

## Practical Tips and Tools for the Discipeler.

### The first time you meet with your disciple

#### 1. Location, Location, Location

If you have not already established a relationship with your disciple prior to the time they decide to commit to discipleship, here are some suggestions for your first meeting;

- Invite them to your home. Prepare snacks and/or something to drink. Make them feel at home.
- Meet them at a restaurant or someplace located between your homes. Have a meal together. Make sure it is quiet enough to meet informally.
- Meet at their home. Bring some type of dessert or drink.

Always start the night off in prayer and end in prayer. Give your testimony. Keep it brief, there will be plenty of time later to weave the details throughout the lessons. Leave time for them to give their testimony; this will better enable you to see their needs.

#### 2. Put out a "Welcome Mat" and set the vision

Always keep the philosophy of discipleship and what it's all about in focus. Use something that was helpful to you when you finally put it all together for yourself. The disciple may not understand all of it at first, but as they continue it will become clearer. REMEMBER: keep it simple! **(KIS)**

#### 3. The Biblical Pattern of Discipleship

In the course of the first few meetings it is helpful to trace this briefly back to the ministry of Christ. We see the seven stages of discipleship in what Christ did with the twelve apostles. Again, do not overwhelm them with too much information.

THE SEVEN STAGES OF DISCIPLESHIP	
<b>Step One:</b> Repentance & Faith, John 1; Luke 3	A change in one's life after he trusts Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord
<b>Step Two:</b> Enlightenment & Guidance, John 2-5	Once that change becomes a reality, the disciple begins learning how his new life in Christ is different
<b>Step Three:</b> Ministry Training, Luke 4-6	As he learns more about what Christ requires of him, the disciple begins getting involved in the mission
<b>Step Four:</b> Leadership Development, Luke 6-9	As the disciple learns and participates in ministry he begins to lead others into the same process
<b>Step Five:</b> Separation & Reevaluation, John 6-8	Leadership draws opposition and demands a time of testing to prove the true commitment and motives of the disciple
<b>Step Six:</b> Participation in Leadership, Luke 10-19; John 9-12	Those potential leaders who endure the testing step up and assume leadership roles in the eyes of others as they put into practice decisions they made during the testing times
<b>Step Seven:</b> Consecration & World Vision, Luke 20-22, Acts 2,10	Leadership becomes a lifestyle where the individual is consecrated and equipped to carry out the mission

## Procedure and structure for meeting

1. Try to establish consistency – same time, same place.
2. Take up to an hour to cover the lesson. Teaching time should NOT take up more than ½ of the meeting time.
3. Fellowship together. But make sure you cover the material when you meet, and do not allow “talk time” to squeeze-out your time in the Bible. Be sensitive to the Holy Spirit and disciple regarding what is going on in their life. There may be times that the content of the lesson isn’t taught as you are getting into God’s Word due to circumstances in their life or items/questions that they’ve read during their quiet time. These times should be the exception not rule for your meeting times. You could always schedule another time to meet/discuss on phone their items and questions.
4. Teach them about building a structure – the lessons build on one another.
5. Look up any used verses directly in the Bible so they will rely on the word of God and not on you. Have them do some of the reading; they become more comfortable with their Bible that way.  
SEE Preparation to teach.
6. Tell them what to expect (memory verses, workbook homework, dealing with questions, false teaching, etc.)
7. Use of KJV Bible. Refer to handout.

## Reporting Procedure

*Discipleship Progress Reports* need to be turned in on your disciple every 3 lessons. This keeps the pastor informed on the state of all his flock. If you encounter a problem, make sure you bump it up the line to your discipleship leader, and pastor if necessary.

## Preparation to teach

Here is a checklist to help you set a structure for each time you meet with your disciple. This will help your disciple be accountable for the lesson. When you went through discipleship, you may not have done these things. Remember that whatever you give them to be accountable for, you should also keep. Show them your work so they can see proof that you care about what you teach and that it is not just idle words.

- *Pray.* Always open your time together by asking God to be a part. Be specific but brief in your prayers. Start things off on a joyous note of *praise*. Use prayer to focus both your emotions and your thoughts on God and his word.
- *Verses.* Before you meet with your disciple go over the verses in the lesson. Make sure you have a full understanding of them before you use them. Hide them in your heart. This process will also help you determine what additional verses you may want to use.
- *Focus.* Do you have a “big picture” understanding of the lessons yourself?
- *Any problems* with the lesson? Go over briefly any problems or questions your disciple had with the lesson.

## Reminders

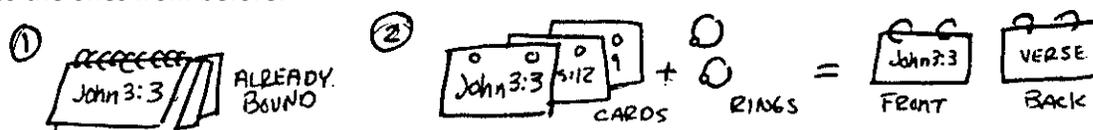
- Construct a reasonable structure for yourself and stick to it.
- Be accountable to your disciple.
- Watch for tests God is giving your disciple that reveals his or her heart. Patience is completing a task over time. Faithfulness is doing it against opposition. God seeks opportunities to develop both—and do it in us as well as in our disciple.

- Monitor their Bible reading (Goal #1). Ask them what they've been reading? What has God been showing them? Encourage them to keep a journal and to share some thoughts from it.
- Call them to build a relationship with them, not to check up on them.
- Sit by them in church.
- After they are through with the D1 study stay in touch.
- Discipleship 1 is not really finished until they are established in ministry like you. Help them along in that.
- Encourage them to get baptized and become a member of the church at lesson three. Re-visit the issue at lesson seven if they are still not baptized. **If they are still not baptized at this point coordinate with a discipleship leader. DO NOT continue until this is done or you have coordinated with a discipleship leader.** Encourage them at lesson thirteen to get a set of offering envelopes, trust God, and start tithing as an expression of God having first place
- Encourage them to sign up for a service ministry and get involved
- Encourage them to get involved with a small group Bible study
- Encourage them to take D2 to help continue their growth
- Have them participate in your ministry with you as they enter the later lessons

## Verses

Give them a method of memorizing scripture. Go over them after each lesson. Remember that your disciple may have never done this before. Their heart attitude will guide you in how to approach this area. Be patient, gentle and longsuffering with them as they should be working to memorize the verses before each lesson. If they not have memorized the verses beforehand take time during lesson to memorize them. Again what is their attitude like? Humble or hardened?

One memorization method that will help you as well as your disciple is to make a simple tool using a set of index cards. On one side put the book, chapter and verse number and on the other put the verse itself. These can be used like a set of flash cards that you used back in grammar school. You can buy a set of index cards in a spiral bound book, or better yet, a package of loose index cards and a couple of loose-leaf rings that can be snapped open and closed. This way the disciple can add each lesson's verses to the ones from before.



There are many apps that work well for verse memorization.

## Handling Questions, Time Issues and Problems

The subject of central issues is vitally important in dealing with questions that may arise in your presentation. That is why we began with that topic, and why it is stressed as so critical. Any lesson can generate a question, but some more than others. The answer to virtually any question that can be asked will often be to restate the central issue (focus) of the lesson. There may be cases where you can refer to one of the main points (function).

If you get outside these issues in answering questions, the natural result is to spark even more questions. We do not have time for "rabbit trails." Also, the further off track you get, the harder it is to get back, and the easier it is to end up in controversy.

New Christians are babes in Christ and will naturally have questions. As the mature discipler/mentor, you have to refocus them on the topic at hand and not let them control the session time. Every question deserves an answer. We cannot refuse to answer questions, but by careful handling we can stay focused

on our objective—which is to communicate the points of the lessons. In some cases, the answers need to be deferred until after the presentation, or deferred to the pastor.

Don't answer questions that are dealt with in detail in future lessons. Let them know that the answer is coming, but that we need to lay all of the foundation to get there. Have them write it down in their notebook and if they still have the question then, deal with it after the later lesson.

In answering questions, NEVER argue or take contention personally. You cannot jeopardize their spiritual growth just so you can win an argument. If you see the possibility of this arising, nip it in the bud by deferring the matter to the discipleship leader. Change the subject and get back to your lesson.

### More tips for keeping on track

1. Have them keep a notebook to write questions while you are teaching and save them until the end.
2. Defer questions that will be answered in future lessons until the time you get there.
3. Never use a question as an excuse to ride a personal hobby horse.
4. Never argue with your disciple.

**Titus 3:2** To speak evil of no man, to be no brawlers, *but* gentle, showing all meekness unto all men.

5. Don't try to answer questions that you are not sure you know the answer to. *"That's a great question. I don't know the answer but I will get back with you."*

**Rule of Thumb:** When covering the teaching material of the D1 lessons (not the daily lesson items)→Teach the material first. Answer questions second. Problems you can't deal with send up the line by notifying your discipleship leader.

### Developing Your Own Teaching Style: Fostering Excellence in Discipleship Presentation

In the time allotted, you as the mentor should have four things in mind. You must be constantly evaluating internally how you are presenting these four areas.

1. **INFORMATION:** "D1" is the Bible study outline. Your job is to be so thoroughly familiar with the scriptures that you can put some meat on the material. This gets hold of their **MIND**.
2. **PRESENTATION:** The surest way to turn someone off is with a poorly planned session. The main aspects of presentation are: **presence, personality and illustration**. Do not just read the lesson to them. Make sure they are involved with their **EMOTION**.
3. **IDENTIFICATION:** The best lesson taught is the one that you have personally learned from God. Personal testimony of how and what God has shown you through the lesson will make it believable. This is perhaps the only true test that we are sharing life with life. This comes from the **HEART**.
4. **APPLICATION:** Preaching the lesson and allowing God the opportunity to work will assure that your disciple has been exposed personally to the conviction of the Holy Spirit. The needed application to their own life will follow naturally. Make an appeal to their **WILL**.

### Resources

Begin to use, and show them how to use, common reference works:

- *The Treasury of Scripture Knowledge*—contains Ussher's chronology and over 600,000 cross-references (an average of 20 per verse) as well as solid historical notes and chapter summaries. The method of this book allows the Holy Spirit to be the interpreter and the Bible to comment on itself.
- *Strong's Exhaustive Concordance*—has every word used in the Bible listed alphabetically with every reference in which it appears. Also has a numbering system tied to basic Hebrew

and Greek dictionaries in the back for simple definitions, and a listing of all other ways a Greek or Hebrew word was translated by the “James gang” into English. *Cruden’s Concordance* is more of a phrase concordance (helpful in looking up groups of words like “day of the Lord”). *Young’s* is an analytical concordance further subdividing each English word under the Greek and Hebrew word it came from.

- *Unger’s Bible Handbook (or Halley’s)*—good historical background.
- *Unger’s Bible Dictionary*—a handy one-volume reference.
- *Manners and Customs of Bible Times*—sheds light on some of the obscure customs.
- *New Englishman’s Greek (or Hebrew) Concordance*—keyed to Strong’s numbering system, these books give an English listing of the usage of every Greek or Hebrew word.
- Some excellent one-volume surveys of the Bible: *Explore the Book* by Baxter, *Willmington’s Guide to the Bible*, *What the Bible Is All About* by Mears, *World’s Bible Handbook* by Boyd.
- E-Sword, Bible Analyzer
- Blue Letter Bible (online)

### **What Makes a Bad Lesson**

1. When you let your disciple run the lesson by monopolizing the time with their issues/problems
2. When you are boring and speak in a monotone with no rapport or emotion
3. When you are tied to the material, or only read the lessons to them
4. When you look up every single verse in a tedious fashion
5. When you don't add your own stuff to spice-up the material

### **Choosing & Using Illustrations**

In our hectic lives, discipleship teaching time is at a premium. So is clarity of communication. That is why we have the goal of getting you to develop your own teaching style and putting your personality into what you are communicating. We have to find ways to impart life and not just transmit information. That means that methods of clarifying concepts have to be chosen very carefully for clarity, time-worthiness, ease of communication, and impact. There are three methods you can use with any concept to get it across to people:

- Restate it
- Explain or define it
- Illustrate it

#### **1A Restatement**

Restatement puts the same idea in different words. This is very important for someone coming from the background of the world. Try to become fluent in synonyms. Restatement has to take place with almost every concept if a person is new to Christianity and the Bible. Restatement is different from repetition. Repetition says the same things in the same words. But the creative mentor learns the art of restatement by say the same thing again in different words. Restatement gains clarity. This is because listeners are not like readers. Readers can go back and read over material. However, listeners cannot go back and hear you over again if they don't understand (unless your voice is on tape). Therefore, we have to restate things for them in our presentation to make ourselves clear.

If you say something only once it is generally ignored. However, if you say it twice, in a slightly different way, it will be mentally underlined. Advertisers invest millions of dollars to do nothing but restate their ideas. Ask Coke; it is a key to marketing.

## **2A Explanation and Definition**

A definition establishes limits. It sets down exactly what is to be included, and what is to be excluded, in the meaning of a word.

Explanation also sets boundaries. However, it does so, not by strict definition, but by amplifying how ideas relate to each other. Explanations involve contrast or comparison, and not just definition.

I can define grace as God's unmerited favor. I can restate that as God's blessing apart from man's working. But I can explain it by contrasting it with mercy. Mercy is God preventing something negative that you deserve (like punishment). But grace is God giving you something positive you don't deserve (like approval).

There are at least five methods you can use to define or explain. Consider these things as ways to add your own personality and teaching style into your lessons. Constantly go through life looking at every circumstance in light of the 18 lessons of discipleship, and how it might be a good illustration.

- Sometimes you can define or explain through **synonyms**. Synonyms are alternate words that have the same meaning.
- Sometimes you can define or explain through **examples**.
- Sometimes you can define or explain through **facts** (observations, statistics). Remember that every person has a right to his own opinion, but no teacher has a right to be wrong on his facts. If you are going to define, do it in language the disciple will understand
- Sometimes you can define or explain through **quotations**. Quotes, poems, or hymns can anchor a point with wording that digs into your mind. However, you have to use them sparingly and briefly. A little goes a long way.
- Sometimes you can define or explain through **narration**. This is a sophisticated word for gossip (telling a story).

The Bible is filled with narration. To use this successfully you try to make your words paint pictures. You have to communicate to the imagination of people.

In all of these five methods, you have to put yourself in the disciple's world during your preparation time. We train you to be familiar with the subject of discipleship, and familiar with these lessons (from the inside out). The pitfall is that the more familiar you are with your subject, the less aware you are of the listener's ignorance of it, and the more you rush through it or take the truths for granted. Therefore, you have to always keep the level of your disciple in mind. Remember back to when you first heard these same truths and communicate the impact it made.

**Illustrations are able to restate, explain, and define all at once.** They do this by relating a concept to real life. Illustrations in your discipleship teaching are like the pictures in your television set. Don't make someone watching you teach as if they were sitting in front of a TV with only the sound going.

Illustrations make truths believable by example. Examples are not proof, but psychologically they allow you to gain acceptance for your ideas. Choose your examples with wisdom. All truth is equally valid, but not all truth is equally valuable. Some truth is dime truth and some truth is dollar truth. Dollars and dimes are both coins, but one is worth ten times more than the other.

Your disciples need to not only understand the concepts of discipleship; they need to know what difference it makes in life. Illustrations and experiences show that. Illustrations have other advantages as well:

- They show what difference truth makes in life
- They aid the memory
- They stir the emotions
- They create a sense of need

- They hold attention
- They establish rapport
- They allow you to personalize the lesson material
- They allow you to put your personality into the lessons and develop your own teaching style

How do we illustrate something?

***1B Illustrations must illustrate***

The word, illustrate, means to throw light on something. To illumine. Illustrations are like the rows of footlights that light-up the stage for an actor. But, if the light shines in the eyes of the audience too brightly, it may blind them to the truth being conveyed. So, a story told for its own sake may be funny, but it also gets in the way and blinds the hearers to what they ought to see. An illustration has to be chosen for how it centers the attention on the idea you want it to display.

***2B Illustrations must be understandable***

In general, you want to clarify the unknown by using the known. If you have to explain the illustration itself, it's probably a bad illustration. Your audience has to be able to put themselves in the place of the story in order to feel its force.

***3B Illustrations must be convincing***

They have to be accurate. They should not offend. Truth may be stranger than fiction sometimes, but your stories shouldn't leave people doubting if you told the truth.

***4B Illustrations should fit the theme***

God is omnipresent. But just because he's everywhere at once, you don't illustrate this by saying that he's even in the toilet. (There goes God! How was that ride, hey?) The illustration must relate to the topic being discussed.

***5B Illustrations should fit the audience***

You don't use the same illustrations for a football team in the locker room that you would in a child's Sunday school class. The illustration will work best when it ties into the disciple's career or interests.

***6B Illustrations should be told with emotion***

If you can't make them dramatic, then they won't have the force that an illustration should have. How do you do that? Kind of the same way you carve the statue of a person: by cutting away everything that doesn't look like a person. You dramatize a story by cutting away all the details that don't add to the punch line, and then delivering it with some animation. That's what builds rapport with your disciple and keeps you from being boring.

***7B The best illustrations come from personal experiences***

Life is a circus (my life anyway). Some people can gather more material in a walk around the block than I can in a trip around the world. And the difference is not in what we experience, but what we see in what we experience.

Your life in this world is meant to be God's picture book. All you have to do is look at ordinary events in terms of spiritual application. Begin to use your entire personal history with God as a platform to build windows into your teaching.

## Developing Practical Discipling Skills

### 1. Realizations

There are some things that you should consider before proceeding that will assist you in meeting your new disciple's needs.

- Realize there may be a spiritual battle taking place  
You will need to ask God for boldness. Your strength comes from Him.  
***Ephesians 6:19-20, Acts 4:29; 1 Corinthians 16:19; Colossians 4:2-4***
- Realize whatever fear may be present is because of the pride of your flesh. Your flesh hates the things of God and is afraid of what other flesh will think when spiritual things come out of its mouth. Your spirit does not have a mouth. It must use the mouth of the flesh. That's why you need to crucify your flesh daily.

***Galatians 5:24*** "And they that are Christ's have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts."

- Realize that God gives us fruit in spite of our fear.
- Realize the Word of God and the Holy Spirit must be present for spiritual communication to take place

The word of God produces faith. The new convert or Christian needs faith to address his or her first need, that of security. Always remember the way you were. Before you got saved.

***Romans 10:17; 1 Peter 1:23-25; Hebrews 11:7***

- Realize they sometimes have to fail in order to learn. Be there to help them heal, not to be the Holy Spirit in their life. Keep your pastor informed where he needs to be involved with their struggles. If in doubt, inform him!
- Realize that keeping your ears open is essential. You must hear from God.

***Revelation 2:29*** "He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches."

In the Bible, hearing from God always involves comprehension and obedience (Romans 10:16-17). The Lord will let you know when it is appropriate to share what God lays on your heart with the disciple you are speaking to if you listen (comprehend and obey). You cannot hear if you constantly talk. Listening sometimes keeps the Holy Spirit and the word of God in the forefront and you in the background.

- Realize that asking questions is a communication skill that can increase your discipline capabilities. Ask open-ended questions that avoid "yes" or "no" answers. Say, "Tell me what you like about..." instead of "Do you like...". Ask easy questions like background and interests.

#### **WHO, WHAT, WHEN, WHERE, WHY, and HOW. (ask questions!)**

Try to find out what they want to talk about. These six words give you the basis to start a conversation with anyone. Regardless of the topic you automatically have six questions you can ask. That keeps **them** talking and **you** listening for the keys in their life which will open the door for communication. Three more key words are:

- Realize that in terms of building rapport, ignorance can be an advantage. Be curious and look for any area where they know more than you. Everyone is ignorant in something (nuclear physics, calculus, religion). Asking someone to explain something you do not know makes him or her feel important. In turn, they won't be afraid to share with you when they are ignorant concerning the Bible. Never let someone's intelligence intimidate you. You have the most important information on earth and everyone needs it.

## 2. Actions

We want to make sure we model a confidence in the Bible, develop in them a love for Jesus, a commitment to prayer, and a desire to learn and grow. People don't just change through information. They change through information and involvement.

- If you are a new mentor or rusty- practice teaching the material before the actual meeting time. God will use this to grow you in your presentation and preparations skills.
- Involve your disciple in your life by inviting him or her into common activities you would normally do alone or with your other good friends.
- Get directly involved in your disciple's life by doing some things on his or her turf.
- Show concern by listening—to testimony, to life struggle, to daily challenges, to body language. This allows you to earn the right to present Biblical solutions and be heard.
- Be real.
- Pray for your disciple and with your disciple.
- Give and allow your disciple to give back. Appropriate gifts may be a concordance, dinner, a postcard, small mementos of special occasions, etc. Give time. Give what you have, not what you don't have.
- Share—not just the lessons, but what God is teaching you through the word of God. Do it without being preachy. Ask your disciple what God has been teaching them through his providence.
- Be willing to apologize if a mistake is made. Be willing to ask forgiveness if something is done wrong.
- Don't push or be offensive. If your disciple doesn't understand, exercise patience and wait until another time for God to bring it up again. Consider that God providentially uses imperfect situations as a stepping-stone to growth.
- In areas of sin or backsliding make sure you consult with a member of Discipleship leadership for direction and guidance.

### SOME CONCLUDING THOUGHTS

Ministry runs on the rails of relationships. Build a relationship as you disciple, and use the relationship to help them grow in Christ, not for what you can get out of it (1 Thes 2:7-12).

- Build a relationship, not a regime
- Use the relationship to teach them of Christ, not to convince them of your own convictions
- Build the relationship through prayer, as stated in the Old Testament verse on discipleship. You will love who you pray for.

**1 Sam. 12:23** Moreover as for me, God forbid that I should sin against the LORD in ceasing to *pray for you*: but I will *teach you the good and the right way*:

- Help them in the areas of struggle without dictating to them. Inform the pastor and let him be the one to do the counseling and make any dictates.
- Help them set goals that are realistic and can be seen.
- **Teach, Train, Task.** Teach them Biblical directives; train them by your example; task them to do the same thing in your presence.
- Let them see you serve. Are you on time? Do you make them work around your schedule or do you work around them? Are you distracted while discipling them or do they have your complete

focus? Do they see you at work in other ministries? Supporting your class in its activities? Reaching out to others and drawing them in? Wash their feet.

- Water the seed after it is planted. After the lesson is finished continue nurturing the relationship.
- Celebrate. Celebrate with your disciple the completion of the lessons, the accomplishment of goals, the fruit they they/you produce, their spiritual birthday, the relationship God has blessed you with (each other).
- Hold each other accountable to a fresh vision.
- If you run into trouble, run to the discipleship team or pastor.