

Session 5

How to Have a Discipling Conversation (Part 2)

Welcome and Prayer

Ask for a volunteer to open the session with prayer.

Sharing

Invite the group to share any insights, questions or revelations from the daily reflections from the prior week.

Introduction of Session Focus

This week we will look a little more closely at the first two steps of a discipling conversation, current reality and vision. The questions, “Where are you?” and “Where would you like to be?” are critically important if we are to help others move forward in their lives in meaningful and faithful ways.

Time in the Word

Scripture reading — Genesis 3:8-13

And they heard the sound of the LORD God walking in the garden in the cool of the day, and the man and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the LORD God among the trees of the garden. But the LORD God called to the man and said to him, “Where are you?” And he said, “I heard the sound of you in the garden, and I was afraid, because I was naked, and I hid myself.” He said, “Who told you that you were naked? Have you eaten of the tree of which I commanded you not to eat?” The man said, ‘The woman whom you gave to be with me, she gave me fruit of the tree, and I ate.’ Then the LORD God said to the woman, “What is this that you have done?” The woman said, “The serpent deceived me, and I ate.”

Large Group Discussion

1. Is it significant that God’s first words to Adam after the fall were, “Where are you?”

2. How might this inform our discipling conversations?

Watch the video: “How to Have a Discipling Conversation, Part 2) with Pastor David Keener.

<https://vimeo.com/showcase/9248204/video/673630031/embed>

3. What did you find most helpful or challenging in the video?

4. The first step in having a discipling conversation is trying to understand where the person is currently in regard to the topic being discussed. What are some questions might we ask to help clarify someone's current reality?

5. The second step is helping the person figure out where they want to be (vision). What is the danger in assuming we already know where the person wants to be? What are some questions we might ask to help someone clarify their vision?

Breakout sessions

Gather in groups of two or three to read and discuss the following Scriptures.

Scripture reading — Ecclesiastes 3:1, 4-7

For everything there is a season, and a time for every matter under heaven:
a time to weep, and a time to laugh;
a time to mourn, and a time to dance;
a time to cast away stones, and a time to gather stones together;
a time to embrace, and a time to refrain from embracing;
a time to seek, and a time to lose;
a time to keep, and a time to cast away;
a time to tear, and a time to sew;
a time to keep silence, and a time to speak;

Two pitfalls in discipling conversations can be either speaking too soon and cutting off conversation or not speaking when a conversation becomes confused or unfocused.

6. How astute are you at discerning when to speak and when to listen?

7. What might be some techniques for avoiding these two pitfalls?

8. What are some questions we might ask to refocus a drifting conversation?

Scripture reading — Proverbs 29:18 KJV

“Where there is no vision, the people perish.”

9. Why is it important to have a clear vision of where you want to be?

10. What are some questions we could ask to help someone clarify their vision?

Practice Session

Over the next few weeks we will be practicing how to have discipling conversations. Assign one member of your group to play the part of a discipleship guide and another to be the one guided. Using the Discipleship Conversation Model work through the scenario below. This will be a new experience for many and may be uncomfortable at first. Keeping this in mind, remember that as Christ followers we are to speak the truth in love. Our evaluations of the practice sessions should be helpful and encouraging not critical or unkind.

If time allows after the discussion switch roles and repeat the scenario.

Remember

- a. A discipleship guide is not a counselor or mentor. The goal in the conversation is to help the other person discover their own solutions.
- b. Part of the discipleship guide’s task is to help others see where God is already walking and working in their lives.
- c. In real life situations there will be no time constraints on the flow of your faith conversations. For this practice sessions focus on the current reality and vision steps of the discipling conversation model.

Where are you now? (Current Reality)

Where do you want to be? (Vision)

Does your vision reflect your beliefs, values and priorities? (Alignment)

How do you plan to accomplish your vision? (Action Plan)

What resources will you need?

How can I hold you accountable?

Scenario

You are talking to a fellow parishioner and they tell you that they just don't seem to be getting much out of church lately and they are feeling spiritually dry.

After about 10 minutes stop and discuss:

1. What went well in the conversation?
2. What might have been done differently?
3. How well did the guide do helping the other to clarify their current reality and vision?
4. How well did the conversation move through the various stages of a discipling conversation?

Large group wrap-up

Remind participants to do the daily devotions and encourage them to journal their insights and questions.

Next week: "How to Have a Discipling Conversation — Part 3"

Close in prayer.

Helpful Resources

The Lost Art of Listening: How Learning to Listen Can Improve Relationships by Michael P. Nichols

You're Not Listening: What You're Missing and Why It Matters by Kate Murphy

Devotions: Week Five

Weekday 1

Scripture reading — Romans 12:2

Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that by testing you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect.

Focus Questions

Record your thoughts from prayer and reflection.

1. Read through the Scripture a second time and highlight the word or phrase that stands out for you.

2. What is going on in your life that connects with that word or phrase?

3. As you contemplate my current reality in what ways are you conforming to the world?

4. In what areas of your life do you sense God transforming your mind?

5. Have I been open or resistant to God's transformation?

6. Where is the Holy Spirit inviting you to respond this week?

Daily Journal

Record your thoughts from prayer and reflection.

What has caused you to think deeper?

Weekday 2

Scripture reading — Proverbs 2:1-5

My son, if you receive my words and treasure up my commandments with you, making your ear attentive to wisdom and inclining your heart to understanding; yes, if you call out for insight and raise your voice for understanding, if you seek it like silver and search for it as for hidden treasures, then you will understand the fear of the LORD and find the knowledge of God.

Focus Questions

Record your thoughts from prayer and reflection.

1. Read through the Scripture a second time and highlight the word or phrase that stands out for you.
2. What is going on in your life that connects with that word or phrase?
3. How “attentive” is your ear in seeking God’s wisdom?”
4. What does “inclining your heart to understanding” mean to you?
5. The writer says that seeking insight and understanding is like searching for hidden treasure. What hidden treasures have been uncovered in your study of God’s Word this week?
6. Where is the Holy Spirit inviting you to respond this week?

Daily Journal

Record your thoughts from prayer and reflection.

What have you thought about today in this focus area that you are longing for?

Weekday 3

Scripture reading — Philippians 1:6-12

And I am sure of this, that he who began a good work in you will bring it to completion at the day of Jesus Christ. It is right for me to feel this way about you all, because I hold you in my heart, for you are all partakers with me of grace, both in my imprisonment and in the defense and confirmation of the Gospel. For God is my witness, how I yearn for you all with the affection of Christ Jesus. And it is my prayer that your love may abound more and more, with knowledge and all discernment, so that you may approve what is excellent, and so be pure and blameless for the day of Christ, filled with the fruit of righteousness that comes through Jesus Christ, to the glory and praise of God.

Focus Questions

Record your thoughts from prayer and reflection.

1. Read through the Scripture a second time and highlight the word or phrase that stands out for you.

2. What is going on in your life that connects with that word or phrase?

3. What can this Scripture teach me about how I should enter into faith conversations with others?

4. Where is the Holy Spirit inviting you to respond this week?

Daily Journal

Record your thoughts from prayer and reflection.

What small specific step and active response can you take in the direction God's Word is leading you?

Weekday 4

Scripture reading — Jeremiah 29:11-12

For I know the plans I have for you, declares the LORD, plans for welfare and not for evil, to give you a future and a hope. Then you will call upon me and come and pray to me, and I will hear you.

Focus Questions

Record your thoughts from prayer and reflection.

1. Read through the Scripture a second time and highlight the word or phrase that stands out for you.
2. What is going on in your life that connects with that word or phrase?
3. Take a few moments to meditate and pray about the plans God may have for you and what gives you hope for the future.
4. Where is the Holy Spirit inviting you to respond this week?

Daily Journal

Record your thoughts from prayer and reflection.

How does this passage focus my attention first on Jesus, second on my identity “in Christ,” and third on my participation in the Body of Christ?

How is this passage moving me beyond myself to take a specific small step in the direction of serving my family, church, or neighbor?

Weekday 5

Scripture reading — Ephesians 3:14-21

For this reason I bow my knees before the Father, from whom every family in heaven and on earth is named, that according to the riches of his glory he may grant you to be strengthened with power through his Spirit in your inner being, so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith—that you, being rooted and grounded in love, may have strength to comprehend with all the saints what is the breadth and length and height and depth, and to know the love of Christ that surpasses knowledge, that you may be filled with all the fullness of God.

Now to him who is able to do far more abundantly than all that we ask or think, according to the power at work within us, to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, forever and ever. Amen.

Focus Questions

Record your thoughts from prayer and reflection.

1. Read through the Scripture a second time and highlight the word or phrase that stands out for you.

2. What is going on in your life that connects with that word or phrase?

3. In this prayer the Apostle Paul prays for spiritual strength. Guided by this prayer take a few moments to meditate on the areas of your faith life that need strengthened.

4. Where is the Holy Spirit inviting you to respond this week?

Daily Journal

Record your thoughts from prayer and reflection.

Reflecting on the Scriptures this week, what theme do you see developing?

Review any action steps you have felt led to take. If you haven't made an action step yet, try doing it today.

Begin to write a one or two sentence statement for this week's focus area. Try to have it reflect what the verses this week have taught you about who Christ Jesus is, and his invitation to follow him in this area of life.

Saturday (before worship...preparing)

Saturdays are a day of preparation as we contemplate the coming Sabbath. Look back over the week, consider such questions as:

1. What sins will I lay before the Lord in my confession?
2. What prayers will I lift up?
3. What questions will I be seeking the answers to?
4. What burdens do I need to lay down in order to be fully open to the movement of the Holy Spirit?
5. Who might I invite to journey with me?

Sunday (after worship...pondering)

Sundays are devoted to worship and reflection. We gather together as the Body of Christ to lift our praises to God and receive what only he can give us. Later, reflect on such questions as:

1. What point of the sermon or Sunday School lesson most caught my attention? What exactly touched my heart?

2. Which song, hymn or portion of liturgy most became a prayer or conversation with God?

3. How will making my confession and hearing the absolution affect how I live this week?

4. What strength or comfort did I receive as I participated in worship today?

5. What was the gospel message I heard today and who did I share it with?

6. Who did I speak with that I can remember in prayer this week?