

Traits of a GB Relationship: Teachability and Desire to Improve

As I begin to conclude this series on the traits of a God Buddy relationship, I need to include Teachability and the willingness to improve can help you become more Christ-like and help your life in many ways.

A desire to learn about improvement often comes by becoming a mentee, student, or disciple of someone you admire. While being a “disciple” is most often used in relation to your faith-life, it can also mean learning from a man that “has been down the road” before you and has the life experiences you need.

Discipleship Definition

According to Dictionary.com, the literal answer to the question, “What is discipleship?” is “To be a learner”. For example:

- A person who is a pupil or adherent to the doctrines of another.
- One who embraces and assists in spreading the teaching of another.
- Any follower of another person.

Sp becoming a disciple – both for spiritual and personal

growth, helps you become a well-rounded and godly man.

Learning from a God Buddy

Having a deep and trusted God Buddy relationship allows you to hear and learn about the ups and downs of life so you can manage through them well.

As I wrote in the post **Finding Your First God Buddy**, C. S. Lewis once said *“Friendship ... is born at the moment when one man says to another “What! You too? I thought that no one but myself . . .”* Pick the situation...we all have some. These often occur the case when you meet someone with experience in an area you are lacking.

For me, it started with a need on my work-life balance problem that I wrote about in the post **Why I needed a God Buddy**.

At first, I needed to humble myself and admit that I needed to learn how to get through the struggle of a major account responsibility in my fast-growing career. The improvement came after finding my first God Buddy, Bill Johnson who had gone through some work transitions himself.

Bill was part of the men’s group at my church and helped me understand the importance of priorities and how studying the Bible could apply to my life. Bill showed a willingness to learn from the Bible; a trait that I cherish in him to this day. Given my lack of any understanding of the Bible, I quickly realized how beneficial it was to study with Bill and other men in our group.

8 Benefits of Learning & Studying with Friends



Although it was not written from a biblical perspective, I found a list of eight benefits of studying with a friend from the website, LeanMBA very helpful in understanding why you must be teachable and have a willingness to learn from and with others.

Here are the principles adapted for your God Buddy relationship:

#1. Builds routine

For many years now, I have participated in the men's Bible study group at our church. When you are part of a study group, you are accountable to more than just yourself since others depend on you to be at the regularly scheduled meetings. This increases your motivation to attend and curbs procrastination and excuse-making.

#2. Increases learning & retention

You can also ask the group those tough questions that linger when you try to learn in isolation. In our men's group, we encourage participation and state that "there are no stupid questions". In doing that, others will explain the biblical or life concepts and help you clarify any doubts. Furthermore, by discussing in a group setting, most people will retain information better.

#3. Shows new perspectives

Your God Buddies may have different viewpoints than you. By discussing topics, debating each point, and arguing your opinions, you'll be able to look at problems from new perspectives. This can be helpful in critical-thinking, idea generation, and creative problem-solving, all of which help you learn how to apply the principles to your own life.

#4. Makes studying fun

Studying the Bible alone can be boring so group study or in partnership with your GB will help you stay on-task. Plus, studying can be fun with friends. In our men's group, we make jokes, create funny examples, and even hang out after study time is over which help build camaraderie and trust.

#5. You compare notes and opinions

For me, an essential part of studying is note-taking. But that does not work for everyone as people learn in different ways. By comparing notes or continuing the discussions afterward with your God Buddy, you'll see what information others

believe is the most important.

#6. Builds skills

The post used for this list states working in a group setting can set the stage for how a real-life workplace operates. In your GB relationship and group though, you'll learn how to debate and cooperate. Most importantly, it helps your listening skills.

#7. Encourages "The Holy Spirit"

Again, the post used for this list is geared toward school work so it stated: "Encourages school spirit". But studying the Bible together in a group helps you form a spiritual bond that becomes very strong over time. By studying with your friends, you'll gain more trust, The others will also begin to see and understand any struggles you have.

#8. You'll become closer friends

If you only see your friends in social settings or at church on Sunday morning, your relationship stays on a surface level. Sharing your personal struggles confidentially among a small group of trusted friends creates a bond that will deepen the relationships.

Quite simply, being willing to learn from someone else and studying in a group adds a built-in level of accountability that all men need.

Biblical Support

Historically, the study of scripture had always been done in community since very few people had their own personal copies of the Bible. Early on, people would get together in homes and read the Bible, then discuss their observations.

Here are several bible verses that encourage you to be teachable and be willing to learn how to improve:

- *That the wise man may hear, and increase in learning; And that the man of understanding may attain unto sound counsels. –Proverbs 1:5 (ASV)*
- *The fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge; fools despise wisdom and instruction. –Proverbs 1:7*
- *Give instruction to a wise man, and he will be still wiser; teach a righteous man, and he will increase in learning.– Proverbs 9:9*
- *Listen to advice and accept instruction, that you may gain wisdom in the future. –Proverbs 19:20*
- *What you have learned and received and heard and seen in me—practice these things, and the God of peace will be with you.—Philippians 4:9*

GBs Learn Together

John C. Maxwell's book *Sometimes You Win, Sometimes You Learn* suggests that teachability is a choice and that we choose whether we are open or closed to new ideas, new experiences, others' ideas, and feedback from others. He suggests becoming and remaining teachable requires that we open ourselves to be

evaluated on a continual basis by others.

Today, many men still tend toward isolation so you must fight the temptation to be a “lone wolf” in life as you will get eaten alive. I suggest you team up with some God Buddies who can guide you through life’s tough decisions.

SURROUND YOURSELF WITH



**THOSE ON THE SAME
MISSION AS YOU**

For God Buddies, this requires that you be courageous and honest enough to accept feedback and criticism without defending yourself. Wisdom comes from having the willingness to learn and surrounding yourself with a group of men who you give the freedom to honestly speak into your life. Without the trait of willingness and some God Buddies, you can never grow into the man God intended you to be.

Next week, I'll summarize all the traits of a God Buddy relationship.

Until then, let me know your best ways to remain teachable in the comments below.