more about how we use the gifts, talents and tools which the Lord gives us as we seek to serve God’s purposes. How we build on this foundation which God has given us is a decision we must make very carefully.

When we obey God’s will for our lives, Jesus says that we are like a wise man who built his house on a rock. When the rain comes and the streams rise, the winds grow and beat against the house, it doesn’t fall down because it has a strong foundation to stand on. For the house, this is the rock. For us, this is the word, will and call of God for our lives.

10 However, Jesus goes on to say that those who recognise God’s gifts and calling, but don’t use them effectively, are like a foolish man who builds his house on sand. When the rain comes and the streams rise, the winds grow and beat against the house, it simply collapses because it doesn’t have anything at its core to hold it up against the forces which push, pull and batter it.

For example, it’s all very well knowing that God wants us to love our neighbour, but if we ignore someone who’s being bullied in the playground, then we cannot claim to truly love those around us. In this case, the innocent person will suffer and people won’t be able to trust us as we, too, will have become a victim of the bullies, fearful of what they might do to us. Everything we claim to believe in will crumble from under our feet, just like sand.

However, if we decide to do something about the bullying, such as telling a teacher or an adult we trust, we prevent the innocent person from suffering by taking the bullies’ opportunities away. In doing something, we can be a beacon of hope for those in a vulnerable position. This is perhaps a more difficult path to take, but it is very important that we do so, for, in using the foundation which God has given us with due care and diligence, we can make the world around us better, both for ourselves and others.

We know that God is the maker of everything. The Lord made us and knows what’s best for us. When God gives us work to do and gifts to use, it’s not simply to boss us around and tell us what to do but to help us be the best people we can be.

If we build our lives on the strong foundation of God’s gifts and calling, we will always have the wisdom and strength we need when situations around us are difficult to handle. What would you rather be, foolish or wise?

Games

Musical Rocks (Statues) – Play some music for the Pilots to dance to. When the music stops, Pilots must stand perfectly still in whatever position they were in when the music stopped. Any Pilot who moves out of position is out. The last remaining Pilot wins.

Rock Ladders – In pairs, Pilots should sit in a line on the floor with their feet touching their partner’s feet. Each pair should be parallel with the others to form a ‘ladder’. Assign each pair with a rock-related word (e.g. stone, pebble, brick, blocks, sandstone). When a word is called out, the corresponding pair must race each other to the top of the ‘ladder’, run round the back of the participants on their side of the room and sit down back in their place. The first Pilot to sit back down wins a point for their side. The side with the most points at the end wins.

Section 2 – Stones

Craft

Inspiring Stones/Pet Rocks. Find smooth, flat or round rocks. Be sure to clean off any dirt or sand and dry completely before starting. Ask the Pilots to decorate the rocks with acrylic paints. They could either create 'inspiring rocks' by painting words and pictures of the things which form their own, personal foundations, or 'pet rocks' using googly eyes, yarn for hair, etc.

The house that Pilots built – Write the word 'God' on a large sheet of paper and place it on a steady, flat surface. Invite the Pilots to use the bricks, representing themselves and those they love, to build a house on top of the sheet of paper. When the building is complete, the house will have a foundation representing God, even if we can't see that this is the case, with the bricks representing the Pilots and those close to them. Just as the house needs its foundation and its bricks to stand, so we need God and each other. To enhance the image, ask Pilots to write their own name or the names of loved ones on bricks, or on sticky paper which can be attached to the bricks.

Voyagers and Navigators

It's all very well to talk of God being our rock and foundation, but it can be very hard to accept this when so many other temptations stand in the way.

Ask Voyagers and Navigators to think about some of the negative foundations which people so often build, believing them to be good (e.g. material goods, alcohol, drugs, gangs.).

Why do people turn to these things? How might people avoid letting these things rule their lives? What help is available for those in need of support?

Firm foundations won't take away your problems, but they will help to shield you against the elements. Even if the building on top of them isn't perfect, it is likely to, at the very least, remain upright through wind and rain.

In the same way, having Jesus at the centre of your life doesn't make you perfect, nor does it stop trouble from coming, but it does offer you the best possible chance of getting through whatever you have to face. Serving God may be a difficult task, but it always leads to health and fulfilment, unlike many of the other foundations, which simply crumble away when the going gets really tough.

This is why foundations are especially important, both in buildings and in our own lives.

Pray about it

Offer this prayer:

God,

You are our foundation.

Thank you that we can trust in you, whatever we're facing, especially during difficult times.

Thank you that you never change and that your promises are always true.

You have never promised us an easy life, but you do promise to be our strength and shield when we need it. You are our rock and we can rely on you.

As we go about our lives, when we see rocks, mountains, pebbles and stones we ask you to help us remember that you are always helping and guiding us.

Bless us, in your service,

AMEN.

Something Different

Whatever the weather, or place you find yourself in, why not organise a sandcastle competition? See who can build the biggest structures. Sand can be difficult to work with as it can easily crumble and fall, especially under pressure. It's still a lot of fun though.



Section 3 – Growing In Faith?

Leaders' Information

Rooting oneself in any foundation, whatever it may be, takes a lot of commitment, energy and focus. The process involves making an exceptionally deep connection with something, so that your whole life will be shaped by it. It's not something people do on a whim. They have to be sure that the foundation is right before they'll take the plunge and make it the centre of their life.

This section will explore what it means to truly have God as our foundation, how this can help to develop our faith into something which will allow us to reach our full potential and how we can help others to recognise the relevance and importance of welcoming God into one's heart, mind and soul.

Read the word

Saul's Conversion

Explore Acts 9:1-22 together:

'Meanwhile, Saul was still breathing out murderous threats against the Lord's disciples. He went to the high priest and asked him for letters to the synagogues in Damascus, so that if he found any there who belonged to the Way, whether men or women, he might take them as prisoners to Jerusalem. As he neared Damascus on his journey, suddenly a light from heaven flashed around him. He fell to the ground and heard a voice say to him, "Saul, Saul, why do you persecute me?"

"Who are you, Lord?" Saul asked.

"I am Jesus, whom you are persecuting," he replied. "Now get up and go into the city, and you will be told what you must do."

The men traveling with Saul stood there speechless; they heard the sound but did not see anyone. Saul got up from the ground, but when he opened his eyes he could see nothing. So they led him by the hand into Damascus. For three days he was blind, and did not eat or drink anything.

In Damascus there was a disciple named Ananias. The Lord called to him in a vision, "Ananias!"

"Yes, Lord," he answered.

The Lord told him, "Go to the house of Judas on Straight Street and ask for a man from Tarsus named Saul, for he is praying. In a vision he has seen a man named Ananias come and place his hands on him to restore his sight."

"Lord," Ananias answered, "I have heard many reports about this man and all the harm he has done to your



holy people in Jerusalem. And he has come here with authority from the chief priests to arrest all who call on your name."

But the Lord said to Ananias, "Go! This man is my chosen instrument to proclaim my name to the Gentiles and their kings and to the people of Israel. I will show him how much he must suffer for my name."

Then Ananias went to the house and entered it. Placing his hands on Saul, he said, "Brother Saul, the Lord—Jesus, who appeared to you on the road as you were coming here—has sent me so that you may see again and be filled with the Holy Spirit." Immediately, something like scales fell from Saul's eyes, and he could see again. He got up and was baptized, and after taking some food, he regained his strength.

Saul spent several days with the disciples in Damascus. At once he began to preach in the synagogues that Jesus is the Son of God. All those who heard him were astonished and asked, "Isn't he the man who raised havoc in Jerusalem among those who call on this name?"

Section 3 – Growing In Faith?

And hasn't he come here to take them as prisoners to the chief priests?" Yet Saul grew more and more powerful and baffled the Jews living in Damascus by proving that Jesus is the Messiah.'

In this story, Saul starts off as the enemy. In fact, Saul's main goal in life was to make things as difficult as possible for Jesus' followers, persecuting, maiming and even killing them.

Yet, after years of deep hatred, within the space of three to four days, Saul completely changes his outlook, coming to understand that Jesus is not the dangerous rebel he originally thought Him to be, but is, truly, the Messiah, the son of God. Saul even changes his name, to Paul, to complete the transformation. This is not something someone would do lightly.

Ask Pilots why they think Saul took such a massive step?

Saul knew all about Jesus. He had heard about the work which Jesus was doing, especially amongst the poorest and most vulnerable in society, yet, despite this insight, he still believed Jesus to be a dangerous rebel who caused nothing but trouble.

Saul's attitude towards Jesus isn't too surprising, as Jesus wasn't like any of the other teachers and preachers which were to be encountered throughout the land. He wasn't trying to swindle people out of their money or promote a violent revolution. He spent his time amongst the poor and destitute, talking about love, forgiveness and peace.



He upset the order of things in a most peculiar way. This made Him very strange indeed, and strange people are not to be trusted!

It wasn't enough for Saul to hear about Jesus. He needed something much more radical. He needed to see for himself the power of God and its relevance for his life.

Consequently, God wanted to appear directly to Saul in an effort to win him over, and so asked the very faithful and committed believer, Ananias, to help. However, Ananias didn't want to be part of it. He knew of Saul and the terrible things he had done to Jesus' followers. Why should he want to help an enemy like Saul?

God is clear, though, in telling Ananias that he must help, because God has plans for Saul's life which must be revealed to him.

When God finally did appear to Saul, the results were extraordinary. Not only did Saul come to recognise the presence and relevance of God in his own life, but also changed his whole identity, turning his back on his previous life of terror and violence, seeking, instead, to be part of God's plan for peace, justice and compassion for all.

Ask the Pilots what happens when they tell people about Jesus. How do people respond to stories about Him? Do they easily accept the idea of loving enemies and turning the other cheek? How do the Pilots respond when challenged about their faith?

As with the story of Saul, people in our own time can often find it difficult to recognise the relevance of God for their lives, and no matter how much we may tell them about the power of Jesus and how good it is to accept him into your heart, they won't find it any easier to accept.

When they get a chance to encounter God for themselves, however, things can be quite different. When they see people standing up for the oppressed and bullied, or giving to those less fortunate than themselves, or being kind to someone who wasn't kind to them, or feeling a sense of peace because they were able to forgive someone who wronged them, people take notice. People see that something is different. People see the relevance of God's will in action and often want to incorporate it into their own lives.

In all that we do, we must seek to show those around us that the love of God and the relevance of having Jesus in our lives is not just a nice story, but a real, living reality which, as Jeremiah in the Old Testament puts it, gives us 'hope and a future'.



Section 3 – Growing In Faith?

Games

Stuck in the Mud (Tag/Tig) – The aim of the game is to run around whilst trying to avoid the person who is 'it'. If a Pilot is touched by the person who is 'it', then they must stand perfectly still with their arms out. Other Pilots can free them by running under their arms. Pilots can take it in turns to be 'it'.

Pyramids – Taking appropriate health and safety precautions, help the Pilots to build different human towers. Each Pilot should be encouraged to play a part, whether it's providing a foundation at the bottom of the pyramid or sitting on someone's shoulders to make it taller. See how many different shapes and formations the Pilots can come up with.

Craft

Family Photo Frame – The people close to us play a significant role in providing the foundations from which our roots can grow. Ask Pilots to stick a photograph of people they care about to a piece of A4 card, leaving a border round the edge. Provide different crafts materials, such as paint, beads and sequins for the Pilots to decorate the card with. At the end, they will have a family photo frame to take home.

Community Tree – Get everyone working together to create a massive tree model, including roots, trunk, branches, leaves and fruit. See how imaginative the group can be, using as many materials as possible. How big will your tree be?

Pray about it

Give each Pilot a seed to hold. Poppy, mustard or sunflower seeds would be just fine. Ask the Pilots to focus on the seeds as they pray. If possible, you may wish to stand round a tree to provide further focus for prayer.

Dear Lord,

In our hands, we hold a tiny seed. If we plant it, this seed will grow to produce a beautiful tree, flower, fruit or vegetable.

We thank you for all the people who have helped us to get us where we are now.

We thank you that you love us, just as we are.

Help us to learn more about you by talking to you, reading your Word, reaching our full potential, through your presence in our lives.

AMEN.

Voyagers and Navigators

Christians regularly talk about having 'quiet time' with God. What does this mean? Do we actually have to be quiet? Is it important to set specific time aside, or is it possible for us to focus on God in everything we do?

See what 'quiet time' books and resources you can find. How might these help (or hinder) our awareness of God and our ability to grow in our faith?

Something Different

Challenge Pilots to trace their family tree back as far as they can. What did their parents, grandparents, great-grandparents, great-great grandparents...do with their lives. What inspiration can we gain from them? What lessons can we learn from them? Why not ask them to design a poster, detailing their findings?



Section 4 – Fruits From Faith



Leaders' Information

Now that the basic meaning of 'roots' and 'foundations' as concepts have been explored, it's time to think about how we can use these to further develop and strengthen our faith. This section will look at the importance of keeping Jesus at the centre of our lives, as our foundation. It will explore some of the key elements we should use as we seek to reap positive outcomes from our relationship with God. Chief among these are the fruits of the Spirit (Love, Faithfulness, Kindness, Self-Control, Peace, Goodness, Joy, Patience and Gentleness), which can be of huge benefit both ourselves and to those around us.

Gathering Activity

Give each Pilot a grape and ask them to compare it with the others. Although they may look the same from a distance, each grape is different to all the others. Ask the Pilots to compare their grapes, identifying even the tiniest differences between them.

Alone, these grapes may not seem much, but together they can make some very special things. We can crush them to make grape juice or wine. We can dry them out to make raisins.

We can only do this, however, if all the grapes grow well. They are all different to one another, and that's good, but if a grape is rotting or is not yet ripe, it cannot be used to make any of the nice products we can create with grapes.

Remind the Pilots that they are unique in the eyes of God, with their own identity, gifts and talents. This is how God wants it to be. Yet it's only when we work hard to be the best that we can be that we will be of any use, either to ourselves, or others. We must always strive to reach our full potential.

When you've shared this message, eat the grapes together.



Section 4 – Fruits From Faith

Read the word

The True Vine

Explore John 15:1-18 together.

“I am the vine; you are the branches. If you remain in me and I in you, you will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing. If you do not remain in me, you are like a branch that is thrown away and withers; such branches are picked up, thrown into the fire and burned. If you remain in me and my words remain in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be done for you. This is to my Father’s glory, that you bear much fruit, showing yourselves to be my disciples.”

Branches exist to help trees develop. They allow the leaves of trees to reach out towards sources of light so that the tree can convert the light into the energy it needs to grow. However, in exchange for the ability to gain energy through the branch, the tree must first use some of its existing energy, gained from the soil through the roots, to grow the branch. In order for branches to grow and do their important work, the tree must have a firm and healthy foundation.

Once a branch has gained what it needs from the roots, however, only it can choose what direction it will grow in. It is very important that branches grow towards sources of light. If they don’t, the whole tree will suffer, spending valuable energy on developing something which will not be helpful, either to the branch itself, or to the rest of the tree.

When this happens, a gardener will usually try to redirect the branch by turning it towards the light, encouraging it to grow correctly. If this doesn’t work, eventually the gardener will need to cut the branch off as it could damage the rest of the plant.

So it is with humans. God, as our foundations, gives us gifts and talents which will help us to make our own lives, and the lives of others, the best they can possibly be. However, in order to achieve this we have to choose to think, speak and act in ways which follow Jesus’ example, for only then will we be the best we can be.

So, how can we better use the foundation of God to develop fruits from our faith? Here are some things which can help us to deepen our relationship with God and use our relationship with Jesus to achieve great things:

Read God’s Word – The Bible contains many stories, ideas, principles and guidance about how best to build our relationship with God. It is important that we explore it together.

Trust in God – God created each and every one of us and knows us inside out. God will always be there to guide and strengthen us. On this, we can always rely.

Learn to Forgive – It’s not easy to let go of anger and hurt when people do wrong towards us, but it’s very important that we seek to overcome the pain and heartache by handing it over to God, letting it go and giving people a chance to do better next time.

Pray – Talking is good. It helps us to think about things and hear different views. Have a conversation with God. Share your thoughts and feelings, both good and bad. God is always there to hear what you have to say.

Love – The most important of all God’s commands. If we don’t love God, how can God be our foundation? If we don’t love Jesus, how can He be our example? If we don’t love ourselves, how can we be the best we can be? If we don’t love each other, how can we make the world a better place? Love means everything to God. It must mean everything to us too.

In keeping these elements close to our hearts we will be able to feel a sense of fulfilment and peace beyond anything which the world could ever give us. Not only that, but we will also be able to make life better for those around us as we support the vulnerable, stand up for the oppressed and demonstrate the power of love in transforming the world.



Section 4 – Fruits From Faith

Games

Fruit Basket – Divide the Pilots into teams. Give each team a basket of fruit. Each Pilot must take it in turns to move, as quickly as they can, to the other side of the room and back with the basket on their head. If a Pilot drops any fruit, they must pick it up before carrying on. The first team to complete this task wins. To prolong the challenge, place the baskets at the other side of the room with items of fruit placed beside them. Challenge the first Pilot in each team to run up to the basket and fill it up piece by piece before running back to the team. The second Pilot must then run to the basket and empty it piece by piece before the third Pilot fills it up again and so on. The team which completes this challenge in the fastest time, wins.

Fruit Relay – Divide the Pilots into teams. Give each team a broom and an apple, challenging the Pilots to take turns pushing the apple, with the broom, to the other side of the room and back again. Any Pilot who touches the apple with anything other than the broom, must start again. The first team to complete the challenge wins. Why not increase the difficulty by adding obstacles to push the apple around?

Craft

Community Vine – Challenge Pilots to work together to make a large model grape vine with nine grapes hanging on it, each one displaying a different fruit of the Spirit, the main principles which Christ calls us to demonstrate through our lives (Love, Faithfulness, Kindness, Self-Control, Peace, Goodness, Joy, Patience and Gentleness). As part of the display, the Pilots may wish to include John 15:5 “I am the vine; you are the branches. If you remain in me and I in you, you will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing.”

Inspiration Bracelets – Challenge the Pilots to make friendship bracelets which will encourage them in their faith journey. Perhaps lettered beads could be used to spell out a message, such as ‘Trust God’ or ‘WWJD? (What Would Jesus Do?)’.

Pray about it

Set up a tower of wooden blocks and ask the Pilots to take turns removing a block from the tower. As they remove a block, ask the Pilots to pray. Perhaps there’s a situation close to their heart which needs God’s hand of strength and healing. Maybe someone they know is struggling

with their faith and needs God’s support. Encourage the Pilots to think of contexts and groups in need of help. If they don’t want to say a prayer, ask them simply to name the person or situation. If the tower topples before everyone has got a piece, rebuild it a little until everyone has had a chance to pray or name something.

Ask the Pilots to rebuild the tower, piece by piece, thanking God for sources of hope, comfort and reassurance. Perhaps there are friends or family who support the Pilots. Maybe there’s a particular place or organisation which is close to them. Again, if Pilots don’t want to say a prayer, assure them that a silent prayer will be heard.

Sometimes, when the pressure is great, we feel like we might topple over, just like the tower, but there is always help available to us. We do not need to continue suffering in silence. When the going gets tough, God sends us the resources we need to rebuild ourselves. It is crucial that we keep God at the very centre of our lives, as our foundation, giving us a base from which to sprout forth and reach our full potential.

Voyagers and Navigators

Challenge Voyagers and Navigators to learn more about the process through which plants convert light into energy (photosynthesis) and to present their thoughts either to the rest of the group, to their local congregation or another audience. Encourage them to explain the process in a way which is suitable for their assigned audience. Ask them to conclude the presentation with an explanation of how they think the process of photosynthesis might inspire Christians in their journey of faith.

Something Different

Challenge the Pilots to plant a tree, flowers or other plants as a company project. Give each Pilot a duty with regards to the planting process, whether it be making sure there is enough water, measuring growth, or recording when the leaves change colour, or photographing development. Make sure everyone has something to do. See how long the Pilots can keep the plants alive. They will only be able to do so if they all work together. The task of looking after the plants can’t just be left to someone else. Everyone must do their part!



Section 5 – Presenting The Parable Of The Sower



Leaders' Information

18 So far, these resources have encouraged Pilots to think seriously about what it means to have strong roots and firm foundations. They have explored what it means to keep Jesus at the centre of our lives and how we can allow ourselves to grow and develop through the presence of God in our hearts. Various verses from Scripture have been examined, detailing the ways in which we can reach our full potential when we root ourselves in the foundation of Jesus, as well as the pain and difficulty we can easily encounter when we don't keep God's purposes of faith, hope and love at the centre of all we do. Hopefully, this will have given Pilots the opportunity to articulate their views on these issues, think about how they wish to share their thoughts in worship and create some artwork to share with the congregation.

Now it's time to look at one of the most influential stories on 'Roots and Foundations'. In the parable of the sower, Jesus uses the image of someone sowing seeds to illustrate the ways in which people respond to God's call and the consequences which follow.

As Pilots might be approaching their time to lead worship, this section will take a slightly different approach to the others. It will challenge the Pilots to create and deliver their own presentation of the story as well as all they have been learning about roots and foundations. The Pilots will need to work together as part of a team, recognising each other's gifts and talents as well as weaknesses and challenges, as they seek to share this important parable in ways which different audiences will understand and engage with.

Section 5 – Presenting The Parable Of The Sower

Gathering Activity

Divide the Pilots into teams. Place various bowls of distinguishable seeds, beans or pulses around the room, relative to the number of teams. Give each team a piece of A4 paper. Give the teams a set amount of time, perhaps one minute, to collect a specific type of seed from one of the bowls. All Pilots may collect seeds at the same time, but each Pilot may only carry one seed back to their team. Once time is up, give the Pilots another set amount of time to arrange the seeds which they have collected into a picture of a tree, leaf, house... The team with the best/most complete picture at the end, wins.

Read the word

Explore Matthew 13:3-9, 18-23 together:

“A farmer went out to sow his seed. As he was scattering the seed, some fell along the path, and the birds came and ate it up. Some fell on rocky places, where it did not have much soil. It sprang up quickly, because the soil was shallow. But when the sun came up, the plants were scorched, and they withered because they had no root. Other seed fell among thorns, which grew up and choked the plants. Still other seed fell on good soil, where it produced a crop—a hundred, sixty or thirty times what was sown. Whoever has ears, let them hear.”

“Listen then to what the parable of the sower means: When anyone hears the message about the kingdom and does not understand it, the evil one comes and snatches away what was sown in their heart. This is the seed sown along the path. The seed falling on rocky ground refers to someone who hears the word and at once receives it with joy. But since they have no root, they last only a short time. When trouble or persecution comes because of the word, they quickly fall away. The seed falling among the thorns refers to someone who hears the word, but the worries of this life and the deceitfulness of wealth choke the word, making it unfruitful. But the seed falling on good soil refers to someone who hears the word and understands it. This is the one who produces a crop, yielding a hundred, sixty or thirty times what was sown.”

Presenting the Parable

At first glance, Jesus seems to make the Parable of the Sower very easy to understand. He even goes as far as providing a clear breakdown of what everything in it means.

Much like the story of Saul, however, if people are not given the opportunity to encounter the Word of God in a way that is truly relevant for them, there is a danger that they will simply pass it by, without realising its significance for their lives.

Challenge Pilots, either in small groups or as a company, to present the story in a fun, imaginative and creative way, through whatever means or media they can. Perhaps they would like to create a drama of the parable to act out. Perhaps they'd like to write a story book to read to the congregation. Maybe they'd like to make a video, or write poetry, or write new lyrics to a well-known tune, etc. Whatever they decide to do, challenge them to make the story easy to understand, fun to engage with and relevant for the people hearing it.

To increase the challenge, why not challenge groups to plan a presentation for different kinds of audiences? Perhaps one group could focus on sharing the story with friends at school, or with strangers they've just met, or with family members who don't know about Jesus. Again, challenge them to make the story easy to understand, fun to engage with and relevant for the people hearing it.



Section 5 – Presenting The Parable Of The Sower

Planting Pilots

For some, an immediate parable or story is enough to help them understand a principle and keep it with them as they move forward. Others, however, appreciate a longer lasting reminder.

Now that the Pilots have reached the end of their explorations into 'Roots and Foundations', perhaps it would be good to create a lasting memento of their time exploring this vital topic. Using various types of seeds, create a giant version of the Pilots logo. If you plan well, within time, flowers and plants of different colours should bloom into the Pilots logo, but Pilots will need to be very attentive to the plants if this is to happen!

As the plants grow and develop, they will provide an illustration of the importance of remaining rooted in the firm foundation of Jesus, who always provides the strength and sustenance we need.

Pray about it

Prayer

Transforming Lord,

Thank you for Pilots and all the fun we have together.

Thank you for our leaders, who show us your power and compassion.

Thank you for families and those who are for us, sharing your care and love with us.

Thank you that little seeds, in the right conditions and surroundings, can grow into big plants and trees.

Though we are little, help us to plant our roots firmly in the foundation of your son, Jesus, who will always help us to grow and develop.

Only then, dear God, will we be able to make a difference in your world, which we so dearly wish to do, in your name and for your glory,

AMEN.



Section 6 – Worship Suggestions



Introduction

This section focuses on using everything which the Pilots have been exploring to plan a worship service to be led by the Pilots, which could, perhaps, be prepared for Pilots Sunday.

The sections in this resource have focussed on the theme of Roots and Foundations:

Trees – What does it mean to have roots?

Stones – What does it mean to have foundations?

Growing in Faith – What does it mean to have God as a foundation for our roots?

Fruits from Faith – What can we do to bring forth good outcomes from our faith?

Presenting the Parable of the Sower – How can we share one of the most important parables on this topic in accessible and fun ways?

The theme has been explored using the Bible stories, activities, games, crafts and worship and prayer ideas. Now that your Pilots have experienced sessions on each of these sections, it's time to weave what they've been doing into a service of worship.

Work together with the Pilots to choose the content of the worship. There are guidelines at the beginning of the pack to help with both the contextual and practical elements of planning worship. This section provides a suggested Order of Service with hymn suggestions.

This worship is all about discovering, understanding, using, cherishing, caring and responding to our Roots and Foundations. Together, these shape the people we are and the impact we have on the world around us. It is crucial for everyone to think seriously about them.

And, most importantly, enjoy worship – it helps us to form our roots and foundations!

Section 6 – Worship Suggestions

Suggested Order of Worship

Opening Verse – Colossians 2: 6-7

‘So then, just as you received Christ Jesus as Lord, continue to live your lives in him, rooted and built up in him, strengthened in the faith as you were taught, and overflowing with thankfulness.’

Sing – In the Sea is a Boat (See Pilots 80th Anniversary Hymn at the end of this section)

Prayers – Things to be thankful for

Ask the Congregation to shout out things they want to thank God for beginning with each of the letters in the Pilots name, beginning with ‘P’ (e.g. people, plants, peace) then ‘i’ (e.g. ideas, intelligence, information) and so on. Perhaps the worship leader or a Pilot could say a prayer containing all the mentioned items.

Read – Parable of the Sower from Matthew 13:3-9, 18-23

Sing – For I’m Building a People of Power (<https://youtu.be/fuhOyVgcMgM>)

Presenting the Parable – Ask Pilots to present some of the dramas, songs and other work they prepared in section 5, explaining this important parable to the congregation.

Sing – My Jesus, My Saviour (<https://youtu.be/hGmZcTCXjmM>)

Prayers – Ask a Pilot to prepare and lead prayers, asking God to forgive our sins and help us to keep Jesus at the centre of our lives, our foundation, from which we can gain the inspiration and support we need to live our lives in the peace, understanding and love to which we are called.

Craft Tour – Show the congregation some of the crafts which the Pilots have made through their exploration of Roots and Foundations, explaining how these crafts represent what they have been learning about the topic.

Sing – You are Faithful (<https://youtu.be/dTWJOX1nkcQ>)

Seeds – Give everyone in the congregation a seed. In the parable of the sower, God asks us what type of seed we would like to be, the seed that forgets everything, the seed that gets taken over by other things, the seed that tries to be good and kind but then thinks it’s all too hard and gets bored, or the seed that tells other people about Jesus and lives their life as best as they can, helping others, because they have good roots and foundations? Ask the congregation to reflect on this as they hold their seed.

General Notices/Offering

Sing – In Christ Alone (https://youtu.be/ENTL_li4GbE)

Blessing – ‘All Ashore’

Leader: Lord, dismiss us

All: with your blessing

Leader: God be with us

All: ‘till we meet again.

Section 6 – Worship Suggestions

Pilots 80th Anniversary Hymn

The Revd Janet Lees has penned a Hymn especially for the anniversary, which can be sung to the tune 'Theodoras' (Rejoice and Sing 274). You can listen to the tune here (with a 12 second introduction): <https://youtu.be/VcvnISi3ZQA>

On the sea was a boat,
'John Williams' was afloat
Children gave money saved
Not one ship but seven
Not one ship but seven
World so round, round, round
Sea so rough, rough, rough.
P-I-L-O-T-S
We are here to praise God

On our badge is the sea
Sea can calm or rough be
Crashing waves, Jesus saves
Those who trust and love him,
Those who trust and love him
Badge so round, round, round
Sea so rough, rough, rough.
P-I-L-O-T-S
We are here to love God

On the sea in a boat,
Jesus' friends all afloat.
Some asleep, some in deep
Learning how to serve God
Learning how to serve God

Badge so round, round, round
Sea so rough, rough, rough.
P-I-L-O-T-S
We are here to serve God

In the boat is a cross
Like a mast, but a cross
Keeps us stable, we are able
All to follow Jesus
All to follow Jesus
Badge so round, round, round
Sea so rough, rough, rough.
P-I-L-O-T-S
We are here to love God

In the world where we live
We are still called to give
80 years, give our cheers
We have come to praise God
We have come to praise God
World so round, round, round
Sea so rough, rough, rough.
P-I-L-O-T-S
We are here to praise God



Pilots Worship Resources 2016

Rootsand**Foundations**

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