



GROWING *Together*

TAKING MENTORING BEYOND
SMALL TALK AND PRAYER REQUESTS

*Melissa B.
Kruger*

“For many of us, the idea of having a mentor is appealing, and the suggestion of being a mentor is intimidating. Through this book, Melissa Kruger helps both the mentor and the mentee know where to start, what to cover, and how to make it work so that the mentoring relationship is a source of joy and growth for everyone involved.”

Nancy Guthrie, Bible teacher; author, *Even Better than Eden: Nine Ways the Bible’s Story Changes Everything about Your Story*

“Mentoring and discipleship are essential for the Christian life, yet so many of us don’t quite know how to do it. *Growing Together* is not only needed; it’s also exactly the book we’ve been looking for. Melissa Kruger has written an instructive, biblically grounded, accessible, practical, and versatile book perfect for one-on-one mentoring relationships, groups, or individuals. Women who read this book will grow together in their faith as well as be equipped to do the work of ministry. I’m grateful for this resource and highly recommend it!”

Trillia Newbell, author, *If God Is for Us: The Everlasting Truth of Our Great Salvation*

“*Growing Together* is a resource for mentoring relationships that facilitates meaningful conversations centered around God’s word. Engaging questions and simple yet transformative suggestions for application will encourage women to grow together in godliness. This is an invaluable tool for any discipleship tool belt, and I am so thankful to add it to mine!”

Hunter Beless, Founder and Executive Director, *Journeywomen* podcast

Growing Together

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*Taking Mentoring beyond Small
Talk and Prayer Requests*

Melissa B. Kruger

Growing Together: Taking Mentoring beyond Small Talk and Prayer Requests

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For my daughters Emma and Kate,
and my nieces, Elizabeth, Jane Murry, Millie,
Reagan, and Anne Randolph

May there be women in every season who faithfully
invest in you, passing on the truths of the gospel from
one generation to the next. And, may you share what
you've learned with those who follow after you— the
world needs the treasure you've been given.

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Introduction

As women's ministry coordinator at my church, I interact with women in a variety of seasons and stages of life. One of the most frequent requests from younger women is help finding a spiritual mentor. For each lady requesting, there are a variety of hopes behind this longing. Some know they need to grow in their faith and desire an older woman to provide guidance and wisdom. Some long for a nurturing figure to encourage them. Some lack direction and hope that a mentor could give them advice. Some are hurting and hoping for healing as they share their struggles with another. Others feel overwhelmed and are looking for someone who might provide help to ease the burdens of life.

When I approach older women with the request of mentoring, they are often hesitant. Most of them have never been mentored themselves, and they rightly wonder, *What exactly does she want from me?* They may even be fearful, not assured of their ability to lead another because of past personal failure. Some desire to mentor but lack clarity and training on how to do it.

The longing of the younger woman and the hesitancy of the older woman are what have encouraged me to pick up my pen and write. Sometimes it's difficult to know how to move past small talk and go deeper with one another. What I hope to provide is a hands-on tool that a mentor and mentee can use together as a springboard for mentoring discussions. Therefore, this book is not primarily about the concept of mentoring.

Other writers, such as Susan Hunt,¹ have already provided excellent resources for the church on the concept of discipleship. What I hope to offer is a book that women can pick up and use to promote life-giving discussions on a variety of topics that foster and encourage one another's faith. For that reason, this book isn't a book *about* mentoring but rather a book to *use* in the mentoring relationship.

The ultimate goal of this book is for two women to grow together as they walk together. As an older believer shares her wisdom, understanding, and love for the Lord, the younger believer learns from her experience. Mentoring helps give shape to the commands of Scripture. To see an older woman living out gentleness, love, joy, and kindness puts flesh on these words so we can see what they look like in action. The good news about discipleship is that the learning isn't just one way—the older woman grows too! As she recounts God's faithfulness and shares God's word, her own heart is refreshed and revived. Growing together in Christ-centered relationship fosters a more intimate relationship with Jesus for both the younger and older woman.

Structure

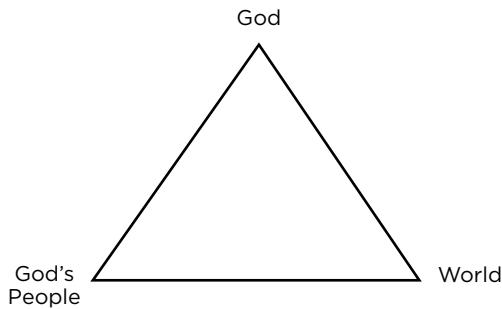
This book is arranged with eleven chapters that can be worked through in a variety of ways. You can meet once a month, every other week, or weekly, depending upon your availability. Whatever pace you set, I encourage you to find a day and time that works for you both and schedule your meetings in advance.

The first two chapters briefly explore the concept of mentoring, provide scriptural examples of mentoring, and offer practical considerations about developing a mentor relationship. These two chapters set the foundation for the mentoring relationship so that both participants have similar expectations as they begin.

The next nine chapters provide a curriculum of sorts to help guide you in your time together. Entire books have been written

on each of these topics, so these chapters are intended to help start the conversation, not cover the topic fully. Since these are introductory-level chapters, there's an appendix that provides further reading for each topic if you want to dive deeper into one particular subject.

To encourage balanced spiritual growth, these chapters are arranged in a way to help foster a person's relationship with God and the world.



The goal is to cycle through each of these areas on a rotating basis. Topics about our relationship with God (Bible reading, prayer, and contentment) are interspersed with chapters about living in community as believers (church, family, and service), as well as with chapters about our engagement in the world (evangelism, temptations, and discernment). The hope is that balanced discipleship will lead to growth in each of these important areas. Each of these chapters follows a general pattern:

- Wisdom for life: What does the Bible say about a particular topic? Why is it important?
- Wandering in unbelief: Why do we struggle to follow God's teaching in a certain area?
- Walking by faith: How do I live biblical truths in light of the gospel?

At the end of each chapter I'll offer three activities:

- Before you meet: practical tools to help you grow
- While you meet: questions for discussion
- Until you meet again: growing in godliness

These questions and activities are provided to help springboard from the theoretical to the personal. Both the mentor and mentee can answer these questions and engage in the different topics. Even those mature in their faith need to be spurred on in their own spiritual growth. If you're the mentor, don't be afraid to share your own areas of weakness and need for growth. It helps when both people can share openly with each other and support each other. If you're the mentee, I encourage you to listen to, respect, and consider the advice of your mentor. She has wisdom and perspective from years of walking with the Lord and can help you discern what is best.

Wording

Throughout the book I'll use certain terms interchangeably. Mentoring can also be called "discipleship" or "spiritual mothering." When discussing the mentor, I might also use the phrase *older woman*. Please note that the mentor is not necessarily older in physical age. By using the phrase *older woman*, I am speaking about the maturity of her faith, not the length of her years. In turn, I will often use the words *mentee* or *younger woman* to describe the woman being mentored.

These are simply terms to help the reader understand the distinction in the roles. It doesn't mean that the mentee never imparts wisdom to the mentor or that the mentor is an expert in every area of life. Both mentor and mentee are disciples of Jesus, seeking to know him more. One is just further along in the faith, seeking to impart to the other what she has learned.

Different Ways to Use This Book

The primary purpose of this book is one-on-one discipleship. However, it can be used in a few other ways.

Discipleship Groups

Discipleship groups usually consist of one older woman meeting with two to four younger women in the faith. This book can easily be used in this type of setting. Working through certain chapters, such as chapter 2, may require two meetings or a longer meeting time so that everyone will have time to share.

Small-Group Studies

This book can also be used for a small group of ten to twenty women who regularly meet together. To get to know one another over the course of the study, each week one woman from the group could use the guidelines offered in chapter 2 to tell her personal story of faith (rather than attempting to have everyone share the same week). Because of time constraints, it might help to cover the discussion questions first and then have a woman tell her story in the last ten to fifteen minutes of the meeting. I encourage the leaders of the group to share their own story first as an example. The goal of the “Sharing Your Story” exercise is not to tell everything from your past (that might take a little more time than ten minutes!), but to communicate the important moments when God clearly was at work, opening your heart to the message of the gospel.

On Your Own

For many years early in my marriage, my husband and I moved together to different cities. During those times, I desired a mentor but didn’t live in one place long enough to establish or seek out that type of relationship. Instead, older women in the faith became my mentors through their books. Elisabeth Elliot, Kay Arthur, Cynthia Heald, Susan Hunt, and many other female authors spurred me on in the faith.

While they weren’t physically present, their words became faithful encouragement for my soul. If you are lacking older women in your church or haven’t found a woman with whom you can walk

Introduction

this journey, I hope these chapters walk alongside you and encourage your faith. It's an honor for me to pass on to you the truths graciously shared with me by older women of faith.

Years ago I read a poem titled "Call Back," which was first published in the early 1900s.² After reading it, I knew I wanted to spend my life "calling back." I'm so thankful for the many women in my own life who have called back and cheered me on in the faith. I hope it will encourage you as we begin.

If you have gone a little way ahead of me, call back—
'Twill cheer my heart and help my feet along the stony track;
And, if perchance, Faith's light is dim, because the oil is low,
Your call will guide my lagging course as wearily I go.

Call back, and tell me that He went with you into the storm;
Call back, and say He kept you when the forest's roots were torn;
That, when the heavens thundered and the earthquake shook
the hill,
He bore you up and held you when the very air was still.

O friend, call back and tell me, for I cannot see your face;
They say it glows with triumph, and your feet bound in the
race;
But there are mists between us and my spirit eyes are dim,
And I cannot see the glory, though I long for word of Him.

But if you'll say He heard you when your prayer was but
a cry,
And if you'll say He saw you through the night's
sin-darkened sky—
If you have gone a little way ahead, O friend, call back—
'Twill cheer my heart and help my feet along the stony track.

—S. P. W.

Mentoring is a privilege. It is needed. It is a blessing. May you call back to others as you grow together in the faith.



We Need One Another

Women need women who will share their lives to train them how to apply the Word to all of life—how to love others, care for their families, cultivate community, work productively, and extend compassion according to God’s Word.

—*Susan Hunt*

In my freshman year of high school, my older brother kept trying to convince me to come with him to FCA (Fellowship of Christian Athletes). While I found it nice that he was actually inviting me to hang out with his friends, I had no desire to go to a big group meeting with him. Eventually, he persuaded me to come, and slowly I became a regular attender at the meetings.

Our FCA advisor was a young unmarried math teacher named Tracey Lafevers. She was energetic and fun as well as discerning and wise. That summer we were invited to share in her wedding day, and I watched with joy as she became Mrs. H. B. Moore.

Thankfully, her new marital status didn’t prevent her from continuing as our advisor. Both she and H. B. came to all of our

weekly meetings and invested their time and energy into sharing the gospel with students. Over the next three years, I spent hours after school in her classroom planning events and working on Bible studies. We had ski retreats and beach retreats as well as summer fellowship meetings.

By my senior year, I'd often skip going off campus with my friends for lunch and just bring my sandwich up to her room for a chat. Her advice prepared me for life after high school in countless ways. The greatest way she encouraged me through those years was by pointing me to God's word in an effort to grow my faith.

Tracy was my first spiritual mentor. Neither she nor I would have called her that at the time. Our relationship just happened as she chose to invest in the lives of students at the public high school where she taught. She helped me process dating, friendships, and how to live a godly life. She put flesh on the gospel and lived it in front of me so I could learn from her example.

Spiritual mentors are vital for growth. Women ahead of us in the faith can look back and cheer us on in our race. They've been right where we are and often have the scars to prove it. We can learn from them and gain wisdom from their experiences.

We also need to become women who mentor. By God's grace, we have the opportunity to call back to younger believers and spur them on in the faith. As we teach others, the truths of God become more firmly rooted in our own hearts. Both the mentor and the disciple grow in grace as they grow together.

We'll spend this chapter exploring the concept of mentoring—seeking to understand what it means to mentor, what the Bible says about mentoring, and the goal of mentoring. While this book is primarily for a mentor and disciple to use together in the mentoring process, it's helpful to have a basic framework before we begin.

The Meaning of Mentoring

As a little girl, I remember an afternoon I spent playing in the front yard while my Dad was busy picking up sticks and weeding. At

one point, he stopped his usual work and went into the garage. He came back with some tools and began doing something I'd never seen him do before. There was a young thin tree that was bent over, suffering from the damaging effects of a storm that had recently blown through. (And, if I remember correctly, it was also suffering from the effects of neighborhood children—myself included—who liked to bounce on its bent-over limb for fun.) He took a rope and tethered the young tree to a much older tree—one that was sturdy and strong, standing straight. When I asked him why he was tying the two trees together, he explained that the older tree could offer support and strength to prevent the younger tree from growing askew. The older tree had withstood years of winds and storms. Just by standing beside the younger tree, it offered stability.

This image comes to mind whenever I think about discipleship. Essentially, the mentoring relationship is one in which a younger woman is tethered to a more mature believer for a season so that she might grow firm in her faith and be equipped for ministry. Just as the older tree doesn't make the younger tree grow (the water and the sun do that), the mentor isn't responsible for the spiritual growth of the mentee (God does that). She's simply standing beside the younger woman, offering the strength she's gained as God has grown her through the years.

Defining Mentoring

With this metaphor in mind, the definition I use for mentoring is this:

Mentoring is a discipleship relationship that focuses on equipping younger believers for the work of ministry so that they grow in maturity and unity in the faith with the ultimate goal of glorifying God.

We'll begin by considering various Scripture passages to help us unpack this definition, and then we'll explore the relationship between Moses and Joshua as an example to follow.

A Discipleship Relationship

Before Jesus ascended to heaven, he gave his disciples a final command, often called the “Great Commission”:

Jesus came and said to them, “All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age.” (Matt. 28:18–20)

Jesus called his followers to go out and make disciples, teaching them to obey all that they had learned from him. Discipleship begins with evangelism, but it doesn’t end there. As we study and learn truths about God, we continually pass on to others what we’ve received. Mentoring is a specific type of discipleship relationship. Through mentoring, an older believer teaches a younger believer how to walk by faith in obedience to God’s commands.

Equipping for Ministry

Ephesians 4:11–13 explains the importance of growing in faith for the building up of the church:

He gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the shepherds and teachers, *to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ*, until we all attain to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to mature manhood, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ.

The apostle, prophet, evangelist, shepherd, and teacher have a shared goal in their training: to equip the saints for the work of ministry in hopes of building up the body of Christ. While this passage addresses those in official roles, we’re all instructed to

teach one another (Col. 3:16), and women are specifically called to teach other women (Titus 2:3–4).

There are two important aims we can glean from this passage as it applies to mentoring. A mentoring relationship seeks to:

- Equip a younger believer
- Encourage the work of ministry

Both of these concepts are vital for well-balanced discipleship. A woman needs to be equipped for ministry as well as actively participate in ministry in order to grow in maturity. A mentor is not just equipping for some imagined future service; she is equipping while she encourages a younger woman in her current ministry.

If either concept of discipleship is neglected, our mentoring can get off-kilter. If a woman is equipped but not participating in ministry, it is easy to become overconfident and self-focused. She quickly forgets why she even needs to be equipped because she doesn't truly understand how much she doesn't understand! If you can remember all the way back to high school algebra—often it's not until we take a test that we realize we've been overconfident in our understanding of the material.

Another problem arising from a woman being equipped without actively engaging in ministry is that she quickly loses interest in training. If a sports team only practiced but never participated in a real game, players would quickly get bored and lose interest in working diligently while in practice. The desire to train is actually increased by playing in the game and understanding areas of necessary growth. A key means of growth in the spiritual life involves actively participating in some form of ministry.

On the other side of the coin, if a woman only involves herself in ministry and never takes the time to be equipped, she may find herself struggling in different ways. She's equivalent to the sports team that never trains but only shows up for the game. She wears out quickly and has little stamina. She's unprepared for certain situations because she hasn't taken time outside of the

game to consider the unexpected. In ministry the unequipped will quickly burn out and face exhaustion. Her external service lacks the internal strength and understanding needed to persevere well in her ministry to others.

Both sides of the definition—being equipped and actively participating in ministry—are vital for full-orbed discipleship. For women, Paul also gives a specific encouragement for mentoring, in his letter to Titus. He writes:

Older women likewise are to be reverent in behavior, not slanderers or slaves to much wine. They are to teach what is good, and so train the young women to love their husbands and children, to be self-controlled, pure, working at home, kind, and submissive to their own husbands, that the word of God may not be reviled. (Titus 2:3–4)

Here we have a special exhortation for older women as they train the younger women. We'll refer to this passage more in the next chapter, but for clarity—this encouragement from Paul isn't a *limitation* on mentoring but a *special exhortation* for mentoring. Paul is not saying, "Only mentor women who are married and have young children." He also never says that mentors must be married and have children of their own. Jesus's final words in the Great Commission call us to make disciples, regardless of their gender, age, or marital status.

Paul is simply giving a special exhortation to older women as they mentor younger women who are married with children. It's tempting as a young wife and mom to believe that work in the home is insignificant in comparison to worldly accolades or more visible forms of ministry. Older women can encourage younger women by reminding them that the home is a vital place to bear fruit. Notice how many of the fruit of the Spirit are mentioned in the Titus 2 passage: goodness, love, self-control, and kindness. All believers should exhibit these fruit as they grow in faith. Paul is emphasizing—but not limiting—the importance of bearing these in the home.

For Unity and Maturity

Ephesians 4:11–13 also helps us understand that mentoring involves more than simply developing a friendship with an older or younger woman. It is designed to bring unity in the faith, knowledge of Christ, and maturity that overflows into a secure and stable trust in God that withstands the enemy’s attacks. Unity is built as we grow together in truth and serve together in love. Maturity produces stability “so that we may no longer be children, tossed to and fro by the waves and carried about by every wind of doctrine, by human cunning, by craftiness in deceitful schemes” (Eph. 4:14).

Over time, the younger woman’s faith strengthens so that she is no longer tossed back and forth by various teaching. She’ll be able to discern what is best because she’s been equipped. She’ll have situational wisdom because she’s participated in the work of ministry. Firmly rooted, she can stand beside others, helping them grow in godliness.

For God’s Glory

As we mentor, it’s important to keep our primary goal in mind. Ultimately, we want to help a younger woman grow in Christlikeness so that she glorifies God in all she does. We’re not attempting to make others in our own image, crafting them to be like us. My goal isn’t to make disciples of Melissa; I’m making disciples of Jesus.

John the Baptist understood his role and rejoiced when people left him to follow Jesus, saying, “He must increase, but I must decrease” (John 3:30). Our goal is to point people to Jesus, saying, “Go follow him. He’s the source of all that is good!” As a younger woman beholds her King, she increasingly transforms into his likeness (2 Cor. 3:18).

Practically, this concept allows the mentor to work with diligence as well as rest with confidence. Her labors join with God’s

purpose for the women she mentors. By pointing another woman to Jesus, she knows her work is not in vain.

She rests with confidence because the work is ultimately God's, not her own. God forms and fashions his child in his timing. The mentor is freed from the pressure of perfection, because she is not the ultimate source of growth. She is supporting the work God is already doing. To refer back to our original metaphor, one tree cannot make another tree grow. It simply stands beside a younger tree and offers its strength for a season.

In Titus 2, Paul speaks to a variety of believers regarding their growth in righteousness. He explains the threefold purpose for equipping the saints for the work of ministry: God's word is upheld, the church is praised, and the gospel is adorned. The goal of mentoring is much larger than our personal happiness or growth. The goal is God's glory.

Ultimately this greater goal leads to our personal joy and growth, but it is a by-product of a much more important desire: God's name being declared holy in all the earth. This longing is the first request that Jesus teaches us to pray in the Lord's Prayer ("Hallowed be your name," Matt. 6:9), and it will be our greatest joy in all eternity. When God is rightly glorified, all will be well.

Biblical Examples of Mentoring

I always enjoy reading Christian biographies because they give me a greater vision of what it means to walk by faith. I've learned so much from their examples, and I've been inspired by their stories. Thankfully, the Bible offers us helpful examples of mentoring relationships that we can learn from: Mary and Elizabeth; Timothy and Paul; Peter, James, John, and Jesus.

My favorite example of a mentoring relationship is the one between Moses and Joshua. Joshua became Moses's aid during his youth (Num. 11:28). He served with Moses as a warrior, fighting the Amalekites while Moses raised his staff in prayer. He alone accompanied Moses onto Mount Sinai when Moses was given the

Ten Commandments (Ex. 24:12–15). When Moses would leave the tent of meeting, Joshua remained inside until he returned (Ex. 33:11). Moses included Joshua as one of the twelve men sent out to spy on the land of Canaan (Num. 13:16). Of the twelve, only Joshua and Caleb believed that the Lord could accomplish what he had promised. They were the only two men in their generation who were allowed to enter into the Promised Land (Num. 14:30, 38).

Toward the end of their ministry together, Moses repeatedly encouraged Joshua by reminding him that God would be faithful to fight the battles for the Israelites as they entered the Promised Land, just as he had done during their time wandering in the wilderness (Deut. 3:21–29). At the end of Moses’s life, God commanded Moses to lay hands on Joshua and commission him before the entire assembly of the Israelites as God’s chosen leader (Num. 27:18). Moses gave this final encouragement to Joshua:

Be strong and courageous, for you shall go with this people into the land that the LORD has sworn to their fathers to give them, and you shall put them in possession of it. It is the LORD who goes before you. He will be with you; he will not leave you or forsake you. Do not fear or be dismayed. (Deut. 31:7–8)

The relationship between Moses and Joshua spanned decades and is one of the most vividly described mentoring relationships in all of Scripture. While most discipleship relationships will be much shorter in duration, we can glean several ideas that correspond with our earlier definition of mentoring from Ephesians.

Moses didn’t spend forty years teaching Joshua truths about God and *then* send him out to lead the Israelites. His instruction and encouragement to Joshua came throughout years of active service on Joshua’s part. As Joshua fought the Amalekites, sat in the tent of meeting, and spied out the land of Canaan, God prepared him as a leader. Joshua was learning from Moses as he was serving God.

Mentoring allows those already serving in the church to be built up so that they can be prepared for even greater service. If we think back to our tree analogy, the younger tree was already growing before it was tethered to the older tree. The stronger tree doesn't make the weaker tree grow, but it can help the younger tree grow upward in the right direction and provide protection from the elements surrounding it. Mentoring younger women who are already actively serving allows them preparation for the good works the Lord will call them to in future ministry.

A second principle we can observe between Moses and Joshua is that Moses brought Joshua with him as he engaged in ministry. Sometimes a younger woman can learn simply by serving alongside an older woman in what she is doing. It might be helpful to involve a younger woman while cooking a meal, setting up chairs, teaching a Sunday school class, helping on the finance committee, caring for an aging parent, or by attending a prayer meeting. Inviting a younger woman to come along as you serve others is an easy way to teach as you do ministry.

The final principle to consider is the way Moses regularly encouraged Joshua with his words. Moses was *for* Joshua. He wanted him to do well so that God's kingdom would advance. He knew that Joshua would face difficult adversaries, but he also knew God would be with Joshua. Moses reminded Joshua that God was for him and that God would accomplish all he called Joshua to do.

Through Moses's example, we find one of the most important roles of a mentor: she reminds the younger woman that God is with her and for her. While the storm winds may blow and the way seems unclear, God is leading and will direct her path. A mentor can shine the light of God's truth into the places where the younger woman may be tempted to doubt God's goodness.

Types of Mentoring

The relationship between Moses and Joshua is just one example of mentoring. No two mentoring relationships are the same, and

there are a variety of ways to mentor. We benefit from both informal and more formal mentoring relationships. My relationship with Tracy happened naturally as I took part in FCA and became a student leader in the group. We never had a formal time together, but she mentored me as we shared life together.

When I was a freshman at the University of North Carolina, a woman named Deanne served as the staff worker from my chapter of InterVarsity Christian Fellowship. Early in the fall she approached me and asked me if I would like to meet once a week so that she could mentor me. Our relationship consisted of a regularly scheduled meeting, and we reevaluated at the end of each semester whether we both had the availability to continue meeting. Over the course of the next three years, we studied different books of the Bible together each week while sharing our lives and ministry in a personal way.

Both of these relationships proved extremely significant for me. My relationship with Deanne was not any less personal because it was more scheduled, nor was my relationship with Tracy any less impactful because it was more informal. An older woman can have a wonderful influence in mentoring a younger woman just by inviting her to go for a walk, being available to answer questions over coffee, or offering to hold a baby so she can have a hands-free moment. Over time, these older women mentor by their example of godliness and the biblical advice they pass on in conversations.

In this book, I hope to provide a path for women looking for a more structured approach to mentoring. It's a starting place both for women who want to mentor others and for women longing to be mentored. Essentially, what I hope to provide is the rope that will enable the older oak to be tethered to the younger tree. My intent isn't to offer the only way to mentor but to help provide a path for two women to walk together while focusing on knowing the Lord and growing in his likeness.

We've covered a lot on the topic of mentoring so far. We've explored the definition of mentoring, observed biblical examples

and exhortations of mentoring, and considered the larger goals of mentoring. In the next chapter we'll begin to consider the practicalities of mentoring. Whom should I mentor? Whom should I seek out as a mentor? When should we meet and for how long? What should I expect our time together to look like? Setting reasonable expectations is vital for a positive mentoring experience.

Mentoring takes time, thoughtfulness, and effort. As you consider beginning this type of discipleship, let me encourage you that it's worth it. Paul emboldened the Corinthians in their labor by exhorting them, "Therefore, my beloved brothers, be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that in the Lord your labor is not in vain" (1 Cor. 15:58). As we mentor, we build up the church. Let us abound in this work, knowing that in the Lord our labors are never in vain.



THE GOSPEL COALITION

The Gospel Coalition is a fellowship of evangelical churches deeply committed to renewing our faith in the gospel of Christ and to reforming our ministry practices to conform fully to the Scriptures. We have committed ourselves to invigorating churches with new hope and compelling joy based on the promises received by grace alone through faith alone in Christ alone.

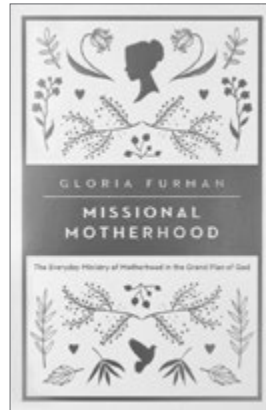
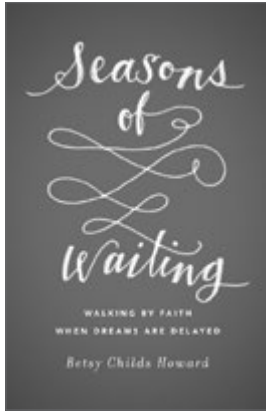
We desire to champion the gospel with clarity, compassion, courage, and joy—gladly linking hearts with fellow believers across denominational, ethnic, and class lines. We yearn to work with all who, in addition to embracing our confession and theological vision for ministry, seek the lordship of Christ over the whole of life with unabashed hope in the power of the Holy Spirit to transform individuals, communities, and cultures.

Through its women's initiatives, The Gospel Coalition aims to support the growth of women in faithfully studying and sharing the Scriptures; in actively loving and serving the church; and in spreading the gospel of Jesus Christ in all their callings.

Join the cause and visit TGC.org for fresh resources that will equip you to love God with all your heart, soul, mind, and strength, and to love your neighbor as yourself.

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the Gospel Coalition



For more information, visit crossway.org.

WE NEED ONE ANOTHER. Yet we don't always know how to develop relationships that help us grow in the Christian life. Spiritual mentoring offers a way for younger believers and more mature Christians to grow together through intentional discipleship and accountability. If you're looking for a place to start, Melissa Kruger presents a guide for discipleship conversations that span a variety of topics for spiritual growth. Each lesson encourages both mentor and mentee to focus on the hope of the gospel as they learn together from the truth of God's word.



“Melissa Kruger helps both the mentor and the mentee know where to start, what to cover, and how to make it work so that the mentoring relationship is a source of joy and growth for everyone involved.”

NANCY GUTHRIE, Bible teacher; author, *Even Better than Eden*

“Women who read this book will grow together in their faith as well as be equipped to do the work of ministry. I'm grateful for this resource and highly recommend it!”

TRILLIA NEWBELL, author, *If God Is For Us*

“*Growing Together* is a resource for mentoring relationships that facilitates meaningful conversations centered around God's word.”

HUNTER BELESS, Founder and Executive Director, *Journeywomen* podcast



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DISCIPLESHIP

