

One to One/Iron Sharpens Iron.

Answers.

These answers are provided to help lead partners in the discipling process using One to One and Iron Sharpens Iron. Although the approach of both is slightly different (mostly in the introductory paragraphs), the questions are almost exactly the same.

WORSHIP

We are made for worship and we all worship something or someone. True worship is our response to God in every part of our lives and stems from our understanding of who God is and what he has done for us. God has brought us together with him through faith in Christ, but he has also brought us together with other believers and so it is the most natural thing for us to meet with other Christians and worship God together. Those who worship and follow Christ do so in fellowship together.

Read Hebrews 10v19-25

1 The writer to the Hebrews begins with a reference to the confidence we have in drawing near to God in worship (v19). Tell your story of the way God has worked in your life.

This is an opportunity to listen and to share experiences of God's working in both of your lives. The writer in Hebrews is building confidence through what they know of the gospel. Take some time to ponder what it took for us to be able to draw near to God. This will help you to assess how deep is your study partner's grasp of the core of the gospel. You may have to do a little bit of digging to make sure you're clear on the Temple talk in these verses. (gotquestions.org is a good source in almost all cases.)

2 God has brought us to himself and together through the cross of Christ. This is called the atonement. Talk about your own understanding of the cross and what it means to you. (v19-22)

Our culture is often very individualistic. This question is framed to remind us of the connection between someone's individual experience of salvation and what that means corporately. The cross is not simply where sin is forgiven, but where sinners are brought together, made one in Christ.

3 What is the difference between assurance and over-confidence? (v22)

Assurance is a humble resting upon God's word and the promises of what Christ has done for us. Over-confidence is a careless approach that is unworthy of the Lord. In this we want to emphasise the ongoing application of God's word. Notice that the writer of Hebrews encourages the believers to hold onto – not what they feel – but what they know with confidence.

4 Why do you think verses 23-25 link faithfulness with meeting together?

The Christian life is never to be a Lone Ranger experience. God has placed us in the family of his people for good reasons. A lack of commitment to meeting together often betrays a careless faithlessness and lack of concern for other believers. We need one another. And it pleases the Lord when we prove ourselves faithful because it displays who we are. (1 Corinthians 12v13)

5 Is there anything new that has struck you from Hebrews 10 that you would want to note and to apply to your life?

Don't be afraid of a silence!

What are your main goals for this course?

Pray. (If you have never done this before then read a verse of Scripture or a verse of hymn).

Do note the goals and relate back to them during the weeks ahead. Do encourage prayer even if it seems awkward at first. This will prove a blessing.

THE BIBLE

Christ is our leader. Following Christ is directly related to the Bible and it is through his word (that Christ gave through his apostles John 14v26) that we come to know him. The Old Testament anticipates Jesus Christ, the Gospels record him, the Acts of the Apostles proclaim him, the epistles explain him, and the last book of the Bible - Revelation - promises his return. Following Jesus as Lord of our lives means being serious about believing and applying his word.

Read 2 Timothy 3v10-17

1 The Bible contains a prompt to action (v10) - and sometimes at great cost. What might it mean for you to be submitted to God's word. What challenges may you face?

Paul wrote this epistle from prison in Rome to a place (Ephesus) that was full of idolatry. His instructions to his son in the Lord Timothy are borne out of his own testimony. Take some time to talk about the challenges Christians face and what God does through them.

2 Paul talks about Scripture as being 'God-breathed'. What do you think this means?

God breathed life into Adam (Gen 2v7) and the idea of the breath or *Ruach Adonai* (wind, breath, Spirit of God) is a powerful theme in the Old Testament. It speaks of God's life giving and his working in power by his Spirit. God's breathed out word is therefore life-giving and powerful. (2 Peter 1v21)

3 What evidence is there that the Bible is God-breathed?

The Bible was written over 1500 years with over 40 authors, on three different continents, but with a unified theme that surrounds the person of Christ. It records prophecies that have been fulfilled – particularly about Jesus – and some that await fulfilment. Its writers are not fantasists but convey an integrity (even recording their own failures Psalm 51) in what they write. There is also more subjective evidence and that is of lives changed by God's word. (Mark 13v31)

4 Think of people who have been good examples of the 'Bible lived out' in your life. What was it about them that made an impact on you?

This is a good learning point for both of you.

5 Read v17 again. What are your gifts? And what steps might you need to take to be better equipped for serving Jesus?

1 Peter 4v10-11 would be a good reference text on this. Do emphasise that what we do – is for the glory of God. There is a joy in serving Jesus in a holy self-forgetfulness that will keep us stable and bless his church.

Return to your goals. How are you progressing?

Pray together. (Remember - a verse of the Bible/hymn if you're nervous!)

(Wayne Grudem's book of Christian Doctrines is a great summary of teaching and could help you go a little deeper.)

PRAYER

Read Luke 11v1-4

We may imagine that this request (Luke 11 “teach us to pray”) coming from one of the disciples was prompted by witnessing the intimacy that Jesus enjoyed with his Father. Jesus has opened the way for all who believe in him to enjoy intimacy in prayer with God. Prayer is a mystery, but it is also an incredible gift opened for us at an astonishing cost. (Hebrews 9; 1 Timothy 2v5)

1 Why do you think Jesus began with: ‘Our Father, hallowed be your name’?

Before we ever get to our *shopping list* of prayer requests it is vital to take time to recognise and to worship God. This is why Jesus begins where he does. Jesus is God the Son, truly God and truly man, and so it is perfectly appropriate – although he is co-equal to the Father – for Jesus – as a man – to pray. (Hallow is to honour as holy.)

2 Talk about what patterns of prayer you have and any different ideas that might help. (Are you a morning person? Or a night owl?)

The plan here is to prompt your study partner to think about healthy patterns of prayer (and Bible reading.) Sharing your own approach might help, but everyone is different.

3 Some people use the acronym ACTS (Adoration, Confession, Thanksgiving, Supplication) in prayer. Why might something like this help us?

I personally find this acronym a good model to follow because it reminds me of Jesus’ priority in the Lord’s prayer, it reminds me of my sinfulness and the need to recognise and confess this, also to be grateful for what I have been given in my salvation and in life generally, and to ask for good things for others and myself. (Matthew 6v5-6 – how we pray matters too!)

4 God is interested in the great things of our lives ‘your kingdom come’ and in the detail ‘our daily bread’. What’s impacting you just now?

“What a friend we have in Jesus, all our sins and griefs to bear. What a privilege to carry, everything to God in prayer.”

5 For some people, their view of their ‘Heavenly Father’ is shaped by their ‘earthly father’. Is this true for you? And how does this affect your view of God/prayer?

This is a very personal question and is to be approached sensitively. It is an important question, but it may not be the right moment. Another approach might be a more general one like ‘What influences shape your view of prayer?’

Note: the normative pattern of prayer is in the Spirit, through Christ, to the Father. But it is okay to address Jesus or the Holy Spirit. (John 16v23-24, Hebrews 4v14, 16)

How are the ‘goals’ doing?

Pray about your goals and the ‘great things’ and ‘details’ that concern you just now.

The Church

Read 1 Corinthians 12

Following Jesus is something that happens in the fellowship of his people which is why metaphors used to describe the church emphasise unity: the body, the bride, the building, the flock etc. Because God is a community of persons, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, he replicates that pattern of community in the church that the Holy Spirit brings to be. In the same sweep of salvation that brings us to God we are also made part of the one true church by faith in Jesus.

1. What are we communicating when we meet in Jesus’ name? (v13)
There is so much that could be said in response to this question, but in this passage we find that it is not just what we do through the gifts God gives, but what we are together as a body of his people that is key. There is also the recognition that this comes from the presence and work of the Holy Spirit in us.
2. What was amazing about the church then – and is amazing now?
There are many amazing things about the church we could mention, but when we think about the cultural setting of the NT church, the egalitarianism (equality) in the unity and in the use of gifts is striking. Their culture would have been top down and class-ridden. The church is not to be like that.
3. Why is it important for us to actually be there together? (14-26)
When we fail to participate in church life, we rob others of what God has given us to bless the whole. It is also a signal of disobedience or a lack of understanding of God’s calling to us to be part of and participate to God’s glory. The surreal language Paul uses emphasises this v17!
4. What gifts do you have that would build up the church?
This is a good opportunity for some discussion. God gives gifts to all his people, but sometimes we need to tease those out! (1 Cor 12v4-6, 1 Peter 4v10-11). If the question of charismatic gifts pops up, then I’d suggest that this is a discussion for another day as there are a variety of

views on this. You could refer to the pastors if that helps. We are not running away from this question but simply recognising that that we are dealing with the significant basics here.

5. Why does Jesus love his church so much? (Ephesians 5v22-33)

Jesus loves the church because she is his betrothed! In a Jewish first century context an engaged couple were considered to be in a binding contract even before their actual marriage. So it is with Christ and his bride the church. (See Revelation 19v6-6.)

6. How do you think what we are together can speak to our world?

A healthily functioning body of believers together is a powerful evangelistic tool. It might be good to make the point that sometimes the beauty of the church is seen when we get things wrong yet show compassion and humility.

How are your goals going?

Think about how you could play your part in church life.

SMALL GROUPS

Read Acts 2v42-47

It is encouraging to be part of a large gathering of God's people and to join in praise and to listen to the Bible being preached but this is only part of a rounded experience of what it means to be a disciple. Growth Groups meet so that we can pray, study and support each other; this is what we see in the Acts 2 passage. Being part of a small church group is important.

1 What is the importance of the link between the 'apostles' teaching' and 'fellowship'?

What unites us in Jesus who is the focus on apostolic teaching. (Hebrews 12v1-3)

2 Why do you think God so blessed and prospered the Acts 2 church?

Wherever God is at work he replicates something of his triune nature in community. Just as we are brought together with God by means of the atonement, in that same sweep of atonement we are brought together into the family of God. God saw the evidence of his work in the Acts church – and blessed them. (Ephesians 4v11-13)

3 What evidence is there of real sacrificial commitment here? (v45)

Generosity.

4 What may we bring to – and receive from - a Growth Group?

This question is framed to prompt thoughts about what we give before that which we receive. I'm sure you'll have your own perspective on this, but a scan of the Acts 2 passage will give you a lot of the answers.

5 Why might Growth Groups be good places to grow as Christians?

We quite deliberately provide notes on Sunday sermons to use at our GGs where we have experienced leaders who can help us apply what has been taught from the Bible on a Sunday morning and speak out of their own experience – and we can listen and learn from the experiences of others. We can also learn to pray in a group and a lot of other things. Learning to *do life* together in Christ is precious.

6 Are there any *blockages* to your participation that you might want to work through?

This question is framed to tease out and fears or misconceptions people may have. Coming to faith in Jesus can seem like a strange new world for the new believer.

Pray about your 'goals'. Are you encouraged? Discouraged?

Over the next few weeks think about what you might bring to a Growth Group.

DISCERNMENT

Read Romans 12

How can we know God's will for us? In Romans 12 we are told that we are to give ourselves in a sacrificial way to the worship of God and it is a reminder to us that worship is not just what happens on a Sunday morning - but is a whole-life response. It also says that we ought to be those whose minds are being renewed, those who think in a different way, Christ's way, shaped not by the prevailing trends of a culture, but primarily by Scripture.

Talk through the following means by which we come to understand God's will for our lives.

God leads us:

1 In submission to Jesus as Lord. Are we being obedient? (1 John 5v2-3)

There is that honest question to be asked: are we submissive to Christ – which – for the Christian means being open to the shaping influence of the Bible. The biblical principle of submission is not one of forced yielding, but of a glad and joyful following of Christ.

2 As we apply his word. What helps do you use in reading your Bible?

Scripture Union notes or the like can be helpful. We have a *10 of Those* link on our website and searching under *devotional* will show the range of helps available.

3 Through prayerful dependence. Why is it important to commit ourselves to God in prayer?

Prayer is the measure of our dependence upon the Lord. If we only pray when facing challenges we have not understood the importance or value of prayer. A Christian's Daily Prayer by Sovereign Grace (access on YouTube) is a good song to listen to get a feel for the prayer filled life.

4 By the Holy Spirit. How does the Holy Spirit lead us? (Romans 8v14; John 14v17)

These verses teach us about the active presence of the Holy Spirit. We need to be careful not to fall into an unhealthy subjectivism, a 'God has told me so don't question me' mode of living which can become dangerous. The Holy Spirit leads us primarily by the word he has inspired. We commit our way to the Lord and acknowledge the Spirit's leading in all the circumstances of life.

5 Through the help of church leaders/pastors. Have you spoken to them?

God has given us church leaders to help and to guide. It is a good and healthy thing to bring one's pastors into the conversation about discernment.

6 Through other Christians. How can you work on developing, or deepening trusted and godly friendships?

This is an important aspect of the Christian life for both married and single people. Develop friendships with people who are not scared to tell you the truth! And be a friend to them.

7 Through circumstances. What do your circumstances communicate about God's will? (Colossians 3v17)

Sometimes we like to imagine ourselves doing something else somewhere else. But there is a godly humility in looking at our present circumstances as being God's sovereign plan for us just now. From that healthy base we can begin to look to the future in faith.

Goals? What progress have you made?

Are you reading any good Christian books? It doesn't take long to read one chapter a day. (10 of Those; Christian Focus; and The Good Book Company are good websites to visit)

SERVICE

A sense of vocation is something that is fast disappearing in our culture, but every believer has been given a call to serve and has a responsibility to explore what their calling or vocation will be. It really doesn't matter what form our service takes, what does matter is the way in which we view it and engage in it. What an incredible example Jesus gives to us in the following passage.

Read John 13v1-17

1 Our culture puts the emphasis upon *self*. Do you sometimes find this tendency in you? Matthew 16v24,25, will be a good reading to refer to.

2 How does Christ's example in John 13 affect you?

What Jesus does for his disciples here was no stunt, it was a necessary action in the context of pride on the part of the disciples. Foot washing was a necessary act in a day when the roads would be particularly unhygienic. It would have been the task of a servant or a junior member of a family to do this. Jesus' act undermines the pride of the disciples and sets an example of service.

3 How was Jesus going to serve them further? (v7) What shape should our service be?

Jesus was about to go to the cross. This would be his greater act of service. He calls us to take up the basin and towel and to serve one another in like manner.

4 How do you deal with criticism or opposition in service?

This is an important question to pose to new and growing believers. The question is framed to pre-empt problems in this area. Romans 12v1 is a good verse to reflect upon in the light of all that Christ has done for us.

5 Can you think of some good examples of Christian service?

The best of Christian service is done with selflessness, and a focus upon the Lord. If we do things to be seen, or for what it gives us (although we may derive great pleasure in what we do!) we are not serving in a Christ-like way. 1 Peter 4v10-11 is a helpful guide in this.

6 What task is there - perhaps seemingly menial, perhaps not - that you could do for the Lord?

This is an opportunity to tease out areas of gifting and opportunities to serve. Suggest taking time to pray and talk with the pastors, elders or a team member.

How are the 'goals' coming along?

What steps in service will you determine to take?

GIVING

Ask most pastors what they *least* like to talk about and most would put giving near the top of the list. We are hugely sensitive to the criticism of being too interested in money and yet the Lord Jesus taught that our attitude to money is indicative of the condition of our hearts, as he said: "Where your treasure is, there will your heart be also." (Matthew 6v21). People in the OT were obliged to tithe (a tenth of their income) and more and many Christians today use this as a guide to their giving.

Read Mark 10v17-31

1 What did Jesus put his finger on in this story?

In many ways this young man was impressive, and clearly Jesus loved him v21. But for all his law keeping he had a blind spot, and that was in the area of possessions.

2 Why does this man hold back? Can you relate to this?

The reality that Jesus exposes is that this young man was really possessed by his possessions. Maybe a diagnostic question like 'What would you find most difficult to give up?' might help.

3 What should spark our giving? (Colossians 3v17)

The grace that we have been shown in Christ is the wellspring of healthy service. Gratefulness for all that we have in Christ should be our motive force.

4. What should the shape of our giving look like? (1 Corinthians 16v1-2)

The Apostle Paul teaches here that giving should be regular, proportionate to our income and regular.

5. What was a feature of the giving of the Macedonians? (2 Corinthians 8v1-3).

The giving of the Macedonian believers was generous and sacrificial. A good test of our giving is to ask how much what I give affects me.

6. How does your giving compare with the above?

This is quite a personal question. In retrospect if I was writing this again, I'd change it to 'How does our giving compare with the above?' Do remember we are not talking sums here, but the pattern of giving mentioned in the earlier references.

Is your giving to God's work realistic? Need to pray/think about this?

How are your goals progressing?

WITNESSING

Read Matthew 28v16-20

Jesus' command (Matt 28) is not to press for decisions - but to make disciples and it is by lip and by life that we declare Christ. Both aspects of witness are important, but it's not enough to say we'll let our lives speak; we have not been faithful in sharing Christ until we have spoken to others about him. Our culture is one in which we are asked to accept that everyone's message is equally valid, however our authority is not our culture - but Christ (v18) and he said, "I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me." (John 14v6). Love tells the truth.

1 How do you react to the idea of sharing your faith in Christ?

You may want to talk about your own experiences of sharing Christ. What challenges? Helps? Answers to prayer have you known?

2 Are you confident in the *core* truths of the Gospel? Can you articulate that clearly and naturally?

You may want to go back to the beginning to the 'What stage are you at?' part. Encouraging your study partner to get the core -life, death and resurrection of Jesus - clear will be helpful. Also committing to memory verses that would be helpful to deploy.

3 How would you respond to someone who said that John 14v6 was narrow minded?

The Bible is clear about the uniqueness and exclusivity of Jesus and this verse shows this (See also John 1v1-5, and Hebrews 1v1-5). That there are many different forms of religion all saying different things, does not mean that one of them cannot be correct.

4 What is there in your life that might be a block to people seeing Jesus in you? Is dealing with this one of your goals? Should it be?

This question is a sensitive one and may involve a bit of self-reflection. Reassure your study partner that we have the presence and power of the Holy Spirit to help us overcome. It might be good to ask this question and come back to it next time?

5 Just now - practice speaking about how you became a Christian and what it means to you to be a disciple of Jesus Christ. Hone it down to one minute - it *can* be done!

This is a good exercise, but it must be natural, true and not forced. It will also build confidence.

Ask God to provide an opportunity for you to share your faith with someone this week.

Are you progressing on the 'goals'? Be encouraged.

HOLINESS

The truth we hold must be held lovingly and with integrity. A life that is truly lived for God will be attractive to some and not to others, we must be ready for that. In the Old Testament there were items that were set apart for the worship of God. In a similar way Christians are set apart, sanctified (means set apart) for that purpose too. Our lives are no longer to be lived for self - but to please our holy and loving God. Sanctification is the process by which the Holy Spirit makes us more like Jesus.

Note: Zechariah – the father of John the Baptist – praised God that Messiah would enable those who believe to “serve him without fear, in holiness and righteousness before him all our days.” (Luke 1v74) In Christ we are made holy, that is set apart for his glory. But we are also to be holy, Paul said: “put off

your old self, which belongs to your former manner of life and is corrupt through deceitful desires, and to be renewed in the spirit of your minds, and to put on the new self, created after the likeness of God in true righteousness and holiness.” Ephesians 4v22-24

Read 1 Thessalonians 4v1-8

1 How does Paul’s teaching here differ from the general worldview today?

It reveals a whole different view of life, not just being good for good’s sake, but holy for God’s sake because he is the focus of our love. It is only the truly regenerate person who can grasp this.

2 Can you say - hand on heart - that you are living to please God?

This question is not intended to induce guilt, but to stimulate thinking about how well orientated our lives are towards God. Would – for instance – living to please God be part of your thinking about a new job, or promotion, or any other kind of life change?

3 What helps has God given us to live in holiness? (1 Corinthians 10v13)

“No temptation has overtaken you that is not common to man. God is faithful, and he will not let you be tempted beyond your ability, but with the temptation he will also provide the way of escape, that you may be able to endure it.”

4 The stats on men (and women) watching porn are scary - is this a problem for you?

This is an awkward question, and there are different ways to approach this, but it would not be included was it not necessary. The access to and use of pornography is a very real issue today.

5 What are your challenges to holiness?

We need to keep preaching the gospel to ourselves in order to keep our focus. Read 1 Peter 1v13-16 together.

6 What are the benefits of holiness?

It is when we seek to please God that we experience more of his presence and peace. And others see Christ in us!

How are the ‘goals’ coming along?

Take a moment of quietness to reflect on areas of your life that need to change and then pray that God would empower you to do so.

REVIEW MEETING

We hope you have enjoyed and benefitted from these studies. But discipleship doesn't end here. In fact - it doesn't end until we see Christ face to face! So keep on moving forward! These are the themes we have studied:

- 1 Worship.
- 2 The Bible.
- 3 Prayer.
- 4 Church
- 5 Small groups.
- 6 Discernment.
- 7 Service.
- 8 Giving.
- 9 Witnessing.
- 10 Holiness.

- Which of the above themes have made the biggest impact?
- Which themes need further attention?
- What are your forward goals for growth in Christ?

It is a great thing to have someone come alongside us for part of the journey. But we need to remember that - although we are helped along the way by other Christians - that it is Christ we follow. Be encouraged as you read these words from Hebrews 12:

“Therefore, since we are surrounded by such a great cloud of witnesses, let us throw off everything that hinders and the sin that so easily entangles, and let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us. Let us fix our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy set before him endured the cross, scorning its shame, and sat down at the right hand of the throne of God. Consider him who endured such opposition from sinful men, so that you will not grow weary and lose heart.”

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