



4.6 We are aware of our need for mentorship and our call to mentor others.

MENTORS - WHAT ARE THEY?

What comes to mind when you think about the idea of mentor? Do you think of a specific person, or a task? Does the idea of having a mentor make you feel nervous, excited, or nothing at all? Is this an important thing to consider? Maybe it would help if we created a descriptive list of words for a mentor.

Inviter
Guide
Teacher

Questioner
Supporter
Pray-er

Investor
Listener
Example

With-ness
Companion
Walk alongside

Q. As you look at this list, what effect could a person like this have if they were intentionally involved in your life?

Look at the list of descriptors again. Jesus was **all** of these things and more to those He led; we could say that one ultimate descriptor encapsulates this entire list is **CHRIST-IMITATOR**. Inasmuch as mentoring was an integral part of His relationship with His disciples, Jesus, God Incarnate, calls on them to follow His lead and example.

John 15:12-17 “This is my commandment, that **you love one another as I have loved you.** (13) Greater love has no one than this, that someone lay down his life for his friends. (14) You are my friends if you do what I command you. (15) No longer do I call you servants, for the servant does not know what his master is doing; but I have called you friends, for all that I have heard from my Father I have made known to you. (16) You did not choose me, but I chose you and appointed you that you should go and bear fruit and that your fruit should abide, so that whatever you ask the Father in my name, he may give it to you. (17) These things I command you, so that you will love one another.”

Paul continued this same kind of relationship with leaders in the churches he established and repeats a similar directive.

I Corinthians 11:1 You must follow my example, as I follow the example of Christ.

Philippians 4:9 You know the teachings I gave you, and you know what you heard me say and saw me do. So follow my example. And God, who gives peace, will be with you.

2 Thessalonians 3:7-9 For you yourselves know how **you ought to imitate us**, because we were not idle when we were with you, (8) nor did we eat anyone's bread without paying for it, but with toil and labor we worked night and day, that we might not be a burden to any of you. (9) It was not because we do not have that right, **but to give you in ourselves an example to imitate.**

We find many more specific examples of mentor-mentee relationships woven throughout the Old and New Testament: Moses mentoring Joshua, Elijah mentoring Elisha, Naomi mentoring Ruth, Mordecai mentoring Esther, and Paul mentoring Timothy. It is evident that mentoring has been part of God's plan for His people for a long time.

But what is our role today? What is the expectation for us?

We seem to face tremendous pressure to be spectators of Jesus. In Matt. 7:24 Jesus says, "Everyone then who hears these words of mine and acts on them will be like the wise man who build his house on the rock." Living faithfully, however, has never been a spectator sport. Jesus lovingly walked alongside men and women.

How do we best describe how this mentoring relationship might look or feel? One person describes it as a "with-ness," a complete attention to the other person combined with a commitment to be completely "with" the other.

Beyond routine, beyond the mere roles of functions we play, the Spirit calls us to be with people in a way that honors both God's purposes and our well-being. Testimonies of "coming-alongside-ness" are strewn throughout the Bible. (Recall the previous list of mentor-mentees.) The Christian faith is an imitative faith. We are called to do our part. (From "Walking Alongside Others," Mentoring Guide, VantagePoint3)

WALKING WITH OTHERS IS A DISCOVERY

Matthew 18:20 "For where two or three are gathered in my name, there am I among them."

When we respond to the Spirit's movement to walk with others, He is calling us to discover more of Him. Growing up, maturing, is a change for each of us, a change toward Christlikeness. You change and the other person changes too. God promises, when we do this together, He will be part of it. When we walk together, we discover more of Him.

COMMUNITY IS CENTRAL TO SPIRITUAL FORMATION IN CHRIST. (IT IS NOT AN INDIVIDUAL THING!) THE AIM OF GOD IN HISTORY IS THE CREATION OF AN ALL-INCLUSIVE COMMUNITY OF LOVING PERSONS, WITH HIMSELF INCLUDED IN THAT COMMUNITY AS ITS PRIME SUSTAINER AND MOST GLORIOUS INHABITANT.

- DALLAS WILLARD

When we walk together, we discover more about ourselves and each other.

Whether you are the mentor or mentee, a good mentoring relationship will invite you to change. As the mentor, you will grow as a mentor. How that looks will be very individual; you might become more comfortable as a coach or listener. You may pray for someone else more than you ever have before. You might learn the value of investing time and energy into another person.

As a mentee, you will learn from someone who may be further down life's road than you are. Maybe you will learn new things to do or try. Maybe you will learn what NOT to do or try, because of an honest mentor who shares mistakes they've made. Maybe you'll learn what an honest person really looks like.

CHANGE DOES NOT COME THROUGH INSPIRATION NOR INFORMATION, THOUGH BOTH ARE IMPORTANT. CHANGE COMES THROUGH ENGAGEMENT IN RELATIONSHIP.

- DALLAS WILLARD

Q. Has God brought anyone to mind as a mentor or mentee?

- **If so, pray for guidance regarding a mentoring relationship with them.**
- **If not, pray for a mentor.**

SUMMARY

Mentoring is an imitation of Christ, walking through life with another person led by the Holy Spirit, for a time to learn and grow. This will change both of you as you spend time with your loving God. This is not a complicated thing. This can be casual over coffee or tea. It might be at work or a child's little league game. No expertise is required. All that's needed is a heart to serve, a willingness to listen, and prayer.

LEADERSHIP CONNECTION QUESTION

Q. With this initial mentoring lesson in mind, why might having a mentor be important to your leadership?

RESOURCES FOR NEXT STEPS

- **Read**
A Mentoring Heart (Free eBook)
<https://mentor.vantagepoint3.org/a-mentoring-heart-ebook>
- **RightNow Media@Work**
High-impact Mentoring- the Waffle House Way (Career Mentoring)
<https://app.rightnowmedia.org/en/content/details/753653>
- **Website**
A Mentoring Way
<https://amentoringway.org/>