

A Biblical Foundation for Mentoring

Mentoring can be defined in a variety of ways, but it is not a new concept. We find such a relationship throughout the pages of Scripture. Moses served as a mentor to Joshua, Jesus equipped His small band of disciples, and Paul invested personally in men such as Timothy, Titus and many others. Ken Horton offers as a starting point this definition: "Mentoring is a mutually encouraging relationship distinguished by the power of example (1 Cor. 4:16; 11:1), the wisdom of humility (Jam. 3:13; 1 Pet. 5:5-7), and an attitude of enthusiasm (Rom. 12:1; 3 John 4). These are experienced by both parties as God works His transforming purpose in them."

Rowland Forman, in *The Lost Art of Lingerin*g, adds, "Investing spiritually and intentionally in another person (or group) isn't just another good idea; it is at the heart of authentic discipleship. ... The mutuality implied in the biblical one-anothers begins to be folded into our relationships in Christ as we come together to listen and learn, rather than talk and teach."

Some other common definitions for mentoring include:

"At their best, mentors nurture our souls. They shape our character. They call us to become complete men, whole men, and, by the grace of God, holy men." —Howard and William Hendricks, *Iron Sharpens Iron*

"Mentoring takes place when a person senses a need for growth and seeks to learn from someone who can assist his or her development." —Barbara Neumann, D.Min dissertation

"Spiritual mentoring is a triadic relationship between mentor, mentoree, and the Holy Spirit where the mentoree can discover, through the already present action of God, intimacy with God, ultimate identity as a child of God, and a unique voice for kingdom responsibility." —Keith Anderson and Randy Reese, *Spiritual Mentoring*