



BRIEF OVERVIEW OF DOING ONE-TO-ONES

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1. A BIBLICAL BASIS FOR DOING ONE-TO-ONES

See verses such as:

- I Kings 19:21. Elijah and Elisha
- Acts 18:24-26. Apollos, Aquila and Priscilla
- Romans 15:14. "...instruct one another"
- Galatians 6:2. "Carry one another's burdens"
- Colossians 3:16. "...teach and admonish one another"
- Hebrews 3:13. "encourage one another"
- James 5:19-20. help the backslider

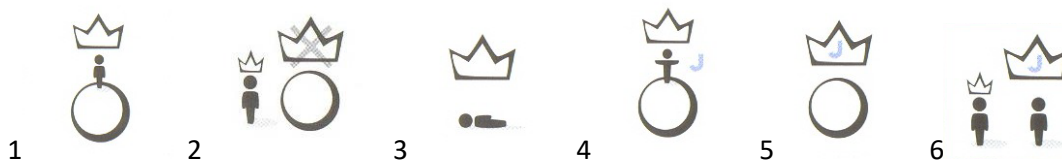
2. DIFFERENT KINDS OF ONE-TO-ONES

Prayer Partnerships:

- Prayer partners might meet once a week or once a fortnight.
- There can be open sharing in a safe atmosphere.
- A passage might be read before praying, but there's little structured Bible study.
- A typical session might involve a cup of tea, general chatting, sharing for prayer, prayer. There might be fifteen minutes of sharing and fifteen minutes of prayer. Prayer partners can pray more than once in any given session.
- Benefits: prayer; encouragement to pray out loud; answers to prayer a mutual blessing; builds friendships; anyone can do it.
- Dangers: can get a bit exclusive.

Evangelistic One-to-Ones:

- For someone who is really interested in the gospel.
- It's a good idea to have a little summary of the gospel in your Bible.
- "Two Ways to Live" is a helpful and sound little booklet which takes people through the basics of the gospel message.



- If you're going to meet more than once, something like "Christianity Explained" or "Just for Starters" works well.
- The idea is to help people to understand fully what the gospel message is all about and what it means in real terms.

- If you don't feel able to do this, take another more experienced Christian along with you. Maybe the next time, you'll be happy to do it.
- Benefits: a good opportunity for the non-Christian to ask questions; a good opportunity to spend some time with someone really enabling him/her to understand the gospel and its implications (without which people will not really come to faith); most can do it.
- Dangers: disappointment.

Mentoring New Christians:

- One-to-one mentoring is the best thing which can be offered to a new believer.
- It gives the opportunity to ask questions in a no-embarrassment context.
- You could work through books of doctrine, books on Christian living, important Bible books.
- The mentor does the majority of the preparation, but the new Christian should also read through and think about any passages in advance.
- Benefits: brilliantly fulfils the biblical commandment to make disciples as opposed to converts.
- Dangers: mentoring sessions should not be seen as an alternative to other meetings of the church.

Accountability:

- For someone who is struggling with a particular issue.
- For two men or two women who want to challenge each other about really living the Christian life.
- There must be absolute honesty. Partners must not shy away from probing and from asking difficult and challenging questions; nor must they shy away from answering questions honestly, even if it's painful or embarrassing. Not everyone can cope with this!
- Good questions to ask might include:
 1. Have you been consistent in reading the Bible and praying daily?
 2. Have you been enriched by your Bible study and praying?
 3. What is something you have learned from the Bible this week?
 4. Do you find yourself resisting God in any area of your life?
 5. What specific things are you praying for yourself?
 6. Are there any unresolved conflicts in your circle of relationships right now?
 7. What are your greatest fears at the present time?
 8. Have you spent the right time at work, at rest, at church and with family?
 9. Have you taken care of your body through exercise, proper eating, and sleep?
 10. What have you done to play or relax?
 11. Have you been completely above reproach in your financial dealings?
 12. Have you honoured God with what you have let your eyes see?
 13. Have you kept a pure mind?
 14. Have you avoided situations which might tempt you to pursue an inappropriate relationship or which might give the appearance of evil?
 15. Have you dealt with issues the Holy Spirit has prompted you about?
 16. Have you fulfilled your responsibilities in the home by being an example and (for men) by leading family devotions?
 17. Have you looked for opportunities to share the gospel with others?
 18. Have you taken opportunities to share the gospel with others?
 19. Have you lied in any of your answers?
- Benefits: someone else knowing the worst about us can be a deterrent to sin.
- Dangers: doesn't work unless there is open honesty; risk of breach of confidentiality.

Mutual Encouragement:

- Two Christians who meet together on a regular basis just to read the Bible or to read good Christian books together. There are a number of different models:

- Both agree in advance to read a chapter of a Bible book and to think about it in advance; the one-to-one time is then spent sharing what has been learned. A good Bible commentary can help, especially if the two people each read a different one.
- Or both agree in advance to read a Christian book or a part of a Christian book; the one-to-one time is then spent discussing it. What did you agree with? What did you not agree with? What should you change in response to what you've read? What was confusing?
- Or both agree in advance to study a Christian doctrine; the one-to-one time is then spent discussing it. Perhaps the two people might read a bit of a Systematic Theology in advance.
- Or both listen to a recorded sermon together and then discuss it.
- Or the two people take it in turns to prepare and to lead a discussion-based Bible study.
- Or both meet with no prior preparation to read a chapter of the Bible or of a book together and then to discuss it. The disadvantage of this is that it can lead to pooling ignorance!
- Benefits: helps stimulate understanding of the word of God; anyone can do it.

Family Devotions:

eg after tea.

- The husband/father of the family should be responsible for leading family devotions.
- Get into this habit before children come along, or you'll probably never do it!
- It doesn't need to take all day. Just ten minutes reading a Bible passage and (perhaps) some devotional comments on it, followed by prayer is all it takes.
- There are helpful resources out there, including Table Talk for families, and Enjoying God Always by Peter Jeffery for couples.
- Benefits: helps bind the family together; sets a good model for children; mutual encouragement, challenge and instruction.

3. SOME PRACTICAL TIPS

- Listen! Learn to listen with your ears open and your mouth shut, which isn't always easy. Often people want to confide in someone, but they won't – or, at least, they won't share the whole story – until they feel very comfortable. People don't necessarily need your great wisdom; they need someone who will love them enough to listen.
- Ask key questions! Ask the right questions of any book or Bible passage you are looking at. (What did this mean to the original readers? What does it mean to me? What do I not understand? What challenges me?) If you are in an accountability one-to-one, probe, clarify, and be direct if need be.
- Watch your body language!
- Write things down if you need to! After the event, jot down things which you may want to follow up next time.
- Set a time limit! If you're going to meet regularly, you don't need to spend three hours each time doing it. Find an amount of time which suits you both and then stick to it as closely as possible without being unhelpfully rigid.
- Don't break confidences, but also don't allow yourself to get into the situation where you cannot seek help from others! Don't be afraid to point your one-to-one partner to a pastor (or even to a doctor!) if necessary.
- Don't deal with members of the opposite sex alone!
- Be realistic! Don't assume that you can sort out any problem your one-to-one partner may have.
- Use the Bible! Open your Bibles and read together.
- Keep praying! Pray before, during and after your sessions.