

A Biblical Basis for Mentoring

New Testament Passages Referring to Modeling

He appointed twelve—designating them apostles—that they might be with him and that he might send them out to preach. (Mark 3:14)

. . . but everyone who is fully trained will be like his teacher. (Luke 6:40b)

Therefore I urge you to imitate me. (1 Corinthians 4:16)

Follow my example, as I follow the example of Christ. (1 Corinthians 11:1)

Join with others in following my example, brothers, and take note of those who live according to the pattern we gave you. (Philippians 3:17)

Whatever you have learned or received or heard from me, or seen in me—put it into practice. And the God of peace will be with you. (Philippians 4:9)

Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly as you teach and admonish one another with all wisdom, and as you sing psalms, hymns and spiritual songs with gratitude in your hearts to God. (Colossians 3:16)

You became imitators of us and of the Lord; in spite of severe suffering, you welcomed the message with the joy given by the Holy Spirit. And so you became a model to all the believers in Macedonia and Achaia. The Lord's message rang out from you not only in Macedonia and Achaia—your faith in God has become known everywhere. Therefore we do not need to say anything about it. (1 Thessalonians 1:6-8)

We did this, not because we do not have the right to such help, but in order to make ourselves a model for you to follow. (2 Thessalonians 3:9)

Don't let anyone look down on you because you are young, but set an example for the believers in speech, in life, in love, in faith and in purity.
(1 Timothy 4:12)

You, however, know all about my teaching, my way of life, my purpose, faith, patience, love, endurance . . . (2 Timothy 3:10)

In everything set them an example by doing what is good. In your teaching show integrity, seriousness and soundness of speech that cannot be condemned, so that those who oppose you may be ashamed because they have nothing bad to say about us. (Titus 2:7-8)

Remember your leaders, who spoke the word of God to you. Consider the outcome of their way of life and imitate their faith. (Hebrews 13:7)

Not lording it over those entrusted to you, but being examples to the flock. (1 Peter 5:3)

Dear friend, do not imitate what is evil but what is good. Anyone who does what is good is from God. Anyone who does what is evil has not seen God.
(3 John 11)

Information taken from *As Iron Sharpens Iron*, by Howard & William Hendricks

MENTORING RELATIONSHIPS IN THE BIBLE

Mentoring was a way of life in Bible times. It was the primary means of handing down skills and wisdom from one generation to the next. So it's not surprising that Scripture gives us numerous examples of mentoring relationships. The list below shows some of the more prominent. By studying the passages indicated, you can learn a lot about the principles and practice of mentoring.

In the Old Testament

Jethro and Moses (Exodus 18)	Jethro taught his son-in-law the invaluable lesson of delegation.
Moses and Joshua (Deuteronomy 31:1-8; 34:9)	Moses prepared Joshua to lead Israel into Canaan.
Moses and Caleb (Numbers 13; 14:6-9; 34:16-19; Joshua 14:6-15)	It appears that Moses groomed Caleb for leadership, and inspired in him an unswerving faith in the Lord's promises.
Samuel and Saul (1 Samuel 9-15)	Samuel not only tapped Saul to become Israel's king, but tried to shape his character as well. Even when Saul rebelled against the Lord, Samuel kept challenging him to repent and return to God.
Samuel and David (1 Samuel 16; 19:18-24)	Samuel anointed David as king and gave him refuge from Saul's murderous plots.
Jonathan and David (1 Samuel 18:1-4; 19:1-7; 20:1-42)	An outstanding example of peer mentoring, Jonathan and David remained loyal to each other during the troubled days of Saul's declining reign.

Elijah and Elisha
(1 Kings 19:16-21; 2 Kings 2:1-16; 3:11)

The prophet Elijah recruited his successor Elisha and apparently tutored him in the ways of the Lord while Elisha ministered to Elijah's needs.

Jehoiada and Joash
(2 Chronicles 24:1-25)

The priest Jehoiada helped Joash—who came to the throne of Judah when he was only seven years old—learn to rule according to godly principles. Unfortunately, Joash turned away from the Lord after his mentor died.

In the New Testament

Barnabas and Saul/Paul
(Acts 4:36-37; 9:26-30; 11:22-30)

Barnabas opened the way for Saul to associate with the church after his dramatic Damascus Road conversion.

Barnabas and John Mark
(Acts 15:36-39; 2 Timothy 4:11)

Barnabas was willing to part company with Paul in order to work with John Mark. Later, Paul came around to Barnabas's point of view, describing John Mark as "useful to me for ministry." John Mark is believed to have been the primary author of the gospel of Mark.

Priscilla and Aquila and Apollos
(Acts 18:1-3, 24-28)

Tentmakers Priscilla and Aquila served as spiritual tutors to Apollos at Ephesus. As a result, Apollos became one of the early church's most powerful spokesmen for the gospel.

Paul and Timothy
(Acts 16:1-3; Philippians 2:19-23; 1 and 2 Timothy)

Paul invited Timothy to join him during one of Paul's missionary journeys. Timothy eventually became pastor of the dynamic church at Ephesus.

Paul and Titus
(2 Corinthians 7:6, 13-15; 8:17; Titus)

Paul, along with Barnabas, apparently won this Greek-speaking Gentile to the faith and recruited him as a traveling companion and coworker. Titus became a pastor and, according to tradition, the first bishop of the island of Crete.

What is a Mentor?

Mentoring is a relational process [in which a] mentor, who knows or has experienced something . . . transfers that something (resources of wisdom, information, experience, confidence, insight, relationships, status, etc.) to a mentoree, at an appropriate time and manner, so that it facilitates development or empowerment.

Paul Stanley and Robert Clinton (*Connecting*)

In modern-day terms, mentors are influential, experienced people who personally help you reach your major life goals. They have the power—through who or what they know—to promote your welfare.

Linda Phillips-Jones (*The New Mentors and Protégés*)

Defining mentoring is sort of tough, but describing it is pretty easy. It's like having an uncle that cares for you for a lifetime, and wants to see you do well. He's not your competitor; he's there to support you, not to compete with you or discourage you. He's not your critic as much as he is your cheerleader.

Bobb Biehl (1993 Promise Keepers workshop)

The mentor relationship is one of the most complex, and developmentally important, a man can have in early adulthood. The mentor is ordinarily several years older, a person of greater experience and seniority in the world the young man is entering. No word currently in use is adequate to convey the nature of the relationship we have in mind here. Words such as "counselor" or "guru" suggests the more subtle meanings, but they have other connotations that would be misleading. The term 'mentor' is generally used in a much narrower sense, to mean teacher, advisor or sponsor. As we use the term, it means all these things and more. . . .

Mentoring is not defined in terms of formal roles but in terms of the character of the relationship and the functions it serves. . . . We have to examine a relationship closely to discover the amount and kind of mentoring it provides.

Daniel Levinson (*Seasons of a Man's Life*)

For the Christian, "mentoring" has objectives in the real world that are beyond the stuff of legends. "Discipling" is a close synonym, with these differences: A discipler is one who helps an understudy (1) give up his own will for the will of God the Father, (2) live daily a life of spiritual sacrifice for the glory of Christ, and (3) strive to be consistently obedient to the commands of his Master. A mentor, on the other hand, provides modeling, close supervision on special projects, individualized help in many areas—discipline, encouragement, correction, confrontation, and a calling to accountability.

Ted Engstrom (*The Fine Art of Mentoring*)

Ten Marks of a Mentor

The ideal mentor is a person who . . .

1. Seems to have what you personally need.
2. Cultivates relationships.
3. Is willing to take a chance on you.
4. Is respected by other Christians.
5. Has a network of resources.
6. Is consulted by others.
7. Both talks and listens.
8. Is consistent in his lifestyle.
9. Is able to diagnose your needs.
10. Is concerned with your interests.

A. W. Tozer's Rules of Self-Discovery

The late A.W. Tozer, an eminent theologian who for years challenged and prodded the body of Christ to action, suggested seven areas that reveal our values and our true commitments:

1. What we want most.
2. What we think about most.
3. How we use our money.
4. What we do with our leisure time.
5. The company we enjoy.
6. Whom and what we admire.
7. What we laugh at.

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