

SERIES ONE  
relationships  
connecting with God



D.I.A.  
Disciples in Action™

GROW REFLECT REVEAL

THE CHARACTER OF CHRIST



participant's guide  
first in a five series course to help you on your discipleship journey

P1



# D.I.A.

Disciples in Action™

## series 1

assisting you in your discipleship journey

Produced by the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventist® Youth Ministries Department

Disciples in Action™ Participant's Guide

Copyright © 2012 General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists® Youth Ministries Department

Published by the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists® Youth Ministries Department,  
12501 Old Columbia Pike, Silver Spring, Maryland 20904, USA.

Permission to photocopy this Disciples in Action Curriculum™ granted for local use in churches, youth groups, and other Christian educational activities. Special permission is not necessary. However, the contents of this curriculum may not be reproduced in any other form without written permission from the publisher. All rights reserved.

Project Director: Gilbert Cangy

Project Coordinator: Maria Dunchie

Cover Photos: JupiterImages

Cover and Interior Design: Maria Dunchie

Copy Editor: Erica Richards

Consultants: Bonita Joyner Shields and Debbonnaire Kovacs

Printed in the United States of America

## **CONTRIBUTORS**

BRENDAN PRATT, South Pacific Division, Greater Sydney Conference

DEBBONNAIRE KOVACS, North American Division

EURYDICE OSTERMAN, North American Division

KIMBERLEY TAGERT-PAUL, North American Division

KRIS STEVENSON, North American Division

MARK McCLEARY, North American Division

# contents

6	how to use this book
10	introduction
12	<b>Session 1:</b> developing a dynamic, deepening, love relationship with God
24	<b>Session 2:</b> understanding that Christ calls me to be His disciple
34	<b>Session 3:</b> seeking opportunities to minister
44	<b>Session 4:</b> helping believers engage in a transformational devotional life
53	<b>Session 5:</b> debriefing
62	mentoring program
70	mentoring application
72	growing disciples inventory
73	the evaluation

# D.I.A.

Disciples in Action™

## how to use this book

The purpose of this guide is to provide you with some general instructions to meet your individual needs.

The main body is written like a conversation you would have with a friend. It is designed to assist you in your discipleship journey. While it is recommended that you follow the process as set out in the book, please feel free to reorganize the material to respond to and maximize your own circumstances and opportunities.

The *Together Growing Fruitful Disciples* (TGFD) framework, on which this curriculum is based, is the scope of learning. While it does not necessarily describe all the tools considered valuable for you in your spiritual journey, it identifies a core of learning that is essential for everyone. There are many different ways to approach this curriculum, but regardless of the approach, it will represent the beginning point of a discipleship journey! However, the completion of this book should not be viewed as the culmination of the discipleship process, but rather as an essential step in your ongoing discipleship journey. It should answer the questions, “What will life look like after this series?” “What is the expected outcome?”

**The suggested length of each session is 90 minutes.**

**Growing Disciples Inventory (GDI):** This suggested pre and post session activity can be found at [www.growingfruitfuldisciples.org/gdi](http://www.growingfruitfuldisciples.org/gdi). This eighty-four-question inventory is aligned with the TGFD framework to aid in determining areas of growth that have taken place in a disciple’s life and areas in which one needs to grow. The online version includes a graphic representation of the inventory results as well as a Spiritual Growth Action Plan. For those of you who may not have access to the Internet or would like to allow others to experience the inventory without having to go through the entire online version, the “short form” version, available on page 72, is an excellent alternative.



## connector

This is the Bible text: the power base of each study. Whether it is one verse or several chapters long, this will provide the link between the mind and the heart. (“All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness” 2 Timothy 3:16, NIV.)



## themes

The themes for each session are derived from the indicators that are listed for each commitment.



## big idea

This is one statement that sums up the essence of the session. It serves as the intersection between the themes and the topic.



## journey (60 minutes)

- **Exploration** (30-40 minutes) is the biblical and philosophical exploration of the main ideas on which the session is built. Each session will include interactive learning to help lead the group in the most effective way possible. **Note:** The leader should make sure to make the interactive sessions exciting and natural. Feel free to adjust each exercise to the size of the group. Familiarize yourself with the “interaction” segments before the session and make sure to infuse excitement into each illustration.
- **Reflection** (10-15 minutes) should focus on helping the participant reflect and respond to the truths they have just discovered. Questions are included in this section.
- **Application** (10-15 minutes) shows how the lessons can be applied to everyday life.



## dig deep

Dig Deep is optional and may not be found in all lessons. It provides informative sidelights that add insight to a particular passage, word, fact, or Core Belief. These can also provide insights on youth culture, current events, and philosophy throughout each study.



## from the pen of Ellen G. White

Where appropriate, relevant quotes from the writings of E. G. White are included throughout each session.



## disciples in action

This is where the writer pulls a challenge from the lesson for the participant to act on using what they have learned during this session.



## mentors

Before beginning, identify someone you can trust and respect to be your mentor. Information on the mentoring program can be found on page 62, and the application on page 70.



## leader's note

This is handy information that will help coach the leader throughout the meeting.



## debriefing

This session intends to summarize and invite responses to the previous sessions and tie them all together. By this time you should have already been putting into practice some, if not all, of what was studied and suggested in the previous sessions. Now you can discuss what works and what does not work for you and examine if you are embracing the life changing habits or disciplines that have been presented and discussed.

**Plan the Work. Work the Plan!**



**Starting over  
or just taking  
a bold step?**

**D.I.A.**

**Disciples in Action Curriculum**

**the youth and young adults discipleship curriculum  
that will help you on your journey toward an  
authentic walk with Jesus.**

# D.I.A.

Disciples in Action™

## introduction

“Now it came to pass, as He was praying in a certain place, when He ceased, that one of His disciples said to Him, ‘Lord, teach us to pray, as John also taught his disciples’” (Luke 11:1, NKJV).

It’s often believed that being a disciple of Jesus is an “automatic” event. Once you’ve accepted Jesus as your Lord and Savior, all you have to do is read the Bible and pray and all will be well. Of course, those are imperative to the Christian journey. But *how* do we read the Bible? *How* do we pray? *How* do we best open our hearts and minds so that the Holy Spirit can do His work in us? That’s what *Disciples in Action* (DIA) is all about!

DIA is built on the Together Growing Fruitful Disciples (TGFD) framework. This framework is the foundation of a discipleship model designed to help us think more clearly and deeply about the spiritual growth and maturity of ourselves and others as disciples of Jesus Christ. It identifies four growth processes around which we believe the disciple’s journey occurs:

- **Connecting:** Growing in relationship with God, others, and self
- **Understanding:** Growing in knowledge of Jesus and His teachings
- **Ministering:** Growing in participation of God’s mission of revelation, reconciliation, and restoration
- **Equipping:** Growing in the body of Christ by walking alongside other disciples in order to support, nurture, and strengthen in love

All four processes in this model are centered on and accomplished through the ministry of the Holy Spirit. Separating these processes may seem artificial, but it does allow us to bring clarity to vital aspects of discipleship that might otherwise be overlooked.

In this model, *commitments* for the growing Christian are articulated for each of the individual processes. Within each process, *commitments* are further divided into key aspects of spiritual growth called *indicators*. These *indicators* represent behaviors through which, by the power of the Holy Spirit, we can grow and mature as disciples of Jesus Christ. They also represent a lifetime of following Jesus.

***Spiritual Mentors*** (or Partners, Companions) are crucial in our discipleship journey, as revealed in the *equipping* aspect of this model. Actually, the support, nurture, and strengthening derived from our walking alongside each other in this journey is foundational. Thus, you'll find in this DIA curriculum that each participant is to be assigned a mentor right from the start.

Whether the person is much older or just a little older, the mentor should be someone who the participant can trust and look to as a role model for learning how to live the Christian life. Some qualities of a mentor should include:

- a willingness to share his/her walk with God.
- sincerity and honesty in sharing their faith stories.
- openness in communication.
- a willingness to provide support and encouragement by listening and giving honest feedback without trying to force change. (Spiritual accountability is not about giving up control. It is about allowing another person to help us accomplish spiritual goals that we have set for ourselves.)

Another element of growing is that of assessment. It answers the question, "How am I doing?" Of course, each person's journey is unique; the work of the Holy Spirit cannot be replicated in a lab as we do vitamins and pharmaceuticals! "The wind blows where it wishes, and you hear the sound of it, but cannot tell where it comes from and where it goes. So is everyone who is born of the Spirit" (John 3:8, NKJV). However, it is possible to assess the direction of one's life. Thus, the DIA curriculum directs leaders to utilize the Growing Disciples Inventory (GDI), located at [www.growingfruitfuldisciples.org/gdi](http://www.growingfruitfuldisciples.org/gdi). This eighty-four-question inventory is aligned with the TGFD framework to aid in determining areas of growth that have taken place in a disciple's life and areas in which one needs to grow. The online version includes a graphic representation of the inventory results as well as a Spiritual Growth Action Plan.

The inventory is also available on page 72 as a "short form" that contains only twenty questions. For those of you who may not have access to the Internet or would like to allow others to experience the inventory without having them go through the entire online version, the short form is an excellent alternative.

Scripture encourages us to "work out our own salvation with fear and trembling; for it is God who works in you both to will and to do for His good pleasure" (Phil. 2:12b, 13, NKJV). While it is God's work in us through His Holy Spirit, the DIA curriculum is an excellent tool to help young people experience God's work in their lives and to assist them in trusting Him to that work.

# SESSION ONE

*by Brendan Pratt*

## developing a dynamic, deepening, love relationship with God



***Brendan Pratt*** currently serves as the Discipleship Coordinator for the Greater Sydney Conference in Australia. Prior to this role he pastored the Papatoetoe church in Auckland, New Zealand for ten years. He is married to Amanda and has three boys, Bradley, Benjamin, and James. His interests include keeping reptiles and Australian football. He is passionate about seeing what happens when people allow God to work in and through them.



## theme

To develop a dynamic, deepening, love relationship with God, I am:

- communing with God regularly through His word, prayer, and other Christian disciplines.
- participating with other believers in worshipping God on Sabbath and at other times.
- worshipping God daily as a living sacrifice by choosing His will over my own will.
- paying attention to what God is doing and praising Him for His love and faithfulness.



## big idea

God created you for a unique, deepening, love relationship with Him.



## connector

**Look:** Romans 12:1-2, Colossians 3:17

**Memorize:** “Therefore, I urge you, brothers, in view of God’s mercy, to offer your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and pleasing to God – this is your spiritual act of worship. Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind” (Romans 12:1-2).



## THE JOURNEY

### exploration

#### God seeks a dynamic relationship with you

God is in love with you. Over and over again in the Bible, God reminds you that you're His child and that He desperately seeks an intimate, growing relationship with you. A dynamic relationship with God starts with knowing that God, for reasons we will never fully understand, loves you beyond your wildest imagination. As a response to God's love, we can connect with Him and allow Him to grow in and through us.

Beyond communicating to us through His love letter, the Bible, and through prayer, God also communicates through wise people, promptings of the Holy Spirit, and even through nature—where He shows us His power and care. In connecting with God, different people find different spiritual practices helpful. Some people find the arts or solitude particularly valuable, while others connect with God deeply through keeping a journal where they include their thoughts about God as they meditate on Scripture or reflect on their relationship with God in general. Some people's journals don't just contain words; they contain poems, drawings, even cut out pictures that mean something to them. Art, music—every kind of creativity can be a doorway for experiencing God. Solitude, particularly in nature (as Jesus frequently sought) is one of the best ways to connect with the Creator.

The ways we connect with God are often referred to as “Christian disciplines.” Christian disciplines are not a measure of your spirituality. They are simply activities that help you connect with God and that allow Him to work in and through you. They become the habits/practices that we put in place so that we can grow in the fruits of the Spirit. Disciplines will not earn God’s love; you are already loved by Him. They are to help us grow towards the life God desires for us.

- What would be your advice if someone asked you to outline the top three factors for growing healthy relationships?
- Describe how it feels to stare into a sky full of stars, yet at the same time remember that the God of the universe cares intimately about you.
- What do you think are the top three factors that stop people from connecting with God?

## **we connect with God through the Bible**

One of the main ways God connects with His children is through His Word. In the Bible, God uses people to tell us the story of how much He deeply desires you and how He wants to spend eternity with you. Through various characters, teachings, visions, and even poems, God communicates values and practices that He knows will allow you to live life with significance now and will shape you for eternity.

In a world that bombards us with noise, consumerism, and all sorts of other worldviews, the Bible reminds us that we exist for God’s glory, and that a relationship with Him is the most important thing. We are given clarity about what really matters.

Studying the Bible is not about just knowing more; it’s about change in our lives. The Pharisees prayed and studied, however, they did so in a self-seeking way rather than looking for a connection with God. You can know that hydrogen and oxygen make water, but that makes no difference if you’re dying of thirst. Knowledge is good, but only if it brings about change that leaves you with a stronger love for God and people. When you ask God to shape you through Scripture, you will increasingly find yourself learning lessons from Bible characters, dwelling on promises, and seeing the world through new eyes.

- Who is your favorite Bible character? What does that character tell you about God and what lesson might you learn from that character?
- Can you think of a time when God brought a Bible verse to your mind at just the right time?
- What do you think it means to be “washed in His Word”?

## we connect with God through prayer

Another primary way of connecting with God is through prayer. Prayer can, at first, come across as being a bit odd. It might seem a little strange to talk to someone we can't physically see—and even stranger to listen to them. However, in prayer we are not really telling God things He doesn't know, but rather inviting Him to be part of our lives, seeking His guidance, and entrusting situations into His control. We can pray in our minds throughout the day, inviting Him into our lives, but it is also important to have some more structured times of prayer during which we worship God, seek His leading, and renew our invitation to Him to work in and through us. There is also incredible power in praying for and with other people.

Ultimately, prayer is about coming humbly before God and inviting Him to lead. God really wants to hear your voice—after all, you're His child.



*Christ impressed upon His disciples the idea that their prayers should be short, expressing just what they wanted, and no more. He gives the length and substance of their prayers, expressing their desires for temporal and spiritual blessings, and their gratitude for the same. How comprehensive this sample prayer! It covers the actual need of all. One or two minutes is long enough for any ordinary prayer. There may be instances where prayer is in a special manner indited by the Spirit of God, where supplication is made in the Spirit. The yearning soul becomes agonized and groans after God. The spirit wrestles as did Jacob and will not be at rest without special manifestations of the power of God. This is as God would have it. (Testimonies to the Church, Volume 2, p. 581)*





## dig deep

Below are six simple ways to change your life through prayer (taken from Barbara Bartocci's book, *Grace on the Go: 101 Quick Ways to Pray*).

1. **GIVE AN ALARM-CLOCK ALLELUIA.** When your alarm goes off in the morning, open your eyes and repeat this line from the Psalms: "This is the day the Lord has made. Let us rejoice and be glad." Commit to living in gratitude for the day, and you'll soon notice how much happier your day is.
2. **PRAY WITH YOUR SNOOZE BUTTON.** My friend Annie has an alarm clock with a snooze-reminder that goes off ten minutes after the initial ring. When her alarm goes off, she sits up in bed without turning on the light and breathes slowly and deeply. "I pay attention to each breath, to my heartbeat, to the feel of my skin against the sheets. I don't plan my day. I merely sit prayerfully in the early morning quiet. It centers me." When her snooze-reminder gives its ten-minute buzz, she turns on the light and goes about her usual morning business.
3. **PRACTICE HOLY CURIOSITY.** A September 2005 issue of *Harvard Business Review* said, "As a society we are biased toward answers. Answers settle matters and tell us it's safe to move forward. Questions are troublemakers, poking holes in ideas and plans." But Albert Einstein said: "The important thing is not to stop questioning. Curiosity has its own reason for existence. Never lose your holy curiosity." What a wonderful combination of words! Holy curiosity—our ability to wonder, to inquire, to welcome what is new, and to keep our minds open to truth when and where we find it—surely this is one of the most miraculous qualities that human beings possess. Maintain an open mind today. Ask questions. Acknowledge truth when you find it. Pray to be led by holy curiosity.
4. **BE MORE ACCEPTING.** Once, in the midst of a quarrel, my husband cried, "Why can't you accept me for who I am?" The anguish of that question

immediately stopped me, for isn't that what all of us want? To be loved for who we are? But how can we accept another unless we first accept ourselves? For years, I held myself to an impossible standard of perfection, and if I had to be perfect, why, those I loved had to be, too. We can only love God and our neighbour to the extent that we love and accept ourselves. Today, whenever you look in a mirror, make eye contact with yourself, and say aloud, "I love myself. Not as I will be. Not as I could be. But as I am." Did you believe the words you said aloud? If not, ask the Holy Spirit to aid you in greater self-acceptance. Then add these words: "I accept others as they are."

5. **PICK A PRAYER PARTNER.** Every week, Twila and her friend Helen meet for thirty minutes of prayer. After asking for God's grace in the words they speak to one another, they share how they have used spiritual principles in their lives over the past week. Then they discuss any problems that are bothering them. Lastly, they hold hands and take turns praying aloud, first for those on their prayer lists, and then for each other. "In the beginning, it seemed awkward to pray out loud with someone," admits Twila, "but now I'm convinced there's a reason why it says in the Gospels, 'Where two or more are gathered in my name there I am in the midst of them.' Praying together is very affirming. We rarely skip our prayer time together." Invite God into your midst. Say a prayer with a friend.
6. **PRACTICE NIGHTTIME TAPS.** Relax into sleep with TAPS prayers. Offer thanksgiving for the day's blessing. Show adoration for the Creator who has given us this incredibly rich universe. Petition for your needs and those of your loved ones. Express sorrow if you've hurt another in any way. Sleep well.
  - Why do you think studies often show that many Christians do not pray?
  - What ideas do you have for how you could make your prayer time more intentional?

## **Sabbath: strengthening your connection**

A particularly vital point of connection with God is the Sabbath. Sabbath reminds us to reflect on our priorities. It's not about having one day separate and then living the other six like any other person. It's about strengthening and re-energizing our connection with God and His eternal values. Our Sabbath experience can change the way we worship, the way we interact with others, and strengthen our relationship with God.

Sabbath is designed for us to take a break from "time = money" consumerism traps. It reminds us that we are created for eternity and that life is not about the abundance of our things. Rather, life is about dynamically connecting with God and people. Sabbath gives us a break from the things that can clutter up the rest of our lives and provides a great opportunity to spend time worshipping, connecting, serving, growing, and sharing.

- Why do you think God invented the idea of Sabbath?
- Why do you think it's important to take a break from "time=money" consumerism?
- How can you make your Sabbath experience personal?

## **your connection is unique**

The way you connect most deeply with God and just how God grows you will be unique to you. He made you that way. By looking at various characters in Scripture we see that people connect with God in different ways. Some people feel deeply connected to God through learning intellectually about Him. For others it is primarily through worship, serving, nature, relationships, or contemplation/reflection. All of these ways of connecting are important and part of a balanced, growing relationship with God. However, you will more naturally connect through some of these ways than others. Remember that everyone is wired differently. Together we can learn from one another and stretch in our experience of connecting with God.

- Can you think of a time when you felt particularly close to God? What factors do you think shaped this closeness?
- What Christian disciplines have you tried and what made them work or not work?
- When are you best able to hear God communicating with you?

## connecting with God in your everyday life

God wants to connect with you and live in the ordinary, everyday moments of life with you. Sometimes we think that a spiritual moment needs to be something unusual or out of the ordinary. However, your everyday, ordinary life is exactly what God would love to experience with you.

The apostle Paul talks about doing absolutely everything, even the everyday things, with God. He calls it being a “living sacrifice” (Romans 12:1). It seems a strange combination of words; however, being a living sacrifice simply means that every part of our life is an offering to God.

*The Message* describes it like this: “So here’s what I want you to do, God helping you: Take your everyday, ordinary life – your sleeping, eating, going-to-work and walking around life – and place it before God as an offering.”

For Paul, your ordinary, everyday life is the very place to be an offering to God. We don’t often think of walking around and going to sleep as being spiritual activities, but Paul says our every thought, word, and action can be an act of worship to God.

Of course, this living sacrifice life isn’t something we attempt in our own power. Jesus is not sitting in the audience watching us perform. Jesus wants to do the ordinary, everyday things of life with us. He wants to work in and through us. We live life in partnership with Him. Being a living sacrifice is about focusing on Jesus’ presence with you as you go through the seemingly inconsequential moments of your day.

- How easy is it for God to get your attention in your ordinary day?
- Would you like to spend an ordinary day with Jesus in person?
- How aware are you of the possibility of meeting God during your day?

## making a plan – training in Godliness

Like any healthy relationship, growing in connection with God takes intentionality. We don't become healthier and increase our muscle tone by just sitting back and seeing what happens. If we want to get fit, we make a plan. It's the same with spiritual fitness. In growing in Christ we need to orient our lives around practices and habits that remind us of what matters and give God space to work in us.

Imagine you are at the starting line to watch the Olympic marathon. Just before it starts, an official spots you and explains that your country needs you to run. Regardless of how hard you tried, you would probably struggle, unless you're already a serious athlete. If you were given a year to prepare and you were serious about it, you would shape your life around habits and activities that trained your body. You would start running short distances and gradually increase them. You might eat differently and arrange your day differently so you could get to the gym. You might buy different shoes and find a coach. When the time came to run in the marathon, you would be able to do by training what trying alone does not allow. It's the same for training in godliness (1 Timothy 4:7b-8). Training means to arrange your life around certain exercises and experiences that will enable you to become over time what you are not yet able to be—even by trying hard.

In attempting to grow a dynamic relationship with God, many people try, fail, and think this life of connectedness with God is not for them, or even wonder if it exists at all. Discipleship is not a matter of trying harder, but rather engaging in a lifestyle of "training in godliness."

- Have you ever found yourself trying to connect with God and feeling like you're going nowhere? How would you explain the difference between training and trying?
- What do you think a plan for "growing in godliness" might look like in your life?

## reflection

- What do you think your friends would say are the top three factors that drive you?
- What do you think are the top three things that get in the way of growing in your relationship with God?
- If in the future an archaeologist was to study your messages, credit card statements, and diary, what would they conclude your priorities are?
- What do you think it means to love God with all your heart?
- What factors might stop you from getting started on your “training in godliness” plan?
- If you cut back using the computer one hour a week, how could you use this time to be in the presence of God or others?
- Would your friends say that being around you is a bit like being around Jesus? What would have to change for this to be the case?

## application

### God gives you the choice

Too often we can live life with no regard for God’s perspective. Even sadder is that instead of looking to God for our meaning and fulfilment we chase the next thing that promises to fill the void. It might be a new body shape, car, or relationship – each promising a sense of fulfilment and none delivering. There is nothing inherently wrong with these things; they are just not designed to give us ultimate meaning and purpose.

The same God who made the world offers to remake your life and live the everyday moments in relationship with you. God did not make you to be a puppet, with strings for Him to pull—that would make you His toy. Rather He made you with purpose and the power to choose so that He could have a relationship with you. He does not force a relationship. God’s desire is to be invited into your everyday situations and live life deeply with you.

Take some time now to direct your thoughts back to Him: ask for His help or His guidance, or simply share your heart with Him.

- What changes in your schedule can you make right now to make space to “train in godliness”? (Share with your accountability partner.)
- What ideas do you have to give yourselves reminders of God’s presence throughout the day?
- Identify a time this week where you can simply be still and focus on God’s love for you. Where and when will it be?
- What one Christian discipline will you train in this week? Where and how will it happen?

## prayer time

- In your prayer time, remember to thank God for loving you so much.
- Pray about the factors that might be getting in the way of your connection with God.
- Ask God to work in and through you in the ordinary, everyday moments of your life.

# SESSION TWO

by Kimberley Tagert-Paul

## understanding that Christ calls me to be His disciple



**Kimberley Tagert-Paul** writes from Michigan, United States of America. An internationally published author, her passion is writing for young people. She loves crafts, photography, and reading. She has been married to the love of her life for thirty years and has two sons. When not gainfully employed, she can be found chasing her four-year old grandson until he catches her, or enjoying the sounds and beauty of Lake Michigan with her husband. Her life goal is to make it to heaven and take as many people with her as she can.





## theme

To understand that Christ calls me to be His disciple, I am learning that:

- by beholding Jesus and abiding in Him, I will continue to grow more Christ-like.
- the love of Christ constrains me to a life of obedience and self-denial.
- all biblical teachings illustrate the character and mission of Christ.
- being a disciple involves all of my life – my worldview, my relationships, and my purpose and mission.
- I will participate in the body of Christ and its work in the world.
- I accept life – both now and eternally – as a gift from God to be shared with others.



## big idea

When Christ calls you to Him, He sends you to others. A disciple isn't just a student, but is also a messenger.



## connector

**Look:** Mathew 4:18-20, Mathew 6:33, Mark 10:28-30

**Memorize:** “As Jesus was walking beside the Sea of Galilee, he saw two brothers; Simon called Peter and his brother Andrew. They were casting a net into the lake, for they were fishermen. ‘Come, follow me,’ Jesus said, ‘and I will send you out to fish for people.’ At once they left their nets and followed him” (Matthew 4:18-20, NIV).



## THE JOURNEY exploration

**by beholding I become changed**

“Then he opened their minds so they could understand the Scriptures” (Luke 24:45 NIV).

God created us with minds that absorb like sponges. We drink in what we see, what we spend time doing. Nothing can be truer in our walk of discipleship with God. To become His disciple, we need to absorb Him into our lives. His disciples did that when He walked with them. Their lives revolved around time with the Savior. So should ours.

Let’s look at the men who became the very first disciples of Jesus. Who were these men Jesus called? Were they educated? Were they rich? Did they have families? Did they have positions of importance within the church?

Jesus chose ordinary men. Most were fishermen—men used to hard work, little pay, and long hours without sleep. He chose men who knew the importance of faithfulness, who were not afraid to work hard to get the job done. Men with personality—firebrands, some. Peter, James, and John were all known for their fiery personalities. Simon and Andrew were both zealous, seeking truth.

Were they perfect men? The Bible shows us clearly that they weren’t. They had faults—many of them. So what was it about their characters that made Jesus call them to become disciples? What can we learn from studying their calling to discipleship?

Their calling, like ours, was one of an instant. The moment Jesus calls you to Himself, the moment that you surrender your heart to Him, you are called to be a disciple. The disciples left their nets and their families and followed without question. Many of those Jesus healed did the same. Instantly, their focus was on their Savior and His kingdom. The same should be true of us. We have the good news, and we shouldn't keep it to ourselves. The world is hungry for what we have found. We are called to share it.

Learning how to best do this is not so instant! It is easy to make mistakes in our zeal to share Christ with others. The disciples showed us this—they wanted to take the world by storm. So do many of us. But storming our way into others' lives is not the most effective method.

As a group, answer the following questions:

- Why was it important for Jesus to choose ordinary men?
- Did their character traits limit them from becoming effective disciples?
- How can your character traits make you an effective disciple? Make a list in your personal journal.

## **how can we grow as disciples and in discipleship?**

By beholding, we become changed. 2 Corinthians 3:18 tells us this. The disciples had the advantage of looking into the Lord's eyes and seeing in them the depth of His love for them. We have the privilege of looking into Scripture, daily studying it as the basis of our spiritual diet. We may feast on the truths that have lasted through eons of years unchanged, and so behold Him as well. We are to follow the example that Jesus set, seeing in His Word His love for us.

You can't rely on others' words to strengthen and teach you. A disciple of Jesus is a student of His Word. Have you ever read the Bible through? Do you know that by reading three chapters a day, in one year you will have read the Bible from cover to cover? It's a wonderful way to start learning all about Jesus—and His Father, whom He came to show us. As you read through the Old Testament, you'll learn about God's character of love and learn to truly love Him. Then, the New Testament will show you His character through His son. The two Testa-

ments go together in a powerful way. And in less than thirty minutes a day, one year later you'll have the whole picture. Then, like layers of an onion, God will be able to reveal new truth from His word to you as you are ready to receive it. You'll fall in love with His Word in a new way—and will be famished when you miss it.



*Open the Bible to our youth, draw their attention to its hidden treasures, teach them to search for its jewels of truth, and they will gain a strength of intellect such as the study of all that philosophy embraces could not impart. The grand subjects upon which the Bible treats, the dignified simplicity of its inspired utterances, the elevated themes which it presents to the mind, the light, sharp and clear, from the throne of God, enlightening the understanding, will develop the powers of the mind to an extent that can scarcely be comprehended, and never fully explained.*

*The Bible presents a boundless field for the imagination, as much higher and more ennobling in character than the superficial creations of the unsanctified intellect as the heavens are higher than the earth. The inspired history of our race is placed in the hands of every individual. All may now begin their research. They may become acquainted with our first parents as they stood in Eden, in holy innocence, enjoying communion with God and sinless angels. They may trace the introduction of sin and its results upon the race, and follow, step by step, down the track of sacred history, as it records the disobedience and impenitence of man and the just retribution for sin. (Messages To Young People, pp. 255, 256)*

## **discuss**

As a group or individually, think of ways that you can make the study of God's Word a daily part of your life. What do you need to do to find the time to study daily? Would making an appointment with God help you to be faithful in this? Would listening to Scripture through electronic media make it easier? Could you use your commute to work or classes as a specific time for this? Would reading from different translations help? Would keeping a Bible journal help you to focus on what you are reading and want to study it more?

## needed: christian fellowship

Before Jesus' public ministry began, He did something with His disciples that He continued up until the end of His earthly ministry. He spent time with them, instructing them, encouraging them, praying for them. For each of us today, that same fellowship is important. Church attendance is a vital link in our growth as disciples. Hebrews 10:23-25 tells us this. Take the time to look up this Scripture now.

*Does it seem that Paul is speaking to us today?*

*Is it easy in our busy lives to sleep in, miss church, and thus the chance for fellowship that helps us grow as disciples?*

We live in a busy world. Jesus never promised that following Him would be easy. He did promise that the rewards would be out of this world. Being a disciple means being disciplined. Time is valuable. Time fellowshiping with other believers is valuable, too. It is a tool Jesus used with His disciples, and one that He wants us to use, as well. Sharing insights with others and listening to what they have learned will make us more rounded as Christians and more effective as disciples.



*Many become inefficient by evading responsibilities for fear of failure. Thus they fail of gaining that education which results from experience, and which reading and study and all the advantages otherwise gained cannot give them. (Messages To Young People, p. 193)*

### **By beholding Jesus and abiding in Him, I will continue to grow more Christ-like.**

Beholding Jesus in His Word and beholding Him by fellowshiping with others are important parts of our discipleship tool kit. What other possible "tools" would be important to put in our kits? Does fellowship have to stop as we leave church each Sabbath?

The disciples met daily, breaking bread in fellowship and encouragement. Today, that would seem almost impossible, but it's not. The Internet has made socializing an instant tool. It is easy to keep up with others and seek their advice and encouragement as you grow in your walk of faith. Texting is another tool that keeps you in close contact with those you know. Why not use it to talk about Jesus, share thoughts and prayer requests to grow and help others to grow? There are

also wonderful books that not only open Bible truths, but can help you become a more disciplined and effective disciple. Journaling your experiences and thoughts is also an effective means to growing in Jesus. As you grow, you'll have more and more to share with others.

Jesus also used quiet time to fellowship with His Father. This was so important that Jesus taught His disciples to spend time in prayer, too. Communication is important in any relationship, but it is vital for a Christian. Time in prayer will help us be able to trust Christ with all aspects of our lives. It will help us to surrender our very will to the Father and find His will for our lives. It strengthens, refreshes, and encourages us. Communication is a two-way process. If we spend quiet time with God, He will speak to us. We just have to listen, and that often takes quiet time, literally.

## application

Christianity doesn't end with our repentance and conversion. It is only the beginning—the beginning of a wonderful journey called discipleship. To disciple effectively, we need to be constantly growing. As we behold the character of God, we can do this in many ways.

**Questions** (Answered individually in journals or as a group.)

1. How can you embrace the discipleship that Jesus has called you to?
2. What barriers do you see in your life that are limiting your ability to become an effective disciple? How can you break these barriers down?
3. It is easy to make excuses, especially when we are busy. Do you use excuses to limit your discipleship? What are they? How can you change these excuses into challenges?
4. What happened to Moses as he spent time with God on the mountain? What can happen to us as we spend time with God?

# reflection

## discipleship means all of me

Do you enjoy God? Psalm 37:4 tells us that we are to delight ourselves in the Lord. The Septuagint translation (the Greek translation of the Hebrew Scriptures) has the most marvelous rendering of these words: “Indulge thyself with delight in the Lord.”

Indulging in some things is not good for us, but oh so tempting. Eating just a little of that half-gallon of ice cream residing in your freezer is sometimes difficult to do. Eat the whole half-gallon and you’ll know it. You’ll feel sluggish, irritable, and probably sick to your stomach. One thing you’ll know is that it wasn’t worth it.

Indulging yourself in the Lord is never a bad thing. You can’t spend enough time with Him once you come to know how very much He loves you, what He has done for you, and what wonderful things He plans to do in your life.

Can you be half-pregnant?

Can you be half-married?

Do you like your food half-cooked, your pizza half-baked?

Discipleship calls for a total commitment. You can’t do it half-way. When you come to truly know God and His character, you won’t want to.

So go ahead and indulge yourself with delight in the Lord. You will never be sorry that you made this commitment. And as you grow, you will naturally want to share what you have learned with others. That’s God way.

## questions for journaling

- What is my favorite method to “indulge myself with delight in the Lord”?
- Where and when do I feel closest to God? How can I make more time in my life to meet Him there?
- If I could tell someone only one thing about God, what would it be? Is that the focus of my life? Should it be?

## life is a gift to be shared with others

### Read John 1:35-40 (NIV)

Andrew was an interesting disciple. Several times we see him in Scripture, and most often he is telling someone about Jesus. That was his first act upon meeting Jesus. He went to get his brother, who became a rock of a man in his faith. Andrew got it right: he found Jesus and immediately went to find others and tell them about their Savior.

Do you remember when you first fell in love with Jesus? Did you want to immediately share the good news with others? Have you let that first love be impacted by just living?

It's time to remember how you began your relationship and find those roots of undeniable love—love that is so full, it makes you feel excited and ready to burst with its goodness.

Are you willing to make that commitment today? Discipleship is not for the faint, but you don't have to rely on your own strength. God will give you all you need to truly be His disciple.

### Questions (answer individually or as a group)

- How can I, today, make the ultimate commitment to become a true disciple of the Lord?
- What will I do when I become discouraged? What plan can I make to remember my first love—and follow it fully into true discipleship?



## disciples in action

Make a list of places that you frequent where you can share the good news of God's love. The most important first step is making friends. Letting others know you care is the most effective way to disciple. "I'm praying for you," is easy to say, but make sure you mean it. Then find other, more practical ways to show your love. Most people will be receptive to this and be thankful for your friendship. Jesus cared about others' needs, and then He presented the gospel. Find ways you can show others that you truly care. You can also tell your own stories. Share what God has given you. Letting others know you are doing this for God is a good way to share His love.



How would you need to change your approach to share the gospel at work? Sometimes you just need to start out simple—and then move forward. Tracts are a good way to introduce others to your faith. Basic facts about God’s love can be shared almost anywhere: you can put them into the canister of your bank, place them on the table at a restaurant, leave them at a hospital. Look for everyday ways to make a simple difference.

Include God in every aspect of your life. That is what discipleship is all about.



## dig deep

In our busy lives, things don’t usually get done unless they are planned. Right now, set aside time this week to tell someone about Jesus. Who will it be? Don’t leave it to chance; plan it. People respond to people. Discipleship is all about others. You share your good news, and then help them in turn to share what God has done. It’s an endless ring, but a joyful one, especially as you see the ones you have shared with, share with others. It’s too easy to neglect this duty as a disciple. So brainstorm now on ways that you can share the gospel with someone right away. Then do it.



*As long as we are in this world, we must be linked one with another. Humanity is interlaced and interwoven with humanity. As Christians we are members one of another. . . . The Lord designs us as His sons and daughters, whom He calls His friends, to help one another. This is to be a part of our practical Christian work. (Our High Calling, p. 184)*

# SESSION THREE

by Eurydice Osterman

## seeking opportunities in all daily activities to minister to others



**Eurydice V. Osterman** is a published author and composer whose works have been read and performed around the world. A listing of her works is cited in the book *Music by Black Women Composers: A Bibliography of Available Scores* by Helen Walker-Hill, CBRM Monographs, No.5, 1995, and in the dissertation of Angelique Clay, "The Life and Music of Eurydice V. Osterman." She is the author of the book, *What God Says About Music*, and is working on a second book about contemporary worship and music.

Dr. Osterman earned both the bachelor and master of music degrees from Andrews University in Berrien Springs, Michigan, and the Doctor of Musical Arts degree from the University of Alabama in Tuscaloosa. Her teaching career in music spans from Kindergarten through undergraduate where she is currently professor of music at Oakwood University. She also served as chair of the department of music at Northern Caribbean University.

Dr. Osterman is the recipient of many awards and holds membership in several professional organizations, including Phi Kappa Lambda, a national honor society. Her service to the Seventh-day Adventist Church includes having conducted numerous music seminars on contemporary issues in church music throughout the United States, Europe, the Caribbean, South America, and Africa, and serving on various General Conference music committees.



## theme

To seek opportunities in all daily activities to minister to others, I am:

- inviting God to change me to bear the fruits of the Spirit.
- choosing Jesus as a daily companion and sharing Him joyfully.
- investing myself in service wherever the Holy Spirit leads.
- carrying out my occupation as a calling to ministry.
- building networks for friendship, fellowship, and support.



## big idea

God wants you to share His love by ministering to others so that they, too, can experience His saving grace and develop a unique, deepening, love relationship with Him and in turn, minister to others.



## connector

**Look:** John 15:12 (see also John 8:31, 32; 13:35, 15:8)

**Memorize:** “This is my commandment, that ye love one another, as I have loved you” (John 15:12).



## THE JOURNEY exploration

In this life, change is inevitable. Nothing stays the same. Only God remains the same, for He says, “*I am the Lord, I change not*” (Malachi 3:6). This means that none of His love, patience, mercy, or loving kindness will ever change toward us no matter how hopeless we may feel we are. As we open our hearts to receive the Holy Spirit, God will bring “gifts into our lives, much the same way that fruit appears in an orchard—things like affection for others, exuberance about life, serenity. We develop a willingness to stick with things, a sense of compassion in the heart, and a conviction that a basic holiness permeates things and people. We find ourselves involved in loyal commitments, not needing to force our way in life, able to marshal and direct our energies wisely” (Galatians 5:22-23, *The Message*) as we minister to others.

At the very heart of the good news is the reality that Jesus has ushered us into an abundant, eternal kind of life that begins in the here and now and will reach its glorious climax when Jesus comes back to take us to His glorious kingdom. He has come that we might have life, and life to the full. This new kind of life is brought about by the transformation that the Holy Spirit initiates as He takes residency in our hearts. Centered in love, this new kind of life is marked by selfless service in the footsteps of the Master Himself.

**1. The greatest law of life in the universe is the law of service. God provides for every living thing. Christ came to the earth to serve and give His life for humankind, and the angels are occupied in caring for the needs of humanity. The same law of service is seen throughout nature. The birds and animals, the trees, grass, and flowers, sun, moon, and stars all provide something of benefit to others.**

Strive to live a life of service; go out of your way to be kind to someone. Kindness is rewarding. Giving is a condition of healthy living—a law of mental well-being. Getting our minds off ourselves and working for the good of others is just what we need to give us strength to get well. It also reminds us that we are not the only ones with problems.

God wants to reshape and transform us. In the book of Galatians we read that the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, and temperance. This type of goodness never perishes, it produces.

One of the things that transforms lives and draws people to us is the goodness produced when we allow the fruit of the Spirit to live within us—to get deep down to the core of our personality—to become ingrained in our everyday lives. Through this inner activity of the Spirit, more people can be drawn to the Lord. When we live our lives in this way, we are like magnets.



*There can be no growth or fruitfulness in the life that is centered in self. If you have accepted Christ as a personal Saviour, you are to forget yourself, and try to help others. Talk of the love of Christ, tell of His goodness. Do every duty that presents itself. Carry the burden of souls upon your heart, and by every means in your power seek to save the lost. As you receive the Spirit of Christ—the Spirit of unselfish love and labor for others—you will grow and bring forth fruit. The graces of the Spirit will ripen in your character. Your faith will increase, your convictions deepen, your love be made perfect. More and more you will reflect the likeness of Christ in all that is pure, noble, and lovely. (Christ's Object Lessons, pp. 67, 68)*

Upon close examination of the fruits of the Spirit, you will see that the character attributes of these fruits fall into three categories. The first three are a direct result of our growing relationship with God—love, joy, and peace, the greatest and

most fundamental of these being love, so that we can represent Christ to the world.

Joy and peace are the companions of love, for a heart and mind governed by love cannot help but exude happiness that seeks to be shared with others. Hence, the next three attributes—patience, kindness, and goodness.

As God is patient with us, so must we be patient with others as they grow and develop their Christian characters. Only as we become secure in our experiential love of God will we be able to perform random acts of kindness without seeking a reward; we can share a smile to brighten one's day, or we can speak an encouraging word to a despondent soul. Thus will our goodness shine forth as the noonday.

Finally, as we relate to others in love, our faith will continue to grow and our humility will increase as we witness the incredible ways in which God will use us to bless others. We will also learn to be temperate as we reveal the fruits of the Spirit within our lives.

## **2. A true disciple recognizes and responds to the needs of God's suffering children in the local community and around the world.**

As we study the life and method of Jesus while on earth, we see that He went to the people and ministered to them. Thus, He was accused by the Scribes and Pharisees of hanging out with winebibbers and persons of ill repute. "For the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost" (Luke 19:10).

As did Jesus, we must be willing to invest our time, talents, and means wherever the Holy Spirit might lead. As we become sensitive to the physical, mental, social, and spiritual needs in the local community, we can respond mercifully as individuals or as a church to these needs as they are discovered. We are to speak out and act to relieve suffering and injustice in society. We must determine to reduce human suffering by being a faithful steward of God's creation.



*The Saviour ministered to both the soul and the body. The gospel which He taught was a message of spiritual life and of physical restoration. Deliverance from sin and the healing of disease were linked together. (The Ministry of Healing, p. 111)*

True, godly ministry will illustrate and coincide with the character and mission of Christ. These teachings will shape one's worldview, relationships, and impact one's purpose and mission in the Christian life. Thus, God has given to us the opportunity to be co-laborers with Him in making disciples for the kingdom of heaven.



*When, as erring, sinful beings, we come to Christ and become partakers of His pardoning grace, love springs up in the heart. Every burden is light, for the yoke that Christ imposes is easy. Duty becomes a delight, and sacrifice a pleasure. The path that before seemed shrouded in darkness, becomes bright with beams from the Sun of Righteousness. (Steps to Christ, p. 59)*

### **3. A true disciple will promote the ministry of service by building networks for friendship, fellowship, and support.**

Pray for the Holy Spirit to prepare you to reach others for Christ, choose to be aware of the spiritual climate locally and globally, and find ways to use your spiritual gifts to help tell the world the story of Jesus. Each of us must be able to give a reason for our faith when asked and be willing to share the story of our personal relationship with Jesus with community members, family, friends, and co-workers.

As Jesus ascended into heaven He asked the disciples to go witness in Judea, and in Samaria, and into the uttermost part of the earth, and witness they did. They went about making so many disciples to the point that they became known as Christians.



*The disciples prayed with intense earnestness for a fitness to meet men and in their daily intercourse to speak words that would lead sinners to Christ. Putting away all differences, all desire for the supremacy, they came close together in Christian fellowship. They drew nearer and nearer to God. (The Acts of the Apostles, p. 37)*

**Share:** What are five factors that can prevent me from effectively ministering to others?

## application

- List three fruits of the Spirit that have already helped me in ministering to others.
- List one aspect of ministry that one should do each day as a disciple of Christ.



## dig deep

### reflecting God's character in ministering to others

The character of God is expressed in ten attributes that are the standard for His disciples. Satan has succeeded in perverting those attributes and has been able to execute his plan of making them void through the fall of humankind, which has resulted in sin and our sinful natures. However, a strong connection with God will produce spiritual growth and the fruits of holiness, which will be made manifest in the life of the disciple.



*The loveliness of the character of Christ will be seen in His followers. It was His delight to do the will of God. Love to God, zeal for His glory, was the controlling power in our Savior's life. Love beautified and ennobled all His actions. Love is of God. The unconsecrated heart cannot originate or produce it. It is found only in the heart where Jesus reigns. 'We love, because He first loved us.' 1 John 4:19, R.V. In the heart renewed by divine grace, love is the principle of action. It modifies the character, governs the impulses, controls the passions, subdues enmity, and ennobles the affections. This love, cherished in the soul, sweetens the life and sheds a refining influence on all around. (Steps to Christ, p. 59)*

We can be encouraged that God has not left us without guidance. If we trust in Him and are willing to follow His leading through the Holy Spirit, He will "direct our path" and "guide us into all truth." After all, these are expressions of His character, so He will make Himself personally responsible for the sincere soul to know the truth about Him.



## Share

- Identify a biblical character who best demonstrated the character of Christ.
- Identify someone you know who demonstrates the essence of Christ's character.



## dig deep

### ministering through music

Music can have an impact upon the way we see Jesus. Therefore, its character should reflect the attributes of Christ's character in order to turn the mind heavenward.



*The value of song as a means of education should never be lost sight of. Let there be singing in the home, of songs that are sweet and pure, and there will be fewer words of censure and more of cheerfulness and hope and joy. Let there be singing in the school, and the pupils will be drawn closer to God, to their teachers, and to one another. . . Singing is as much an act of worship as is prayer. Indeed, many a song is prayer. (Education, p. 168)*

God has given to humankind the gift of music. It is clear that music will have consequences both now and through eternity. If one is heaven-bound, the character of one's music should resemble, as nearly as possible, that which represents the character of the Savior and of heaven.



*Song is a weapon that we can always use against discouragement. As we thus open the heart to the sunlight of the Savior's presence, we shall have health and His blessing. (The Ministry of Healing p. 254)*

**Share** an experience where you or someone else's musical rendition ministered to the souls of the hearers in such a way that you could feel the Spirit of God surrounding you.

**Apply and Integrate:** List three ways in which you can improve your ministry.

## reflection

In order for me to grow spiritually, bear the fruits of the Spirit, and minister effectively, I must connect with God every day—not just one day a week. God’s Word will be rooted and grounded within me through Bible study, worship, and songs that reinforce the themes necessary for this spiritual growth.

- What lifestyle changes have I made in an attempt to behold Jesus, abide in Him, and grow more Christ-like?
- What fruits of the Spirit have I recently seen developing within me?
- What are some of the biblical teachings on ministry that illustrate the character and mission of Christ?
- How does my lifestyle impact my ministry?
- What is my worldview, my purpose, my mission?
- How can I participate in ministry in my community?
- How can I effectively use music to minister to the un-churched?

## application

### choosing God first

Sometimes we do not understand or just plain forget to consider God’s perspective of how to effectively minister. Although He has promised to “guide us into all truth,” we are guilty of manufacturing substitutes instead of asking Him first for guidance and help. He wants us to seek Him first and in turn, He will “supply all [our] needs” for an effective ministry.



### disciples in action

- Share with your spiritual partner a change that you will make during the coming week to enhance your relationship with God in order to minister more effectively.
- Choose with your spiritual partner an aspect of ministry to begin training in and how you will implement it.

## prayer time

- Pray that God will help you to minister effectively via the time, talents, and means He has given you.
- Pray that God will make you fruitful in your ministry.
- Pray for others who are interested in ministry.
- Thank God for His blessings and the opportunities afforded for you through this discipleship program.

# SESSION FOUR

*by Kris Stevenson*

## helping believers engage in a transformational devotional life



***Kris Coffin Stevenson*** lives in “super natural” British Columbia where she hangs out with her husband and two children and waits to see what God will do every day.

## theme

To help believers engage in a transformational devotional life, I am showing others how to:

- study the Bible to know Christ and to develop a biblical worldview.
- communicate with God through prayer and Christian meditation.
- participate in other Christian disciplines to be open to the Holy Spirit.
- set priorities to allow for regular, quality devotional time.
- seek spiritual growth opportunities with other believers.



### big idea

Our relationship with God grows through Bible study and prayer, both personally and within a community of believers.



### connector

**Personal Prayer:** Matthew 7:7, Matthew 26:41, Philippians 4:6, James 5:13

**Corporate Prayer:** Acts 1:14, John 17:21, Acts 4:31, Jude 1:20

**Intercessory Prayer:** Romans 1:9, Ephesians 1:16, 1 Samuel 12:23

**Memorize:** “Always be joyful. Never stop praying. Be thankful in all circumstances, for this is God’s will for you who belong to Christ Jesus” (1 Thessalonians 5:16-18, NLT).



## THE JOURNEY exploration

### personal devotions

The very heart of your Christian life is personal devotion. Even if you have been a Christian only a short time, you probably were encouraged to have your own personal devotions. But what exactly does that mean? How do you have devotional time? Is it like meditation? Do you just sit there quietly with your Bible in front of you, hoping something will happen?

Many Christians feel perpetually guilty for not doing devotions, because they are not sure what they should do. If this is your experience, here are some suggestions for how to get started or improve your devotional time.

**Bible Study:** The Bible is God's Word. Start a conversation with Him! There are a number of different ways to do this.

- a. **Read a one-year devotional Bible.** These Bibles come in different versions but are organized so that if you read a section every day for a year you will finish the whole Bible. Rather than just start at the beginning and plow through to the end, many one-year Bibles are organized so that you read a section of Scripture along with a portion of Psalms and Proverbs every day.

- b. **Pick a book of the Bible.** Choose a book of the Bible that you are interested in studying. Each day read a portion. Allow God's Spirit to speak to you through the passage. It might be just a couple of verses, or maybe an entire section. Use underlining and highlighting to keep track of things that speak to you. Consult a Bible commentary, Bible concordance, and the writings of Ellen White to bring an added dimension to what you are studying.
- c. **Read a devotional book.** This is probably the easiest way to get started. However, there is no substitute for being in the Word yourself.

**Prayer Time:** The biggest complaint made about prayer time is that people find that their mind wanders. Adding some structure to your prayers can make it easier to stay focused. Use whatever method works the best for you.

- a. **ACTS.** This is an acronym that stands for Adoration, Confession, Thanksgiving, and Supplication. Each word is a type of prayer. Adoration is praise to God for just being God. Most praise songs fit this category. Confession is a time to not only confess your sins, but to listen and let God clean out your heart. Thanksgiving flows naturally from your understanding of who God is and what He has done for you. It is important to focus on being thankful and not just on what you need from God. Finally, bring your prayer requests to God in supplication. You can even organize your prayer requests to make it easier to remember. Start by praying for yourself and your immediate family, then move out in broader and broader circles, praying for work or school associates, extended family, friends, your local church, and even national issues. Many people keep a written prayer list so they don't forget the names they want to pray for. It's even easier to keep that list on a laptop or phone.
- b. Write your prayers. Some people find it easier to stay on track if they journal every day. The nice thing about a journal is that you have a record of your spiritual journey to look back on.

- c. Sing your prayers. Praise songs are a wonderful way to express your adoration for God. Singing brings you closer to heaven and lifts your spirits.
- d. Pray out loud. If possible, say your prayers out loud. This should keep you awake and on track!

**Share:** As a group, share some of the techniques that each of you use to help stay focused on your personal devotions. What other ideas do you have that can enhance your personal time with God?



*It was in hours of solitary prayer that Jesus in His earth-life received wisdom and power. Let the youth follow His example in finding at dawn and twilight a quiet season for communion with their Father in heaven. And throughout the day let them lift up their hearts to God. (Child Guidance, p. 525)*

## group devotions

A lot of emphasis is placed on personal devotions, but group Bible study and prayer are just as important. If personal devotions represent our vertical relationship with God, group study is the horizontal relationship. When you experience both aspects, it enriches and completes your relationship with God.

## Bible study

Many different methods exist for group Bible study. The most obvious one is the Sabbath school lesson. There are many other Bible study curriculums available as well. Another option is to read a book such as *The Purpose Driven Life*, or to watch a video series like the *NOOMA* DVDs. All of these are good options, but just like in personal devotions, it is important to focus on time spent in the Word.

The simplest method of Bible study requires no major preparation, but it works very well. As a group, choose a book of the Bible you would like to study. Read a section aloud, usually two or three paragraphs long. Then have other group members read the section aloud again using different Bible versions. After hearing the same passage several times, with slightly



different interpretations, the class will find lots of material to discuss. Since you will move in order through the Bible book, the members will know which section will be read ahead of time and can prepare if they want.

## prayer time

One important element of group prayer is intercession. As a class you should take the time to share prayer requests with one another. Prayer tends to be the last thing a group focuses on. It is often used as a ten second bookend to a meeting. However, you will find your study group extremely blessed if you make prayer the center of your study time.

### **Some do's and don'ts for group prayer time:**

#### **Do**

- Designate a specific amount of time to prayer.
- Do ask for prayer requests. Someone can keep a record of these in a journal, if desired. It is often nice to look back on requests and record the answers that were received. The real names of people in the requests do not have to be used to ensure privacy.
- Encourage everyone to pray silently during quiet moments.
- Designate someone to begin and end the prayer time. Those persons can pray more than once if they choose, but it will help people to know when prayer time is over.
- Do remember to pray for the prayer requests.

#### **Don't**

- Don't force anyone to pray out loud. Some people are not yet comfortable praying in public.
- Don't go around the circle praying. People tend to focus on how many people are left to pray, rather than on what is being said.
- Don't worry if no one prays and there is an awkward silent gap. Just use the time to pray silently.

## community

There are other aspects that groups share besides Bible study and prayer. True Christian community and fellowship includes bearing one another's burdens, sharing life's trials and triumphs, eating together, worshipping together, and working together, among others.

**Share:** What examples of Christian community are there in the Bible? What activities did these groups share?



*It is in the order of God that those who bear responsibilities should often meet to counsel with one another and to pray earnestly for that wisdom which He alone can impart. Unitedly make known your troubles to God. Talk less; much precious time is lost in talk that brings no light. Let brethren unite in fasting and prayer for the wisdom that God has promised to supply liberally. (Counsels on Diet and Foods, p. 188)*

## reflection

As a group, or in smaller groups of five to seven people, discuss what the format of an ideal Bible study group would be. Decide on factors such as:

- When and where will the group meet?
- Who will be a part of the group?
- How long will the group meet? (Both length of time and how many times during the year)
- What will be studied?
- How will it be studied?
- What other components of group community will you include in your study? (For example, prayer, social, worship, service, testimony)
- Who will lead out in each section?

Make a written plan outlining the format of your study that includes each component.

## application

Finish up your study time together by practicing group prayer. Have someone write down the prayer requests that the group has. Avoid discussing these in great detail, since that wastes prayer time. Designate someone to begin prayer and someone to end. Tell the group that you will pray for ten minutes, whether anyone is talking aloud or not. No one has to pray, and people can pray as many times as they would like. As part of your prayer requests, invite the Holy Spirit to be part of your lives, your group, and your church.



### dig deep



*Let little companies meet together to study the Scriptures. You will lose nothing by this, but will gain much. Angels of God will be in your gathering, and as you feed upon the Bread of Life, you will receive spiritual sinew and muscle. You will be feeding, as it were, upon the leaves of the tree of life. By this means only can you maintain your integrity. (Pastoral Ministry, p. 274)*

“Nothing tends more to cement the hearts of Christians than praying together. Never do they love one another so well as when they witness the outpouring of each other’s hearts in prayer.” —Charles Finney



### disciples in action



**Note:** See pages 8, 62, and 70 for more on the mentoring partnership.

- Meet with your accountability partner regularly to pray and talk about the challenges you face in being faithful in your personal relationship with God. They can help you to work through any difficulties you encounter.

- If you don't have a mentor/accountability partner, pray that God will bring you someone to pray with. Having a prayer partner is a huge boost to your personal spiritual life. God loves to answer those prayers! A prayer partner should be someone of the same sex because praying together with someone is a very intimate experience. Make sure that you guard your prayer time to avoid using it to complain, gossip, or talk about unimportant things. The best rule is to pray first and talk second!

## prayer time

- Choose one method for Bible study during your personal devotions this week.
- Practice one of the suggested methods of personal prayer or journaling.
- Begin a prayer list and pray for specific people and their needs this week.



## leader's note

If your group is quite large it will be easier to break into smaller groups of five to seven people to complete the activities. However, since these activities are focusing primarily on being a group, the optimal idea would be to keep everyone working together during the activities, so as to experience the dynamics of community.

Here are some additional resources about small groups and prayer:

1. *Delighting in God*, by Kris Coffin Stevenson
2. *Reinvent your Sabbath School*, by Chris and Yolanda Blake
3. *Releasing God's Power*, by Becky Tirabassi
4. *Too Busy not to Pray*, by Bill Hybels
5. *What Happens When Women Pray*, by Evelyn Christenson

# SESSION FIVE

by *Debbonnaire Kovacs*

## debriefing sessions 1 - 4

**Time: 90 minutes.** *Try to spend approximately 15-20 minutes discussing each section below, leaving time for small group prayer and commitment at the end.*



**Debbonnaire Kovacs** has been writing since she could hold a pencil, and sold her first story to Junior Guide when she was eleven years old. By her twenties, she recognized that writing and speaking were not just what she loved to do, but what God wanted her to do. She has written off and on for most of her life, but has been writing full time since 1990, having written fourteen books including the first, second, fifth, and sixth grade Bible textbooks used in Adventist schools in North America, and more than 150 stories and articles for all ages. She speaks at camp meetings, women's retreats, and other events, and also does copyediting. She urges everyone to take their dreams to God and see whether they are more than just dreams. They may be assignments from the King of Heaven.

You can reach her at [debbonnaire@debbonnaire.com](mailto:debbonnaire@debbonnaire.com) or on the Web at [www.debbonnaire.com](http://www.debbonnaire.com)



## debriefing sessions 1-4

**Time: 90 minutes.** *Try to spend approximately 15-20 minutes discussing each section, leaving time for small group prayer and commitment at the end.*

### Discipleship begins and ends with Jesus—the focal point!

The call to be a disciple comes the second you make the choice to accept Jesus. Learning how to be a good and effective one takes a bit longer. Yes, training in godliness must be intentional.

During these four sessions, we have explored many facets of what it means to have a true, abiding, whole-life relationship with God. We discovered that there is no instant, microwaveable way to spiritual growth. Growing spiritually takes time, and everything we do on a daily basis affects this journey—the friends we keep, how we relate to each other, the songs we sing, the things we watch—in short, everything we do.

But the greatest growth comes when we allow Jesus, through the Holy Spirit, to transform us and make us want to be like Him, want to spend time with Him—sitting at His feet and listening to him. Like Martha, we too can learn what is really important “...and it will not be taken away....”

(Luke 10:38-42).

Then, like the disciples, we will say, “Lord, teach us to pray”  
(Luke 11:1).



## leader's note

Be sure to watch the clock and save time for prayer. There is no need to cover every one of these questions. Some will be more or less relevant to your particular group. Some will cause great discussion and interest—those are the ones to spend more time on. But at least fifteen minutes before you want to close, wind it up and divide the group into small groups with instructions to pray specifically for the things that have been brought up in the discussion.

If you know some are already prayer partners, you may want to put those together. A good prayer group might consist of two pairs of prayer partners. You could even have people take notes from the beginning, writing down issues, concerns, blessings, and fears that are brought up so that they will be able to pray intelligently for each other.

End by praying aloud for each one in the room and commissioning them to go forth for God. You can make a ceremony of it, if you wish. They could light each other's candles, or put prayer requests in a basket, or anything you or they think of.

*During these four sessions, we have explored many facets of what it means to have a true, abiding, whole-life relationship with God. Here is an overview of the four “Big Ideas” we’ve looked at:*

1. God created you for a unique, deepening, love relationship with Him.
2. When Christ calls you to Him, He sends you to others. A disciple isn't just a student, but is also a messenger.
3. God wants you to share His love by ministering to others so that they, too, can experience His saving grace and develop a unique, deepening, love relationship with Him, and in turn, minister to others.
4. The God and Creator of the universe, who created undiscovered worlds and galaxies, still wants to be intimately involved with you. He shows you this by making Himself available through His Word and by actively using different means to have one-on-one time with you.

**In Session 1 we looked at the ways we develop this love relationship with God—primarily through Bible study, prayer, and worship, especially with others on Sabbath.**

## **Bible study and prayer**

### **think about and discuss:**

- Have your ideas and attitudes about the Bible and prayer changed during these sessions? If so, how?
- In what ways did you find your devotional life changing as you tried out some of the suggestions and activities? For instance, did you begin (or already have) a prayer journal? Was it only written, or did it contain art and doodles and other things? Do you like or dislike the idea? If you don't, what would you prefer to do to make your relationship with God more visible and real to you?
- Which methods of prayer and Bible study were the most helpful to you and why? Which were not helpful, and why? Did you discover anything not mentioned in the session that you would like to share?
- Did you make a plan for training yourself in greater godliness? How is it working for you? What are some of the blessings you have found? What are the obstacles you face? Ask your group if they have ideas and solutions. You can all share both your blessings and your problems and ideas.

## **worship and Sabbath**

- Of course, what we do in the church building on Sabbath is only a small part of what worship really is. Every discipline and practice in this session is all about worship, from private devotions to prayer partners to corporate worship on Sabbath. In fact, our every thought, word, and action *is* worship one way or another. We might want to be careful and attentive to whom or what we're worshipping!



- Have your attitudes toward worship changed during these sessions? If so, how?
- Did you find a prayer partner? What are the blessings and challenges of this relationship? (Of course, do not share any personal details of prayers with the whole group.)
- Are you developing a growing ability to remain aware of God's presence and your connection to Him all day? Are you catching yourself sometimes worshipping something else entirely? What do you do when this happens?
- How does fun relate to worship?

**During Session 2, we explored what it means to be a disciple. We learned that being a true, wholehearted disciple has more layers than we might have thought.**

## **first, behold Christ**

“Beholding Christ and becoming changed” is exactly what Session 1 was all about. Look back at some of the questions and issues you just discussed (on Bible study, prayer, and worship), but this time, instead of viewing them as a sort of test of “how well I’m doing in my devotional life,” ask yourselves and each other, “What did this teach me about Jesus?”

## **second, grow**

We learned that the call to be a disciple comes the second you make the choice to accept Jesus. Learning how to be a good and effective one takes a bit longer!

- Have you found that, as your awareness of God's presence grows, so does your awareness of the little calls that come in your daily life? Are there some you can share?

- Have you had some blessings and exciting new connections with other people? Have you made some painful errors? What might you do differently the next time?
- What questions and suggestions do you have for your group?

## third, get together

Jesus is recorded as doing some one-on-one work, and of course our personal relationships with Him are unique, and different from any other on the earth. But He spent, by far, the most of His time with groups—both large and small. And He never once called someone to be a disciple alone.

- Why do you think the “two-by-two” principle is effective?
- What are some things you have done as a disciple that you think should be done alone?
- What are some things you have done or want to do as a disciple that will require another person? Several others?
- What did you think of the Ellen White quote that included this line: “Humanity is interlaced and interwoven with humanity”?

**During Session 3, we looked at ways to minister to others. Of all the principles we have explored so far, this one is the most able to be integrated into our daily lives of work, study, and play.**

## the journey of change

- As you reflect together on all the things above and how they are working together in your life, where do you see yourself moving forward?
- Where do you see yourself moving backward?
- Where do you feel stuck?
- What suggestions can the group give each other?

## service

The session asserts that the great law of life is service. If God is love and all who love are of God, then love must equal service.

- How do you find this to be true or not true in your life? Think both of the ways you give and the ways you receive service.
- Can there be such a thing as love without service, or true service without love? Why or why not?
- What do the fruits of the Spirit have to do with love and service? Which ones do you see most clearly being brought into your life with God? Which ones do you most long to develop more fully?

## recognizing and responding

The needs of the world are sometimes missed or misinterpreted by Christians. We can be so focused on saving people's souls that we forget their bodies. As Adventists, we don't believe in a separate soul. We believe that peoples' bodies and physical needs *are* part of their souls' needs! But we still are hesitant to enter the world of social action, despite the fact that this is where Jesus spent the vast majority of His time.

- Brainstorm some of the great needs of the billions on this earth. You could write them on a white board. It won't take two minutes to fill the board! Now, each person pick one or two needs that call the most to their hearts.
- What are you doing to find ways to help meet this need? Are you *doing*, or just *talking*?
- Are the needs you're called to work for global, local, or both? What are some ways you can help in your own family, workplace, school, neighborhood? What are some ways you can help globally?
- Tell each other one way you will serve this week. Then hold each other accountable.

## Networking for Ministry

- “Social networking” is the buzzword of our age. In what ways are you presently involved in social networking, both on- and offline?
- What are some ways you use these platforms for ministry? (Don’t think only of specifically religious ministering. Those needs you brainstormed didn’t only speak to spiritual natures.)
- What are some ways you could minister more effectively? Do you need a partner? A group? Do you think online networks are sufficient? Why or why not?
- Are there ways you have used social networking skills that actually worked against God’s kingdom? What will you do to change that?
- How can music and other arts be connected with personal devotion, groups, churches, discipleship, and ministry?

### **In Session 4, we explored ways to transform the devotional life.**

- In many ways, this session comes full circle back to session one. Why do you think this is so?
- What are some of the differences you have seen in your devotional life that have happened specifically because of your attempts to grow your discipleship?
- What are some of the differences that have occurred because you have tried to minister?
- What are some ways you want to grow now?
- What are some ways you could envision yourself growing in the future?
- Are there any fears and concerns you feel on this topic? Can you share them with the group and practice ministering to each other right now?

# mentoring

## encouraging youth to be disciples of Christ and mentors to others



**Pastor Mark McCleary** began his pastoral career in 1974 after receiving his Bachelor of Arts in theology and a minor in history from Oakwood University in Huntsville, Alabama. He earned his Master of Divinity degree in 1978 from Andrews University Theological Seminary and his Doctor of Ministry degree from Eastern Baptist Theological Seminary in 1998. He is currently pursuing a doctorate in Conflict Analysis and Resolution from NOVA Southeastern University.

Dr. McCleary continued to gain experience in spiritual leadership through the years, beginning in 1974 as an associate evangelist in Kansas City, Missouri and Kansas City, Kansas. He now serves as the senior pastor of the First Seventh-day Adventist Church in Washington, D.C.

Dr. McCleary is affiliated with the Faith-Based Community Association Partnership (FBCAP) and the Metro Area Ministerium of Seventh-day Adventists. He has written several publications, “A Guide to Discovering Your Spiritual Gifts”, “Gospel Presentation,” “A Comprehensive Study Guide: Back to Basics,” and “A Study Guide and Workbook: Daniel and Revelation.” These are available online at <http://www.firstsdachurch.org/pastor/books.html>.

Pastor McCleary is the loving husband of Queenie and their union has been blessed with two sons, Brian and Michael, and a daughter, Michelle. Pastor McCleary says his sincere goal is to be a role model of Christian values in order to inspire positive lifestyle transformation in others.



# DISCIPLESHIP—MENTORING FOR YOUTH

*By Dr. Mark McCleary*

## objectives

- To encourage youth to be disciples of Christ and mentors to other youth
- To provide basic understanding of discipleship and mentoring as correlating endeavors
- To inspire youth to be productive stewards in view of social well-being and Kingdom building

## big idea

As a youth, you are uniquely wired to reach other youth with the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

**Scriptural Connection:** Matthew 28:18-20; 1Timothy 4:12-16

## the journey

The following guide has been produced primarily, but not exclusively, for youth and young adults. It comprises a format that focuses on discipleship and mentoring of young people on their journey toward an authentic relationship with Jesus.

I want to highlight the congruence between the concepts of discipleship and mentoring. Discipleship involves following a teacher as Peter, James, John, and the others followed Jesus. On the other hand, mentoring highlights the role of the teacher or coach toward his followers, such as a basketball coach to his players or someone with a particular expertise to his or her student/mentoree. Thus, this guide emphasizes the dual roles of following and leading—discipleship and mentoring—in the context of youth-to-youth interaction.

## how can I benefit from a discipleship-mentoring experience?

- Start with family members (i.e., parents, guardians, siblings).
- Seek same-sex role models who have demonstrated their effectiveness in discipleship and/or mentoring.
- Practice discipleship and mentoring with youth who want your involvement.
- Learn what discipleship or mentoring ministries are available at your church.
- Research successful discipleship and mentoring programs.

## what can I do to help someone begin the discipleship journey?

Why not use a functional tool like my *Gospel Presentation* guidebook? This booklet consists of twelve steps for leading someone to a conscious relationship with Jesus. This method is more directed and purposeful in its approach to making disciples of Jesus. Of course if another approach works better for you, feel free to use that method. But, we must go beyond the notion and practice of merely leading an individual to complete a set of Bible lessons and pass an oral examination in order to be baptized and voted as a member of a congregation.

Rehearse the steps (on page 65 of the *Gospel Presentation* guidebook) and reflect on their key phrases and intent. They comprise a tool for helping you lead other unsaved youth to a relationship with Jesus Christ. Memorize these twelve guidelines, listen actively, and you will become a youth-fisher of men and catcher of born-again individuals, many of whom will be youth like yourself. Is not this the essence of discipleship? The fulfilling of Jesus' Great Commission in a one-to-one approach.

## the youth-mentor

"Ask not what your country can do for you, but what you can do for your country," stated the 35<sup>th</sup> President of the United States, John F. Kennedy, during his inauguration speech. He was challenging Americans to seek to work and live for the common good and not by an ethos of rugged individualism that espoused personal interest by any means necessary at the expense of others.

It might seem ironic to exhort youth to be mentors because often they need the same themselves as they mature into productive adulthood. Nevertheless, their personal need for mentoring does not negate the need for youth fulfilling the same for other youth. Someone said, "When you learn, teach," and "When you receive, give." Both statements are indicative of mentoring. In fact, the best mentors are those who learn and receive from others and in turn share their life lessons with their peers during informal and formal times of giving and teaching.



## Gospel Presentation Steps:



1. Obtain permission to enter the other person's space.
2. "May I share something with you?"
3. If "Yes" to # 2, "Do you have the assurance of eternal life?" (1 John 5:11-13)
4. Check up question, "If God asked you, 'Why should I let you into heaven?' What would your response be?" (Ephesians 2:8,9; Romans 5:15-17)
5. "Why do you think it is a free gift?" Use an illustration of breaking the law (eg. traffic)—establish guilt.
6. Bible references for human guilt (1 John 3:4; Romans 3:23; 6:23)
7. "Could I/you pay our sin-guilt penalty?"  
"Yes—consequences?" "No, Alternative?" (John 3:16)
8. Accepting Jesus' sacrifice pays our debt. It justifies us before the Father and reconciles our relationship with Him.
9. "We need more than Jesus' death" (Romans 5:10,19)
10. "Do you want to accept Jesus' provision for you receiving eternal life?" By faith and prayer of confession and acceptance.
11. "Welcome!" (John 1:12; 6:37)
12. Caution:
  - "Don't look to your goodness—legalism; Pharasism (Ephesians 2:9; Titus 3:5)
  - "Don't look to your badness—discouragement (Hebrews 12:2; 4:14-16)

(McCleary, 2006: 31, 32)

---

For information on getting a copy of the *Gospel Presentation* guidebook contact the author, Dr. Mark McCleary, at [QMacbmm@aol.com](mailto:QMacbmm@aol.com).

## how can a youth take advantage of mentoring opportunities?

- Begin by forming genuine friendships with other youth.
- Connect with another youth by suggesting and scheduling a Bible study session.
- Suggest and establish, with pastoral blessing, a youth prayer ministry (i.e., group meeting or prayer line).
- Start a youth book reading group.
- Coordinate a discipleship training ministry for youth to use *The Gospel Presentation* tool to lead other youth to a growing relationship with Jesus Christ.

## to the discipleship and/or mentoring leaders

It is likely your church does not have nor ever has had a ministry specifically focused on youth fulfilling the roles of discipleship and/or mentoring. Well, “To be or not to be, ah, that is the question,” according to Macbeth. In other words, dare to be a youth discipler or mentor like explorers Lewis and Clark, who blazed a trail to the Northwest United States; or Booker T. Washington, who walked 100’s of miles to attend Hampton University and eventually began Tuskegee University; or James Naismith, who invented the game of basketball at a youth recreation facility so boys and girls could develop their physical, mental, and social skills; or Mary, the Mother of Jesus, who invested all she had into His formative training so that He might “increase in wisdom and stature and in favor of God and man” (Luke 2:52). She disciplined and mentored Him so well, He one day commissioned His disciples and mentors to “Go into all the world and do likewise” (Matthew 28:19, 20).

## practical ways to lead out in discipleship and/or mentorship training

1. Recruit youth disciples via public and private media.
  - Use church announcement periods, bulletins, bulletin boards, and flyers.
  - Use face-to-face, email, phone, or other electronic media.

2. Determine a meeting schedule that is best for the group of trainees.
  - Distribute, collect, analyze, and report the individual group member's multiple meeting options.
  - Use the same media options for recruiting and announcing the meeting schedule.
3. Maintain an updated roster of all disciplers and mentors (i.e., name, address, phone, email). Use this list for mass communication.
4. Use this roster for your prayer list also. Without their personal information, share this list with your prayer ministry leaders and group for systematic intercession.
5. Establish a meeting format—this can be at church, home, or other informal settings. Meetings should not last more than 45-60 minutes—one half for discipleship and the other half for mentoring. Leave about a third for actual practice, questions, and answers.
6. Maintain summary records of meetings and activities to report to pastor, assigned or elder-sponsor, youth ministry, and church board and business meetings.

### **discipler/mentor connecting with disciple/mentoree**

1. Invite disciple/mentoree to church or church-sponsored event with you (Hebrew 10:25).
2. Encourage disciple/mentoree to enroll in Sabbath school class or other church-sponsored youth activities that appeal to their interest (2 Timothy 2:15).
3. Delegate disciple/mentoree to proactive, hospitable, and Christ-centered individuals.
4. Encourage disciple/mentoree who would like to be baptized after completing the Gospel Presentation and/or Bible studies to respond to the appeal for baptism (Acts 2:41).
5. Offer to accompany disciples/mentorees who are ready for baptism as they make their public response to accept Jesus as Savior and join His church (Acts 2:47).
6. Encourage and offer to educate disciples/mentorees of the importance of continuing in prayer (1Thessalonians; Matthew 17:21).
7. Encourage the disciple/mentoree to practice the habit of reading God's word for knowledge and growth (2 Peter 3:18).

## reflection

1. What do you think about yourself as a disciple and/or mentor?
2. What do you think others might say are the primary factors that make you suitable as a discipler and/or mentor?
3. What would others say are your major priorities that make you suitable or unsuitable as a disciple and/or mentor?
4. What do you think it means to be a disciple of Jesus Christ?
5. What do you think it means to be a mentor?
6. What factors might prevent you from being a good disciple and/or mentor?

## application

As a growing young man in my neighborhood, I used to hear people say of a hot issue or during a confrontation, “Talk is cheap.” In other words, what we say needs to be backed up by what we do. Our actions need to be where our mouth is. Researchers make a distinction between one’s “espoused theory” and one’s “theory in use.” This analysis is similar to my previous two descriptions above. My point is that all that has been shared concerning discipleship and mentoring is espoused theory, profession, or talk unless you apply it, move beyond profession to action, and put it to use.

Ask God to help you and guide you to fulfill your call to discipleship and/or mentoring. The following are questions you might ask yourself to express such help and guidance:

- How can you change your schedule to ensure proper discipleship and/or mentorship training?
- What and who are positive influences in your life that are helping you develop into a productive disciple and/or mentor?
- What is the single most important factor for increasing your success as a disciple and/or mentor?
- How, when, and where is it best for focusing on God’s grace for electing and empowering you as a disciple and/or mentor?

## personal prayer time

- Thank God for expressing His love to you by calling you to faithful stewardship as a disciple and/or mentor.
- Pray that God will give you discernment to avoid pitfalls and take advantage of opportunities to fulfill your discipleship and/or mentorship.
- Ask God to use you to effectively and positively reach other youth to His glory, for social edification, and the Devil's horrification.

---

### REFERENCE:

McCleary, Mark (2006). *The Gospel Presentation: A Step-by-Step Guide on How to Lead Someone to Jesus*, Burtonsville, MD: McCleary Publishing.

## APPLICATION FOR A MENTOR



Participant, if you would like to work with a mentor during the period of these discipleship sessions, please fill out this form and send it as an attachment to \_\_\_\_\_

*(Name and phone number of facilitator/contact person)*

Your Contact Information	
Name	
Street Address 1	
Street Address 2	
City, State & Zip Code	
Preferred Phone	
E-Mail Address	

How can your mentor help you?	
Please check any of the following topics that you would like your mentor to specifically address.	
<input type="checkbox"/> To begin a relationship with Christ	<input type="checkbox"/> Managing my resources (stewardship)
<input type="checkbox"/> Healthful living	<input type="checkbox"/> Prayer (can be for yourself, family members, friends, etc.)
<input type="checkbox"/> Understanding the Bible	<input type="checkbox"/> Understanding my relationship with myself and others
<input type="checkbox"/> Time management (stewardship)	<input type="checkbox"/> Understanding my relationship with God
<input type="checkbox"/> Transforming my devotional life	<input type="checkbox"/> Developing positive relationships outside the church
<input type="checkbox"/> Leading others to Christ	<input type="checkbox"/> Embracing the mission to bring others to Christ

<input type="checkbox"/> Learning to trust God	<input type="checkbox"/> Recognizing the needs of the less fortunate
<input type="checkbox"/> Discipling others	<input type="checkbox"/> Committing to live by biblical standards of sexual morality
<input type="checkbox"/> Understanding biblical truths	<input type="checkbox"/> Understanding that God forgives sin and restores brokenness

**What is your primary motivation for attending these discipleship sessions?**

**Please describe how a mentor could best assist you.**

**Do you have any special requests for a mentor?**

**How would you prefer to communicate with your mentor?**

<input type="checkbox"/> Email	<input type="checkbox"/> Facebook
<input type="checkbox"/> Phone	<input type="checkbox"/> Skype
<input type="checkbox"/> IM	<input type="checkbox"/> Other

## Commitment as a Mentee

Participants who wish to have a mentor are asked to carry on a regular conversation with the mentor. Mentees should try to respond to a mentor's emails at least once a week. This regular contact helps to build the relationship between the mentor and the participant. Persons in the mentor program should contact the session facilitator/coordinator or their pastor if they need assistance beyond the help of their mentor. If a participant no longer wishes to participate in the program, or does not feel their mentor is the right match, then the participant should contact the facilitator to make them aware of the situation.

## Growing Disciples Inventory

**A disciple is one who responds in faith and obedience to the gracious call of Christ to follow Him.** Discipleship is not something we do alone, only on Sabbath or during a seminar. Discipleship is about growing spiritually. Closer to God, self, and others. Daily. Forever.

**Take an inventory of your spiritual walk today. Here's how:** Respond to the 20 statements below. Score your answers. Ask the Holy Spirit and Christian friends to guide you. Serve and equip others using the two processes you score higher in. Plan to grow in the two processes you score lower in.

How often is this true of you? Circle one number for each commitment.	Rarely /Never	Not Often	Quite Often	Regularly /Always	Write the number you circled in the white space.
I am developing a dynamic relationship with God.	1	2	3	4	
I keep learning more about what it means to be a growing Christian.	1	2	3	4	
I am seeking opportunities in all my daily activities to minister to others.	1	2	3	4	
I am teaching others how to build Christ-like relationships.	1	2	3	4	
I am discovering who I am in relationship to Christ.	1	2	3	4	
I keep learning more about who God is.	1	2	3	4	
I am helping one or more friends to grow in their relationship with God.	1	2	3	4	
I am helping others to study and obey God's Word.	1	2	3	4	
I am developing Christ-centered family relationships.	1	2	3	4	
I keep learning more about the human fall from God's original plan	1	2	3	4	
I volunteer to serve in my community without reward, outside my family.	1	2	3	4	
I am showing others how to live as committed, healthy Christians.	1	2	3	4	
I am developing Christ-like relationships with church members.	1	2	3	4	
I keep learning more about God's grace and plan of salvation.	1	2	3	4	
I am supporting my church's ministries with my time and/or money.	1	2	3	4	
I am helping others discover where God is working in their lives and world.	1	2	3	4	
I am developing positive relationships with those who are not part of my church or family – at work, in my community.	1	2	3	4	
I keep learning more about how God has provided everything needed to restore me to His image.	1	2	3	4	
I am helping my church tell the story of Jesus e.g. friendship evangelism.	1	2	3	4	
I am teaching others how to use spiritual gifts in God's work.	1	2	3	4	
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>To score, total each column</b> →				
Processes: C=Connecting; U=Understanding; M=Ministering; E=Equipping Learn more: <a href="http://growingfruitfuldisciples.org">growingfruitfuldisciples.org</a> Full GDI: <a href="http://inventory.growingdisciples.info">inventory.growingdisciples.info</a>	Disciple others through strengths. Plan to grow in 2 weaker areas.				C U M E

© Glynnis Bradford, [inventory.growingdisciples.info](http://inventory.growingdisciples.info), 2011. Permission granted to copy for educational and religious purposes. Visit [growingfruitfuldisciples.org](http://growingfruitfuldisciples.org) to take the full version with online report.



## THE EVALUATION PROCESS

The development of an effective curriculum is a multi-step, ongoing, and cyclical process. The process progresses from evaluating what we are doing now, to designing an improved program, to implementing a new program and back to evaluating the revised program. Your honest review and analysis of the information provided, its impact on lives (yours and others), as well as on people's perception of its strengths and weaknesses will help form the foundation of future curriculums and resources as we look forward to developing other curricula to assist in the discipleship process of our youth and young adults.

Please send your comments or concerns to [dunchiem@gc.adventist.org](mailto:dunchiem@gc.adventist.org) or write to:

Youth Ministries Department  
General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists  
12501 Old Columbia Pike  
Silver Spring, MD 20904







[www.gcyouthministries.org](http://www.gcyouthministries.org)

**ONE** in Compassion

**8 million**  
adventist youth  
mobilized on the streets



**worldwide**

8  
m  
i  
l  
l  
i  
o  
n  
a  
d  
v  
e  
n  
t  
i  
s  
t  
y  
o  
u  
t  
h  
m  
i  
n  
i  
s  
t  
r  
i  
e  
s  
m  
o  
b  
i  
l  
i  
z  
e  
d  
o  
n  
t  
h  
e  
s  
t  
r  
e  
e  
t  
s  
w  
o  
r  
l  
d  
w  
i  
d  
e