

THE TURNING

Yinka Oyekan
@ The Gate

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How to use this course

Great, you want to help with discipling new Christians!

Since it began in 2016, The Turning has become one of the largest church-based ministries to pray for people on the streets of the UK and Europe. The heart of The Turning is to equip churches and church leaders across towns in Europe to share the gospel of Jesus Christ and train them to disciple those who respond.

The Turning discipleship course is unlike any other discipleship course you've used before. Why? Most discipleship courses, such as Alpha, are group-based, but this is different; it offers the respondent a one-to-one discipleship experience. This booklet is a tool to enable you to develop this one-to-one discipleship. It helps people who respond in prayer on the streets in two ways. Firstly, it helps them develop a meaningful relationship with a Christian while using the Bible as a follow-up tool. Secondly, it provides, through that discipleship relationship, an understanding of how church works and how they can engage with it.

The many excellent group-based courses, such as Alpha, are helpful primarily for the family and friends of Christians, and for people who have been witnessed to over a period of time. One-to-one discipleship is essential in The Turning, to change a tenuous link with a stranger into a relationship within which discipleship can occur – a discipleship relationship. The Turning discipleship course builds a link which could develop into a friendship or, at least, form an association within which the respondent can see and understand, through the biblical teachings of Christ, the benefit of personal growth. It shows them how, by following his teachings, they can become his disciple. Essentially this is a tool that helps them move from being a stranger to the Bible and a stranger to the church to being a disciple of Christ.

This tool also serves a secondary purpose – to train Christians who have never had the privilege of discipling people one-to-one before. The course will help you if you feel you lack confidence or the skills required. By following these simple steps you will gain greater confidence in the discipleship process. Anyone can do it!

There is a difference between seeing your friends respond and reaching out to strangers. Everyone engaged in the process of trying to bring the respondents into community life must bear this point in mind: if those who respond on the streets had wanted to attend church, they would have done so a long time ago. However, the fact that they're open to Christ and willing to engage with him is an indication that they are open to God; while many of them will not understand the full implications of their prayers, many others will. We have found that many respondents are happy to meet up later and talk through the decision they made on the streets.

Practical considerations

There are practical considerations that you have to ensure you pay attention to. The first is that the first few one-to-one follow-up meetings must be held in a safe public venue. We advocate that the initial setting for the one-to-one discipleship follow-up is a neutral venue over a cup of coffee (or cup of tea or any kind of soft drink!) – somewhere that enables the discipleship course to be used. We advocate a public venue because it provides a safe place for both the respondent and the Christian doing the follow-up, giving both parties an opportunity to get to know one another.

We advocate that before you go to meet a respondent for the first time, you let someone else know (perhaps someone in your church) who you are meeting, where and at what time. You should also arrange to call back to let them know you have finished the meeting and are safely on the way back home.

The meeting itself will take around an hour and a half – an hour at the venue, with 15 minutes getting to the appointment and 15 minutes to get back home. Make sure you give yourself plenty of time to arrive at the agreed time. It is essential that we are faithful, once a meeting has been set up, but don't be discouraged if you must rearrange the meeting several times at the request of the respondent.

On your way to the meeting, pray. It will do you a world of good! Very often we carry anxieties and fears, and prayer helps to calm our nerves and gives God a chance to minister into our heart even as we seek to minister to the respondent. We would also encourage you to share the follow-up journey with your fellow home group members, so that they can cover you in prayer.

(We, of course, respect the respondent's confidentiality, and we will not share personal or sensitive information.)

At the meeting it is important that you trust the Holy Spirit to give you the words to say; remember that most of us Christians have heard countless sermons and know a lot more than we give ourselves credit for. In any case, if the respondent asks a question for which we have no answer, all we have to say is, 'I'll find out and get back to you.'

At the end of each session, always set a date for the next meeting before you leave. This way, you ensure continuity for yourself and the respondent.

How this course is formatted

The format of the discipleship sessions is consistent throughout. Each session is organised into four clear sections with understandable goals, and is entirely question-based.

We always start with a section headed 'Aims and goals for this session', in which clear goals are set, so that everyone involved understands what is a successful outcome and can assess if the session has achieved its purpose. We strongly encourage you to give the respondent a copy of the material, so that they can follow, see what questions are coming up and so avoid any unnecessary embarrassment.

The second section, 'Caring for you: Let's make sense of your journey so far', asks key questions about the well-being and spiritual development of the respondent since the last meeting.

The third section includes one or more theological questions about 'Understanding your faith'. This is the biblical part of each session and is intended to bring the respondent into a relationship with the Bible. It is important to remember that many people nowadays have very little biblical understanding, so we encourage you to help them access the Bible they have been given. This is a critical part of the course, because if the respondent engages with the Bible they are likely to grow faster and mature much more quickly than otherwise.

We then proceed to the fourth and last section: 'Purposeful lifestyle – living a prophetic lifestyle'. This part of the course aims to explore with the respondent,

in light of the Scriptures, how they should now seek to live out their lives.

You'll notice that the whole course is a series of questions. These questions are designed to elicit discussion and facilitate communication. The questions are intended and designed to provoke thought about the respondent's spiritual journey.

Key skills

There are eight key skills that you will need to develop if you're going to do a good job. These are:

1. Patience

Getting that initial meeting with the respondent requires patience. We must remember that, for many new converts, we are not on the top of their priority list. Therefore, we need to be patient if we have to call them several times before gaining the first appointment, or if they fail to turn up, having promised to do so.

2. Consistency

We must ensure that we are consistent. Having made an appointment to meet the respondent, we must never cancel it without extraordinary reasons.

3. Tenacity

The British disposition is to avoid being pushy and refrain from being insistent. We must be willing to keep on ringing the respondent until we finally meet up with them for the cup of tea or coffee (unless, of course, they specifically ask us to stop calling).

4. Listening ear

The course is written with the respondent in mind. The course is full of questions and so it is important that you develop the skill of good listening.

5. Non-judgemental approach

There are many things that the Bible speaks of regarding lifestyles and behaviours that are not compatible with walking with Christ. Our job, when we go out onto the streets, is not to be condemning of people but to love them and assure them that God loves them and is compassionate. You must avoid the temptation to correct or rebuke people; instead, trust the

Holy Spirit to convict where he needs to. If a direct question is asked about sinful behaviour, offer the respondent your understanding of what the Bible says, by getting them to read the Scriptures. Do not just give an opinion.

6. Prayer

It is impossible to achieve the purposes of God by simply giving people information. There is a spiritual battle for the souls of the individuals you are sharing the gospel with. Therefore, prayer is an important foundation to all our follow-up endeavours.

7. The building of a discipleship relationship

The goal of this journey is not so much to build a friendship (although that may come) as to help the respondent develop a lifestyle in which they take responsibility for their own spiritual development. This course provides them with the means to explain that journey to those around them. At the end of each session, you should ensure that they know where you are up to in the course, so that they can go back and share what they've gone through with their family and friends.

8. End goal

You should always keep the end goal in mind. The end goal is to help the respondent become a disciple of Jesus. Regardless of whether they choose to come to our church or go to another church, we should keep this goal in mind. We are making converts to Christ and not converts of our church.

The benefits of this form of discipleship

This type of discipleship benefits everybody. It benefits you because you begin to live a lifestyle that is obedient to Christ's command that all disciples should be engaged in the job of making disciples. If you pursue this format you will essentially build the capacity to do it consistently for the rest of your life.

The church benefits because pursuing a discipleship program in which every member learns how to disciple others results in the mobilisation of the whole church. In truth, through such discipleship we take the church outside its walls and set a trend for future generations. By bringing individual discipleship needs into our home group prayer time, we ensure

that accountability for evangelism and discipleship is part of Christian development.

Finally, for the converts and respondents the benefits are clear. They get a guiding friend to help them navigate their personal journey and, when the time is right for them to come into church fellowship, they have somebody to help them explain how church works. Most importantly, they have someone to explain the Bible to them in a non-threatening environment.

We encourage inviting respondents to any social events that churches hold, but avoid inviting them to church services until a relationship of some kind has been formed. The more the respondent trusts us, the more likely they are to be able to cope with our church services.

1 Who is Jesus?

Aims and goals for this session

- Making sense of your journey so far.
- We need to be able to explain who Jesus is.
- We need to start learning from Christ's example.

Caring for you: let's make sense of your journey so far

Questions worth considering

How are you?

Have you been praying?

Have you told people what you have done yet?

How would you share your story with me?

Why we explore this

Pastoral care

Are you growing?

Are you sharing?

Are you growing in understanding?

Understanding your faith

Would you be able to explain who Jesus is?

- The name Jesus means 'saviour', while the title Christ means 'anointed'.
- He was born of a virgin (Matthew 1.18).
- Because he is God, Christ has unique attributes (John 1.1).
- His very nature is divine (Philippians 2.6).
- In Christ, the fullness of God dwells (Colossians 2.9–10).

An example from life:

- Our lives should reflect Christ’s teaching.
- If it was possible to place a mirror in front of God, the image reflected would be that of Jesus Christ. His life reflected God’s word (Hebrews 1.2–3).

How should I respond?

- I should acknowledge that Jesus is Lord of all situations (Matthew 14.26–33; see also Philippians 2.9–11).

What do I need to understand?

- Christ’s mission was to make salvation known to humankind (Mark 2.15–17).
- His authority extends to the forgiving of sins (Mark 2.5–7).
- The reason why he chose to die was to rescue sinners (Mark 10.45).

What can I do to make a difference?

- Tell someone how much you value what Christ has done for you.

What should I do now?

- Explain to someone you love and trust who Jesus is and why you have given your life to him.

2 The Bible

Aims and goals for this session

- To gain an understanding of how important the Bible is.
- To identify how God speaks to us personally through the Bible.
- To understand how to apply the Bible to our daily lives.

Caring for you: let's make sense of your journey so far

Questions worth considering

Is there anything I can help you with?

Are there any new challenges you are facing?

Do you find it easy sharing your faith with others?

What new things have you learned?

Why we explore this

Pastoral care

Are you growing?

Are you sharing

Are you growing in understanding?

Understanding your faith

Do you understand why the Bible is so important?

- The Bible is described as God's word (2 Timothy 3.16–17).
- The Bible is your instruction book for a properly functioning life; just as electrical appliances need handbooks, so do we.
- The Bible shows us how to choose between those things that will bring joy and those things that can wreck life and make it dysfunctional.
- The Bible also teaches us how to fix things that have gone wrong in our life.
- The Bible is a personal book; it is a book given to you from God (2 Timothy 3.16–17).

An example from life:

- Relationships are about loving one another. One of the ways we express relationships is through communication; we talk to each other. The Bible is God's love letter to us, expressing how he feels about us and the world in which we live. The Bible is alive, sharp, and useful for many purposes (Hebrews 4.12).

How should I respond?

- Recognise that God is trying to plant his word in your heart like a seed (Matthew 13.1–9).

What do I need to understand?

- God watches over the seed, his word (Isaiah 55.10–11).
- The growth of the seed is directed by God (Mark 4.26–29).

What can I do to make a difference?

- Read the Bible as a discipline.

What next?

- You could begin to memorise scriptures as an additional step, and you can use a daily devotional in addition to this study. A daily devotional could be a Bible reading plan, a series of things to think about or a selection of Bible verses with an explanation. It's not intended just to give you more information, but to change your heart and bring you closer to God and his plans for your life.

3 Receiving the Holy Spirit

Aims and goals for this session

- To understand who the Holy Spirit is.
- To understand and receive the baptism of the Holy Spirit.

Caring for you: let's make sense of your journey so far

Questions worth considering

Has God been speaking to you through the Bible?

Have you noticed any spiritual changes in your life?

How excited are you about your new faith?

Are there things you have received through revelation?

Why we explore this

Pastoral care

Are you growing?

Are you sharing?

Are you growing in understanding?

Understanding your faith

When do we first receive the Holy Spirit?

- When we become Christians, God seals the transaction by giving us the Holy Spirit.
- The infilling Holy Spirit demonstrates that God accepts us as his children (Galatians 4.6).
- When we become Christians, the Holy Spirit lives in us as a guarantee of his promises (Ephesians 1.13–14).

So what is the baptism in the Holy Spirit?

- Jesus encouraged believers to wait until they had experienced the power of the Holy Spirit in their lives (Luke 24.49; John 20.19–22; Acts 1.4–5).
- Some believers don't realise they can receive an empowering of the Holy Spirit (Acts 19.1–7).
- Jesus told his followers to expect power when the Holy Spirit came (Acts 1.8).

- The day of Pentecost was when the Holy Spirit first came upon the disciples (Acts 2.1–4).

Purposeful lifestyle – living a prophetic lifestyle

An example from life:

- In some translations of the Bible, Jesus tells his disciples to wait until they're 'clothed' with the power of the Holy Spirit. No one turns up at a wedding dressed in a swimsuit! Just as it is important for us to be clothed suitably for every occasion, it is important that we are properly 'clothed' for our Christian life. The Holy Spirit enables us to live the life that we are called to (Luke 24.49).

What does the Holy Spirit do?

- The Holy Spirit enables us to intervene where natural ability is limited (Luke 4.18–19).
- The Holy Spirit convicts us (makes us aware) of sin (John 16.8–11).

How can I get involved?

- You can receive the Holy Spirit, but make sure you have turned away from any sin in your life ('repented') (Acts 2.38).
- You can read more about the gifts the Spirit gives Christians (1 Corinthians 12).

What next?

- Read the first ten chapters of the book of Acts and see how often the Holy Spirit is involved in helping the early church. In your prayer time, tell Jesus you are thirsty for him (John 7.37–38).

4 Baptism in water / Public declaration of faith

Aims and goals for this session

- To understand why baptism is important.
- To learn from Christ's example.
- To understand what baptism does for us.
- Have you been baptised?
Some Christian denominations baptise infants, while others prefer to wait until the person being baptised is an adult.

Caring for you: let's make sense of your journey so far

Questions worth considering

How is your new faith impacting on your life?

Do you have important questions you need answered?

Have your friends noticed the changes in you?

What has been your biggest spiritual challenge so far?

Why we explore this

Pastoral care

Are you growing?

Are you sharing?

Are you growing in understanding?

Understanding your faith

What do you know about baptism?

- The word 'baptism' in the Bible is a Greek word, *baptizo*, which means 'to make fully wet'.
- Baptism is in essence a declaration that you are dead to your old life (Romans 6.3–6).
- For friends and family, your baptism is an outward sign of an inward change (1 Peter 3.21).
- Jesus was himself baptised as an example of how important a requirement it is (Matthew 3.13).

An example from life:

- Jesus himself chose to be baptised (Matthew 3.16).

How should I respond?

- Jesus said that we should proclaim the good news and baptise those who respond (Mark 16.15–20).

What do I need to understand?

- Baptism is what Jesus wants us to do (Acts 2.38).
- A spiritual event takes place in the waters of baptism (Colossians 2.12).
- Jesus was anointed with the Spirit during his baptism (Luke 3.22).

What can I do to make a difference?

- Read Romans 6 and see if there is anything else you can glean about the impact of baptism on a believer.

What next?

- What do you think you should do now?

5 Time with God in prayer

Aims and goals for this session

- To understand the biblical principle of a devotional lifestyle.
- To examine the significance of spending time with God in the daily life of a believer.
- To identify how we can have a fruitful devotional time each day.

Caring for you: let's make sense of your journey so far

Questions worth considering

Have you had any further thoughts on baptism?

Have you had to apologise to God about anything?

Have you shared your spiritual story with loved ones?

Is there anything you need to have explained to you?

Why we explore this

Pastoral care

Are you growing?

Are you sharing?

Are you growing in understanding?

Understanding your faith

What do you think is the value of spending time with God?

- Jesus spent time in prayer (Matthew 14.23).
- Prayer helps us avoid falling into temptation (Mark 14.38).
- Jesus sometimes prayed all night (Luke 6.12).
- Jesus spent time with God when things were hard (Mark 14.32–36).
- Before making important decisions, like choosing the 12 disciples, Jesus spent the night in prayer (Luke 6.12–13).

An example from life:

- We all love a good meal: it nourishes us. God’s word does the same: it feeds us on a daily basis, as God uses that time to speak to us (Matthew 4.4).

How should I respond?

- Work out what would be a sustainable and consistent prayer and devotional lifestyle.

What do I need to understand?

- Everyone who spends time with (or ‘waits upon’ the Lord in prayer or devotion is strengthened by him (Isaiah 40.31).

What can I do to make a difference?

- Taking time to meditate will have a direct spiritual and beneficial impact on your life (Psalm 1).

What next?

- Make two lists of things that are important to pray for – one for yourself and one for your friends and family – and practise praying and noting when God answers your prayers.

6 The centrality of worship

Aims and goals for this session

- To understand what praise and worship mean.
- To examine the significance of praise and worship.
- To identify how to correctly praise and worship our Father in heaven.

Caring for you: let's make sense of your journey so far

Questions worth considering

Have you tried to pray for others you care about?

Do you feel more knowledgeable?

Have you tried to convert anyone?

What does Jesus mean to you now?

Why we explore this

Pastoral care

Are you growing?

Are you sharing?

Are you growing in understanding?

Understanding your faith

Do you understand why worship is so important?

- God is looking for true worshippers (John 4.23–24).
- Other things, and people, can get in the way of worshipping God (Luke 4.8; see also Romans 1.25).
- God wants us to live a lifestyle of worship (Romans 12.1–2).

An example from life:

- People coming into an environment where true Christians are worshipping God experience God's presence and often become aware (or 'convicted') of their sin; but, however they come, they should always leave feeling built up (1 Corinthians 14.24–25; see also 1 Corinthians 14.26).

How should I respond?

- We should worship God with a grateful and thankful heart (Hebrews 12.28).

What do I need to understand?

- You are about to learn a lot of new things – some amazing, some exciting – but you must not forget that it is God who should be the focus of our awe and worship (Colossians 2.18–19).

What can I do to make a difference?

- Commit to attend a worship service as a priority in your life, and be committed to joining in.

What next?

- Music is a great tool in worship. Why don't you explore? There are modern Christian songs in almost every style of music imaginable, as well as the older hymns.

7 The wages of sin

Aims and goals for this session

- To understand what sin is.
- To identify what we should do about sin in our lives.
- To be clear about the consequences of sin.
- To understand the Father's continuing attitude to us when we rebel.

Caring for you: let's make sense of your journey so far

Questions worth considering

How is your family?

Do you find worship helpful?

What do others think about your new interest in worship?

Do you value quiet times with God?

Why we explore this

Pastoral care

Are you growing?

Are you sharing?

Are you growing in understanding?

Understanding your faith

Do you understand why sin is so destructive?

- Jesus said, 'What comes from your heart is what makes you unclean' (Mark 7.20–23).
- Everyone has sinned and failed to live up to God's standard (Romans 3.23; see also Ecclesiastes 7.20 and Isaiah 64.6).
- What happens when sin takes hold of the heart? (James 1.15)
- What does sin ultimately give by way of reward? (Romans 6.23)
- Sin includes not just acts, but also wrong thoughts (Matthew 5.28).
- If we repent of our sins, we are promised fresh strength from God (Acts 3.19–20).

An example from life:

- The story of the lost son is the story of being set free from slavery to sin (Luke 15.11–32).
- We also should confess our sin (1 John 1.9).

How should I respond?

- ‘Repentance’ is a big word that means ‘turning away from sin’. It is an important act of the will (Acts 3.19).
- A change of heart should be reflected in how we speak about others (Ephesians 4.29).
- Repentance should also reflect a willingness to put right any wrongs we have done to others (Luke 19.8).

What do I need to understand?

- Love is the key to finding the grace to forgive those who have hurt us and the courage to put right our own sins, where possible (Mark 12.30–31).

What can I do to make a difference?

- Testifying to how God has helped you overcome sin is an encouragement to others.

What next?

- Consider going through a prayer ministry time with someone you can trust, at which you can be sure you have dealt with the past sins in your life.

8 How to live free from past issues

Aims and goals for this session

- To understand that some battles in your life are covert operations by an unseen enemy.
- To see the need for a spiritual worldview and not just a pragmatic or 'earthly' one.

Caring for you: let's make sense of your journey so far

Questions worth considering

Are there difficult struggles in your Christian walk?
How is your relationship with God developing?
What recent feedback have you had about your faith?
How has your faith changed your view of the world?

Why we explore this

Pastoral care
Are you growing?
Are you sharing?
Are you growing in understanding?

Understanding your faith

Humanity is in a conflict with forces other than human

- From the Garden of Eden onward, this conflict has impacted humanity (Genesis 3.15).
- Humanity's sin allowed evil into the world.
- The things stored in the heart are what cause difficulty in the world (Matthew 15.18).

Understanding this helps us make sense of this broken world

- Some of the struggles we face in this life are as a direct result of spiritual forces opposing humanity (Ephesians 6.12 and Revelation 12.7–12).
- To overcome problems, we need help to think differently about them (2 Corinthians 10.3–5).

- Things happen in life that hurt us and affect our well-being. But God is a safe place to go to in times of trouble (Psalm 18.2).

Purposeful lifestyle – living a prophetic lifestyle

An example from life:

- We are warned not to let the devil gain a foothold in our hearts (Ephesians 4.26–28).
- Just as the world is in bondage to sin and evil, so there are areas of our lives that are strongholds, where wrong ideas or thoughts are so deeply entrenched that it is hard to make progress in life (1 Samuel 22.4–5 and 1 Samuel 24.22).
- Submit yourself to God and you will resist the devil (James 4.7–10).

How should I respond?

- Start by forgiving those who have hurt you in the past. Confession releases us from being locked into the past (1 John 1.9).
- Confession releases healing (James 5.16).
- Acknowledge that Jesus is your deliverer (Luke 13.16 and 1 John 2.3–17).

What can I do to make a difference?

- Choose not to live in such a way that your actions present an obstacle to faith for other believers (Romans 14.13–15).

What next

- Consider asking for prayer, especially for hidden issues that you struggle to get over.

9 Your church family

Aims and goals for this session

- To understand what it means to be 'church'.
- To understand the relationship between Jesus and his church.
- To explore the relationships we form with each other.
- To see the relationship between the church and the world.

Caring for you: let's make sense of your journey so far

Questions worth considering

Do you attend church regularly?

Are you part of a small group?

Do you contribute to church life in any way?

How are you developing your spiritual life?

Why we explore this

Pastoral care

Are you growing?

Are you sharing?

Are you growing in understanding?

Understanding your faith

What do you understand the church to be?

- Jesus is head of the church (Ephesians 1.22–23).
- The church is the Body of Christ empowered by the Spirit (John 15.1–17 and 1 Corinthians 12.12–31).
- Christians are being built, through Christ, into a meaningful relationship with each other (Ephesians 2.22).
- Jesus wants the church to remain connected to him (John 15).
- The church is meant to be a force for good in the world (Matthew 5.13–16).
- Jesus has promised that the church will withstand assaults against it (Matthew 16.18–19).
- The church gathered should be devoted in prayer and study (Acts 2.42).
- The church should evangelise the world (Matthew 28.19–20).

An example from life:

- Jesus says, ‘I am the vine, and you are the branches’ (John 15.5) and explains that a branch separated from the vine is useless.

What should I do about attending church?

- Every believer should attend church in order to fellowship and worship God together (Act 2.42).

What do I need to understand about my contribution to church life?

- Each part of the body is significant and essential (Romans 12.4–8).
- In times of trouble, the Church is there to be a caring refuge (2 Corinthians 8–9).
- The church is not a collection of perfect people, but of people just like you, trying to live to please God.

What next?

- Make a decision that you are going to be part of church, whatever flaws you discover there.

