

How *Mentoring* Is Different Than *Discipleship*

and the things that you have heard from me among many witnesses, commit these to faithful men who will be able to teach others also

IF I ONLY HAD A MENTOR¹

Let me take you back in time. Remember when you were twenty-one years old (if you aren't 21 yet, go back five years). Remember how you felt: shy, arrogant, brash, insecure, over-confident, unsure, questioning. Remember where you were.

Now remember the three adults in your life whom you respected most and with whom you had some type of relationship. They knew your name. They would say, "Hi, how are you doing?" You weren't necessarily close, but you looked up to them and admired them a great deal. Take a moment to identify three adults such as I've described. Remember them?

Let's say one afternoon you were walking along at the age of twenty-one, feeling near the prime of life, and one of the three adults you looked up to called and asked you to go have a cup of coffee. Imagine that once you got past the small talk, this highly respected person in your life said something like this:

"I know a lot of young people. And of all the young people I know at this point in my life, you are one of the most outstanding. I have been praying about it, and I would like to become one of your life mentors.

"What I mean by 'Life Mentor' is very simple. I want to be one of the people, whether you become the president of the United States or a prisoner, who cares whether you live or die and wants to see you win for the rest of your life. I want to help you in any way I can. I want to put you on my lifelong prayer list, and when you have children, I want to hear about every one of them. I want to know when they arrive, even if I'm living two thousand miles away. If you run into problems or just need a friend to talk to, I'll be available any time, day or night. I want to stay in contact with you no matter where you go or what you do for the rest of your life; I want to be one of your life mentors. Whenever we get together in the future, this year or in thirty years, I will ask you two simple questions:

- 'What are your priorities?' and
- 'How can I help?'"

What difference would it have made in your life if even one of those three adults you listed had come to you and offered you a mentoring relationship like that and then followed through on his or her intentions?

STOP READING FOR A FEW MINUTES AND SERIOUSLY TRY TO IMAGINE SPECIFICALLY WHAT DIFFERENCE WOULD IT HAVE MADE

¹ Contents of the first section are from [Mentoring: Confidence in Finding a Mentor and Becoming One](#), by Bobb Beihl, Nashville: Broadman and Holman 1996.

A MEANINGFUL DIFFERENCE

The terms discipleship and mentoring are being used with increasing frequency in ministry circles these days and with varying definitions. In our Companionship workshops and materials, we have tried to help you create a distinction between discipling and mentoring rather than viewing them as synonymous.

- Discipleship is broader and more basic. It is focused on getting believers grounded in their faith, living a God-honoring life, and equipped for general ministry.
- Mentoring is advanced discipleship. It is focused on preparing faithful, fervent and gifted emerging leaders for mature, capable and fruitful leadership.

<i>Discipleship</i>	<i>Mentoring</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Discipling others is the process by which a Christian with a life worth emulating commits himself for an extended period of time to a few individuals who have been won to Christ to aid and guide their growth to maturity and equip them to reproduce themselves in a third spiritual generation.²</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Mentoring is the process by which a church leader with a life and philosophy of ministry worth emulating commits himself for an extended period of time to a few faithful, fervent and gifted emerging church leaders to aid and guide their growth to leadership ministry and equip them to reproduce themselves in a third generation of church leaders.</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Target Group: Newer Believers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Target Group: Emerging Leaders
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Trigger: Faith in Christ³ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Trigger: Faithful and fervent service, evidence of leadership giftedness
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Healthy disciples reproduce disciples 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Healthy leaders reproduce leaders
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discippler has the role of a spiritual parent and teacher 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mentor has the role of a player-coach (training others while in the game himself)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Focus is on the Christian disciplines, basic Bible knowledge and personal ministry skills 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Focus is on spiritual maturity, advanced Bible and theology and leadership ministry skills
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Primary emphasis is on character development 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Primary emphasis is on skills development
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Key Verse - Matthew 28:19-20 "Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them ... [and] teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you ..." (NKJV) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Key Verse - 2 Timothy 2:2 "And the things that you have heard from me among many witnesses, commit these to faithful men who will be able to teach others also." (NKJV)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Jesus' Group: Thousands of disciples 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Jesus' Group: The 70, the Twelve and the Three
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Paul's Group: The churches 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Paul's Group: Fellow laborers, and Sons in the faith

A PASTOR'S FIRST STEP

As the presenters of the Change Workshops have traveled about and conversed with pastors and church leaders, they have noticed that many pastors mention that they are "getting together with their men." For some, this is a monthly breakfast; with others it is a weekly get-together. Some meetings are devotional; others involve the reading and discussing of a recent Christian book. Most all involve a time of sharing and prayer. This is awesome! This is a wonderful first step for many on the road to developing leaders.

² Allen Hadidian, [Helping Other Christians Grow](#), (1978 out of print).

³ By "discipleship" here we are speaking of what most Christians are familiar with as Christian discipleship. At BMW, we believe that discipleship often begins long before a person places saving faith in Jesus Christ.

To develop an emerging leader, God must first give you the raw material. You need a faithful and fervent man or couple that evidences some leadership giftedness. The truth is that initially many pastors or church leaders may not see any potential within the congregation. Give the matter some prayer, and then like a good pheasant hunter, start “kicking up the hedgerow.” The pastors who take the first step in coming alongside a group of men, building relationships, deepening their walk with Christ and involving them in basic ministry will often surface abilities in their men that no one had really seen before. And eventually an emerging leader will take wing (don’t take the analogy too far and shoot him!).

WHO IS MY TIMOTHY?

Many pastors have preached hundreds of messages to hundreds of people for dozens of years and yet have no “sons” in the ministry. Approaching retirement, they cannot point to several men and say, “There go some good men that I equipped for ministry and leadership.” New Testament leaders did not only have a ministry to the crowd – they mentored successors. Jesus had the Twelve, but primarily Peter, James and John. John had Gaius and Polycarp. Paul had Timothy and Titus. You may only have one or two in your lifetime. But who are they?

One of BMW’s Companion Churches gave itself a huge incentive to develop its leaders. The church went so far as to amend its Bylaws to state that, “All successive pastors of this church will be hired from within the congregation.” What if your church was to do that? What if you had to do it ... like most of BMW’s missionaries out on the mission field? Could you mentor someone to take your place?

Take a few minutes to again ponder the differences between discipleship and mentoring. How well are you performing as a leader who should be discipling and equipping saints for the work of ministry (Ephesians 4:11)? How well are you performing as a leader who should be reproducing himself in a new generation of emerging leaders (2 Timothy 2:2)? Who are your Timothy’s? Who might become one?

NAMES OF THOSE I HAVE DISCIPLED	NAMES OF THOSE I HAVE MENTORED
NAMES OF THOSE I COULD DISCIPLE	NAMES OF THOSE I COULD MENTOR

MENTORING BOOKS FOR CHRISTIANS

Biehl, B. (1997). *Mentoring: Confidence in Finding a Mentor and Becoming One*. Nashville: Broadman and Holman.
 Stanley, P.D. & Clinton, J.R. (1992). *Connecting: The Mentoring Relationships You Need to Succeed in Life*. Colorado Springs: NavPress.
 Hendricks, H.G. & W.D. (1995). *As Iron Sharpens Iron: Building Character in a Mentoring Relationship*. Chicago: Moody Press.

OTHER MENTORING BOOKS

Ambrose, L. (1998). *A Mentor’s Companion*. Chicago: Perrone-Ambrose Associates.
 Kram, K.E. (1988). *Mentoring at Work: Developing Relationships in Organizational Life*. Lanham, MD: University Press of America.
 Murray, M. (2001). *Beyond the Myths and Magic of Mentoring*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.
 Phillips-Jones, L. (2001). *The New Mentors & Protégés: How to Succeed With the New Mentoring Relationships*. Grass Valley.
 Shea, G.F. (1999). *Making the Most of Being Mentored: How to Grow From a Mentoring Partnership*. Menlo Park: Crisp Publications.
 Shea, G.F. (2002). *Mentoring: How to Develop Successful Mentor Behaviors*. Menlo Park: Crisp Publications.

WEBSITES:

De Pree Leadership Center. <http://www.depree.org/>
 Faith Centered Mentoring and More, an affiliate of The Mentoring Group. <http://www.faithmentoringandmore.com/>
 National Mentoring Partnership. Great resources on their main menu and “Find Resources” link. <http://www.mentoring.org/>
 The Mentoring Group, Linda Phillips-Jones organization in Grass Valley. <http://www.mentoringgroup.com/>
 Triple Creek Associates (2003). Great resource for Mentoring material [online]. Available www.3creek.com