

Disciple-Making Series

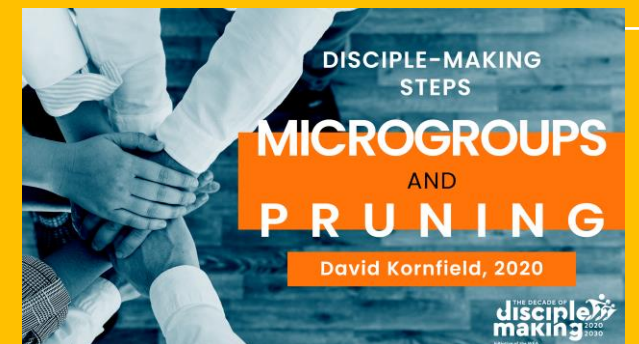
Finding a Mentor/Discipler and Key Questions for Disciple-Makers

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Many pastors and leaders can't find a mentor. They've tried and given up. Others have tried and found someone and not felt the effort was worth it. Yet others have grown with their mentors, reached their level or learned what they could and stopped because life and grace didn't continue to flow. What can you do when you know you need a mentor and can't find one?


This is the fourth article on practical disciple-making. The first article, *First Steps in Disciple-Making*, focuses on 1) foundational definitions of a disciple and discipler; 2) the value of multiple models, not falling into the tyranny of thinking there is one right model; and 3) recognizing that selection involves some "chemistry" and divine direction. The second article gives an underlying biblical vision for a disciple-making church and goes on to look at five selection processes that Jesus used and possible selection criteria. The third article features microgroups as a model that integrates many disciple-making principles exceptionally well and the critical role of pruning our lives to make space for being discipled and discipling. [Click below to access the previous articles.](#)



Finding a Mentor/Discipler

Matthew 7:7-8 assures us that if we ask, seek or knock, we will receive. A key in understanding this is that those three verbs in the Greek are continuous imperatives. We often don't receive what we ask for because we just throw something out there as a kind of hope or wish. We need to ask and persevere in asking and in following through on our asking. That applies deeply to finding a mentor or discipler.









The following steps will usually bring breakthroughs in our search for a mentor or discipler.

1. **Pray**, listening to God. Do this with each step below as well.
2. **Evaluate**. Do you have characteristics that impede people from mentoring you? You may even ask some people you trust about this. Try to eliminate any such barriers, especially lack of time. The greatest obstacles in finding a mentor are internal (Howard and William Hendricks, *As Iron Sharpens Iron*, chap. 4). “Looking for a mentor is a bit like looking for your true love” (Hendricks, p. 59).
3. **Dream**. Write down your ministry dream or vision statement. By the end of your life, what would you like to have accomplished? One way of doing this is to begin with Martin Luther King’s statement “I have a dream” and write what flows from your heart. After writing a paragraph, repeat this any number of times and see your dreams become clearer and deeper with each paragraph. You can then seek a specialized mentor in the area of your dreams or calling.



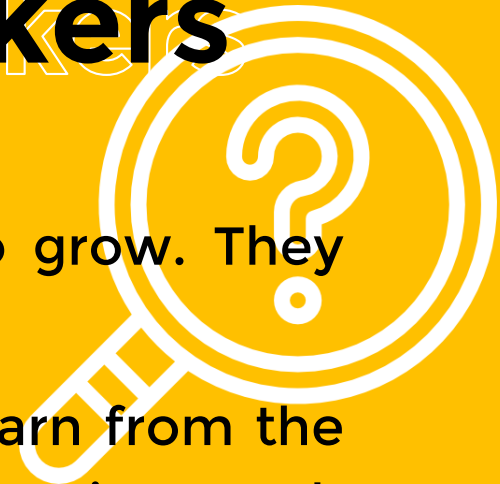
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4. ***Growth goals.*** Identify the areas in which you most want to grow, being as specific as possible. This should include at least one area of strength, since we should become specialists in those areas. Without investing in this task, you will not even know who to look for as a mentor (Hendricks, chap. 3 and pages 60-61). For example, many understand that it helps to have a professional or ministerial mentor, and another personal mentor to help with your spiritual, emotional and family life.
 5. ***Three candidates.*** Write down the names of the best candidates that come to your mind. No one is perfect! A significant barrier can be thinking that no one in your life is good enough to be your mentor. Knowing that none of the three options is perfect decreases the expectation of finding someone awesome and then feeling disillusioned by them.
 6. ***Prioritize*** the people on the list, as to who you think could be the best option, the second best, and so forth. Consider especially how easy it would be to meet.

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7. **Meet!** Set up an initial meeting with the first person on your list, *without* talking about mentoring so as not to scare him or her. If the meeting goes well, ask if you could meet with him or her again in about two months. If the next meetings also go well, you can thank the person for being your mentor or discipler. You could give them a good book about mentoring. As they grow, so will you!
 8. **Be proactive.** During the meeting be sensitive to the voice of the Spirit about tasks or areas that you should work on before the next meeting. Take notes. As the meeting ends, write down these action steps and send them to your mentor. Take the initiative to schedule your next meeting.
 9. **Review and project.** Normally each meeting will begin, after prayer, with a review of the previous meeting's goals and action steps. By the end of the meeting, you should have new action steps and sometimes new goals.
 10. **Persevere.** If, as time passes, you realize this isn't working well for you, try another person on your list. Continue seeking, until God gives you someone who matches your needs. 😊 A given person may work well for a period of time, after which you may need to look for a new mentor or discipler.

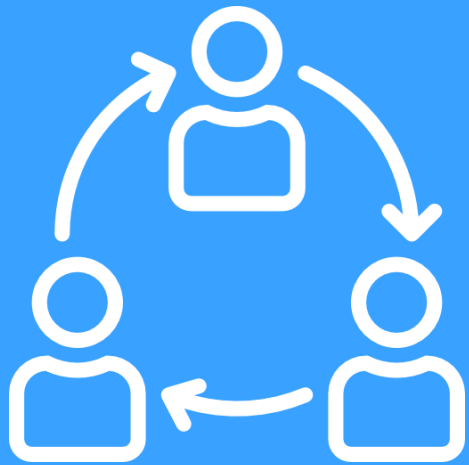
Key Questions for Disciple-Makers

Genuine disciples ask questions. They are learners. They want to grow. They have a God-given curiosity. Jesus' disciples were full of questions.

Genuine disciplers also ask questions. They want to help others learn from the inside out. A number of books of the Bible are based on asking questions such as Job, Malachi and Romans. Jesus asked many questions. We need to be like him. Four types of questions follow: **Accountability Questions, Bible Study Questions, 3-key Disciple-Making Questions, Devotional Questions**



Accountability Questions



Being accountable for our growth is fundamental for disciples. Disciples and mentees commonly identify growth goals and deeply appreciate accountability partners. The following ten questions, adapted from the Promise Keepers, help cover accountability in significant areas of our lives. They are especially good for accountability in groups of two or three single gender groups. If the group grows to four people, it should multiply into two groups of two, so that each person really has time to share, within one hour. This multiplication allows for a growing accountability movement.



During the last seven days,

1. How is your **relationship with God**? Devotional time? Prayer? Have you talked with a non-Christian about Jesus?
2. Is your **identity** firmly based on God? Did you overly concern yourself with others' opinions? With your productivity or lack thereof?
3. Have you been honoring, understanding and generous in your **family or important relationships** this week? If married, did you demonstrate love to your spouse? If you have kids, did you treat them lovingly?
4. Were you envious or unhappy as regards **finances or possessions**? Did you spend more than you should have? Were your finances marked by integrity and generosity?
5. How is your **emotional health**? Are you overly sensitive, bitter, angry or under the power of other feelings? Did you not forgive someone?
6. Did you protect your heart in relationship to the opposite **sex**? Did you avoid pornography? Keep your thoughts pure?
7. Were you careful in your **words**? Did you speak the truth in love? Did you speak badly of someone? Talk too much? Or should you have spoken up and didn't?
8. Are you developing authentic **relationships**? Were you transparent with your small group?
9. Are you **discerning what the Father is doing** and doing only what He shows you?
10. What **growth area** is God asking you to focus on at this time? How are you doing in that?

Which of these questions most caught your attention?



Bible Study Questions

The Discovery Bible study questions² that follow work with new and old Christians and even with seekers who don't know Christ.

1. What are you thankful for today or this week?
2. What challenges are you facing?
3. Read Scripture on _____
4. Have two to three people read this passage aloud. (For example: "Faith comes by hearing and hearing by the Word of God." Romans 10:17.)
5. Can you summarize this passage in your own words?
6. What did you discover or learn about God from this passage?
7. What have you learned or discovered about people from this passage?
8. How are you going to obey this passage? (What is your "I will" statement?)
9. With whom are you going to share what you have learned?
10. Based on this passage (or on other things in your life), what can we pray for you?

These ten questions are intended to be used in about an hour. That requires limiting each question to about five minutes, especially the earlier questions. Alternately, be prepared to skip certain questions, but always try to leave ample time for the last questions on application, sharing and prayer.

² Taken from Renew.org. For an app that uses this approach, see: <https://discoverapp.org/discovery-bible-study>.

3-Key Disciple-Making Questions³

- 1. What most caught your attention? (or what is God saying to you?)** Of all questions we may ask, this may be the most basic and important. It can be used with a Bible passage, a chapter from a book or a recent experience. It stimulates learning, provokes participation and allows for a flow of the Holy Spirit.
- 2. What can you do this week in light of this truth? (Or, what step or steps can you take?)** This kind of application question is crucial so that we live truth, not just discuss it!
- 3. What questions come to mind in light of this study? Note at least one.** This provokes the investigative mentality that characterizes disciples and disciple-makers. It can be used in family devotions with children and teens. Rotating the leadership, each one can ask a question to the person to their right based on a Bible or devotional reading. Once a person answers, they then ask a question to the next person!

For more details on the power of these questions, see: <https://docs.google.com/document/d/1ETnVGSBhz-b6Hkff1S95BMG1d1o38G1q/edit>.

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Devotional Questions

Asking God questions. Most of us don't genuinely treat God as a person. We don't ask God any questions. When was the last time you asked, "God, how are you?" Try it! And then listen with your sanctified imagination to his response. Most people's prayer life and Bible study are monologues. Us talking to God. Us journaling or making notes of what's important to us. Rarely do we move to dialogue - where we ask God questions and listen in silence for the answer. Rarely do we ask God if he has any questions for us! If you do spiritual journaling, you could consider changing the color for when God speaks. That enables you to see more clearly whether dialogue is genuinely happening and highlights what God is saying to you.

Question asking. An art and a science. Even more for disciples and disciplers. May you grow in your ability to ask good questions!



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