

NBC

NARRABEEN BAPTIST CHURCH



10 WEEK STUDY GUIDE Written by Travis Mundy

WEEK 1

WEEK 3

WEEK 5

WEEK 7

WEEK 9

WEEK 2

WEEK 4

WEEK 6

WEEK 8

WEEK 10

Week 1

Mentoring – What is it and why do we need it?

When you think of the word “mentoring” what comes to mind? Does it have positive or negative connotations in your mind?

In our world today we often think of mentoring as something non-Christians do outside of the church, but inside the church we make disciples.

Is there a difference between mentoring and discipleship? Interestingly enough, neither the word “mentor” or “discipler” are found in Scripture. So where do we get these terms and ideas from?

The word “mentor” originates from the ancient Greek epic The Odyssey. The main character, King Odysseus of Ithaca, goes off to fight the Trojan War and after gets caught in a series of misadventures that delay him returning home for twenty years! The Greek goddess, Athena, not wanting Odysseus or his family to lose their kingdom at his delay, takes the appearance of an old wise man who shows up to give counsel and guidance to his son Telemachus. Athena, in this disguised form, takes the name Mentor. This story reveals to us what a mentor does – provides wisdom, help and accountability to another person that they might grow as a human in all areas of life.

READ

MATTHEW 28:18-20

This verse takes place after Jesus’ death and resurrection.



What is he instructing his followers to do? How does this relate to mentoring?

This verse is known as “The Great Commission.” A commission literally means “being entrusted with a special role or task.”



According to Jesus, what special role or task are followers of Jesus entrusted to take part in?



Is this verse meant for only those in the audience that day?



What do you think it looks like to “make disciples”? Is making disciples a one-off event or a process? How might you measure this task?

But before we go any further, we should ask, what is a disciple? How might we define that term?

disciple

In the Greek language the New Testament was originally written in, the word “disciple” is the Greek word *matheites*, which literally means “learner.” In the context of Jesus’ first disciples, these were people who stopped what they were doing and followed Jesus (literally). They learned from his teachings. They learned from his example. They learned about God and how to treat others. They learned about themselves and their areas of growth.

Pastor Mark Dever, in his book *Discipleship*, puts it this way:

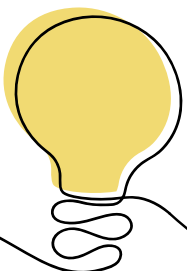
“A disciple of Jesus follows in Jesus’ steps, doing as Jesus taught and lived. But it means more than that. Following Jesus first means that you have entered into a personal, saving relationship with him. Being a disciple of Christ, in other words, does not begin with something we do. It begins with something Christ did.”

Mark Dever, *Discipleship*, 2016, pg. 14.

We, therefore, are ALL disciples of Jesus if we have put our trust in him. So the instructions we see in the New Testament (like the Great Commission) apply to every believer. But why? Why should I make disciples? Why should seek to mentor others?

Take a moment and reflect on this question:

How did you become a Christian? (Or if you are not yet a Christian – how did you get to this time and space you’re in right now?) Did you get here on your own? Or were there someone or several people along the way that told and showed you Jesus?



Almost all of us will have had at least one person disciple/mentor us in the way of Jesus. Maybe it was a parent who read Bible stories to you as a kid. Maybe it was a grandparent who prayed for you. Maybe it was a Scripture teacher who taught you that God loves you and has a wonderful plan for your life. Maybe it was a coach who showed you how Jesus wants us to act on the footy field. It could be a friend who invited you to a church event. Perhaps it was a co-worker who sat down and explained the basic gospel message to you. But the point is – ALL of these are examples of discipleship and mentoring.

Which means...what...exactly? Mentoring is highly relational. It's not a program, necessarily. It's not a do-list. It's not an unnecessary evil. Mentoring happens through a variety of people in a variety of ways. But at the heart of it is relationship. Because of relationship, you and I are here, in this space, talking about this very topic.

READ

JOHN 1:35-49



How does this passage reflect disciple-making?

By a simple invitation through relationship, people like Andrew, Simon, Philip and Nathanael started the process of becoming more like Jesus. Jesus then commissioned them to be mentors and disciple-makers themselves. These first men (and women) disciples made disciples, who made disciples, who made...well, you get the point. All of this is a big multiplication chain that leads to you and me. We get to experience salvation and are invited to God's family because Jesus disciplined someone who disciplined someone.

And now you and I are invited to join in this same Great Commission. Over the next few weeks we will dive deeper into what mentoring is and how to do it as laid out in the Bible. If we take up this biblical challenge we get to be part of God's kingdom unfolding, seeing people from every tribe, nation and language come before God's throne. How exciting!

Week 2

The heart of Christian mentoring

READ

JOHN 17:1-5

Toward the end of his ministry, Jesus prays this prayer found in John 17.



What do you notice about this prayer?



What does it tell us about Jesus and his relationship with his Father?



What does it tell us about Jesus' intention for every human?

John 17 is one of many verses that explain the nuanced and mysterious nature of what Christians call the Trinity. This ancient doctrine states that God is One (as in there is one God, not many), but that this One God shows Himself in Three ways (or "Persons"): God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Spirit. We don't have time to unpack this belief here, but since the dawn of the Church, Christians have fastidiously searched the Scripture and come to the conclusion that there is ONE God, but Three Persons (hence "trinity" means "three in one").

READ

JOHN 14:6-21



What is going on in this passage? What does this tell us about the nature of God?

We are given this picture that Jesus is the one who is fulfilling the will of the Father. He obeys Him, loves Him and carries out His instructions, showing others what it means to know the Father. In turn, the Father glorifies Jesus, gives him honour and authority and sets Jesus as King above all kings. We also read that Spirit rests on Jesus and comes from the Father and is given by the Son to those who put their faith in him. This is what the Jewish leaders couldn't understand – the relational nature of God.

READ

JOHN 17:20-26

Here we find Jesus praying for those who will come to faith in him because other followers of Jesus have discipled and mentored them (this includes us!).



What, in verses 21-23, does Jesus specifically pray for these disciples?

His prayer is all about relationships. Jesus prays that his followers would understand the relational nature of the Trinity and the unity of the Father, Son and Spirit and that this might be reflected in how they love one another.

But Jesus goes on. He says he has made the Father known to his disciples and will continue to remind them of the love of God and be in them. Through this ongoing process of making himself known and demonstrating the love of God and remaining with them – the world will come to know Jesus as well. This is the description of what Christian mentoring and discipleship are all about. The Father, Son and Spirit maintain love and unity with one

another. Jesus makes this love and unity known by instructing, reminding, caring for, standing beside his disciples.

The heart of Christian mentoring is being in relationship with God. Author John Mallison writes,

“Christian mentoring is a dynamic, intentional relationship of trust in which one person enables another to maximise the grace of God in their life and service”

John Mallison, *Mentoring To Develop Disciples*, 2010, pg. 8



But what does that look like? How does Jesus exemplify a dynamic, intentional relationship of trust with the Father?



What examples do we see of Jesus mentoring others so that they are “enabled to maximise the grace of God in their life and service?”



Can you name a time where someone did this for you? If so, what did that look like? Be specific.

Our picture of mentoring comes from the example of the Trinity in Scripture. From here we can construct a picture of what discipleship best looks like:

Read the following passages and ask:



How do these verses demonstrate how God loves and disciples us?

LAMENTATIONS 3:21-24

1 JOHN 4:8-16

ZEPHANIAH 3:17

PSALM 139:1-17

ISAIAH 40:27-31

Jesus’ prayer was all about us coming in the loving knowledge of God through intimate relationship with Him, empowered by His Spirit in us. Jesus invites us, his followers, to do the same thing in others, walking alongside them and reminding them of the love of God and empowering them to follow Jesus through the help of the Spirit.

Next week we’ll ask ourselves the question, “Me? A Mentor?”. But before we explore that sometimes daunting question, take a moment to remember how God has shown His great love to you. How Jesus calls you, loves you, cares for you. How the Spirit is present with you, reminds you of God’s ways and speaks on your behalf to the Father. Reflect upon how great God’s love is for you – that He sent the Son so that you may not perish but have everlasting life. That with God, you are never alone. That you are seen and heard and loved. These are important truths to remember. We love because God first loved us.

Week 3

Me? A mentor?

In Exodus 3 and 4, the Lord appears to Moses in a burning bush. It's a pretty famous scene. We may recall God telling Moses that He has seen and heard of His people's suffering in Egypt and tells Moses that he will be God's appointed person to lead them out of slavery.

But we often forget other parts of the story.



For example, why is Moses out here in the wilderness in the first place?

READ

EXODUS 2:11-15



And how does Moses respond to God's offer to use him to accomplish His purposes?

READ

EXODUS 3:11-15, 4:1-13

From the story so far, Moses should have everything working for him. He was miraculously preserved from Pharaoh's killing of the innocent Hebrew babies. He was adopted into Pharaoh's own household and made prince of Egypt. On paper, this sounds like the kind of person God definitely wants to use. But then out of anger, he murders an Egyptian slavedriver and tries to cover it up. When his act is discovered, he runs away. Then when God offers him a chance of a lifetime, Moses comes up with multiple excuses why he's not the man for the job. He finishes by telling God to send someone else.





Why do you think Moses didn't want the job?



Can you relate at all to Moses?

What Moses failed to realize was that despite his failures, despite his obvious "disqualifications" for the role, despite his lack of natural skill and ability, God told him, "I will be with you." The "I" in that sentence is where God tells Moses His name: Yahweh. That word can be translated many ways but perhaps the simplest is "The One who Is." God tells Moses that it doesn't matter about who Moses is, was or will be. All that matters is the One who Is will be with him, working in and through Moses despite all Moses' limitations.

 Do you, like Moses, ever doubt that God is with you?

 Have you, like Moses, disqualified yourself for something that God perhaps has called you to do?

As we think about mentoring and discipling others, this is often the sentiment we as Christians have. Here are some of the things I (Travis) have said over the years when someone has asked me to lead or walk alongside someone else. Can you relate to any of these...?

“I’m still a relatively new Christian. I should probably just take my faith slow.”

“I don’t think I’m mature enough to share my faith with others or mentor anyone.”


“I really don’t know the Bible as well as others in the church.”


“I haven’t been walking as closely with the Lord as I’d like to, so you probably want to ask someone with a more vibrant faith than me.”

“I’ve got a lot on my plate right now.”

“I don’t think I have the skills and personality to disciple someone else.”


“I wouldn’t even know where to begin.”


 What do all of these statements reflect? Who is the primary subject of each sentence?

 What do statements like this fail to recognize (hint: it’s the same thing Moses didn’t seem to understand)?

READ

2 CORINTHIANS 4:7-12

 What does this verse remind us of? Who is really the one at work?

 As we think about making disciples, how does this verse encourage us?

Paul here states that it is BECAUSE of all his issues and troubles that God demonstrates His power and goodness, not despite of it.

? How can our brokenness be used to building someone up in the Lord?

One of the things that often hold us back from mentoring someone else is we think we don't know how to do it. In his book on mentoring, John Mallison asks:

"Have you ever encouraged another person? At that moment you were mentoring!" He adds most of us are already doing this without even knowing it. He states, "Mentoring is a very significant role every Christian disciple can fulfill...irrespective of age or experience. It is not restricted to 'giants of the faith.' The basic requirement is a living relationship with God and an ability to listen and respond sensitively, and to encourage. If this is true of you, you can be God's agent in enriching another person's life."

? How does this change or sharpen your understanding of mentoring/discipling?

If you have been following this study, here is the progression of what we have learned so far:

- 1** Jesus loves us so much he became one of us, walking in our steps. By doing so, he laid down the example of what investing in others looks like.
- 2** He then commanded EVERYONE who calls themselves a follower a Jesus to make disciples themselves.
- 3** You are no doubt where you are right now in your faith because one or even many people have disciplined you.
- 4** The Bible is clear: everyone can do this job. Why? Because the role isn't about us, how good we are or how qualified we are. It's about being willing to allow God to do His work through us.
- 5** You are probably already mentoring someone without knowing it.

If all this is true, it means perhaps it is time to stop coming up with more excuses for why we don't want God to use us and instead begin to understand how we can take even small steps into the grand adventure God is calling us to. We will dig into that more in the weeks to come.

To end our time, spend some time in prayer and confession

What is holding you back from saying YES to being God's disciple maker? What unhelpful statements do you think about yourself or your qualifications that you need to surrender? What is one true thing that you learned this week from God's Word that you can apply to your life?



Week 4

Walking the road together

Interdependence & accountability

In 1 Kings 18 we perhaps have one of the most incredible moments of trust and seeing God at work. Elijah is a prophet of the Lord who is living in a land that has moved on from Yahweh to the gods and goddesses of the neighbouring countries. Even the king of Israel at the time, Ahab, began following a Canaanite god named Ba'al and turned much of the country to worship of this false god. Elijah gets summoned by King Ahab, who tells Elijah to stop making trouble for him (by continually preaching to the people to turn back to Yahweh). Elijah tells Ahab to meet him up at Mount Carmel where they will answer the question whose god is the real God and deserving of worship?

You may know the story well. Hundreds of prophets of Ba'al call on their god to show up and light the fire of their offering to him. There is no response and Elijah even begins to mock them, saying "Maybe Ba'al is out back using the bathroom." But there is no response. Elijah then requests his altar be drenched in water (making it even harder to light a fire), then calls on the name of the Lord and the altar and everything around it catch flame. The people watching are amazed and proclaim that Yahweh, not Ba'al is the true God. Pretty amazing moment, hey?

But what happens next is very perplexing. Jezebel, King Ahab's wife, becomes enraged at Elijah and puts a hit out on his life. Elijah, instead of trusting in the God who just showed up in this amazing way, runs for his life. He becomes so depressed he asks God to take his life from him (1 Kings 19). God provides food and drink and shelter for Elijah despite Elijah's protests. God even shows up at Elijah's side, but this doesn't seem to do anything for Elijah. Finally, God tells Elijah to go into the desert, where he will find himself a friend, Elisha, who Elijah will mentor. Elijah meets Elisha and the two travel together, walking the road together, as Elijah pours into Elisha. From this point there is no more word of Elijah's depression or loneliness. He's found a friend and someone to walk with.



As you hear this story? What comes to mind?



Does it seem a little bit counterproductive for God to tell Elijah to start discipling someone else when Elijah is at his lowest moment... when he doesn't want anything to do with God?

 How was his relationship with Elisha able to excite Elijah and get him back to his calling to serve the Lord?

The heart of this story is this: the Christian faith is all about relationships. All throughout Scripture we see that humans need not only a relationship with their heavenly Father, but with one another to thrive. From the opening pages of the Bible, even in the middle of paradise, God says, “It is NOT GOOD for man to be alone,” and makes a partner (the Hebrew word is best understood as a “delivering ally” – someone who will partner with you through life’s ups and downs) for the man. Likewise as we read all the instructions the New Testament writers give for Christian living, they are almost always to be read as “you all... [do this, think this, act this way]”. It makes no sense for audiences at the time to see themselves as “doing faith on their own.” We are made for partnership with one another. This is really what mentoring is all about.


READ

ECCLESIASTES 4:9-12

PROVERBS 27:17


HEBREWS 10:24-25

ROMANS 12:3-13

 What do these verses tell us about ourselves?

 What do they tell us about how we “relationship” together?

 In what ways have people within NBC lived these out in your own life?

 When was the last time you “spurred someone” on in their faith? What did that look like? How did that feel?

READ


ACTS 2:42-47


 What are the disciples doing here? What is happening as the result of it?


The word for “fellowship” is the Greek word *koinonia*, which means “sharing together” – it’s the ideal of mutual encouragement and accountability. A partnership to help each other know and follow Christ more and more.

We may understand verses and words like these well. We may be part of Community Group or attend church for the very reason of receiving encouragement and help. But biblically,

partnership is *koinonia* – sharing together. Perhaps the thing we forget most often is that we have something valuable to share with others. In the words of David, *I am fearfully and wonderfully made*. We have been “made alive with Christ” and each person’s story is unique, even if we think ours is not as exciting as someone else’s. God designed each of us like no one else. We each have a powerful and special role in caring for, building up, encouraging and helping others. Paul notes that when we hold ourselves back or say no to walking alongside others, not only are **we** missing an amazing opportunity and experience, but so are **others**. God’s solution to Elijah’s depression, isolation and broken faith was a partnership, a mutual encouragement in the gospel.

 Who are you and what do you have to offer? What unique personality, experiences and skills do you have?

 How can YOU and what you bring be used to mutually encourage and spur others on in the gospel?


 What is one step you can take to sharpen someone and be sharpened yourself?


Week 5

Biblical models of mentoring

READ


LUKE 24:13-35

 What is happening in this passage?

 What exactly does Jesus do with these two men (what actions does he take)?

In only a matter of (perhaps) hours, these two men went from being dejected and hopeless to transformed witnesses of the resurrection. Why? Because they were disciples. Jesus CAME UP and WALKED ALONGSIDE them. He ASKED questions and LISTENED. He reminded them of God’s Word and EXPLAINED it to them. He broke bread and GAVE to them. This short scene is a snapshot of what Jesus did for his entire earthly ministry. This is what turned fishermen and tax collectors and outcasts and sinners into preachers and church planters and pillars of the church. Today we’re going to take a biblical look at how this is done and what it looks like.

Before we dive into God's Word, take some time to share:

 Who discipled you? What exactly did they say or do that helped you grow into the person you are? What do you remember about that relationship?

Remember, mentoring can take many forms (as we'll see in a moment), so perhaps think about how other Christians did what Jesus did above (walked alongside you, listened to you, etc.).

The amazing thing about God's Word is that there are MANY examples of discipling relationships. None are the same because every person and relationship is different.

READ

2 TIMOTHY 1:1-14

 WHO is being discipled and HOW they are being discipled?

READ


EXODUS 18:5-27

1 SAMUEL 20 (if too long read verses 12-17 and skim the rest)

JOHN 11:17-45

There is a lot to unpack in these verses. We see older people mentoring younger. We see fathers mentoring sons. We see friends and equals mentoring one another. We see mentoring as conversations. We mentors and mentored have shared experiences together. We see praying, challenging, listening, walking alongside, sharing emotions, passing wisdom, crying, guidance, speaking truth and carrying burdens. All this is to say there are LOTS of ways to mentor.

Think back to people (or a person) who mentored you:

 Who were these people and how did they mentor you? Was it over a long or short period of time? Was it in a ministry setting or one-on-one or both? Was it incidental moments or planned out? Did it include listening? Challenging? Rebuking? Correcting? Building up? Helping? Sharing wisdom?

If we were to make a map of our experiences, we would probably see an array of people who have varying degrees of influence in our Christian growth over a period of many years.

Have a look at an abbreviated version of my discipleship journey:

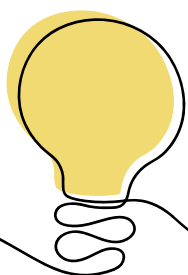
AGE	RELATIONSHIP	SIGNIFICANT MOMENTS	HOW THEY DISCIPLED ME
0-18	Grandmother	General love, encouragement and listening	Prayed fervently for me and told me about her love for Jesus
13-16	Vern, youth pastor	Long conversations at youth camp	Saw something in me, challenged me to take my faith seriously
17-22	Scott, youth pastor	Called me every week, invited me to become a youth leader, invited me to consider ministry because he thought God wanted to use me in powerful ways	Intentionally disciplined me by hanging out with me every week, praying for me, teaching me God's Word and challenging me to grow
17-22	Other youth leaders	Inviting me over for dinner, coming to my sporting events and graduation	Present. Loving. Listening. Never judging.
16-Present	Cory, best friend	Too many to name	Faithful friend and Jesus follower who has been through every up and down in life with me. Always is there to help, talk, cry, pray.
19-24	Andrew, pastor	Hired me in my first job as a youth pastor.	Met with me weekly to talk about ministry and life. Had weekly dinners at his house.

These are just some of many people who have shaped me over the years. If we were to ask them about their discipleship journey, they would be able to name lots of people (maybe even me!) who shaped them. And if we asked those people, another list would be generated. We could keep doing this until we got all the way back to Jesus and others in the Bible.

Here's the point...

There is no one way to disciple others, just like there are likely many people in a variety of ways over a long period of time who have mentored us. Yet those people intentionally took the time to show us Jesus, pray for us, share God's Word with us, encourage us.

Next week we will get into the nitty gritty of what mentoring is and what false myths we often believe about it. But before we do, it is helpful to end by doing two things: pray and thank God for those people who mentored you AND then ask God to help you consider being and doing that for others.



Week 6

Dispelling some myths and main roles of a mentor

We are now over halfway through our study on mentoring. Well done for making it this far! No doubt you might be feeling a lot of different emotions, from excitement to fear or perhaps both at the same time! That's normal. Whenever we want to step out to follow Jesus' lead, there will always be wind and waves swirling around us that make us want to stay in our comfortable boats (just ask the disciples on the Sea of Galilee!). However, the Christian journey has never been one of personal comfort, but intentionally knowing and following Jesus more and more so we can know Christ and the power of His resurrection (Philippians 3:8-14).

Below are some of the most common myths we often believe about serving, discipling or stepping out to do something Jesus calls us to. Next to these myths are the biblical principles that dispel these myths. Take a few moments reading through the list below and the verses listed and ask – which of these is true of me?

“I'm too young/old!” 1 Timothy 4:12, Psalm 92:12-14

“I'm don't know enough/I'm too inexperienced!” 1 Kings 3:5-13, Psalm 19:7

“I don't know if I can do it!” Psalm 121, Philippians 4:13

“I don't know what to do or who to serve!” Matt 25:34-40, 1 Pet 4:10

“I'm too busy!” Colossians 3:16-17

Hopefully, these biblical principles help dispel the myths we come to believe. I have found that despite hearing the call of Jesus to make disciples and to serve others and knowing the scriptural reasons for them, I am still hesitant. This is a natural reaction. We saw this earlier in the first stages of ministry of Moses – that despite God promising Moses his presence and power, Moses still asked God to use someone else! So how can we move beyond our fears and take a step in the direction God has invited us to go?

One answer is to have a clearer definition of what it means to disciple someone else. As we have explored earlier, a basic biblical definition of mentoring is “helping others become more like Jesus.” We have already discussed there are many examples of what this looks like. We have also discussed that discipling is a two-way relationship. As you pour your life into another's, so they help you to grow more like Jesus. But beyond that, then what? What does it take to be a mentor?

John Mallison lists nine characteristics that a person needs to develop to disciple someone else. You may be inclined to score yourself “low” in all of these characteristics, but Mallison

reminds us that the best mentors are not people who do all these things perfectly but simply are willing to grow in them. That's it. So what are these traits? Have a look at the list and discuss what you think these things mean.

Christ-centredness

Passion to serve

Loves others

Affirming

Open & transparent

Trusting & trustworthy

Available

Willing to learn & teach

Prayerful

Take a moment and silently assess yourself currently in these areas.



Which of these presents a challenge for you?



How have you seen one of these attributes in yourself in helping someone else? What did that look or feel like?

Great, you might think. These sound really good. But I have no idea how to grow in these areas, let alone be these things to someone else. However, we have already spoken about how anyone, as long as we're willing to learn, can fulfill this role. Let's look at this list again. Imagine someone in your church or small group or ministry area has approached you. Maybe it's to seek advice. Maybe it's to share something they are going through.

As this happens, think of and write down just ONE idea of what each of these traits could look like in that scenario. How can you show these things to this person as you chat?

At the time of my writing this, a pastor who was much older than me called me for a chat. He is someone I would consider much wiser and godly than myself. As we were talking, he began sharing a struggle he was having in his church. My first reaction was to say, "Mate, you know better than I do! I'm the wrong guy to chat with!" However, the Spirit reminded me that mentoring relationships can look like lots of things, including caring for someone I'd consider a hero in the faith. So I listened, I prayed, I shared wisdom where it seem applicable, I empathized with his struggle and allowed him space to share more. Even though I didn't think I helped him very much at all, the last thing he said was how thankful he was I was available and how the simple fact I listened made him reframe what he was struggling with.


We'll dive deeper into listening, questioning and the power of presence next week, but I wanted to share this example of what even "unaware" and "accidental" mentoring can look like. I would not think I'm that great of a listener or call myself a prayer warrior, but through simple actions, I made a difference in his life in that moment.

Spent the last few moments encouraging one another

Select one person at a time and allow the others in the group to share how they see these attributes in that person. Be creative! You could write each person's name down on a piece of paper and pass the paper around to various group members who can write down what that person means to them. Or share it out loud. We all need to be encouraged and what better time to do this to dispel any doubts we may have that God wants to use us for His glory?

Week 7

Listening, questioning & the power of presence

 When is the last time someone asked you a question about yourself? Not about the weather or sports or holidays. But about you?

Whenever I get to spend quality time with someone else, the first question I always ask is, "Can you tell me your story?" Usually after I ask that question, there isn't any more time to ask additional ones. Almost always I just watch as that person's face lights up and then they start sharing about themselves: highs, lows, meaningful moments and people. Sometimes there are tears. Lots of times there are smiles. But every time that person feels cared for. Why do you think that is?



Why do we (usually) like to be asked questions about ourselves?

READ

MATTHEW 9:1-8

MATTHEW 16:13-15

LUKE 8:42B-48

LUKE 15:8

JOHN 4:4-8



What is Jesus doing here? And why?

Often when Jesus met with people who came to him, he used this same technique of asking questions. Sometimes the questions were conversation starters: “Will you give me a drink?” Often times they prompted the hearer to look deeper within themselves or be more acutely aware of what was happening in front of them. There are about 135 questions recorded of Jesus in the Gospel accounts. As we think about how we can help other Christians to grow in their faith, asking good questions is a great place to start. John Mallison notes, “Asking appropriate mentoring questions gets a person thinking for themselves about their situation rather than being dependent upon advice. Questions build confidence and good feelings in a person as they realise they have an active rather than passive role in the relationship.”

He goes on to note that the most effective questions, like the majority of the ones Jesus asked, are open-ended and/or reflective questions, rather than closed questions.



What’s the difference between an open-ended or reflective question and a closed question? How do you see Jesus using these questions? What effect do they have on people?

Mallison lists a few different questions that help us engage deeper with those we desire to grow with. As you read through these questions, think about how you yourself might answer them and then reflect on how these questions might open up further discussion or insight for someone you are in relationship with.

Can you tell me about yourself?

What motivates you?

What are your strengths?

What's your relationship with God like?

What are your hopes?

How are you (really)?

What are you thankful for?

What are you finding difficult?

What are you doing to grow in your faith?

How are your relationships (with your spouse, kids, parents, co-workers, friends)?

What are you doing to rest and rejuvenate yourself?

Are you serving? How's that going?

How are you finding church/ministry/Community group?

What has God been putting on your heart?

What areas of your life can we submit to prayer?

Asking questions is a great way to help someone grow as a human and as a believer. But discipling someone and caring for someone goes beyond just asking questions.

READ

JOHN 9:1-34



What do you notice in this passage?




What questions are being asked? What is the response after a question is answered?


The religious leaders here are curious to know what is happening to this man, so they ask lots of good questions. But even though they ask good questions, they refuse to listen. They already have their minds made up even before the man speaks to them and get angry


when he doesn't play along with them. This is an example of how mentoring relationships should NOT work.


Have you ever had the experience of someone who talked over you or at you instead of listened to you? What was that like?

 How often are YOU quick to give advice or make judgments instead of listening?

One of the practices we see Jesus doing is called active listening. Mallison states active listening is “sensitive, empathetic, concentrated listening to discover what people are really trying to communicate.” Sometimes active listening means not saying anything at all, but leaving space for the words to sit there. It means focusing in on someone, keeping good eye contact, sitting comfortably, avoiding looking at your phone, leaning in, nodding along as someone is sharing and then when appropriate, reflecting back what you've heard, “This is what I think I heard you say...” Active listening allows the other person to lead and for you to observe and find the deeper feelings being shared.

 Who are the people that really listen to you? How does that make you feel about yourself and about them?

 How do you feel when people don't listen to you?

 How has Jesus' example of asking questions and actively listening challenged you today?

Asking good questions and actively listening are just two points of the triangle. The third (and equally important) point is being present.

 What does “being present” mean in a relationship?

Being present can mean lots of things. It can mean not being distracted. It can mean setting aside time for someone. It can mean being available.


The best (followed by the worst) model of being present happens at the end of Job 2. After Job loses his source of income, the lives of his children, and his own health deteriorates, Job's friends respond.


READ

JOB 2:11-13

 How did Job's friends demonstrate the power of presence?

Unfortunately, Job's friends after this then try to explain away to Job why he is suffering the way he is. They don't ask good questions. They don't listen. And after their initial helpful presence (sitting with him in his pain in the silence), they adopt a more aggressive style of presence that is far less loving.

 What is a positive example you have of the power of presence in your life?

 How might we demonstrate the power of presence for someone we are caring for or discipling?

Take a few moments to reflect on people who have done these things well in your life. Think about how you felt when someone asked good questions, actively listened and was present. Now think about your own response to others. Do you do those things? Or do you struggle to ask good questions? Or actively listen? Or do you find it hard to be present?

A challenge for this week

Try to put these three things into practice in some form. Try them out and then think about how that felt – for you, for the other person. Was it helpful? Healing? Insightful? What did you enjoy? What did the other person enjoy? What can you do differently next time?

Week 8

Understanding how people grow

How do you best learn and grow? Do you grow most through explicit teaching (like listening to a lecture)? Or are you more of a visual-spatial learner? Do you grow most through hands-on experiences? Or do you appreciate being shown a variety of thoughts and being allowed to draw your own conclusions?

All of us learn and grow in different ways. Our aim as a church community has always been to grow in our knowledge and love of Jesus the Messiah. So in whatever we are doing, whether it's a worship service or a Community group study or a youth talk or even meeting one-on-one with someone, your church leaders are always asking how we can help people grow through a variety of ways. Growth is a vital part of the Christian life. In John 15, Jesus




warns those claim to know him but aren't interested in being nourished and spiritually fed by him (which undergird growth): "Apart from me, you can do nothing" (John 15:5). Jesus calls us to bear fruit, which happens when we stay connected with him and allow him to grow us into maturity (John 15:4).

If this Jesus' desire for us, it should also be our desire: to grow ourselves and to help brothers and sisters in Christ grow in their faith. This study aims to delve into the concept of growth and learning as modelled by Jesus. We'll explore how He nurtured His disciples through experiences, challenges, and reflection, offering insights into effective mentoring. Understanding this growth process is crucial for our own personal spiritual development and for those whom we seek to care for and disciple.

PART 1 Experiential Learning with Jesus

READ




LUKE 10:1-20

-  How did Jesus prepare His disciples for their mission?
-  What can we learn from the disciples' experiences when they returned?
-  How do you think this experience (living the gospel message out) shaped Jesus' followers?

PART 2 Embracing Failure as a Learning Tool

READ


MATTHEW 14:22-33


-  What lessons can we draw from Peter's attempt and failure to walk on water?
-  How does Jesus' response to Peter's failure guide us in mentoring others?
-  How have you learned from failure?

PART 3 Reflective Learning through Parables

READ

MARK 4:1-20


 How do parables encourage reflective learning? What do these strange teachings encourage us to do when the “answer” isn’t exactly clear?


 Discuss the different responses to the Word as described in the parable. How does this apply to spiritual growth?

PART 4 Questioning as a Tool for Growth

READ

JOHN 20:24-29

 How did Jesus address Thomas’ doubts? How can doubt (which we often view as a negative thing) function as a learning and growth experience?

 What role do questions and doubts play in spiritual growth and mentoring?

PART 5 The Role of Community in Learning

READ


ACTS 2:42-47


 What aspects of the early church’s community life contributed to the growth of its members?


 Why does community help us to grow in our faith?


 How can we foster such a community in today’s context?

As you can see, there are lots of biblical models of spiritual growth. Personal experiences. Hands-on learning. Learning through doubt and failure. Wrestling through God's Word. Community encouraging and challenging one another.

 Because of these methods of learning, how did the disciples grow and mature?

 Look back and reflect again on your own spiritual growth. How do you see these parts at work in your own life?

 What is one area of growth for you? How can you foster growth in that area of your life?

 Knowing what you've just learned, what might it look like to nurture spiritual growth in another person?

Week 9

What the mentoring space looks like

“*As iron sharpens iron,
so one person
sharpens another.*”

PROVERBS 27:17

Over the last few weeks we've dialed in on the biblical foundations and vision for mentoring and discipling others. We've listened to the call of Jesus on every Christian to "make disciples of every nation, teaching them to obey [his] commandments and to baptise them in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit." We've explored ways in which we have been mentored. We've looked at characteristics and methods of how mentoring works best.




But you may still be thinking, "I don't know about this. I don't even know where to start." That's okay and normal. In this study we're going to examine some mentoring relationships in Scripture. We will read passages that give us insight onto what the mentor-mentee relationship looks like and think through some questions that will help us reflect and put together a picture of how we might begin discipling someone.

EXAMPLE 1 Moses and Joshua

READ

EXODUS 33:7-11

NUMBERS 27:15-23




-  How did Moses mentor Joshua in leadership?
-  What qualities did Joshua exhibit that made him a good mentee?
-  Discuss the importance of passing on leadership as seen in this relationship.

EXAMPLE 2 Elijah and Elisha

READ

1 KINGS 19:19-21

2 KINGS 2:1-15

-  What can we learn from Elijah's approach to mentoring Elisha?
-  How did Elisha respond to Elijah's mentorship?
-  What is the significance of the mantle passing from Elijah to Elisha?



EXAMPLE 3 Paul and Timothy

READ

1 TIMOTHY 1:1-5

2 TIMOTHY 1:3-7

2 TIMOTHY 2:1-2

-  How did Paul nurture Timothy's faith and ministry?
-  What role did spiritual gifts play in their mentoring relationship?



What can modern mentors learn from Paul's letters to Timothy?

EXAMPLE 4 Jesus as a Mentor

READ

MARK 3:13-19

JOHN 13:1-17



How did Jesus model mentorship with His disciples?



What characteristics of Jesus' mentorship are crucial for today's mentors?



How did Jesus balance teaching, modelling, and empowering?

John Mallison uses these examples (and others) in Scripture and creates a picture of what a mentoring space looks like. Read through and reflect on what you think these look like as we care for others:

1

Establishing and maintaining healthy and co-supportive boundaries

2

Have clear guidelines and a shared common goal

3

Maintain lines of accountability with each other and with the leadership of the church

4

Be available (within reason)

5

Keep confidences

6

Avoid excessive intimacy

7

Remember you're co-travelers on a journey

8

Season your time together with prayer and God's Word




9

Allow space for vulnerability

10

Have fun, laugh and cry together!

Next Step questions

-  How can you identify someone to mentor? What does that process look like and how can you begin?
-  Reflect on your own qualities as a mentor or mentee. What biblical principles can you apply to grow in these roles?
-  How can you move from incidental discipling of others to purposeful and intentional discipling?

Week 10


Starting the process


Our hope through this study is that our church community might take up Jesus' challenge to make disciples. As we've stated already, many of us are already doing this, maybe without even knowing it. But as we follow our Lord's commands, we want to be more purposeful in how we love, care for and minister to others.


This, our last study, will take us through what starting this process can look like. It should be stated this is not the 100% Always-Works, Follow the Exact Instruction handbook, but merely a guide to help us think how we might get started. Feel free to use and adapt these suggestions to your own personality and context.


So where do we begin?


First. Are you ready to be a mentor? As we have already discussed, we may generate hundreds of reason why we are not. When we look at our examples of "good" mentors in the Bible, we don't see a lot of qualified people. We see broken, sin-filled people who get it wrong, stick their feet in their mouths and fail. The starting point, we examined, is not us and whether we are good enough or godly enough or extroverted enough...it's knowing despite all our faults and limitations, God is at work and wants to use US for His kingdom building purposes. So some helpful and reflective questions we should ask ourselves to begin:

-  What is holding me back from obeying God's call to make disciples?


 Am I faithful that God is doing the work and it is His job to change hearts or am I fearful that I'm supposed to do all the work and it's all dependent on me?


 How can I look back on ways I've helped people in the past and use that as fuel to spur me on for future relationships I may have?

 Even though I may not feel ready, how can I move ahead in faith? What needs to happen to get me over that line and how can I make that happen?


 Once I've allowed God to quash all my fears and excuses (like Moses in Exodus 3 and 4), how can I free up some time and space to mentor someone else?

Which leads up to the second step. Who can I mentor? Before we go too far into this question, it should be said that there are probably already people in your life that you are either mentoring (even though you may not call it that) or who are primed and ready to start being mentored already in your circle of influence. So think about the following questions:


 Is there someone currently who comes to me for wisdom or advice or prayer? How might I go deeper in the mentoring relationship with that person?


 Is there someone in your current circle of influence you might want to investigate a deeper discipleship relationship with? This can be someone in your Community Group or ministry team or someone you regularly engage with at church?


If no one comes to mind, ask yourself the following questions:

 Is there a type of person I can see myself coming alongside? Is there a demographic that sparks my interest?

Again, this could be anyone. Maybe you have a desire to see high school students grow in their walk with Christ. Or maybe you think you have wisdom to share with young married couples or young parents. Maybe you have an affinity for the elderly, who may have the desire but not the ability to come to a church service. Perhaps it's kids or those of your own gender (we highly recommend those of the same gender mentoring one another) or people new to the area. Maybe you have a heart for a specific group: those struggling with addiction, refugees, young adults or non-Christians.


 How might I explore starting a mentoring relationship with someone else?

 Am I aware that mentoring can take all sorts of forms (and just not sitting down over a coffee discussing deep issues)?

 Who can I ask if I don't know my gifts or passions or people? Is there someone I can turn to myself for insight on where I might start and with whom?

Fortunately, you are not on your own. As part of our vision for our church, we are beginning mentoring pathways for people in our community – both to be mentors and to be mentored. You will hear more about this in the coming months. To summarise what we hope for – NBC will help facilitate mentoring relationships and providing training and follow-up with mentors and soon-to-be mentors. This means instead of having to search out and find a mentor or mentees, NBC can help build those connections. However, mentoring relationships always happen best naturally and organically.

And finally, as you prepare to invest in others, ask yourself the following questions:

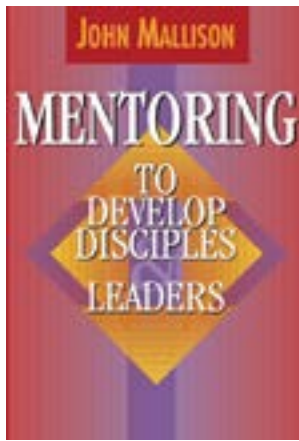
 What do you want the mentoring space to look like?

What would it look like to incorporate the following:

- Prayer
- Invitation to do regular, everyday life things together
- Opening up your home
- Choosing a set time and calendar
- Choosing study material
- Sharing your faith with one another
- Setting goals and hopes

 How can you season this relationship (or future relationship) with prayer?

There are lots of resources to help you. Besides your church leadership team, we want to provide you with some great places to get more information. Many of them have been used in this study.



Mentoring to develop disciples and leaders

by JOHN MALLISON

You'll have noticed many references to Mallison's work throughout this study. Mallison has generously made this book available as a [free PDF on his website](#).



CRU Ministry

The parachurch ministry called CRU (formerly *Campus Crusade for Christ*) has great articles and worksheets that can get you started.

This study features content from [this article](#) and has additional [links and resources listed at the bottom of the page](#).



How to pursue meaningful mentoring relationships

PODCAST by MELISSA KRUGER

Melissa's amazing podcast and her book *Growing Together: Taking Mentoring Beyond Small Talk and Prayer Requests* [can be found here](#).

We hope you are inspired to invest in and mentor others

Please close your time in prayer for each other. Ask the Spirit of God to be at work, showing you His power at work in you, helping you overcome your fears and to bring the right people into your life. This journey seems daunting. But it is incredibly rewarding and life-changing, both for you and those in your care. If you want to continue to grow and be challenged in this area, please do not hesitate to ask for help. Our church leaders and community want to come alongside of you.

