Jonathan Srock / General Adult

Can a Christian Say "No"?

Description

Jesus didn’t design our Christian rock to be a solo one. We need friends and confidants. We discussed what a spiritual mentor is and how to find one who has your best interests at heart. We also discuss how to become a spiritual mentor and do the best job you can.

Opening Prayer (10 Minutes)

Teaching and Discussion (70 Minutes)

What Is a Spiritual Mentor/Parent?

A spiritual mentor is another Christian who partners with you to help you grow in your discipleship and in the Lord. This person could be a prayer partner, a biblical counselor (unprofessional), and a spiritual guide.

Spiritual mentors help you navigate living in the world and being a Christian. They give you support, are a good listener, and have your very best at heart.

A spiritual mentor will be further along in the faith then you. It’s not about chronological age as much as it is about spiritual maturity. This Christian has grown more in the faith then you.

A spiritual mentor offers wisdom and maturity, perspectives in Christ you have not considered or known. This person should be well-versed in the Bible.

A spiritual mentor should also be seasoned in life and have wisdom on how to live in this world. He or she should be prepared to help you grow in your decision-making skills as a Christian.

A spiritual mentor is also a person you become accountable to because you have presented them with your struggles and the choices before you. They are not

people to obey as much as they are people who point us to Jesus and we obey Him. But they will know if we are not following their spiritual counsel.

Benefits of a Spiritual Mentor

Spiritual mentors see the options in our decisions and point us toward a godly approach to life.

You will grow as a disciple of Christ under the direction of a spiritual mentor.

A spiritual mentor helps you be accountable to Jesus in your behavior and actions.

A spiritual mentor will help you avoid pitfalls and mistakes in your Christian walk, temptation, and decisions. a spiritual mentor is a prayer partner to intercede for you, does spiritual warfare with you, and hold you up before Jesus.

Spiritual mentors become some of our closest friends and if we are vulnerable enough with them, they encouraged us and our people to look up to as we walk with Christ.

Biblical Examples of Spiritual Mentors

Moses and Joshua (Exodus 33:11; Numbers 11:26-30; 27:18-23 Deuteronomy 31:1-8)

Elijah and Elisha (1 Kings 19:16, 19-21)

Paul and Timothy (1 Timothy 1:2, 15; 2 Timothy 1:2; 2:1)

Paul and Titus (Titus 1:4-5)

John and his disciples (2 John 4; 3 John 4)

Qualifications for a Spiritual Mentor

A more seasoned Christian more mature than you spiritually and in the experience of life.

A Christian who knows the Bible and is an experienced person of prayer.

A good listener who will hear you out before offering suggestions and wisdom.

Preferably, a Christian of the same gender will help you to avoid any conflicts of interest.

A Christian who deeply cares about you and wants to see you grow in Christ and seed in your endeavors.

A person who will hold you accountable to the decisions you have made in consultation with them.

A Christian who is demonstrating the Christian life to you and is showing spiritual maturity and growth themselves.

Vulnerability in Your Relationship with Your Spiritual Mentor

We have been discussing in this group relationships that have a vulnerability for us. Our relationship with our spiritual mentor is one of vulnerability if we are willing to be open and upfront about our struggles.

It is hard to grow as a Christian if you are not vulnerable with your spiritual mentor. Being closed off also leaves you vulnerable to temptations and falling into sin, and allowing sin to have power over you as you keep it in the closet and in the dark.

Your spiritual mentor cannot offer you wisdom and counsel if you cannot be open and honest about what is happening in your life. Whatever counsel they can offer will not be everything you need.

You will not get prayer support and wise counsel with biblical insight from your spiritual mentor without an open and vulnerable relationship.

It is hard for us to trust another human being but if we do not find a person who can help us with growing in our faith and growing in Christ, exposing our lives and struggles to them, we could suffer spiritual atrophy.

We could even be mistakenly thinking that they are not the right spiritual mentor for us or that they have not done their job and helping us grow and helping us address our issues in life.

We tend to have a closed off approach to life and keep ourselves from getting hurt that way. In our American culture with rugged individualism, we do not feel like we can let another person in on our struggles and our life decisions.

We feel awkward and are afraid to really address the issues we have because of our culture and what we have learned from childhood. If we are in a good relationship

with the right spiritual mentor, it will bring healing to our life, wisdom to our choices and actions, and spiritual blessing.

Dangers of Having the Wrong Spiritual Mentor

Your spiritual mentor may abuse the vulnerability of your relationship by gossiping about your sins and situations, your lack of wisdom, or a number of things that are confidential between you and your mentor.

Your spiritual mentor could be concerned about their own ability to be your mentor, that you asked them to be your mentor and they might think of themselves more arrogantly and prideful.

Your spiritual mentor could actually cause spiritual abuse by abusing your relationship with them, offering unbiblical advice, not allowing you to consult anyone else, or taking advantage of you in some way.

Your spiritual mentor may try to not allow you to express your concerns to anyone about your mentorship with this person. You have every right if you think you are being abused in any way to seek someone else to talk about the relationship with.

Dealing with the Aftermath of the Wrong Spiritual Mentor

Once you have been hurt by a spiritual mentor, it is hard to trust anyone again in such a relationship.

Any time a vulnerable relationship has been exposed to abuse of any kind, you may never want to experience that kind of relationship again.

You should take some time away from pursuing another spiritual mentor. You may need to see a Christian counselor about your experience and may need time to heal.

Perhaps you have a relationship with another mature Christian that will seem safer and more secure. Do not jump into a new spiritual mentorship before you have healed from the old one.

You will need a safe person and safe environment before you should attempt to have another spiritual mentor. Perhaps the best opportunity would be with a pastor or an elder of the church.

Realize that nothing can guarantee you will have a healthy relationship with a new spiritual mentor.

Set up personal boundaries before a new spiritual mentorship. Space them off of the failures of your previous mentorship but ask God for wisdom on some boundaries you should set beyond the failures of the previous spiritual mentor.

When you enter into a new spiritual mentorship, explain to that mentor reasons why you have boundaries. It is unnecessary to name things, but you can spring the situations that led to you stopping your mentorship with that person.

Be careful not to be unforgiving, closed off to the new mentor, or unwilling to take the counsel of your new spiritual mentor.

Wisdom in Finding Your Spiritual Mentor

Review the qualifications for a good spiritual mentor who can help you to see the kind of person you are looking for.

Above all other steps in this process, pray and ask the Lord what you need to work on and who would best fit you as a spiritual mentor. After each step, return to prayer to get clarity.

List your strengths and weaknesses so you know what to expect from your mentor. Set up a time to meet either in person or by phone. Set a predetermined length to meet, like 12 weeks.

Carefully observe people you think would be able to help you the most in growing in Christ and as a person. You're looking for someone to disciple you, to hold you accountable, and to speak wise, biblical counsel into your life.

Write down a list of expectations you have for your spiritual mentor. What do you want to get out of being mentored by each of the people you are observing?

Do not pit one person against another as you are choosing your spiritual mentor. Choose one at a time to address and ask if they would be willing to be your spiritual mentor.

Do not be late to any of the meetings and show up to each one. Be respectful of your time and your mentor's time. Be prepared to talk about how you are progressing, listen to the mentor's input, pray for one another, evaluate your progress, and set goals for the next meeting.

How to Be a Godly Spiritual Mentor for Someone Else

You always have the relationship of growing in Christ yourself with a mentor who is further along than you are and the relationship of someone you are mentoring spiritually to help them grow.

Do not try to be their Savior. Only Jesus can help this person you are going to mentor. He will use you but He is the one making the difference.

Be humble and encouraging. Be strong when you must be, an encourager, and a prayer warrior with them.

Make sure you know you can help this person that is reaching out to you. If you cannot, be upfront and honest about your limitations or weaknesses.

Do not take on a spiritual mentorship for a member of the opposite gender. Do not take on a spiritual mentorship for a person who struggles with the same struggles you have.

Make your meetings one-on-one with the person. Don’t mentor too many people at one time.

Be careful about thinking you need this person to feel like you’re somebody in God’s Kingdom. Maintain the proper relational boundaries so that you do not become codependent on one another.

You are not a failure if the person you are mentoring does not take your advice or do everything you say. If they fall into sin or fail in the goals they have expressed, it is not your fault if they have not grown or achieved their goals. Relationships can be messy.

Keep the meetings to listening, giving counsel, evaluating, praying, and setting up goals for the next meeting. After the agreed upon time, reevaluate whether continued mentoring and guidance would be worthwhile or if the person needs to seek out someone else.

Lead by example, following Christ and then lead.ving them. Let Jesus be your guide by the Holy Spirit and do not make any moves or give any Council He is not leading you to give.

Ask the mentoree for grace, reminding them that everyone makes mistakes and you are not perfect.

Application (10 Minutes)