

Establish a New or Young Christian

So then, just as you received Christ Jesus as Lord, continue to live your lives in him, rooted and built up in him, strengthened in the faith as you were taught, and overflowing with thankfulness. (Colossians 2:6-7) Therefore encourage one another and build each other up.... (1 Thessalonians 5:11)

As you ESTABLISH a new or young believer, your goal is to help her get **rooted in the basics of the faith** and **connected with the community of believers** to continue learning. Discipling women new to the Bible is a great way to let your own accumulated Bible knowledge overflow as you ESTABLISH others in their faith.

In this booklet, you will learn where to find new or young Christians, how to give them some basic Bible reading skills, get a checklist for what they need to know as believers, and suggestions for providing the best tutoring for them. For help in starting a Bible study group and choosing a Bible study guide, see our **“Start and Lead a Bible Study Group”** booklet.

FINDING NEW OR YOUNG CHRISTIANS

*“Come, follow me,” Jesus said, “and I will **send you out to fish for people.**” (Mark 1:17)*

Where are the new and young believers besides anyone you bring to Christ yourself? Most likely, they are where you are presently connected such as in small groups at your church. All you have to do is pay attention and come alongside the one who needs to be discipled like Priscilla and Aquila did in Acts 18:24-26. That is better than assuming she will “catch up” just by being in the group. Small groups are “fishing pools” for discipling.

1. Pay Attention in Group

- Ask Jesus to help you recognize where women are in their faith walk.** Small groups may contain women new to your church or not attending any church, new Christians or new-to-the-Bible Christians, as well as established Christians.
- Listen well** for who is new to your church or to the area, attends church or not, is new to doing Bible study, hesitant to answer questions, lacks Bible familiarity, has confused doctrine, or reveals she is wanting to know God. Also, recognize the established Christians in your group.
- Make note** if she is new to attending church, studying the Bible for herself, or a new believer. She needs an established Christian woman to come alongside her. If she is an established Christian, she needs to reach out to one of the new ones.
- Ask Jesus if** you should disciple the new believer or encourage another established Christian to do so. If His answer is for *you* to do it, then...

2. Come Alongside Her

- Invite** her to join you for an hour sometime in the next week—early before work, during the day, after supper, whenever. Find a time that works for her and do it.
- Share** a little of your stories when you get together. Find out where she is in her walk of faith. If she is not there yet, ask if you can share the gospel with her.
- Offer to meet** with her for a few weeks (6-8) to help her get established in her faith walk. If she says, “Yes,” then agree on a time to get together.
- Choose** a Bible study guide for new believers or those new to the Bible that you can work through together. See our [Graceful Beginnings books for anyone new to the Bible](#) and [Disciplemaking Resources](#) page.
- Depend** on Jesus’ power and leading to help you establish a new or young believer. He is with you every step of the way. Trust Him!

GIVE HER SOME BASIC BIBLE READING SKILLS

Because so many women today were not raised in a church setting, assume the one you are discipling does not know much about the Bible. Anyone who is new to Christ and / or new to the Bible needs to know some basic skills so she can confidently read and study a Bible.

- Reassure her that anyone can study the Bible for herself regardless of experience because God wants you to know Him and to understand what He has freely given you.** The Bible is God's Word for every one of us whether you are a book learner or not. You can ask the Lord Jesus to teach you through what you are reading in His Word. The Holy Spirit living inside of you will help you understand what you are reading. That is a promise and God's will for you. He will answer, "Yes!"
- Make sure the one you are discipling has a Bible (print or app) in a good translation that she can understand.** Many people have old Bibles that were given to them as children, usually in the King James Version. Mature Christians can handle the difficult language, but new Christians have trouble. Lead her to find an easy-to-read Bible translation such as NIV, ESV, CSB, NLT, or NET. Avoid the paraphrase versions at first (e.g., The Message, The Passion Translation). The "[The Bible App \(from Life.Church\)](#)" is a good one to use. Help her to get the right app, not the copycat version that has popup ads.
- Explain to her that the Bible is one book containing a collection of 66 books combined together for our benefit.** It is divided into two main parts: Old Testament and New Testament. The Old Testament tells the story of the beginning of the world and God's promises to mankind given through the nation of Israel. All the stories and messages in the Old Testament lead up to Jesus Christ's coming to the earth. The New Testament tells the story of Jesus Christ, the early Christians, and God's promises to all those who believe in Jesus. You can think of the Old Testament as "before Christ" and the New Testament as "after Christ."
- Each book of the Bible is divided into chapters and verses within those chapters to make it easier to study.** Bible references include the book name, chapter number, and verse number(s). Ephesians 2:8 refers to the New Testament book of Ephesians, the 2nd chapter, and verse 8 within that 2nd chapter.
- Use the table of contents to find a specific book of the Bible to read.** Show her how to find Bible books in the table of contents of her Bible or Bible app. "The Bible App" lets you find books in alphabetical order rather than needing to know if it is in the Old or New Testament.
- Encourage her to start reading the Bible in the first four New Testament books called "the gospels."** What better way to start understanding the Bible than reading the life of Jesus! Christianity is Christ. What she needs first and foremost is to get to know Him well and be secure in her relationship with Him. My suggestion is to walk through Mark chapter 1 with her. Show her how to read the verses and let the Holy Spirit show her something from them. Ask the question, "What grabbed your attention?" That is the milk God wants to feed her that day.

Our [Graceful Beginnings books for anyone new to the Bible](#) have a "Bible Basics" section covering these helpful skills for new believers. The first book, [A Fresh Start Bible Study](#), is designed for new Christians and leads them to read through the book of Mark.

INTRODUCE WHAT ALL BELIEVERS NEED TO KNOW

Here are eight aspects of a good foundation for every believer (new or long-term) to "rooted and built up in Him, strengthened in the faith."

1. Who Christ is, what He has done for us on the cross, and what His resurrection means for us

All Christians need to know this information. Christianity is not a lifestyle or rules of conduct. Nor is it a society whose members were initiated by the sprinkling or covering of water. It is about Christ and our relationship with Him. What she needs most is to get to know Him well and be secure in her relationship with Him.

She also needs to know what Christ did for her on the cross in His death and what His resurrection gives to her. Forgiveness, reconciliation, and justification are benefits we receive from the cross and are huge relationship changers when it comes to our relationship with God. The new life she gets because of Jesus' resurrection begins the moment she trusts in Christ and continues forever. She needs that assurance.

2. Who the Holy Spirit is and how He works in our lives

The Holy Spirit is God's empowering presence in her life. Make sure she understands that He is a person living inside of her who is actively involved in her life. He is the one helping her to understand the Bible passages she is reading. He is the one representing Jesus to her and leading her to trust Him. The Spirit is the one who produces fruit in her life and helps her to sense God's presence with her. He is there whether she "feels" it or not.

3. Living by the Spirit's power rather than living by the flesh

Faith is how she received Christ and His Holy Spirit giving her new life. Faith is how she turns her life over to Jesus and trusts Him on a daily basis. Christianity is not a set of rules to follow on her own. She needs to know and understand God's grace toward her and what it means to live in the freedom of that grace. The Christian life is a life of becoming more dependent on God and less independent of Him. It is a different way of approaching life.

4. What prayer is and knowing God the Father's love

Even if she did not have a good earthly father, she can by faith believe that she has a good Heavenly Father who loves her dearly and delights in her relying upon Him through prayer. Jesus taught His followers to think of God as their Heavenly Father. Prayer is communicating with her Heavenly Father and hearing back from Him. It is conversation with Someone who loves her dearly (Ephesians 5:1; Colossians 3:12). What a privilege for the believer to go directly into God's presence and talk with Him about whatever is on her heart. He desires to hear from her, and He promises to listen.

5. Your identity in Christ

The moment she believed, the old self that was born in Adam died; a new self with the same body but a new interior started life as a new person with a new nature "in Christ." That new identity contains many unconditional benefits that she got all at once the moment she trusted in Christ. These benefits make possible an unending relationship with God as her Father. One of the fundamental questions of the human race is that of identity, "Who am I?" The one secure, eternal answer is that through faith in Jesus Christ she can say, "I am in Christ, a child of God, one of God's saints, completely loved and accepted by God"—an identity that no circumstance can change.

6. Obedience flowing from love and gratitude rather than obligation

The entire Christian life is to be lived by faith, not works. Other religions force their followers to adhere to a list of rules to stay acceptable. Christians should want to obey God out of love and gratitude for how much God loves us and for Jesus paying the ultimate price for our sins. Yet, we cannot live an obedient Christian life in our own strength. We must live by faith in Christ every day. By faith, we trust the Holy Spirit to enable us to obey what God wants for our lives. By faith, we learn to obey Christ and experience a life of freedom and joy.

7. Being part of the Body of Christ and enjoying its community

What a privilege it is to enjoy fellowship with God through prayer and fellowship with other believers in God's awesome family on earth—the Church (usually written with a capital "C" to distinguish from local individual churches). While she is part of the universal Church, God wants her to be part of a local church family. It is like having relatives all over the world but living with your immediate family. A local church is a group of believers committed to worshiping Christ, teaching and learning from His Word, supporting each other as we follow Jesus together, and proclaiming the good news to others. She can enjoy relationships and spiritual growth within a local church community.

8. Telling others about Jesus

As a follower of Jesus Christ, she now has the awesome privilege of sharing the good news of eternal life with others. There is tremendous joy in reaching out to those who do not know Jesus and introducing them to Him so they can know Him just as she now knows Him. This includes letting others see how Christ is living His life through you. And it also includes telling the good news of the gospel. If she has opportunity to tell someone one thing, she can tell them what she knows about Jesus. That is enough to plant the seed.

Our [A Fresh Start Bible Study](#) is designed for new Christians and covers all of the basic information given above.

PROVIDE THE BEST TUTORING FOR THEM.

Choose a study designed for women who are new Christians and / or new to the Bible.

Make it easier for them to learn. Choose something with short lessons that are basic with simple terms and easy-to-understand questions. That is the premise behind our [short and easy Graceful Beginnings Bible studies](#) for women new to the Bible. Any woman can work through one of these studies and feel confident as she learns something from God's Word in each lesson. We hope she will be ready to pick up another study and keep going. Our goal is that she gets to know both God and His Word better with each lesson. She will learn how to study the Bible with confidence and joy!

Maybe you already have something that someone used to disciple you when you were a new Christian. Or, your church might have discipling materials on hand. Just make sure you walk through the 8 necessary elements of a good foundation mentioned above.

- If you are discipling a new Christian, start with [A Fresh Start Bible Study](#) or another book for new Christians and work with her one-on-one. This is really beneficial to do before she signs up for any large group study. It is much less intimidating to someone just learning from the Bible. Get a book for each of you. Using a book also makes it transferrable. She can use the same thing to disciple another new Christian.
- **Start with prayer:** Ask the Lord Jesus to teach both of you what He wants you to learn through the lesson.
 - **Work through the lesson together** when you meet. Allow an hour.
 - **Look up and read each Bible verse.** That way you can make sure she knows how to find Bible verses to read and how to answer the question asked about that verse.
 - **Read the summary paragraphs** and discuss anything confusing or interesting.
 - **Encourage her to listen to any associated podcasts** before you meet. Ask what grabbed her attention and highlight specific things you want her to know. Always discuss the application question at the end.
 - **Encourage her to do the extra Bible reading and reflecting on her own** before the next time you meet. Talk about what she learned in her reading / reflecting from the last lesson before you work through the next lesson.
- If you are discipling women new to the Bible in a small group,**
- **Do the first 2-3 lessons together as a group.** Then, encourage them to work through the rest of the lessons on their own before meeting together to discuss them. The process of leading the lesson is similar to the one-on-one time mentioned above but faster since the women have already had a chance to consider their answers.
 - Look up and read each Bible verse. Let them read the questions and answer them.
 - **Read the summary paragraphs** and discuss anything confusing or interesting.
 - **Encourage them to listen to any associated podcasts** before you meet. Ask what grabbed their attention and highlight specific things you want them to know. Always discuss the application question at the end.

There you go. Enjoy the blessings of discovering God's Word together with women who are new to the Bible. Watch them experience a joyful walk with Jesus.

One of the benefits of discipling someone is that sharing what you know gives you a fuller understanding of what you have. It takes the "inflow" of information to another level. On the next page is a worksheet to help you be ready to explain some of those "Bible words" so new believers can understand what you all have in Christ.

BE READY TO EXPLAIN TO NEW BELIEVERS WHAT YOU HAVE IN CHRIST

I pray that you may be active in sharing your faith, so that you will have a full understanding of every good thing we have in Christ. (Philemon 1:6, NIV 1984 version)

According to the law of learning, the best test of whether you have really learned anything or not is by explaining what you have learned to someone else. Review each of the following good gifts from God that we have in Christ. These words and phrases are in the Bible verses that you will likely be reading together. Consider how you would explain what that means to a new or young believer you may be discipling. If you need help with understanding these gifts from God to all believers, see our [Graceful Living Bible Study](#).

- Grace:** How would you explain God's gift of "grace" to someone who has been taught she has to earn God's

- Peace with God:** How would you explain "peace with God" to someone who thinks God is always angry with her because she makes mistakes?

- Forgiveness:** How would you explain God's "forgiveness" to a woman who has done something morally wrong in her past and is feeling awful about it (examples: had an abortion, cheated on her husband, stole money, had a drug or alcohol addiction)?

- Reconciliation:** How would you explain God's gift of "reconciliation" to someone who feels that God is so far away from her because she has been taught she has to go through someone else to reach Him?

- Redemption:** How would you explain God's gift of "redemption" to someone who feels trapped in sinful behavior?

- Justification:** How would you explain God's gift of "justification" to someone from a very strict, legalistic background or a performance-based religion?

- Sanctification:** How would you explain God's gift of "sanctification" to someone who thinks she can never be good enough to please God or for Him to love her?

DISCIPLING ANOTHER PERSON MAKES YOU RELY ON JESUS MORE

That is LIFESTYLE DISCIPLEMAKING. It is what Jesus is calling you to do every day. Come alongside **one** woman for a time to help her become a better follower of Jesus.

Are you feeling a bit scared or hesitant about discipling a new Christian? Jump right in and do it. Whatever leads you to trust in Jesus more is good for you. If you have not been rooted with the basic information shared above, your discipling experience will be a huge growing experience for you as well.

So give your insecurities to Jesus. He is the one who makes you able to do everything in the Christian life, and that includes discipling a new Christian. You are simply to obey Him and trust His Spirit to work through you. Being scared is a good thing; you will rely on Him more. It is okay to say, *“Lord, I cannot do this on my own, but you can in me and through me. I will trust you with this.”* Step out in faith.

Enjoy the blessings of discovering God’s Word together with a new Christian and watch each one experience a joyful walk with Jesus. It will be a great adventure!

Want more help for leading a small group? Get [Be a Christ-Focused Small Group Leader](#), available at [Amazon.com](#) and other online bookstores.