



discipleship ministry

One-on-One Intentional Spiritual Growth

Pursuing Intentional Spiritual Growth with a Discipler

Productive discipleship relationships are fostered by the willingness of one person to be used by God in imparting valuable insight, teaching, and direction into the life of another person who desires to fulfill the role of a disciple; an eager learner, or follower. This specified time of learning must include an intentional plan and course, directed by the Holy Spirit, in which each person relies upon God's empowerment to fulfill His will within their life.

As you consider engaging in a Titus 2 type of relationship, the following guidelines will help you better understand not only the commitment needed for such a relationship, but also will prepare you for your first meeting with a potential discipler who will ask you questions pertaining to the information below. Please seek the Lord's guidance as you consider these guidelines, if you sense that you cannot make this commitment at this season in your life, don't be discouraged! There will be other opportunities in the future to connect with a mature believer, and perhaps it will result in a more fruitful time growth as you prepare for that relationship in this season.

More about one-on-one discipleship.

A discipler is one who nurtures and teaches not only biblical concepts, but also the deeper spiritual meaning of Christianity. In other words, what we believe and why we believe it. The discipler is also instrumental in supporting the transition from biblical knowledge to personal application. This is an important step in discipleship which encourages spiritual growth and personal experience of God as one chooses to live out biblical precepts. Those who are new in Christ, returning to Christ, or those who sense that they would like to grow in a specific area of their Christian faith, would be good candidates for discipleship.

A discipler passes on knowledge and skill which benefits the disciple in addressing areas of needed growth. The need might be to learn a character quality such as gentleness or self-control; or perhaps a skill that would assist in overall Christian maturity, such as time management or financial stewardship. The discipler not only imparts knowledge, but also provides training and practical exercises focused on the area of intended growth while providing the biblical mandates that inspire and motivate us to pursue our area of focus. You could say that disciplers support us in the what (our area of focus) and help direct us in how (the steps and training to achieve) while supplying the why (the biblical inspiration to motivate us to achieve). In essence they are experiencing the journey with us!

Ready for the next step?

Take time to prayerfully consider the answers to the questions that follow. The answers will reveal whether you are ready at this time to invest in a discipleship relationship as well as providing you direction in making this a productive time.

1. Seek the Lord's direction in focusing on one area of transformation. This is to be the area that you and your discipler will spend your time addressing.

There are so many needs and so many desires, but only the Lord knows in which area we are ready and prepared to do battle and gain victory! He is a God of order and has an intentional plan for our lives to bring glory to Himself. Therefore, be on God's timetable! He will be faithful to direct you (Psalm 32:8) as you seek Him in discovering your area of focus. This area may be in developing the character of Christ through choosing one of His character traits (Galatians 5:22, Philippians 2); it could be developing a life skill, or it can be an area of general spiritual growth such as sharing the gospel; learning how to study the Bible; resisting and overcoming a specific temptation, or building a strong biblical foundation of your Christian faith (understanding what Christians believe and why they believe). Since this discipling time is for a specified period (12 weeks), choosing one area of focus will allow you to gain depth of knowledge and training rather than being spread too thin and accomplishing little.



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2. As you consider pursuing discipleship, identify your weaknesses and strengths. You will need to share these with your discipler so that he/she can successfully partner with you.

Each of us is made uniquely in the image of God. Our personalities and how we view not only ourselves, but the world, must be considered in developing a successful relationship with others. Since an essential element to successful discipleship is trust, consider the following questions. What must your discipler know about you? Are you sensitive, prideful, mistrusting? What strengths do you bring to this relationship? Are you persevering, full of faith, compassionate?

3. Are you willing to make time in your schedule for a quality relationship? This will mean not only making time to attend your regular meeting, but also being faithful to complete the assignments given in preparation for your meetings.

A relationship such as this is designed for intentional, purposeful "training" in biblical principles (practical application which is experienced by repetition). This will require a serious commitment to apply and practice the principles addressed (Matthew 7:24-27). It may be necessary for you to trim down other commitments during this season so that you may obtain victory in your area of focus. It also will express to your discipler that you honor their time and commitment and are serious about spiritual growth.

4. Are you willing to be honest with God and your discipler?

Lasting, Spirit-empowered change, can only come through sincere, honest communication about our spiritual condition. This is the gateway to godly sorrow which ushers in the actual change brought about by repentance (1 Corinthians 7:10).

How do I connect with a discipler?

Having given some deeper thought to the previous questions, you might now be asking, "How do I meet a discipler?" We have formulated and given careful thought as to how your discipleship relationship can succeed. Research shows that many relationships fail due to a lack of connection. That is why many people who are paired up by a third party do not find a deep connection which fosters spiritual growth. Another issue is the need to match expertise and issue, many disciplers bring to the table areas of unique experience as well as their experience of walking with Christ in day to day life.

Therefore, we have designed what we call "Discipleship Connection Events" where disciplers and potential disciples come together. During this event, disciplers share a brief presentation about themselves, their life experience, and the unique contribution they bring to a discipling relationship. This allows you an opportunity to hear from many potential disciplers.

There is also a brief time at the closing of the evening for the disciples to share what they are looking for in a discipler and to specify their area of focus.

As the event draws to a close there is opportunity for each person to get to know one another. If you sense a connection with a discipler, there will be the opportunity to ask more specific questions that you have for them and hear more about their experiences. Everyone who has participated in a Discipleship Connection Event has found it to be a very encouraging and edifying experience. Testimonies are shared and opportunities are provided to meet other Christians who are intentionally pursuing spiritual growth.

From the Discipleship Connection Event, you can then meet with the discipler that you have connected with for a time of getting to know one another better and explore whether it is a good fit for future meetings.

Once we receive your Discipleship Ministry Application, we will explain the above process in further detail, but we hope that the information provides you with a general introduction to the Discipleship Ministry at Grace. If you have further questions, or are prepared to complete an application, please contact tinaf@gccaz.org.

APPLICATION



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Name: _____

Mailing Address: _____

Phone: _____ E-mail: _____

Please answer the following questions to better help us in assisting you.

How often do you attend services at Grace?

Are you involved in a ministry here at Grace or at another Christian organization?

Have you been discipled before? If so, please tell us a bit about your experience.

What is your reason for pursuing discipleship at this time in your life?

What is your desired area of spiritual growth? (Be very specific as to the topic and nature of your need since the ministry format promotes intentionality)

Does your schedule allow for the availability to meet with your discipler on a consistent basis as well as the time to complete your study and/or assignments as you pursue spiritual growth? (You may need to consider adjusting your schedule for the duration of the discipleship term)

In submitting this application you are aware of the responsibilities as outlined in this application and agree to pursue fulfilling these requirements.

Signature _____ Date _____