

Exploring the Life and Mission of the Church

3 – Teaching & Discipleship

Teaching and Discipleship: 2 Corinthians 3:18 says we are being changed into the very likeness of Christ while Ephesians 4:13 calls on us to reach the full stature of Christ. Do we have the means of nurture and discipleship in place for our members? Or is 'teaching' left only for the children or 'new believers'?

Consider this selection of Scriptures and note the focus that each offers for our: Teaching and Discipleship

Deuteronomy 6:4-7; 20-25 _____

Matthew 18:1-6; 10-14 _____

Romans 14:19 _____

Ephesians 6:1-4; 4:11-16 _____

Key Themes in the readings :

Don't forget commandments

Teach your children

Strengthen one another

Parents: Christian discipline

Grow into maturity

Reach full stature of Christ

Guide Questions for Reflection and Discussion:

- (a) NOW: How seriously have we taken the idea of "nurture" and "growing" people in their faith? What opportunities do we get to reflect on our own spiritual journeys within the church?

- (b) In 5-10 years What action do we take to ensure "inclusion and incorporation" of new members?
What specific areas need attention? How can we build in to our church life varying opportunities for members to grow and deepen their discipleship? (e.g. Serving, discussion, mentoring?)

- (c) What can be done? What needs to be introduced or changed to make Discipleship an integral part of our church life? Suggest some practical ways that you will make these changes?

Please use the grid on the next page to record the main points of your discussion.

Area of Church Life	Priorities for development (from (b) above)	Practical Suggestions towards implementation and likely timescale (from (c) above)
3. Teaching and Discipleship		

Sample Readings for area 3- Teaching & Discipleship

Deuteronomy 6: 4-7

⁴ Hear, O Israel: the LORD our God, the LORD is one. ⁵ Love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength. ⁶ These commandments that I give you today are to be on your hearts. ⁷ Impress them on your children. Talk about them when you sit at home and when you walk along the road, when you lie down and when you get up.

20 – 25

²⁰ In the future, when your son asks you, 'What is the meaning of the stipulations, decrees and laws the LORD our God has commanded you?' ²¹ tell him: 'We were slaves of Pharaoh in Egypt, but the LORD brought us out of Egypt with a mighty hand. ²² Before our eyes the LORD sent signs and wonders – great and terrible – on Egypt and Pharaoh and his whole household. ²³ But he brought us out from there to bring us in and give us the land that he promised on oath to our ancestors. ²⁴ The LORD commanded us to obey all these decrees and to fear the LORD our God, so that we might always prosper and be kept alive, as is the case today. ²⁵ And if we are careful to obey all this law before the LORD our God, as he has commanded us, that will be our righteousness.'

Matthew 18: 1 – 6

At that time the disciples came to Jesus and asked, 'Who, then, is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven?'

² He called a little child to him, and placed the child among them. ³ And he said: 'Truly I tell you, unless you change and become like little children, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven. ⁴ Therefore, whoever takes the lowly position of this child is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven. ⁵ And whoever welcomes one such child in my name welcomes me.

⁶ 'If anyone causes one of these little ones – those who believe in me – to stumble, it would be better for them to have a large millstone hung round their neck and to be drowned in the depths of the sea.

10 – 14

¹⁰ 'See that you do not despise one of these little ones. For I tell you that their angels in heaven always see the face of my Father in heaven.

¹² 'What do you think? If a man owns a hundred sheep, and one of them wanders away, will he not leave the ninety-nine on the hills and go to look for the one that wandered off? ¹³ And if he finds it, truly I tell you, he is happier about that one sheep than about the ninety-nine that did not

wander off. ¹⁴ In the same way your Father in heaven is not willing that any of these little ones should perish.

Romans 14:19

¹⁹ Let us therefore make every effort to do what leads to peace and to mutual edification.

Ephesians 6: 1-4

Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right. ² 'Honour your father and mother' – which is the first commandment with a promise – ³ 'so that it may go well with you and that you may enjoy long life on the earth.'

⁴ Fathers, do not exasperate your children; instead, bring them up in the training and instruction of the Lord.

Ephesians 4: 11 – 16

¹¹ So Christ himself gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the pastors and teachers, ¹² to equip his people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up ¹³ until we all reach unity in the faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God and become mature, attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ.

¹⁴ Then we will no longer be infants, tossed back and forth by the waves, and blown here and there by every wind of teaching and by the cunning and craftiness of people in their deceitful scheming. ¹⁵ Instead, speaking the truth in love, we will grow to become in every respect the mature body of him who is the head, that is, Christ. ¹⁶ From him the whole body, joined and held together by every supporting ligament, grows and builds itself up in love, as each part does its work.