

Introduction:

- One of the first things I knew I had to do once I got saved was to surround myself with successful Christians. People who could 'show me the ropes.' I needed people around me who knew more than me on how to live this life.
- That has not changed. Every new believer has to take that approach if they want to make it in Christ.
- As I shared two weeks ago I already knew how to pray but there were other things I needed.
 - I needed to learn how to study the Word.
 - I needed to learn how to position myself before the Word: No distractions, when the church was open, my own daily habit and with my heart and not just my head.
 - I needed an outlet of ministry. Detention center, leading prayer groups on campus, discipling new Christians, volunteered to help with three year olds at church.
 - I needed relationships: Above, beside and below me.
 - Above to lift me up.
 - Beside to walk with
 - Below to influence
 - I needed to grow in character and put on Christ.
- This message tonight is to both teach those who disciple and those who are being disciplined.
 - All Christians need help in this journey but it is particularly true of new Christians. Mentors needed.
 - Mature Christians need to remember what it was like to be a new Christian. I.e. It was new language, new culture, overcoming Christianese.

I. New Christians Must Have the Basics**A. Basics are foundations.**

1. Regarding military, have you ever heard of 'basic training?' You are not ready for battle equipping until you have gone through basic training. Why? Basics are the foundation for training an army. No matter where you go from there; in the army you have to get through basic first.
2. The foundations determine how high the structure can go. How well you build the basics of your faith determine how big of a spiritual structure you can build on that foundation.

B. New Christians must have the basics of the Christian faith first and foremost.

1. I.e. It is like school you have to learn to count well before you can take on calculus.
2. Without the basics everything else just does not work. It will lead to discouragement because of the inability to understand and operate in faith, in the Word.

3. Those who are 'mature' in their faith must remember this and help the new Christian grow in Christ.
- C. What are the basics one must learn as a new Christian?
1. Prayer - is talking with the Father.
 - a) Who do I talk to? God the Father, God the Son or God the Holy Spirit.
 - b) There are different types of prayer: warring prayer, worshipping prayer, Lord's prayer, etc.
 2. Word - is getting to know the Father, Son and Holy Spirit and their ways.
 - a) The word is life and Spirit - John 6:63
 - b) The Word reveals God to me.
 - c) The Word establishes sound doctrine in me. Paul in the pastoral letters says much about doctrine. Sound doctrine/teaching brings about revelation and understanding. Eph 1:17
 - (1) 1 Timothy 1:10 speaks of having sound doctrine.
 - (2) Trained in good doctrine. *"If you put these things before the brothers, you will be a good servant of Christ Jesus, being trained in the words of the faith and of the good doctrine that you have followed."* (1 Timothy 4:6, ESV)
 - (3) *"Until I come, devote yourself to the public reading of Scripture, to exhortation, to (doctrine)."* (1 Timothy 4:13, ESV)
 3. Fasting - Intentionally denying yourself in order to know/encounter God.
 4. Serving - Expressing the love you have received from Christ to others.
 - a) Start with service jobs: moving table & chairs, greeting, helping where needed (Not teaching and preaching) lifting and moving, preparing and cleaning, assisting in children's ministry.
 - b) Loving your neighbors.
 5. Sharing your faith. Building relationship with the goal of leading others to faith in Christ.

II. New Christians Must Have A Mentor

- A. They need a shepherd. Think of Ps 23. A shepherd is a picture of God. *"God is early called the Shepherd of Israel who goes before the flock (Ps. 68:7), guides it (Ps. 23:3), leads it to food and water (Ps. 23:2), protects it (Ps. 23:4), and carries its young (Is. 40:11). Embedded in the living piety of believers, the metaphor brings out the fact that the people is sheltered in God"* Kittel, G., Friedrich, G., & Bromiley, G. W. (1985). In *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament, Abridged in One Volume* (p. 901). W.B. Eerdmans.
- B. 1 Peter 5:2 says, *"Shepherd the flock of God..."* A shepherd watches over.
1. A shepherd feeds the new disciple the word! The milk of the word not the meat.
 - a) *"I fed you with milk, not solid food, for you were not ready for it. And even now you are not yet ready,"* (1 Corinthians 3:2, ESV)

- b) Grow up into salvation. *“Like newborn infants, long for the pure spiritual milk, that by it you may grow up into salvation–”* (1 Peter 2:2, ESV)
 - c) Eventually when they have the basics down they can move on to the meat of the Word.
2. A Shepherd teaches the new disciple how to pray. Most of the time this is ‘caught and not taught.’ I.e. The instructor can teach you all about how to shoot a gun but until you actually hold the gun and pull the trigger, you have not learned.
 - a) Intercessory prayer - you carry the burden of the Lord.
 - b) Prayer to get your needs met.
 - c) Worship is prayer.
 - d) Who do you talk to in prayer? Father, Son, or Holy Spirit.
 3. A Shepherd teaches the new disciple how to share their faith.
 - a) Personality
 - b) Confidence
 - c) “Low hanging fruit”
 4. A Shepherd teaches sound doctrine and keeps watch on the disciple’s doctrine. Acts 1:1-3 After the resurrection Jesus proved Himself alive many times. **To assure** His disciples that He was alive. He also continue to teach them about Kingdom. (Strong doctrine.)
 5. A Shepherd teaches how to love your spouse, raise kids, live holy, etc., etc.
- C. A mentor is not only Shepherd but a father.
1. A father gives his children their identity. I.e. Prodigal son received hugs, robe, ring, shoes, and fatted calf. He was not allowed to be a servant in the house when he is a son of the house!
 - a) Their past is passed.
 - b) They now have a new identity in Christ.
 2. A father loves his son.
 3. A father disciplines his son. Heb 12:6-10
 4. A father prepares and equips his sons to succeed.
 - a) How to marry and be a loving husband.
 - b) How to treat his employer or employees.
 - c) How to go on when life is not fair.
 5. It is not enough to teach new believers, they must experience the continued love of God.
 - a) Paul said to the Corinthians–*You have many teachers/instructors but not many fathers.* 1 Cor 4:15
 - b) A father brings strength of relationship into the mentorship.
- D. They need a teacher to lead them into Holy Spirit:
1. Fruit of the Spirit

2. Gifts of the Spirit
3. Ways of the Spirit

III. New Christians Must Know!

- A. God loves them and He is good!
 1. God cannot not love you.
 2. He loved your first Rom 5:8 while you were a sinner!
- B. It is all about Jesus! Keep your focus on Him! His cross, His resurrection and His Kingdom! Jesus is God in the flesh! Jesus is the God who became man not the man who tried to be God.
- C. The one thing you reach for daily is a closer relationship with Him
 1. Love God.
 2. Love each other.
 3. Do these well and you fulfill the whole book. LOVE must be all consuming to us.
- D. You are saved by grace through faith and you grow the same way. New Christians have a tendency to drift back into a works mindset trying to earn their way to God. It must be clear that the same grace that saves you is the same grace that grows you!
- E. God cares about the details of your life, so don't worry. Matthew 6:25-34
- F. Refuse to take offense. You have a choice. Luke 17:1
- G. Mature Christian often forget that they were once where you are. *ie. Being reminded I no longer have children.*

Conclusion:

- The basics are critical to our faith.
- Methodism got its name for how methodical John Wesley's approach to disciple-making was.
- Same with Charles Finney. He has more people still in church after 20 years than any other move of God.