

Help along the Way . . .

When you became a Christian, you became a new person. You left behind your old way of doing things and found yourself being transformed by God's Spirit to live a radically new life! Even so, most of us need help understanding how to live the life God offers.

God recognizes that we need help in order to grow. One method He uses is mentoring or discipleship. Mentoring occurs when a more mature Christian trains and teaches others who are less mature.

Do you have a mentoring relationship with someone who is helping you grow in your spiritual walk? Are you helping someone else grow in their walk with Christ? By choosing to develop relationships to help others grow, you follow Paul's counsel to Timothy when he said,

*"What you have heard from me in the presence of many witnesses entrust to faithful men who will be able to teach others also."
(2 Timothy 2:2)*

Q: "What is a disciple/mentor?"

- A disciple is one who follows the teaching and training of another.¹
- The Greek word for "mentor" is *didaskalos*, which means "teacher."²
- The Greek word for "disciple" is *mathetes*, which means "a learner."³
 - The derivative word math originally meant "to teach, learn or disciple."
 - A disciple builds a relationship with someone more knowledgeable or mature in order to grow in practical and theoretical knowledge and understanding.
 - The carpenter's *mathetes* (apprentice) learns by example and experience, following in the footsteps of the teacher.
 - The goal of the *mathetes* (student) is to be like the teacher.

*"A disciple is not above his teacher, but everyone when he is fully trained will be like his teacher."
(Luke 6:40)*

Don'ts for the Mentor

- **Don't** assume the role of God—your role is helper, not to be the Holy Spirit. (John 15:5)
- **Don't** have a rigid structure—each person you mentor will have different needs. (1 Corinthians 12:5)
- **Don't** have too many in a group—two to four people provide opportunity for significant sharing. (Luke 6:12–13)
- **Don't** sacrifice personal devotional time—you need to soak in before you give out. (Psalm 63:1)
- **Don't** become emotionally dependent on your disciple—set a cutoff time and stick to it. (John 2:24–25)
- **Don't** think that you are a failure if your disciple fails—Jesus had eleven disciples that struggled and one that totally strayed. Each person is individually responsible before God. (Romans 14:12)
- **Don't** fail to mentor your own children—after God, your first priority is your family. (1 Timothy 3:4)

“Be imitators of me, as I am of Christ.”
(1 Corinthians 11:1)

The “Ten Commandments” of Mentoring

Thou shalt not . . .

- . . . put your disciple above your relationship with God
- . . . “play God” in your disciple’s life
- . . . point your disciple to anything but Scripture for all teaching
- . . . fail to meet regularly with your disciple
- . . . play “mother” or “father” in your disciple’s life
- . . . kill or discourage the spirit of your disciple
- . . . neglect your personal family or work
- . . . steal your disciple’s affections
- . . . fail to be truthful with your disciple
- . . . envy the success of your disciple

(adapted from Exodus 20:3–17)

Discover the Joy of Mentoring

Demonstrate by example how the Christian life is lived.⁴ (1 Timothy 4:12)

Detail a reasonable plan for reaching goals. (Proverbs 21:29)

Devise challenging activities to increase faith and confidence. (Psalm 119:35–36)

Display unconditional love. (John 13:14–15)

Develop an intimate friendship.⁵ (Proverbs 18:24)

Discern needs and fulfill them when you can. (Proverbs 14:21)

Determine to pray daily for your disciple. (1 Thessalonians 5:17)

Delight in the joy and growth you will experience through investing in the life of another. (3 John 4)

Key Verse to Memorize

*“Go therefore and make disciples
of all nations, baptizing them
in the name of the Father and of the Son
and of the Holy Spirit.”
(Matthew 28:19)*

Key Passage to Read and Reread

The Book of 2 Timothy

Steps to Finding a Spiritual Mentor

Write down the areas in which God has taught you and trained you. (Psalm 119:13–14)

Write down your strengths and areas where you need growth (weaknesses). (Psalm 139:23–24)

Ask God for a mentor who is hungry for spiritual growth and eager to feed others. (2 Timothy 2:2)

Ask the mentor for a twelve week commitment—be definite! (Luke 14:28–30)

Set a weekly time and place to meet—be consistent! (Ecclesiastes 3:1)

Establish goals to work on together—identify needs and desires. (Ephesians 5:15–16)

Determine that at the end of three months there will be continuing interest and growth or you will agree to stop meeting. (Hebrews 10:36)

Related Topics . . .

- Codependency:
Moving from Bondage to Balance
- Counseling:
Biblical Hope with Practical Help
- Decision Making:
Discerning the Will of God
- Friendship:
Iron Sharpening Iron
- Purpose in Life:
Pinpointing Your Priorities
- Self-Worth:
Discerning Your God-Given Value

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Mentoring:

How to Shepherd the Sheep.

If you would like more information, call 1-800-488-HOPE (4673) or visit www.hopefortheheart.org.

For prayer encouragement and biblical counsel call 1-866-570-HOPE (4673).

1. Merriam-Webster's Collegiate Dictionary (electronic edition) (Merriam-Webster, 2001), s.v. "disciple."

2. W. E. Vine, *Vine's Complete Expository Dictionary of Biblical Words*, electronic ed. (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1996), s.v. "teacher, false teachers."

3. For this section see Vine, *Vine's Complete Expository Dictionary of Biblical Words*, s.v. "disciple."

4. For this section see Allen Hadidian, *Discipleship* (Chicago: Moody, 1987), 46–49; J. Oswald Sanders, *Shoe-Leather Commitment* (Chicago: Moody, 1990), 69–90.

5. For this section see Ted W. Engstrom and Norman B. Rohrer, *The Fine Art of Mentoring: Passing on to Others What God Has Given to You* (Brentwood, TN: Wolgemuth & Hyatt, 1989), 10–12.



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