



SESSION TWO: STARTING WELL WITH CLEAR EXPECTATIONS

SESSION TOPICS

- The qualities of a good disciple
- Making the time count
- How long the discipleship relationship should last

The qualities of a good disciple

Here are 4 qualities to look for in someone you are considering discipling.

- 1 Spiritual.** Jesus was not interested in helping leaders lead better. He was looking for those who would follow Him and follow His example of leadership. The most important quality of a disciple is their willingness to follow Jesus and make their relationship and pursuit of Him their highest priority.
- 2 Faithful.** They come prepared each week, having done whatever reading or homework you agreed to in the prior meeting. They arrive on time and give you their full attention during your meeting.
- 3 Teachable.** They are willing to take direct feedback without being defensive. They are willing to look at themselves in the mirror and make changes to improve. They are humble and have an expressed hunger for personal growth.
- 4 Missional.** The person worthy of your time is one who recognizes their responsibility to then pay it forward and do the same with someone else. Though they might not initially see themselves as qualified, they should understand that God has called all His children to The Great Commission, making disciples and passing on what they've learned.

Making the time count

When you have someone interested in a discipleship relationship, the temptation is to jump in right away and start working through some material. This often results in 'discipleship fizzle' caused by mismatched expectations, a lack of established trust, poor commitment on their part, or simply having different ideas about the process. To prevent this, consider a slower start that looks something like this:

MEETING 1: GET TO KNOW THEM.

- **Their story.** Learn about their career, their family, hobbies, etc. Be sure to share your story as well to model the kind of transparency and honesty that will be important as you continue forward. Look for common interests and experiences.
- **Their goals.** Find out what drives them, where their passions are, where they see themselves in 10 years and what's on their 'bucket list'.
- **Their expectations.** Ask what they're looking for in a discipleship relationship. Many will come thinking they want a business mentor or a marriage counselor, so be prepared to explain that your interest is to help them grow in their relationship with Christ, not to advise on business matters or provide focused marriage counsel.
- **Their experience.** Ask whether they've ever had someone work with them personally to help them grow in their faith. Explain that you've been through this process with someone else and would be willing to do the same with them if they are interested.

Even if they respond favorably and express a desire to start meeting regularly, ask them to read a short book like *My Heart Christ's Home* before your next meeting and be prepared to talk about it when you come back together. Suggest that you both pray between now and then about whether to move forward. This establishes early on that your time is important and you are entering into this commitment prayerfully and seriously.

Establish a time and place for the next meeting and try to meet in person if possible. Choose a place with few distractions and enough privacy to discuss sensitive topics.

*See <https://cbmc.live/myheart>

MEETING 2: OBSERVE THEIR FOLLOW-THROUGH AND AGREE ON THE PATH FORWARD.

- **Discuss.** Talk through the assignment from your first meeting and let them explain what stood out to them and why. Pay attention to the clues they give regarding their challenges, what inspires them, and most importantly, their understanding of God.
- **Observe.** Did they do the assignment and come ready to discuss? Are they thinking critically about the application to their lives? Ask, “What do you think would best help you get where you want to be in your Christian life?” At this point, people will generally fall into one of two buckets:
 - A. A small group where they can find encouragement and fellowship, or
 - B. Someone to lead and challenge them personally and intentionally
- **Direct.** If they don’t seem interested or committed in working one-on-one (bucket A), refer them to a small group and offer to meet occasionally. If, however, they show themselves committed and engaged, offer to meet regularly for a few months and then re-evaluate.
- **Agree.** Explain that they’ll have some light homework to do between meetings, like reading, answering questions, listening to a podcast or sermon, and even some scripture memory. Their faithfulness to be on time and prepared is both important for them and a sign of respect to you, so make it clear that you’re in this only if they are fully committed. Agree on a checkpoint after six to eight weeks to review your progress and decide whether to continue.
- **Share.** Give them access to the discipleship material you will use to guide your meetings going forward. CBMC’s Operation Timothy is a fantastic resource to start with and will take 6-12 months to get through from start to finish. Not only is it practical and biblically sound, it provides a path that they can use when they begin discipling someone else. Operation Timothy can be purchased in book form on Amazon or can be accessed free online at advance.cbmc.com.



DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Why is it important that we set clear expectations about what we are looking for in a discipling relationship?

2. What are the pros and cons of using some discipleship material versus just letting the conversation go where it will?
