

BEING A CARING FRIEND TO A NEW BELIEVER

Every new believer in Jesus Christ needs a caring **Friend** who will encourage and exhort them in their faith. Lord willing, this will be the outcome of your personal outreach - someone will trust in Christ through your influence and your on-going friendship will encourage them to walk with Jesus.

While most of our discipleship will take place in the context of a Community Group, the role of the Friend is a crucial one, particularly in the beginning stage of their faith. The Friend will connect with them regularly and utilize initial discipleship resources to help them grow. They need to belong to a Community Group to build them up in their faith and bring them into new relationships. They also need to begin serving.

Your role as a Friend is an extremely significant ministry. You will be working alongside the Spirit of God and your church in getting a new believer started on the journey of faith. Be careful to understand their life situation. Remember they have spiritual needs like a new-born, and an old nature that will be resistant. They have the Holy Spirit in them, creating spiritual desire and love for God, and an enemy who will try to stop them.

As for you, remember that every calling of God requires active faith and humility, that recognizes we are completely dependent upon the grace and truth of God. (John 15:5). We can only pass along to others what we have learned and applied (2Tim.2:1-7). Teach them how you follow.

It is our mandate to utilize personal relationships that exist in the church body in our mission of making disciples of Jesus Christ. For those who come to Christ without this Friend available, we will seek to provide someone suitable of the same gender to take on the role of the Friend.

COMMUNICATE - CARE - CONNECT

God's desire is that we make disciples who in Christ will become the person God created them to be. Our goal is not to merely put new believers through a process, but to teach, encourage and model what it means to be a follower of Jesus Christ. The Friend role is based on three key components that should personalize initial discipleship: Communicate - Care - Connect.

The Friend is to **COMMUNICATE**, by teaching, sharing, discussion, and giving direction. Early on we want new believers to know that making disciples, teaching them to know Jesus and to follow and serve Him, is what we are all about. Truth is key, but applying what we learn and submitting our life to Christ is what we exist for.

Look for a growing hunger for the Word of God in a new believer. Some people are academic by nature, so reading and study will appeal to them. Others are less inclined and may be resistant. For them you may have to rely more on verbal instruction, showing them where to read in the Bible and perhaps reading with them. Remember Jesus' method - show them - do it with them - let them do it. When you meet, allow ample time for listening to them, plus discussing their questions.

The Friend is to **CARE**, by encouraging, loving and shepherding them. A weekly 1-on-1 meeting is ideal. This will not be easy for some but aim for it. Be flexible. There is also a great need for the Friend to regularly connect with the new believer. A new believer needs someone to encourage them often, even if for only a few minutes. Be creative in showing them the love of God. Use the phone, internet, Sunday worship, the Café, going for coffee, or invite them to your home. Their enemy will do all he can to discourage them, so one of our best weapons is to **pray** daily for them.

The Friend is to **CONNECT** them to the Lord, to new friends, church leaders, church events, ministry team etc. In other words connect them to some key relationships that will help them in their walk with Christ. Don't rush it if they are introverted, but seek to draw them out. Make it a goal to introduce them to someone new each Sunday. When you have them over or go out, invite some others. Help them build relationships.

Encourage them to get involved in an entry level of serving in the church, perhaps helping you with what you are serving in. We also want to help them connect as a new believer with their '*oikos*' relationships (their family and friends). So try to get to know some of the people in their world.

FBC Resources for the New Believer

One Minute Bible
Now That You Are a Christian
Communicate-Care-Connect
My Heart Christ's Home
How to Study the Bible

We would like you to encourage the use of the FBC resources for the new believer. You can help them cover these in the initial few months of their new walk. Speak with them about how critical it is that they feed on the word of God and the life of the Holy Spirit as new-born children of God.

The One Minute Bible: Ask them to begin reading 1 chapter a day for the next 3 months and meet with them once a week to discuss what they have read and any questions they have. Show them how to read it as a daily devotional, using the Bible text, the commentary and space for personal notes and application. Ask them to pray with you about what they have read.

Now That You Are A Christian: Have them read this short book right away. Some will read in an evening, others may take a while, but in any case it will give them a good overview of what the Lord has done for them, what He wants them to do for Him, and how to develop a heart like God's. Talk about a section of the book each time you meet

Bible Reading Plans: Ensure they have a Bible and encourage them to read it, especially after the 1 Minute Bible. Reading plans are found in the CALLED TO FOLLOW study, plus on the FBC website.

My Heart Christ's Home: Jesus seeks to live His life in a life-changing relationship with each of us.

How to Study the Bible: We offer this booklet and many other kinds of resources you can find in our Library and on the FBC Website. Encourage them to listen to Christian radio at HOPE 106.3 FM.

FBC DISCIPLESHIP STRATEGY

Our FBC Model describes the New Testament expectations for all believers. We seek to involve them in the Church Body, Community Groups, and have a Personal Ministry. We seek their growth through Calling them to Follow, Equipping them to Grow and Sending them to Serve. We encourage them to be worshippers, to declare their salvation in public Baptism, and to become contributing and serving members of His church. We aim to model and instill in every disciple our core Biblical values. The goal is that every disciple reproduces the faith and becomes more like Jesus Christ.

3 CORE VALUES

Truth: inspiring life change through the changeless Word of God

Community: sharing our lives together in authentic relationships

Engagement: stepping out in faith to make a difference in Jesus' name

These are the studies for the Friend to do 1-on-1 with the new believer for FBC Membership.

CALLED TO FOLLOW (prepare for Baptism)

1. The Bible Reveals the Plan of God
2. What It Means to Become a Christian
3. Establishing your Walk with Christ
4. Preparing a Personal Testimony
5. Baptism: Going Public With Jesus Christ

EQUIPPED TO GROW (essential teachings)

1. God is Trinity - Father, Son, Holy Spirit
2. Your Identity in Christ - related to God
3. Your Position in Christ - related to sin
4. Jesus Christ as Lord of Your Life
5. God's Process for Personal Change
6. Personal Spiritual Disciplines
7. Spiritual Conflict and the Armour of God

FBC MEMBERSHIP - requirements

Public Baptism

Completion of Called + Equipped

Involved in a Community Group

Take the Lead Pastor's Course: **Real Church**

Interview: Board member + CG Leader /member

Serving in a Ministry

SENT TO SERVE (1-on-1 or group)

Discovering your personal calling for ministry

- Our Placement by God in the Body of Christ
- Passion - Monitoring Your Unique Heartbeat
- Experiences - Assessing Your Life Experiences
- Spiritual Gifts - Completing Spiritual Gift Analysis
- Time Availability - Investing Time to Serve Christ

Many other Christian resources are available.

<https://christianuniversity.org/>
TheGospelProject Curriculum – CCEF.ORG
Bible and Discipleship Courses
FBC Resources (sharethejourney.com)
BILD First Principles Courses



COMMUNICATE CARE CONNECT



"Guard what has been entrusted to your care"
-1Timothy 6:20