

Christ Collective Church Discipleship Pathway

The purpose of discipleship is to equip people to be mature in the faith in Christ Jesus.

Defining Christian Maturity

Greek word is *teleios*: perfect, complete, mature

All of the following passages have this Greek word being used to describe what a mature Christian looks like.

Hebrews 5:12-6:2

- Mature believers should be able to be teachers to some degree. This implies a solid foundation of proper biblical interpretation in order to live on solid food and not milk, as the author seems to be saying.
- The author mentions elementary truths of God's word (v12). What are they? (seem to be mentioned in 6:1-2)
 - Doctrine of repentance from acts that lead to death
 - Doctrine of faith in God
 - Instruction about cleansing rites
 - Instruction about the laying on of hands
 - Doctrine of the resurrection of the dead
 - Doctrine of eternal judgment
 - Probably more that the author didn't mention
- Mature believers are able to distinguish between good and evil (v14)

James 1:4

- Trials of many kinds refine our faith, producing perseverance which adds to our faith what lacks. This perfects or matures us.

Colossians 4:12

- Prayer for others to stand firm in God's will and be mature and fully assured
 - Seems to be saying that maturity means knowing God's will and standing firm in it as well as being fully assured of it

Philippians 3:7-15

Verse 15 tells us who are mature to have the mindset that thinks in the following ways:

- Worldly accolades and accomplishments mean nothing to those who are mature? (v7)
- Understanding that true righteousness is not from works but from faith (v8-9)
- Desiring to know Christ and the power of his resurrection and participate in his sufferings, and become like him in his death (v10)
- Striving to attain to the resurrection (v11)
- Always pressing on in order to attain the prize of the upward call in Christ Jesus (v12-14)

Ephesians 4:12-16

- Being equipped for God's work (v12)
- Unity in the faith and knowledge of Christ (v13)
- Attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ? (v13)
- Not being led away by bad teaching (v14)
- Being able to speak the truth of the Gospel in love (v15)
- Knowing your part in the body and being effective at building up the body (v15)

1 Corinthians 14:20

- Understanding the purpose for tongues and when it is appropriate to use them is maturity

In summary, The mature Christian should understand God's will, and stand firm and assured in it. They must be able to understand basic doctrines of the faith and not be swayed by false or even cunning teachings. They should have a basic understanding of how to properly read/study and interpret Scripture. They should know their spiritual gifts and be effective, serving God and building up the body of Christ. They should strive for unity in the faith with others. They should understand who they are in Christ and that their old life with all its sins and boasts must be considered gone. They must pursue Christ, striving to attain to the resurrection. They must understand that Christians will suffer and trials of life will come. These are meant to give us perseverance and add to our faith what is lacking.

Discipleship Process

The discipleship process of bringing a person to spiritual maturity is done in 3 phases:

1. Phase 1: Mentorship
 - Usually for new believers, untrained, unequipped, needing guidance, etc.
 - In this phase the mentor takes on the role of a spiritual coach. The main purpose is to establish basic spiritual foundations in the life of the mentee. These include: daily reading of God's word, daily prayer, attending a weekly fellowship, beginning to learn how to share their faith with others, understanding their basic identity in Christ, etc.
 - The mentor should provide spiritual guidance and stability, counseling, emotional support, and most of all set an example of faith.
2. Phase 2: Equipping
 - When the mentor and mentee agree that the mentee is ready for phase 2, then that's when they will move to phase 2.
 - This phase is more scholastic than phase 1. The mentee will learn the basics of biblical interpretation, basic theologies, how to properly share their testimony as a witness account, how to share the Gospel, what their spiritual gifts are and how to use them.
3. Phase 3: Guided Exit Strategy

- This is the phase that ends discipleship. The purpose of this phase is to enable the mentee to move on into whatever ministry focus God has laid out for them.
- The mentee will be coached into their next ministry focus by the mentor. Since every believer has different gifts and talents, this means that every mentee in phase 3 will have a different pathway. It is up to the mentor to guide them along.

Note: the total discipleship process from phase 1 to phase 3 can take up to two years. (This assumes a once a week meet up)

Note 2: A mentee may skip certain aspects of the process if he or she shows proficiency or maturity in an area. For example, some believers do not need phase one mentorship and can move straight to phase 2 equipping (determined by the initial evaluation).

Phase 1 Guide: Mentorship

The mentor and mentee should establish a regular meeting schedule. Once a week is preferable, however this may need to be altered based on availability.

The first few meetings should be focused on 3 things:

1. Establishing the needs of the mentee
2. Building a relationship between the mentor and mentee (getting to know each other).
3. Determining the maturity level and the needs of the mentee

Once the maturity level and needs of the mentee are assessed, then the mentor should establish a pathway for the mentee. Remember, the goal is to bring them to a stable and mature enough place in their walk where they are ready for phase 2. At some point, they should memorize key verses (listed below).

- ☐ Is the mentee going through a time of healing?
- ☐ Is the mentee struggling in any habitual sin? (Porn, drugs, alcohol abuse, same sex attraction, excessive partying, any form of unmarried sex, etc.)
- ☐ Practicing habitual Daily bible reading
- ☐ Practicing habitual Daily prayer
- ☐ Can they articulate their faith well?
- ☐ Can they articulate the basic gospel message well?
- ☐ Do people in their life know they are Christian? (Co-workers, family, friends)
- ☐ Have they memorized these memory verses yet?
 - ☐ John 3:16
 - ☐ Hebrews 12:1-2
 - ☐ Romans 12:1-2
 - ☐ Matthew 28:19-20
 - ☐ Ephesians 2:8-10
 - ☐ 2 Corinthians 5:17

Phase 2 Guide: Equipping (8-12 months)

In phase 2, the mentee will be assigned a phase 2 equipper. This phase requires the mentee to be able to understand basic tenets of the Christian faith as well as being able to complete various assignments often given in the form of homework.

Just as with phase 1, phase 2 starts with an assessment of the mentee. After the initial assessment, the phase 2 discipler will determine what aspects of phase 2 are needed for the mentee. This phase requires a weekly meet up (in person is preferable)

- ☐ Basics of Biblical Interpretation (usually a 4-6 week course)
- ☐ Deeper and biblical understanding of prayer (2-3 weeks)
- ☐ Spiritual Gifts (3-4 weeks)
 - ☐ Theology of spiritual gifts (2 weeks)
 - ☐ Spiritual gifts test
 - ☐ Discussion with equipper regarding the test (1 week)
- ☐ Personal Testimony (2-4 weeks)
- ☐ Essential Theologies (6-10 weeks)
 - ☐ Soteriology
 - ☐ Eschatology
 - ☐ Spiritual Battle
 - ☐ Spiritual Gifts
 - ☐ Trinity
 - ☐ Spiritual Identity
- ☐ Evangelism

Phase 3: Exit Strategy

In this phase, the mentee and equipper will work to create a pathway for the mentee to follow post discipleship. The intention of this phase is to provide guidance for next steps. Often, discipleship classes or programs end and the disciplined believer is left alone to figure out their next steps. Phase 3 is meant to counter that and provide guidance until the mentee is confident enough in their next steps to be without guidance.

The next steps will be determined by:

- Maturity level
- Spiritual gifts
- Desire/calling
- Needs of mentee

For some mentees, a second or prolonged mentorship may be recommended.