

## Discipleship - Discussion Points

1. Our desire is to present the concept of discipleship as a **commitment to “spiritually parent”** a disciple-in-the-making, in contrast to the prevalent idea that discipleship is simply a “transfer of Biblical **knowledge**” that takes place, usually in a classroom or group setting. We believe that group meetings do play an important part in healthy Christian growth, but **they cannot take the place of personal one-on-one mentoring**, which includes individualized teaching, modeling, encouragement, exhortation, etc. Discuss the advantages and disadvantages of corporate meetings such as in a classroom setting, or a small accountability group. What are the advantages and disadvantages of one-on-one meetings?
2. Discuss the importance of each of the **four major components** of personal discipleship. Why is the initial period in a new Christian’s life so important for spiritual development?
3. If we see new believers as “spiritual babies” in Christ, then it seems logical to look at the **characteristics** of a typical human baby. There are at least three notable traits: **1) They’re hungry**; **2) they’re dependent** on others; and **3) they are self-centered**. Are these characteristics also true of the typical new believer?
4. Often new believers are not presented with essential spiritual concepts because there is a fear of overwhelming them with too much complex Biblical information, concluding that the Christian life can really only be understood by **advanced believers**. None of the spiritual concepts presented in this discipleship curriculum are overwhelming if clearly explained. However, if left to their own, many newer Christians will conclude that God’s provision for a healthy Christian life is totally dependent on their **outward behavior** and/or **Biblical understanding**. That **is** overwhelming.
5. Some reasons for which many Christians are **reluctant to make a commitment** to mentoring a new believer are: **(1) I don’t feel adequate**; **(2) That’s not my gift**; **(3) I don’t have enough Biblical understanding**; **(4) I don’t want to be a hypocrite**; **(5) I’m too busy, over committed; etc.** These reasons are usually based on one’s appraisal of personal capabilities, rather than faith in God’s capabilities. Many such Christians would greatly benefit from being trained as disciplers. How many Christian parents would have kids if they had waited until they felt their parenting skills were adequate? Have any of these reasons affected you either in the past or present? If so, has God given you victory, or are you presently seeing God’s victory in your life?
6. How have you been personally impacted by the **modeling** of other Christians? Has it had a positive or negative impact on your life?
7. The excitement commonly observed in a new Christian’s life is often **mistakenly** taken to indicate a measure of spiritual understanding. They hear that they are “new creatures in Christ,” yet soon find themselves with temptations similar to what they experienced as unbelievers. Is it any wonder that so many Christians find themselves living like unbelievers after a few months of **trying** to live the “new” life that seems to be expected of them? Many continue to attend church services, and may be involved in Christian events and programs, but inwardly are defeated and struggling, “doing their best!” Does this resemble your personal experience in any way?

8. Personal discipleship serves **to acquaint** the newer believer with the general goals that God has for their life and with the **process** by which God typically accomplishes spiritual growth. Because each Christian is unique, **only** the Holy Spirit can be in charge of the spiritual growth process. Through personal discipleship, our intent is to shorten the time required for the newer believer to learn **how to cooperate** with the Holy Spirit in the process of spiritual growth. What do you believe should be the anticipated spiritual results of healthy discipleship? Why?
9. Ideally every new Christian should be **individually** disciplined in order to help them in the **transition** from self-reliance to an increasing God-reliance, as clearly contrasted in Proverbs 3:5-6. “Persecution” is one instrument that God uses to accelerate that transition. Often **older** Christians, who have not yet acknowledged His Lordship, will have an increasing measure of **resistance** to changes, since they typically will have become accustomed to a somewhat manageable Christian lifestyle. God often uses “crisis” to bring about that transition. We need to be alert for Christians who have recently passed through such a crisis and are now ready to acknowledge His Lordship over their life. It is the Holy Spirit’s job to coordinate crisis, and **my** responsibility to be **available** to Him when He wants to use me in the life of another who is responding to Him. If someone were to ask you to describe a **“biblical disciple”**, how would you respond?
10. Do you believe that you know what **spiritual gift(s)** you have been given by the Holy Spirit? If so, how have you drawn this conclusion? From observing the Lord’s involvement in your life? How has He been using you to spiritually benefit others? Has anyone else commented to you regarding your spiritual engiftedness? (See also Lesson 1-6, pt. 8)

***Jesus did not tell us to go into all the world and just make “converts”,  
He told us to go and make “disciples”.***

***Every believer should be seen as a potential witness, and every  
believer should be seen as a potential discipler (“spiritual parent”).***





