



“Follow the Son”

Welcome!

Why “Spiritual Mothers”? Because we are all mothers to someone, somehow. We all nurture, encourage, teach, exhort, support....whether children or other adults, intentionally or maybe even unintentionally.

At the tea, we gathered to see what Scripture had to say about discipleship, and to make connections with one another, to help one another “follow the Son” more closely and with perseverance.

As you might know, sunflowers seek and follow the sun, which not only feeds them to be strong as they mature, but fills them with seeds that scatter to feed the birds. This is a pretty direct analogy to the concept of discipleship: we each follow God’s Son so we can grow and flourish to maturity, and produce seeds and fruit that feeds others. What is the seed? The Word of God. This is the primary “tool” that is the source of our discipleship and how we disciple others.

The tea was an opportunity to look at and talk about ways we can invest in one another and build up the Body of Christ to maturity in the faith. Attached is a little framework, followed by questions to prompt consideration of what this looks like in real-life application. As you talk with other sisters-in-Christ, you’ll build relationships, and that is our end-goal. After the tea, we’ll continue to work together to develop more opportunities to learn, disciple, invest in, and encourage one another.

For starters, we’ll look at the concepts of **influence, discipleship, and mentoring.**



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INFLUENCE:

We all influence those around us -in our personal “sphere of influence”—every day: our husbands, our children, our friends, our neighbors, our co-workers, and even the public-at-large who witness us as we move throughout our days. **Every godly woman is a spiritual mother to someone, whomever she pours her life and time into.** “Our” days are God’s days: given by Him for our stewardship, for His purposes, according to His determined times for our lives. Someone is always watching our actions (and attitudes!) and hearing our conversations.

Therefore if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creature; the old things passed away; behold, new things have come. Now all these things are from God, who reconciled us to Himself through Christ and gave us the ministry of reconciliation, namely, that God was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself, not counting their trespasses against them, and He has committed to us the word of reconciliation.

Therefore, we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God were making an appeal through us; we beg you on behalf of Christ, be reconciled to God. 2 Corinthians 5:17-20

Conduct yourselves with wisdom toward outsiders, making the most of the opportunity. Colossians 4:5

*Let no unwholesome word proceed from your mouth, but **only such a word as is good for edification according to the need of the moment, so that it will give grace to those who hear.** Ephesians 4:29*

Here is where “the rubber meets the road:” What are you doing with the days He gives?

- Do you point those in your sphere of influence towards Christ, or away from Him and onto temporal things of this world?
- Are you His; do you model and reflect your identity?
- What is your witness to the world; what do they see and hear?
- Who and what influences your life most?
- Who has had the greatest impact on your life? (Name 3 people & what they imparted to you.) Have they guided you closer or further in your relationship with Christ?
- What are some suggestions for how to be more effective at pointing others to Christ?

DISCIPLESHIP

Ideally, we influence others to draw near to Christ by looking like Him and pointing to Him through His Word. This can seem intimidating in daily practice. But we will “break it down” to be more manageable. Discipleship literally means **learning**. Discipleship consist of two main elements: **being a disciple and making disciples**.

And He summoned the crowd with His disciples, and said to them, “If anyone wishes to come after Me, he must deny himself, and take up his cross and follow Me. Mark 8:34

Are you a disciple of Christ? Do you know Him, believe Him, trust Him, follow Him? Is His glory more important to you than your will? Is reading and studying the Word of God a joy; is prayer a privileged and relatively easy and regular conversation for you? What additional understanding, teaching, and help do you need to grow in this area?

*And Jesus came up and spoke to them, saying, “All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth. Go therefore and **make disciples** of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, **teaching them to observe all that I commanded you**; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age.” Matthew 28:18-20*

God calls all believers to disciple others; therefore, we need to be equipped. Specifically, our role as women is to disciple our children and other women in our “sphere of influence.” When we are submitted to the indwelling Holy Spirit, He equips us with the right words at the right time, and illuminates understanding of His Word to His children. Therefore, a basic familiarity with the Word is the place to start; you don’t need to be an expert in chapter and verse, and “understand all mysteries and all knowledge” (1 Cor 13:2), but you do need to be faithful and submit to His leading. No perfection is necessary, and in fact our testimonies of struggle are often the most useful, beneficial tool. And we all continue to **be disciples** - learning more every day—even as we disciple others. No one has “arrived” at perfection... until we are in heaven. Ideally, as our relationships grow, every woman should have someone more mature who can teach her, peers to encourage her, and someone younger she can pour into.

What is it we “pour into” one another? What is it, exactly, we are to do? “Hold out the Word of life.” Be able to speak God’s truths -in concept, in Word, in application to life circumstances. Help people “connect-the-dots” to the Source of all life and all answers. “Reason through the Scriptures together.” Hold one another to account....which **ONLY** works in relationship with someone you trust. So first, love. Be trustworthy, grow in maturity, be genuine, invest in other women. Be intentional to **MAKE** time for what God tells us He deems important. In fact, He says just that in Titus 2.

Titus 2

¹But as for you, speak the things which are fitting for sound doctrine.² Older men are to be temperate, dignified, sensible, sound in faith, in love, in perseverance. ³ Older women likewise are to be reverent in their behavior, not malicious gossips nor enslaved to much wine, teaching what is good, ⁴ so that they may encourage the young women to love their husbands, to love their children, ⁵ to be sensible, pure, workers at home, kind, being subject to their own husbands, so that the word of God will not be dishonored.

*⁶ Likewise urge the young men to be sensible; ⁷ in all things show yourself to be an example of good deeds, with **purity in doctrine, dignified**, ⁸ **sound in speech which is beyond reproach**, so that the opponent will be put to shame, having nothing bad to say about us....*

*¹¹ For the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation to all men,¹² **instructing us to deny ungodliness and worldly desires and to live sensibly, righteously and godly** in the present age, ¹³ looking for the blessed hope and the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior, Christ Jesus, ¹⁴ who gave Himself for us to redeem us from every lawless deed, and to purify for Himself a people for His own possession, zealous for good deeds.*

- According to verses 2-3, what are the character traits an older mentor should have?
(The term *likewise* indicates elder women should have the same qualities as older men, in addition to more.)
- Why do you think the characteristics in verse 3 were directed specifically to women?
- According to verses 3b-4, what are the commands older women are to follow; what actions?
- You can only teach what you know; therefore, “loving your own husband and children well” is to be your own example and legacy, carried on through the generations. Younger women will grow into older women. Look at the whole Scripture in context. What character traits, attitudes, and roles are **all women**, therefore, to show and to learn to exhibit **by practice**?
- Does this look like the world’s definition of womanhood and marriage?
- Can this be achieved apart from the Spirit?

- Having looked at this passage, would you identify yourself as an older or younger woman, spiritually? Are you in a position to help or be helped? Does this “read” as optional?

MENTORING

To effectively live out God's Word in life-application, spiritually mature women need to come alongside younger women for encouragement and accountability. This can be as formal or informal as each woman desires; it can be planned times to meet and talk, teach and counsel, or it can be "doing life together."

In a mobile society where mothers and daughters, sisters, aunts and grandmothers no longer live in the same city, establishing intergenerational relationships among the sisterhood of the Body of Christ is essential. We were all designed for relationship, just as the Trinity is relational and God designed us for relationship with Him. In fact, in this way, women were designed "in His image" to share that attribute of God with the world; **we are the relationship-builders.**

*At this point, there is an opportunity to continue the type of discipleship we have looked at: **please prayerfully consider filling out the enclosed connection/comment card** (return it to the church).*

Spiritual Mother's Day Tea

May 13, 2017

Your name _____

Phone _____ email _____

1. MENTORING

____ I want a spiritual mother/mentor who will invest in me, to help me grow as a believer, to help apply God's Word to my life circumstances, to be a friend.

OR

____ I am interested in being a Titus 2 woman to help another woman grow in her faith, and have the time and availability to invest in her life, in my home or hers.

2. DISCIPLESHIP

____ I am interested in growing through Bible study.

The topics of greatest interest to me are (circle or other): _____

- | | | |
|--------------------|------------------------------|---------------------|
| Identity in Christ | Knowing & sharing the Gospel | Discipling others |
| Bible study tools | Memorizing Scripture | Spiritual gifts |
| Marriage | Parenting | Being a godly woman |
| Prioritizing | Homemaking | Service |

The times that work best for me are:

____ weekday mornings ____ Sunday mornings ____ Sunday nights

3. INFLUENCE

____ God has placed in my heart a desire for a specific ministry and I am willing to invest myself in getting it started, and interested in discussing details (type, description):