

**Walking With God's People**  
**Training Materials for Group Facilitators**

## **SESSION FOUR**

### Facilitating a Christian Group: 90mins



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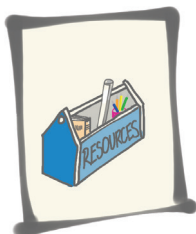
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## TIMINGS FOR THE SESSION:

These timings are suggested for a 90 minute session (as for previous sessions) but experience has shown that this is very tight and, ideally, a 2 hour session would be best if your group is happy to go to 120 minutes. You could build in a short break part way if that would help. If you go for 2 hours then plan your timings to give 'Extending Learning', 'Facilitating Faith' and 'Reflection' longer.

■	Worship	5 mins
■	Résume of Inter-sessional Activity	15 mins
■	Planning	40 mins
■	Extending Learning	10 mins
■	Facilitating Faith	10 mins
■	Reflection	5 mins
■	Prayer	5 mins



## FOR THIS SESSION YOU WILL NEED:

1. Bibles or copies of the New Testament readings listed below
2. The Handouts on Learning Objectives, Using Questions, Theological Reflection and Jesus and his Disciples
3. Large sheets of paper, felt tip pens
4. Everyone to have their Learning Journal with them
5. Your preferred feedback sheet

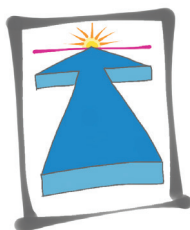
## AT THE START OF THE SESSION YOU:

- Might consider asking someone to be ready to finish the session with prayer

## OPENING WORSHIP

5  
MINS

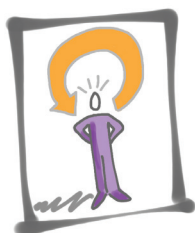
Start with an opening song and prayer. Alternatively, there could be a moment of quiet reflection.



## LEARNING OBJECTIVES

- Practise the process of planning a facilitated group session
- Consider practicalities in preparing to lead a session or course
- Reflect on how my preferred style of learning and skill mix will help or hinder group learning
- Be able to describe how I'd like to develop my facilitation skills further
- Reflect on what can be learned from the NT about how people were helped on their faith journey through facilitation

## RECAP &amp; REVIEW



Last time, we thought in detail about the personal qualities and skills a good Facilitator needs. We looked at how one's own personal style can influence the way in which you lead a group – for good or ill – and we examined some approaches to dealing with those difficult moments which confront all Facilitators from time to time. We discussed some biblical passages that helped us to think about how a Christian group leader needs to behave and operate.

15  
MINS

## RÉSUMÉ OF INTER-SESSIONAL ACTIVITY



The inter-sessional activity set at the end of Session 3 was to reflect on a series of questions about a group participants had led in the past:

1. Was the group as successful as they hoped? Why was this?
2. Did they lead it in their preferred leadership style in which they felt comfortable or did they have to flex or vary their style?
3. If they had to vary their leadership style how did doing this make them feel?
4. Did the way that they led the group achieve the outcomes for which they hoped?
5. Would they now change anything in the way that they led the group?

If participants had not led a Christian group before, they were asked to reflect on areas where they might have authority or a leadership role such as at home or at work. In these contexts:

1. Do they have a preferred leadership style/way of doing things?
2. Did they ever have to vary how they behaved in these contexts? If so, how did that make them feel?
3. How do they feel others around them reacted to the way they behaved in these contexts?
4. Would they want to change anything about the way they typically behave in/manage these contexts?

Ask participants (5-6 mins) if some of them would like to share their reflections on these questions. How do they feel about how they led the group or behaved in that context? You might need to be ready to share a short anecdote of your own in order to prime the conversation.

Essentially, in sharing our reflections we are telling each other stories. Psychologists think that story telling is the basic building block of human learning: an easy way for people to acquire information, ideas and concepts – for example, think of the times in which Jesus used stories to teach and challenge his disciples.

**SHARE THE FOLLOWING WITH THE GROUP (2-3 MINS):**

*Story telling is a gregarious activity and is a way of 'hooking in' the listener. We can learn that we are not alone in having an experience, understanding or emotion. It is held that story telling is the way in which adults learn best – especially when new information/ideas are added to their previous experience. In a very real sense, adults are their experiences. As a general rule, if the Facilitator does not value the stories people want to tell and allow them to share some of them, then they may feel undervalued, irritated or perhaps indignant. Using story is an important facilitation technique. Stories stimulate the listener to think at the time and also later on – both on a conscious and subconscious level. The Facilitator seeks not to tell people what to think but to create a space in which for them to think.*

40  
MINS

## PLANNING A SESSION

Explain to the group that you are going to ask them to go into pairs and to spend 15 minutes planning an hour long facilitated group session using what they have learned so far from Sessions 1-3 of this course. You could come up with your own topic or Biblical passage for the exercise or let the pairs do so themselves, but we suggest two possible topics:

1. A Study of the Call of the First Disciples (Luke 5 v1-11)
2. Session 1 of a Lent Course called 'How to Pray'.

The purpose of the exercise is not to focus too much on content but on the shape of the session. When participants are planning the session what would they need to be aware of as Facilitators? You will know, and might want to suggest to the group, that they will need to develop a plan for their session that covers: timings; content; activities; resources; and evaluation.

After 15 minutes invite some of the pairs to share their plan (10 mins) asking them to explain why it has been put together as it has. What were they aiming to achieve and why? Hopefully, this session will turn into a plenary with all members of the group coming in with questions and observations. The aim of this part of the session is to consolidate learning. Have the following checklist in your mind as you prompt participants through their **feedback: timings; content; activities; resources; and evaluation**

10  
MINS

## EXTENDING LEARNING

It would be useful to remind participants both of some of the materials they have already covered that might help them plan sessions, and to signpost them to other reading or thinking.



Over the last 3 sessions we have already used the following handouts:

- The Facilitator Handout
- The Learning Cycle Handout
- The Tuckman Handout
- The TIM Handout
- The Difficult Moments Handout

At this point, you could also direct the attention of participants to the handouts on:

- Learning Objectives
- Using Questions
- Theological Reflection

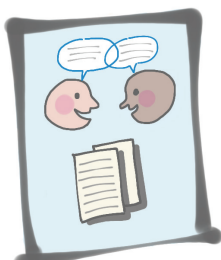
► *The purpose of this slot is to let participants know that there are other materials available that they might find interesting and useful and to make the connection with the other handouts they have already received. It is not intended that there be any detailed discussion of the additional sheets. Experience shows that people do immediately want to talk about the sheets when they see them, but the 10 minutes available will only allow a very brief comment or two.*

10  
MINS

## FACILITATING FAITH

We are going to look quickly at a story from the New Testament where someone was either helped to initial faith or where their faith was deepened through the help of someone else or through some form of intervention.

Choose one of these passages to look at with the group - it would help to have it printed out ready to pass around. Be aware that the story of Peter's Vision is rather long.



1. Luke 24 v13-35 (The Road to Emmaus)
2. Mark 10 v46-52 (Blind Bartimaeus)
3. Acts 10 v1-48 (Peter's Vision)
4. John 4 v1-30 (Jesus and the Woman of Samaria)

Working with the whole group, ask participants how they think faith was facilitated (built up) in the story. You should discover that their findings loop back into topics already covered today such as using questions, accompanying someone on their journey of discovery, offering challenge or modelling an approach - these are all marks of a good facilitator.

There is a handout on how Jesus worked with his disciples to aid their learning and growth that could be taken away by participants at the end of the session.

5  
MINS

## REFLECTION

In this final session of reflection ask participants to spend a few minutes thinking about and then to note in their learning journal or log:

1. Any learning that has stood out for them from today's session
2. Which of the four sessions of the course they feel was the most significant
3. What they will take away with them from the course overall
4. What they might do differently as a Facilitator in the future as a result of the course
5. In general, what went well (www) over the four sessions and what would have made it even better (ebi – even better if ...)

## CLOSING PRAYER

As you finish this final session you could conclude by either leading with a short prayer said by yourself, or by asking for a volunteer you approached at the start of the session to do so. You could, of course, have a few moments of open prayer if it feels right. It is suggested that you finish by saying the Grace together or the Lord's Prayer.

## FINALLY

Would the group like to meet again in the future? If so, what would they like to do?



## TASK ACTIVITY

This session focuses in on practical experience: it is hoped that participants will throw themselves with a will into planning a session. When you set the task it may be necessary to gently encourage some to settle to the task. You may also need to help them focus on the process of establishing timings, content, activities, resources and evaluation by asking prompt questions.

**In the plenary part of the task activity you are looking for participants to be thinking about how they will make members of the group for which they are planning feel welcome and engaged. You will be hoping that they use what they have learned from the 3 previous sessions to:**

- ▶ **Plan** Learning Objectives and Learning Success Criteria
- ▶ **Think** about different learning styles and approaches
- ▶ **Reflect** on how they need to behave as Facilitators
- ▶ **Consider** pace and timing
- ▶ **Predict** and plan for any possible difficulties or problems
- ▶ **Identify** resources they need to source and other practical issues for which they need to plan

## EXTENDING LEARNING

At this point of the session you will be doing the equivalent of what might be described as old fashioned 'talk and chalk!' Your enthusiasm and positivity as you direct attention the various handouts will be the key to carrying everyone with you.

It is a short slot in the session, but do try to allow for some questions and discussions if at all possible.

## EXTENDING FAITH

The Biblical stories chosen here show how faith can be deepened through:

- The use of questions that challenge assumptions or force explanation
- Reflecting back to someone what they have said or thought so they see it in a new light
- Working things out with someone who 'accompanies' them on the journey of discovery
- Going through the Kolb Learning Cycle – in fact Peter went through two learning cycles as the second one came when he went to report to members of the Early Church what had happened with Cornelius (Acts 11 v1-18).

We see that the first Christians learn just as we learn and were facilitated in their learning. As Facilitators we need to learn and use those skills that will help people grow in faith.

## REFLECTION

Good facilitators are reflective thinkers and learners. They take the time to look back and to identify and note what they have learned so they can think about and act on the learning. Writing down what I have learned helps a) to crystallise my thinking, b) fix it in my memory and c) creates a record to which I can refer when I want. It also helps me map my learning and identify success.

Good facilitation is about the effective leadership behaviours and skills that the facilitator used. The 'what went well/even better if ...' approach is a well tried method for getting feedback. As a Facilitator you will be modelling the idea that a group leader should be open to feedback, need not fear it and can learn and grow as a result. In a sense, this is about acting with humility and sending a signal that this is a joint learning journey.

## AND MEETING UP AGAIN IN THE FUTURE?

Members of the group may wish to meet up again in a few months' time to share how participating in the course has helped them in their facilitation work or changed the way that they approach working with a group. It would be an opportunity to celebrate successes, explore how to avoid pitfalls and to learn from each other.





## LEARNING OBJECTIVES

LEARNING OBJECTIVES ARE IMPORTANT TO A FACILITATOR IN PLANNING THE LEARNING IT IS HOPED WILL TAKE PLACE IN AN INDIVIDUAL SESSION...

### WHAT ARE AIMS?

These can best be described as what the Facilitator wants to do for the participants. It is a clear statement of what you want members of the group to learn.

### WHAT ARE OBJECTIVES?

These describe the nature of the learning that you hope the participants should have achieved at the end of the session/course. They can be:

1. General, i.e. *a broad outline*
2. Specific, i.e. *breaking down a general objective into smaller components*

Ideally, objectives should be written in a way to indicate behaviour, i.e. they state what you expect the participant to be able to do after the learning has taken place. Remember that objectives can relate to process as well as product.

### WRITING OBJECTIVES

When writing objectives, ensure that you can assess if the learning has taken place. This means that words such as "know" and "understand" are best avoided. You need to know how they can prove understanding/knowledge

#### EXAMPLE:

**WRONG:** *A participant will know how to use the Bible*

**RIGHT:** *A participant will be able to demonstrate how to use the Bible*

► You might also consider the level of learning that you require - in the example given above you might want them to be able to use a variety of different translations

The following list of 'action words' may help you design the learning objectives (LO) for whatever session you are planning:

AGREE	DESCRIBE	EXPLAIN	CHOOSE	DEVELOP	PRACTICE	DEMONSTRATE	EVALUATE
ANALYSE	DESIGN	EXPLORE	COMMIT	DISCUSS	PRESENT	REFLECT	PRODUCE
Can your LO be observed or measured in some way? If not, is it really an LO?							

List adapted from Nikki Highmore Sims 'How to run a Great Workshop'



## QUESTION TYPES

**CLOSED QUESTIONS:**

1. Require a one word answer e.g. 'yes' or 'no'
2. Close off discussion
3. Usually begin with 'is', 'can', 'how many?' or 'does'

► *For example, 'Does everyone understand the changes we've discussed?'*

**OPEN-ENDED QUESTIONS:**

1. Require more than a 'yes' or 'no' answer, and stimulate thinking
2. Usually begin with 'what', 'how', 'when' or 'why'

Examples of open ended questions might be:

'How did/could?' 'What or what if?' 'Why?' 'Who?' 'Can you describe for us ...?' 'Is there...?'  
'Tell me more about....?'

► *For example, 'What seems to be the key point here?' or 'Can you help us understand the reason behind your opinion by explaining ...?'*

If you feel that the word '**why**' is too aggressive, then you could say, for example, '**What makes you think that?**' rather than, '**Why do you think that?**'

ONE OF THE MOST FAMOUS OPEN-ENDED QUESTIONS IS, 'How are you feeling? How do you feel about about X now?' Questions about **opinions, feelings, values and beliefs** often really help you to get to the deepest level of meaning.

Open-ended questions help people to think about their answers and elaborate on their thinking, and they engage the emotions and tap creativity and problem solving approaches. Because responding to open ended questions makes us try to communicate meaning really clearly, they also enable us respond more deeply to the person/people with whom we are communicating. In this way, open-ended questions help to positively build and strengthen relationships.

## HOW A FACILITATOR CAN USE QUESTIONS EFFECTIVELY

**QUESTIONING IS THE MOST IMPORTANT TOOL YOU POSSESS AS A FACILITATOR.**

Questions test assumptions, invite participation, gather information, and probe for hidden points.

**REPEAT WHAT PEOPLE SAY TO MAKE SURE THEY KNOW THEY ARE BEING HEARD**, to let others hear their points a second time, and to clarify key ideas. (i.e. 'Are you saying . . . ? Do I understand you to mean . . . ?'). This technique is a way of summarising that values the speaker and shows you have been listening.

**SEEK COMMENTS FROM OTHERS** in the group about the individual ideas put forward by participants. In this way you can build on and enrich the input. This will help build a feeling of group ownership and represent collective thinking about an issue. (e.g. 'Mickey, is there anything that would you add to Millie's comments?')

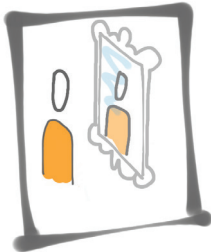
If participants make comments that are unclear or ambiguous, ask them to clarify so all the participants clearly understand. You should do this before the group continues. (e.g. 'Mickey, what is the comment you are making based on? Could you explain in more detail how you arrived at that conclusion?')



The term 'theological reflection' is used to denote a process in which an individual or small group reflects on their personal or collective experience(s) in light of their faith. The aim is not only to come to new understandings about the circumstances in which people live and the faith they profess, but to identify new ways of responding that validate their experience and give voice to their truth.

- Theological Reflection links 2,000 + years of tradition and the here and now
- It is interactive
- It threatens change to our theological base
- It asks questions about God: where is God in this and what does God think?
- It helps us to think about how what we are doing will help in the expansion of God's Kingdom.
- There is Revelation.
- There is an exploration of our own spirituality and relationship with God.
- It demonstrates the variety of ways that God speaks to us.

## WHAT DO WE BRING TO THEOLOGICAL REFLECTION?



- **Ourselves:** our life experiences, our beliefs, understanding and values
- **Tradition:** what has come down to us from the past and shaped us
- **Culture and society:** the context in which we live and have been formed
- **Bible:** our own reading of it, study and the influence of Church/Others
- **Church tradition:** our preferred or learned styles of worship, doctrinal beliefs and attitude to authority
- **God:** our knowledge, experience and relationship

1. Why is theological reflection important?
2. How might a Facilitator encourage theological reflection?
3. What questions might a facilitator ask to help a group to reflect theologically?
4. What prejudices or attitudes might we have developed which could be unhelpful in enabling theological reflection during a Bible Study?

### What Is Theological Reflection? A Guide from the Rev. Dr Richard Dickey

The term 'theological reflection' has come into prominence over the last thirty years in a variety of settings and serving a number of ends. It is used to denote a process in which an individual or small group reflects on their personal or collective experience(s) in light of their faith. The aim is not only to come to new understandings about the circumstances in which people live and the faith they profess, but to identify new ways of responding that validate their experience and give voice to their truth.

To reflect theologically is an essential element in faith formation. It is a principal means of integrating faith and life. To reflect on one's circumstances in life is as natural as breathing. It is that innate capacity and necessity that characterizes our human condition. It is that same capacity which enables us to recognize a reality greater than ourselves. To reflect on our life experiences in light of this greater reality is to reflect 'theo-logically.' It is to open us to the possibility of 'knowing' and 'being known' by what some call the 'Holy Other.' Such reflection draws us into the realm of faith. It grounds us in an unseen reality, alters our way of 'seeing' and shapes our responses in all of life's relationships.

The practice of reflecting theologically, likewise, is an essential ingredient in the process of spiritual discernment. It holds the inherent possibility of discerning God's presence and/or leading. When entered into from a 'contemplative stance,' theological reflection on one's experience is to be receptive to being guided by the Holy. It is to stand before our experience 'open' to what may or may not be revealed. In the words of the late Gerald May, it is to stand "undefended and open eyed." [Gerald May, *Addiction & Grace*, p. 107]. It is to stand as on tiptoe at a parade eagerly seeking to catch a glimpse of that which attracts but is fleeting. It is to notice what we may not have noticed before – about ourselves, about our experience, about the reality that gently beckons us.

## EXPERIENCE...REFLECTION...RESPONSE

*There are different models for 'doing' theological reflection. All hold that the act of reflecting theologically is critical to an informed faith and instrumental in fashioning faith-filled action in the world. All share these three elements in common: experience - reflection - response.*

**EXPERIENCE**

Current understandings of theological reflection are characterised by their focus on life experiences rather than on a doctrine, belief or practice. 'Experience' can include one's own or another's – present or past – individual or collective. It also can encompass an 'event' that one participates in or observes. One can even reflect theologically on a work of art such as a painting, a poem or a musical composition with great effect. Although any experience can be reflected on theologically, the most fruitful experiences are those which 'grab' or make a claim on us. Often it is those experiences that we can't get out of our mind, or that we keep going back to, that invite a more disciplined reflection on our part. They bother us or raise questions about how we responded or didn't respond. We might wonder what the experience says about who we are or what we profess. Or, perhaps, we are curious as to where or how the Divine might have been present in the experience. So, we let our experiences inform our faith stance and, whatever the impetus, we seek to learn from our experiences.

**REFLECTION**

The second major component that defines contemporary models of theological reflection centres on the sources or resources that are brought to bear in the reflection process. It is to choose the lenses by which to view our experiences. One lens may be that of our faith tradition with its history, sacred writings and collective beliefs and values. Another lens may be our culture with its diverse and changing (and often conflicting) voices, values and practices. Even more basic are the lenses forged by our own unique life-stories. For what we 'see' and 'hear' in any experience is coloured (and at times clouded or distorted) by past encounters.



Experience  
Reflection  
Response

To learn from our experiences requires that we become skilful observers of our interior world. It is to 'listen' with an inner ear and to 'see' anew with the mind's eye. In this context, reflection serves to bring to awareness what is already present but often deeply hidden. It is a way of getting in touch with feelings, attitudes and images; it is a way of making connections with prior learning. It also is a means of opening ourselves to a Source deep within us. To reflect on our experience with an intentional openness to the Holy is to assume 'a contemplative stance.' It is to place ourselves in a receptive posture. It is to ponder how and where the Divine may be encountering us. It is a way of perceiving that not only invites self-revelation but the discerning of what Spirit brings to mind in our times of reflection.

**RESPONSE**

Our experiences shape our perceptions, and our perceptions shape our experiences. Therefore, a third core element in theological reflection is the outcome or desired end of the reflection process. The intent goes beyond gaining clarity or new insights. It is more than just the product of our best efforts at analysing, and processing new information from whatever source or resource we bring to the task. The goal is response-oriented. It is to bring our faith to bear on life experiences in order to come to a new way of perceiving and a new way of responding.

Entered into with integrity, theological reflection challenges how we think and feel about ourselves, others, and our world. It opens us to a new reality - one stripped of our prejudices (i.e., pre-judgments) and our blindness in a given situation. To reflect theologically is to be vulnerable to change - change in our feelings, our attitudes, our perceptions, and our ways of responding. In a word, Theological Reflection is about transformation - in our thinking and in our perceiving - in our being and in our doing.

The approach used by Jesus in working with his Disciples is, in many ways, akin to medieval apprenticeships where the learner lived with the Master as skills and knowledge of the trade were developed. As Facilitators we need to understand that people learn best often by being part of a group and through a combination of input (teaching), demonstration or experience and reflection. It has been said that, 'Discipleship is not what you know, but what you are becoming.'

It is important to note that rarely in the Gospels do we see Jesus working with just an individual. He works with the inner core of Peter, James and John or with the Twelve or the whole group of wider followers. Jesus taught by modelling, by demonstration (miracles), through having his disciples live in community together, by formal discourse (Matthew 5 and repeatedly throughout John's Gospel) and by challenging assumptions and behaviours. In this way, he used a whole range of techniques that met the preferred learning styles of those who followed him. Most significantly, perhaps, Jesus accompanied the disciples whilst they accompanied him.

### Sometimes Jesus helped the adults who followed him learn by doing:

1. Luke 9 v1-6 & v10 (Sending out of the Twelve)
2. Mark 9 v14-28 (Healing of a demon possessed boy)
3. Matthew 14 v22-33 (Peter walks on water)

In Luke, the disciples were sent out to 'practise', but were given instructions about lifestyle and how to react in certain circumstances. On their return there was a space for reflection (Lk 9 v10). How important is reflection in the Christian life?

In Mark, Jesus demonstrated his power & authority by casting out demons. The disciples learned truths by observing. The disciples were allowed to fail – they couldn't cast out the demon though they'd been successful before. Failure did not lead to reprimand but to further learning (Mk 9 v28-29).

In Matthew, Jesus' walking on water demonstrates his Lordship. Peter's leaping onto the water allows us to see both how situations (even dangerous ones) can be used by God to help us grow in faith. Peter acts like this because his faith is growing – he understands more about the true identity of Jesus. Peter is gently chided by Christ for having doubts but is helped to safety. Having faith is not a final place of arrival. We are constantly learning and growing.

**Jesus was an artist in the telling of parables and used story to help the learning of those who followed him. He painted vivid word pictures to dramatise his teachings. The word "parable" comes from the Greek word παραβολη (parabolee). In the Greek para means beside, and ballo means to cast or throw. So parable means 'to cast beside'. A simple story is told, certain features of which are analogous or parallel to the points or principles one wishes to drive home. His parables were told in such a way that they were easy to visualise and thus to remember. It is important to understand that in a parable there are certain features that carry the moral or point. Other details are there simply to make the story vivid, memorable, and complete in the mind's eye of the hearer.**

Jesus told the short parable of the two debtors to Simon the Pharisee (Luke 7:36-47) to open his eyes and to help him see things differently. In Simon's eyes, he is the lesser debtor to God, and the immoral woman the greater. Yet Jesus shows Simon, with a piercing parable, that Simon has the lesser love for God!

In the Parable of the Sower (Matt 13v24-43) we can see how Jesus handled the situation when the disciples 'didn't get it'. The Parable of the Sower is an example of Jesus interpreting his own parable. We can take Christ's own interpretation of one of his parables, as a paradigm or pattern for interpreting his other parables.

- Quite intentionally called them away (often in pairs) from their families, occupations and everyday lives into a life of faith & self-denial.
- Asked them to follow him on his travels and to be in his presence continually.
- Brought them into a community of other followers (a new sort of family), and required them to live together (with all of the joy and difficulty such a life brings).
- Sometimes taught them formally, and other times through question and answer.
- Allowed them to practise and learn from experience – mistakes and all.
- Demonstrated through healing and miracle his identity, his power & authority and the coming of the kingdom.
- Modelled how to care for and meet the needs of others.
- Showed them how to draw close to God through meditation and prayer.
- Made it clear that suffering and sacrifice was at the heart of his ministry.
- Commanded them to be his witnesses and to bring others into a loving relationship with himself.

'Christian discipling is an intentional, largely informal learning activity. It involves two, or a small group of individuals, who typically function within a larger nurturing community and hold to the same beliefs. Each makes a voluntary commitment to the other(s) to form close personal relationships for an extended period of time, in order that those who at a particular time are perceived as having superior knowledge and/or skills will attempt to cause learning to take place in the lives of others who seek their help. Christian discipling is intended to result in each becoming an active follower of Jesus and a participant in his mission to the world.'

BOTH FROM (Sylvia Wilkey Collinson, 'Making Disciples, Paternoster Theological Monographs)

'Discipling enables every person to be treated as an individual learner of significance, not a product of mass education....The schooling model has been widely used within the faith community, but there is the danger that it may over-emphasise the need for right belief without touching the attitudes and values behind those beliefs or the behaviours which result from them. Christian beliefs, facts and knowledge are extremely important and the schooling model has been very successful in transmitting these..... But formal teaching alone will never communicate the full spectrum of what it means to be a follower of Jesus. That is a completely different way of life. A personal relationship with God may receive great emphasis in formal teaching, but the relationship itself is more easily caught than taught. People understand what it means by seeing and being with others who have such an experience.... It is one thing to teach about the fruit of the Spirit, and another thing for people to be provided with opportunities to develop these in their lives'.

'While Jesus endorsed both the formal and informal teaching models for members of the faith community by his use of them, discipling rather than schooling was the model which he commissioned his followers to use in taking his message to the world. It is a life-centred approach which they could use among future believers no matter what their nationality, gender, age, skills, resources or experience of life.'

Jesus asked questions all of his life. He made a habit of it. Someone has worked out that in Mark's gospel there are 67 episodes recorded of conversations taking place. Jesus asked 50 questions in those 67 accounts. If you met Jesus he was more likely to ask you something than he was to tell you something. In fact on one list circulating on the internet it says Jesus asked 137 questions during his ministry!

<http://mondaymorningreview.wordpress.com/2010/05/14/137questionsjesusasked/>



Name ..... Date .....

PLEASE WRITE A SENTENCE OR TWO OR SOME BULLET POINTS IN RESPONSE TO THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS:

■ What did you learn in this session about yourself? What difference will it make do you think?

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■ What did you learn in this session which will most help you as either a leader or member of a Christian study/learning group?

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■ Looking back over all 4 sessions on this programme what do you think went well and has been most helpful?

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■ Are there any ways you think the programme (the 4 sessions) as a whole could be improved?

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■ What are your next steps having completed the course?

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