



Helping repentant hearts return to the fold in rural communities

CHRISTIAN NEIGHBOR DISCIPLESHIP MANUAL

INTRODUCTION

With great joy we introduce you to Rural Reentry Ministry, Inc., a post-prison ministry of biblical discipleship for Christians coming out of prison. It is our privilege to minister by creating bridges to enable you, the Christian inmate, to go from prison to the local church through biblical discipleship. Our desire is to serve you and help you grow in your walk with the Lord Jesus Christ. We realize there are usually no short-term answers to long-term problems. Your participation in this discipleship ministry, therefore, will last **at least** 12 months, depending on your growth, level of Christian maturity, and other circumstances, as determined by your Primary Mentor and sponsoring ministry/organization

While participating in this discipleship ministry your goal should be to equip yourself to move into the community as a gainfully employed, self-sufficient person, firmly grounded in the Word of God, the Bible, and established in a church where you fellowship with other Christians. This will enable you to live a victorious Christian life-style, become a productive member of God's Kingdom, and overcome your inability to depend on the Holy Spirit and God's people.

We take the truths of the Bible very seriously. We believe the Bible is the inspired, infallible and inerrant Word of God; it is authoritative not only for doctrine, but also contains the principles for effective Christian living. We seek, therefore, to determine and apply Biblical principles to our lives. We also have committed ourselves to prayer for wisdom, guidance, and strength as we apply these principles to our decisions in any situation that may arise.

"Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit, but in humility consider others better than yourselves. Each of you should look not only to your own interests, but also to the interests of others. Your attitude should be the same as that of Christ Jesus." (Philippians 2:3-5) This is our house verse. Memorize it, so you can apply it to daily life.

The *Biblical Rules for Christian Living* shall be adhered to. Any infractions will be taken very seriously and will require intervention by your Primary Mentor and sponsoring ministry/organization. Any infraction requiring dismissal will be considered and a decision made by the same. They, like we, are here to help and encourage you to be victorious and successful in your walk with the Lord

We ask you, as a participant, to have a sincere and genuine desire to change and be committed to abide by the *Biblical Rules* and the *Non-Negotiable Rules* because they are for your benefit. A positive example set by you will enable other prospective candidates to have the same opportunity as you and encourage them to do so. We will make every effort to encourage and help you to make responsible and right decisions in your life.

Because you need time to re-group, we recommend that prior to beginning your time of discipleship you resolve any conflicts you may have with family and relatives and inform them if necessary that you need this time to re-establish yourself in a new environment. This may even result in holiday time NOT being spent with family members. Keep in mind that building a solid, consistent relationship with the Lord is your first priority.

ORIENTATION PERIOD

When you enter into your time of discipleship, you will have an orientation period of **at least** 8 weeks. During this time, you will be evaluated to determine your potential success within the program. It also gives you the chance to become accustomed to program, the community, and your church.

You will be given basic tasks to accomplish as part of your orientation:

- Complete a check list of orientation
- Bible study daily or weekly with your Primary Mentor
- Tests and interviews for evaluation purposes, if necessary

You will be expected to abide by the *Christian Neighbor Discipleship Manual*, especially the *Non-Negotiable Rules*, *Biblical Rules*, and *Biblical Principles*, follow through on all meetings, attend church, and begin to accept personal responsibility for your life and Christian life-style.

In addition, you will be helped to adjust to post-prison life and evaluated through:

- Interviewing to determine job skills, job opportunities and set long-term goals
- Working with a financial mentor to establish a personal budget
- Scheduling and securing a medical/physical exam, if necessary

Consistent discipleship will be maintained throughout your orientation period. An evaluation will occur at the end of 56 days in order to determine successful completion of orientation, or an extension of orientation. A post-orientation period with specific conditions may be established prior to accepting full-time employment. Daily discipleship may be required during post-orientation. Once your Primary Mentor and sponsoring ministry liaison have approved the end of your orientation, you can then move on to the next phase of your discipleship program.

DISCIPLESHIP AND EMPLOYMENT

Your anticipated length of discipleship following orientation is **at least** another 10 months. During that time, you will continue to spend time each week with your spiritual and financial mentor in addition to meeting weekly with your Primary Mentor for continued discipleship and bible study. Arrangements with church families on Sundays will also continue. At this point, meeting new families is encouraged. Participate in personal and church activities whenever possible. These relationships mutually benefit you and those you participate with. You have the opportunity to help others grow in Christ and better understand what post-prison ministry is all about.

Your Primary Mentor and other volunteers will help you obtain a job, assume greater responsibility, and grow in your Christian walk. You will also begin to contribute financially toward your personal budgetary goals. You will have greater accountability to your mentors and to people in your local church, because you will no longer be meeting daily with your Primary Mentor. You will also be accountable to your employer and/or supervisor.

Statement of Faith

Rural Reentry Ministry, INC. has compiled the following statements as a testimony of the truths that bind all Christians in the Body of Christ, the Church. As a participant of Rural Reentry, I agree with and adopt this statement.

1. We believe the Bible to be the inspired, infallible, and authoritative Word of God. (2 Tim 3:16; 2 Peter 1:21)
2. We believe that there is one God, eternally existent in three persons: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. (Duet 6:4; Matthew 28:19; 1 Cor. 8:6)
3. We believe in the Deity of our Lord Jesus Christ, in His virgin birth, His sinless life, His atoning death on the cross, and His bodily resurrection from the grave. (Col. 1:15; Phil 2: 5-8; Matt. 1: 18-25; 1 Peter 2: 24-25; Luke 24; Hebrews 4: 14-16)
4. We believe that Jesus Christ ascended to the right hand of the Father, now rules as Head of His body, the Church, and will personally return in power and glory. (Luke 24:33-43; John 20:24-29; I Cor. 15:3-8)
5. We believe that the Church, composed of believers in Christ, proclaims the gospel of God's redemption, nurtures Christians in their life of faith, and cares for the needy. (Acts 2: 41; 15: 13-17; Ephesians 1:3-6; 1 Cor. 12:12-13; Matthew 29:19-20; Acts 1: 6-8; 1 Thess. 4:16-18)
6. We believe that human beings in their natural state are lost and alienated from God. (Gen. 1:26-27; Rom. 3: 10, 23)
7. We believe that reconciliation with God comes through personal faith in the person and work of Jesus Christ. (John 3:3; John 3:16; Matthew 25: 46; 2 Cor. 5:1)
8. We believe in the present ministry of the Holy Spirit, by whose indwelling, a Christian is made spiritually alive and enabled to live a godly life. (John 14:26; Rom. 8:14; Gal. 5:16, 22, 23)
9. We believe in the resurrection of both those who believe in Jesus Christ, and those who are alienated from God. Those who believe have eternal life with Christ; those who are lost are separated forever from God. (Rev. 20; Joel 3; Matt. 25; 2 Pet. 3: 13; Rom. 14)
10. We believe in the spiritual unity of believers in Christ.

I understand that my signature indicates my agreement with the above *Statement of Faith*.

(Participant Signature)

(Date)

(Witness)

(Date)

NON-NEGOTIABLE RULES

The following list is of items that are stated elsewhere in the manual but are listed here for emphasis. Inmates applying to become participants in a post-prison discipleship ministry as Christian Neighbors must be well aware of these non-negotiable rules and expect to abide by them before they can be approved.

1. Christian Neighbors are committed to **keep the orientation schedule**.
2. Christian Neighbors **do not use drugs or use alcohol**.
3. Christian Neighbors **do not purchase or borrow a car for transportation** without prior approval from the Financial Mentor. Transportation for most things can be arranged and focus should be on immediate needs not purchasing large ticket items.
4. Christian Neighbors **do not date**, do not correspond, do not phone, and do not allow themselves to be alone in the presence of a person of the opposite gender unless they are a spouse or family member as appropriate.
5. Christian Neighbors **must** provide their work schedules to the Financial Mentor as soon as they are available to ensure proper scheduling for appointments, discipleship, etc. **Absolutely no working on Sundays!**
6. Christian Neighbors are committed to **meet with each mentor** at least once each week.
7. Christian Neighbors **do not go back to their old neighborhood or crowd** without prearranged protective planning, including ministry supervision.
8. Christian Neighbors **do not argue** about keeping these non-negotiable rules.

These non-negotiable rules must be strictly enforced in love by the Primary Mentor. While recognizing that each Christian Neighbor is a unique individual, we also recognize that struggles in life are similar. Following these non-negotiable rules will keep Christian Neighbors from struggles that interfere with the goal of mature discipleship. PRACTICE MAKES PERMANENT.

Christian Neighbors are committed to do what is right in the eyes of the Lord **and** in the eyes of their Primary Mentor. When in doubt, wait, ask, discuss, and be sure. In time, **you will learn how to know** you are making a godly decision every time.

I understand that my signature indicates my commitment to the above *Non-Negotiable Rules*.

(Participant Signature)

Date

(Witness)

Date

BIBLICAL RULES FOR CHRISTIAN LIVING

As a Christian Neighbor, you are expected to live out the Christian life in thought and deed, fully recognizing that each of us is a new creature in Christ, but still has the old nature within us. We need to love one another, submit to one another, be accountable to one another, and do all we can to please God by what we think and do. All of this will help each of us to grow towards maturity in the Christian life and in a family setting. These guidelines, with Scriptural references, have been developed to cover most of the expectations we have for you and for each other during your partnership with Rural Reentry Ministry, your sponsoring local church/organization and your Primary Mentor.

1. Substance abuse of any nature is **not** permitted. A violation is cause for termination of your participation. Notify your Primary Mentor if you use prescription medications. (Proverbs 20:1; I Corinthians 3:16)
2. Possession of weapons of any nature will terminate your participation. (Romans 8:5-6)
3. Be respectful of the property of others. Borrowing or trading is not recommended or advised. (Proverbs 22:7b)
4. Attend and be on time for all required discipleship unless given prior permission by your Primary Mentor. (Proverbs 19:20)
5. Gambling or playing the lottery is not allowed. (Hebrews 13:5)
6. Treat others with consideration. Fights, threats, and/or aggressive behavior are not allowed. Additionally, show respect for your Primary Mentor and others involved in your discipleship. (Romans 12:16-18, Philippians 2:1-5)
7. Do not engage in sexual activity anywhere, including within the house unless you are married and with your own spouse. (I Corinthians 6:13; Hebrews 12:16)
8. Borrowing or lending money is not allowed between Christian Neighbors and others. Your Primary Mentor and/or financial mentor should approve, in advance, the lending or borrowing of money between you and someone else. (Proverbs 22:7b)
9. Being truthful and honest about everything during your participation is expected. (Proverbs 12:22)
10. You must notify your Primary Mentor when you plan to be away and receive approval for your plans. This is for your own protection and is part of being a responsible and accountable family member. The name, address and phone number of your employer and supervisor, as well as your pay period and work schedule should be given to your Primary Mentor and kept on file. In order to protect yourself, we do not encourage communication with former inmates that are not Christians. Accountability in all areas is key. (I Peter 2:13a; 17a)

11. Consistent fellowship in an approved church, and fellowship and discipleship with your Primary Mentors and others involved in your discipleship is required and will help you build ongoing self-confidence, lessen negative temptations, and provide encouragement during your participation. Church attendance and the mentor relationships will also prepare you to live triumphantly when you complete your time of discipleship. (Hebrews 3:13; 10:24-25)
12. The following are the *Scriptural Principles for Any Task*. They should be memorized so you can develop the habit of using them:
 - Take initiative
 - Follow through
 - Deliver
 - Keep your eyes wide open
 - Hit the corners
 - Be concerned with details
 - Pour your heart into everything you do
 - Check your work, AFTER you believe it is completed
 - Always have a plan of protection
 - Do all things as unto Jesus
 - "Everything we do, we must do with excellence, to bring glory to God." (I Cor. 10:31)
13. You are a part of this discipleship program because the Lord placed you here. You are under His full authority. By entering this program, you are placing yourself under the authority of your Primary Mentor and your local church. Titus 3:1-2 commands us "*to be subject to rulers and authorities, to obey, to be ready for every good work, to speak evil of no one, to be peaceable, gentle, showing all humility to all men.*" You must submit to the authority of your Primary Mentor and your local church, otherwise you are rebelling against God's authority (Romans 13:1-7; 2 Peter 2:10). However, if you can show through the authority of the Scripture that your Primary Mentor is wrong in a particular decision, then he/she must submit to the Word of God. Otherwise, you must comply with their judgment. Remember that the scriptures teach biblical principles and we apply them to our lives in difficult situations in order to do what is right in the eyes of the Lord. The Scripture may not say word-by-word what you want it to say for your specific situation, but it will clearly imply what needs to be done in your particular situation. Your Primary Mentor is God's chosen vessel to point you to the truth and assist you in applying scriptures.
14. Rural Reentry Ministry is a biblical ministry, as is your local church. We are **not** a social service agency. We are directed solely by the authority of the Word of God. God's Word is final in all matters.

BIBLICAL PRINCIPLES TO KEEP YOU FROM DEFEAT BY YOUR SINFUL NATURE AND SATAN

The goals of Rural Reentry Ministry, your Primary Mentor and your local church are: (1) to disciple you, a Christian former inmate, from living in your sinful nature to living in the Spirit of God, and (2) to teach you to fear the Lord, so you can do what is right in the eyes of the LORD. As a Christian Neighbor, you need to learn self-discipline and humility. Submission requires faith because, in many cases, you may not understand why a particular decision is being made. Also, you must be in Christ at all times (II Corinthians 5:17-21). Every problem you have is spiritual and you cannot go to war, spiritual war, without protection (Ephesians 6:10-18). Let Psalm 51:7-8 and II Corinthians 6:18-7:1 be your constant prayer.

The Lord has chosen you to be a Christian Neighbor in this program of intense discipleship, so He may pour down His blessings on you and fill your heart with joy. Joy is not a feeling; it is a reality in your heart, even when you do not feel it. It is a great privilege for you and you have dozens of Godly people working with you. Do not let this opportunity be wasted or take it for granted. The Lord has given you the opportunity of a lifetime.

We want you to become a person who demonstrates Philippians 2:3-5, Titus 2:11-14, and Galatians 5:22-26 in your life. Please memorize these verses and apply them daily. The following are biblical principles that you need to learn while participating in this program of discipleship and continue to apply the rest of your life.

1. Do not trust yourself. (Romans 3:9-10 & 23)
2. You still have a depraved sinful nature that must be placed under the submission of the Holy Spirit, so you may bear His Fruit in abundance and demonstrate Christ's character in you. You used to be dead in your sins. (Genesis 2:17;3:1-24; Ezekiel 36:26-27, 37:1-14; Romans 7 & 8; Ephesians 2:1-8)
3. At all times, you must have a tangible and visible plan of protection against your sinful nature and the enemy, Satan, because you are in a constant war, and the devil is fighting to win you back. (John 10:10, Revelations 12:7-17)
4. Be on the alert at all times and keep your eyes wide open. Remember John 10:10. Remember also that Jesus will come like a thief in the night and you must be ready. (2 Peter 3:10-16; Revelation 3:3)
5. Be concerned with details. God is concerned with details. You can see this by looking at your own body. He created you with a lot of details. He also created the universe with a lot of minuscule details. The instructions He gave Moses to build the tabernacle, and the instructions to David and Solomon to build the temple included many details. He wants you to do all things for Him with excellence (here in the house, in your life, in your church, in future employment, in all your relationships, and above all in your relationship with Jesus Christ). After you have finished a project, take time to inspect what you have done. Make sure you are satisfied with your work and that the Lord would be satisfied with it as well. (Genesis 1; Exodus 39:32-43; Kings 6; II Chronicles 2-8)
6. He wants all your heart (the new heart you received now that you belong to Christ) to be involved in ALL you do. He wants you to work with joy and without complaining. People who complain the most pray the least. If you have a problem or a situation, take it to the Lord in prayer and fast about it. I will be glad to pray and fast with you. (I Thessalonians 5:16; Ezekiel 36:26-27; Ephesians 6:7-8)
7. Clean all the corners, especially the corners of your heart. Ask the Lord to purify you. (II Chronicles 7:1; Psalm 51:7-8)

8. Ask the Lord to break you if you have not been broken. He wants to make you new, but He must break you first. He is in the business of changing people. Let him do it. You must be accountable at all times. In other words, live your life *coram deo* (openly before the face of God and men). (John 3:3-16; II Corinthians 5:17-21; Psalm 51)
9. The goal in your Christian walk is to pursue complete joy and satisfaction in God for God's glory. John Piper said "*God is most glorified in you when you are most satisfied in Him. God's glory and our joy are not in competition.*" When we abide in Jesus and in His word, we can take advantage of His promise to do anything according to His will. The Lord will actually change your mind, your heart, and your desires so that you will want what He wants and be joyfully satisfied. (Psalms 20:4; John 15:7)
10. We don't want to teach you based on giving you a bunch of facts and truths that will most likely fly over your head. We want to connect those facts and truths to your *experiences!* In other words, we want to teach you by providing bread -- the bread of life -- *Jesus Christ* (John 6:35) which will bring satisfaction to your hunger!
11. We want to build a bridge that will feel comfortable and secure walking through, to take you from the familiar (what you know) to the unfamiliar (what you don't know); but always making you feel sure that you are not by yourself and that you are walking on safe and secure ground. We want this bridge to be strong and solid (for its foundation to be cemented so that it will never be moved), but yet challenging enough to equip you with the *Christian attitude* so that you can live a humble, yet victorious life in Jesus Christ!! (Philippians 2:5) The goal is for you to be able to make the *right godly choices* so that you will make it -- not just somehow but *triumphantly* -- and therefore you will bring glory to God (I Corinthians 10:31). Remember, the Lord Jesus Christ promised to be always with you, until the end of this age (Matthew 28:20). He also promised to be *within* you in the form of the *Holy Spirit* (Ephesians 1:13). He has chosen to use people, us, to walk with you, and we are committed to be with you in the good times and the bad times. We truly want to be your family. All we want from you is the opportunity to demonstrate to you Christ in us!!
12. *Attitude is the key!!* Please pay full attention. Put your 5-½ senses in full gear and ask the Lord to protect your mind and heart from outside thoughts that will hinder your concentration on the subject we may be discussing at a particular time. Ask the Holy Spirit for *illumination* (I Corinthians 2:14). Ask Him for *wisdom* (James 1:5). He will only give you wisdom from His Word. You must know and be immersed in His Word in order for Him to give you wisdom. Ask Him for perseverance, endurance, and joy (I Timothy 4:16; Philippians 3:12-14; and James 1). Challenge us. Make us work hard to satisfy your questions according to the Word of God. Our prayer for you is that *God will be your goal in life!!*
13. Every discipleship session must be bathed with prayer. We can teach and learn all we want, but it is the Holy Spirit who gives the *illumination* to truly understand truth (I Corinthians 2:14). Only the truth will set you free to become His righteous disciple. (John 8:31-32)
14. You and your Primary Mentor will discuss, in the context of your experiences, the results of your assessments and together create a case plan that will include your course of biblical discipleship.
15. In each subject of study, we want you to tell your Primary Mentor how much you know about that subject. Each time you will begin with your answers to the previous lesson, then questions, then you will be taught. *Every time you have a question* about whatever is being said or if something comes to mind that may be related to the subject of discussion, please stop your Primary Mentor and ask questions. REMEMBER: The only dumb question is the one you don't ask.
16. Every so many minutes (probably every 15 minutes or so) your Primary Mentor will stop to allow you to explain what was just said. This way, if there are any doubts, hopefully they will come up

and they can be tackled head on. The game plan for successful living is being developed, the strategy of the game, because the aim is for you to win and to win *triumphantly*!! You are already on the winning team, but the winning team must always execute the game plan in order to win. Remember: *If you fail to plan, then you plan to fail*!!

17. The objective is to teach you, through your experiences, *Biblical truths and facts*, which you will be able to apply in real, every day and practical situations in life. However, you must be warned (this is one of the duties of a minister of God), trouble is coming. But the true and genuine Christian will endure the trouble, not by their own strength or endurance, but by the help of the Holy Spirit and reliance on the truth of the Word of God.
18. The Word of God is applicable to any situation in life and the Word of God is very reliable to any situation in life. *The bible is sufficient all by itself* without any outside help. In other words, *it is not the bible plus...*but rather the bible can stand on its own four very strong legs and never faint. Wow!! Oh, what a promise the lord has made to us!
19. In other words, the genuine Christian will *show that he/she is real* in times of trouble. In the midst of trouble, we must not lose our joy. Although the Christian may experience pain, joy must be evident. You do not have to put on a tough exterior or become stoic. You can say, even with tears in your eyes: "Let's pray." (Hebrews 4:14-16). The Christian *knows* where to go for comfort, to God the Father through Jesus Christ, who is full of compassion, who truly understands our struggles and cares because He sent His only begotten Son, Jesus Christ [God Himself], out of *love*, to suffer and to carry our pain, our guilt and sin so that He could become the comfort zone for human beings (you and us).
20. Our God is not a distant (we don't believe in deism) God who does not understand. But rather, He is a God who came down to our level and who understands our situation (of whatever magnitude), whatever the situation may be. The Christian must rejoice in tribulation and be triumphant in the midst of the worst circumstances. The Christian knows a holy joy that is real. He is to become "more than a conqueror" instead of merely exercising self-control with the aid of iron will. The Christian is to rejoice in the Lord and to rejoice in the God of salvation. Martin Lloyd-Jones, "The Doctor" stated: "Such a time is a test for our Christian profession. If we are not then more than conquerors, we are failing as Christians."
21. Just be the person the Lord intended you to be (Jeremiah 29:11-14, John 17:1-5)! Fervent prayer will discover for you, *exactly*, what the Lord has intended for you to be. Put it into practice.
22. It is important for you and those ministering to you to get to know one another better, as persons and culturally, so that your interaction will become more meaningful. The experiences you have had are precious because they will be the linkage to your learning. You must understand that 1) First you are a Christian and 2) Your Christianity must dictate your culture, not your culture to your Christianity. Please get to know those ministering to you so that you can understand them. They have the best intentions at heart for you to become a strong, solid pillar for the Lord. They truly want you to love the Lord more and more every second that goes by, because it will be your love for the Lord that will keep you and spare you from sinning. Remember that our God the Father is Holy and *He hates sin with a passion* (John 14:23).
23. Results will be measured by how you apply what you have learned to your practical Christian living.
24. It all begins with you and your relationship with Jesus Christ. For this reason, you must know who Christ is and why He became human as The Messiah; what He accomplished for us and for what purpose. You must also understand sin as God understands sin and its consequences. The bottom line question is: Why do we need a Savior? What did He save us from? You will also be taught tools so you can be an effective student (disciple) of God's Word.

25. Discussion will take place on how to apply the lessons taught in the Self-Confrontation Manual or local church curriculum during our practical teaching time. It is important that you remember to read at least 20 minutes daily from this book or lesson prior to each time you meet with your Primary Mentor each week. You should also read one chapter from the bible before our meeting.
26. Everyone involved is joyful that you are on board and believe the Lord is really going to use you in a mighty way. To get where the Lord wants you to get, He wants to prepare you by bringing you *under* His discipline (the Lord prepared the Apostle Paul for 14 years and Moses for 40 years prior to their ministries). He uses people, ordinary people like us to get His message across to other people. People are critical and essential for our growth. It is important that we choose the right people, Christian people, to associate ourselves with.
27. The Lord has chosen wonderful, godly people for you. Your pastor, church liaison, Primary Mentor and others involved in your time of discipleship truly care for you and also want to see you succeed in the Lord. The people in your church have truly embraced you with genuine Christian love.
28. Remember that the difference between the Christian and the non-Christian is that we know, as Christians, where and when (how fast) to hide. Indeed, Jesus is our hiding place. He always fills our hearts with songs of deliverance and whenever we are afraid, we must *trust* in Him (Psalm 37). We are *only* strong in His strength (Philippians 4:13). He is indeed our *only safe and secure* hiding place!!
29. The Lord only wants three things from us: *Availability, Purity, and Obedience!* Again, we are all thrilled that you have made the choice to partner with Rural Reentry Ministry and your local church.
30. Please never forget to recite every day:

I Corinthians 10:31 ***".... in whatever you do, bring Glory to God"***

I Timothy 4:7 ***".... train yourself to be godly"***

Romans 12:2 ***"Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world. But be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is--His good, pleasing and perfect will."***

MENTOR RELATIONSHIPS

"As iron sharpens iron, so one man sharpens another." Proverbs 27:17

Each Christian Neighbor is provided a Primary Mentor. This mentor will be responsible for discipling you spiritually and practically. Two additional mentors may be assigned to you; one to focus on spiritual issues of the Christian life, and the other to focus on financial issues of the Christian life. Through these relationships you will have close Christian fellowship and friendship and learn to trust one another. This is a mutual relationship, although your mentors have greater experience in living a Christian life outside of prison. Casual interaction is as important as the times of more formal teaching. Your mentors have been given guidelines. Below are ways you can help these additional mentors follow the guidelines:

1. Be a friend.
2. Be a living example of what it means to be a Christian--in other words, WALK YOUR TALK! Show Christ in YOU!
3. Meet CONSISTENTLY once a week, for approximately 2 hours with each of your mentors, for discipleship and bible study.
 - a. Be a good, reliable student by being prepared for your mentor meetings. Have your homework done and ready to show your mentor.
 - b. Nourish each other in the Christian faith through the Word of God every time you meet.
 - c. Build a friendship in Christ so that you will be able to trust each other and ultimately love each other as brothers or sisters in Christ!
 - d. Expect your mentors to get into your business. Financial mentors should know about and approve every penny you receive and every penny you spend.
4. Be sensitive to your mentors. Treat your mentor with the same dignity and respect that you expect.
5. Pray with and for your mentors regularly. Have them pray for you.
6. Ask the Lord for wisdom and discernment each time you meet together.
7. Set short and long-range goals and objectives with your mentors. Go over them periodically to monitor their progress. You may want to keep a journal of these and of other experiences you go through together.
8. *Don't accept money or gifts* from your mentors without approval from your Primary Mentor. If someone from the church wishes to give a monetary gift, ask the person to discuss that with your Primary Mentor. The same should be done for other gifts.
9. You may consult with your mentors about possible job opportunities, but do not apply for any job until Your Primary Mentor and local church has determined your initial orientation has ended. Then, do not apply for any job without approval from your Primary Mentor for that specific job. Be sure the hours are acceptable.
10. Any trips out-of-town or retreats with your mentors must be cleared first with your Primary Mentor.
11. When you are ready, and if you feel comfortable, share about your prison experience and your past convictions. We have suggested that mentors and church families refrain from asking you.
12. When in doubt, please call your Primary Mentor. They are the ones to guide mentors, church families, and even church staff on what is truly best for you.

LOCAL CHURCH / RURAL REENTRY MINISTRY RELATIONSHIP

Part of the relationship you have entered into includes your local church which you are to attend consistently during your time of discipleship. This is your home church. Your Primary Mentor, other mentors and a church liaison may be chosen from your home church. Your church liaison will be our contact person with your home church, making all the arrangements to prepare for your arrival and to support your discipleship process. Here are some ways you may be a blessing to your church family:

1. Meet with your church pastor at least once each quarter.
2. Your transportation to and from worship services and all other activities planned by your home church should be arranged through your Primary Mentor.
3. Any time you are with people from your home church, be sure your Primary Mentor has their contact information (names, addresses, phone numbers, etc.).
4. Any time you are with people from your home church, be sure they have your Primary Mentor's contact information as well.
5. If you don't already own a car, be ready and waiting for your ride on Sunday morning. Be ready and waiting for every ride. No one should have to come to the door looking for you. (Always confirm arrangements the day before.)
6. Your host family will provide a meal after the morning worship and then be with that family, doing whatever they do until the close of their Sunday (evening worship service, small group, at home relaxing, let your hair down, etc.). At the end of the day, transportation will be arranged to take you home. This is an entire day commitment for that family and a wonderful opportunity for you to get to know them and for them to get to know you. This is also a marvelous opportunity for you to see how other Christian families function.
7. Please do not personally accept any donations or gifts. Have the person(s) contact your Primary Mentor to make sure the items are appropriate and to make arrangements for their receipt.
8. Be courteous and demonstrate gratitude--be a shining example of good manners, even if your host family falls short in this area.

ORIENTATION CHECK LIST

The following checklist was created to help you understand expectations and adjust to this time of discipleship the Lord has provided for you. As with the rest of the *Participant Discipleship Manual* information, this checklist is a tool for you to refer to often, to renew your mind and refresh your memory. God is creating a new you!

Please initial each heading of information AFTER the material has been covered during your orientation sessions, and AFTER you believe you understand the information presented well enough to do it.

Biblical Foundation for the Rural Reentry Post-Prison Ministry

[] **Concept of Orientation Period**

Acceptance to this time of discipleship has been established through the *Admissions Procedures*. The first 56 days are the minimum orientation period. Your progress will be evaluated at the end of three months. This evaluation is required in order to determine successful completion of orientation. A post-orientation period with specific conditions may be established prior to accepting full-time employment. Discipleship class attendance may be required during post-orientation.

Criteria for completion of orientation includes the following:

- A. Present work from the Self-Confrontation Manual's Biblical Foundation for Change section or your local church curriculum as provided
- B. Recite Philippians 2:1-5 from memory
- C. Recite the method for interpretation of scripture taught in discipleship class
- D. Update case plan with heart issue lessons from Self-Confrontation Manual or local church curriculum as provided
- E. Recite the complete Gospel message with supporting scripture. (1Corinthians 15)

This evaluation is necessary for your time of orientation to come to an end. It is the basis for continued discipleship, attachment to your local church, provision of mentors, and assistance to find suitable employment.

[] **Biblical definition of Covenant**

Discuss James 5:12, Exodus 39:32-43, John 17:4, John 19:30, and II Timothy 4:7-8.

This is not a legal contract, although a contract and a covenant can be expressed as written agreements. The intent of this document will always override the wording, because your individual welfare is its purpose.

[] **Trust**

Trust has to be **earned**. Yes, you have been forgiven. That is not the issue. Trust is a matter of demonstrating that your walk is equal to your talk and that you are showing your real self. Your Christian character has to have time to develop. As you mature in Christ, as the old patterns of sin are destroyed, the new you will display trustworthiness. Then you can be trusted.

There are no scriptures that tell us to trust each other. Our complete trust is in God alone. However, God commands each of us to "*walk worthy of our calling.*" (1 Thessalonians 2:12, Colossians 1:10, Ephesians 4:1) If we are able to demonstrate obedience to Christ in this way, other Christians will know that we can be trusted. It is not wise to fully trust someone who has not demonstrated trustworthiness.

Walking worthy of your calling includes a humble attitude and teachable spirit. (Philippians 2:1-5) Do not think that you already know all there is to know. The Lord has begun a NEW work in you. You will have to put your old ways of thinking, especially the prison mentality, under the blood of Jesus Christ, and deliberately let go of your old patterns, over and over again. New

patterns of thinking and new patterns of behaving will take over as you are conformed to the image of Christ.

[] **Christ's Humility - a pattern for family living**

"Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit, but in humility consider others better than yourselves. Each of you should look not only to your own interests, but also to the interests of others. Your attitude should be the same as that of Christ Jesus." (Philippians 2:3-5)

These verses must be committed to memory (carried on a card in your pocket if necessary) and applied to daily living.

Be considerate of others, especially where shared living space is concerned. Your rooms are near the rooms of others in the family. Heavy walking, loud radio playing, and loud television viewing will be heard and felt by others.

Please be on time for your appointments and commitments. When someone is coming to pick you up, please be watching and waiting--*not in your room or in the TV room*. Don't make your ride (guest) wait for you. They are already sacrificing their time. Therefore, demonstrate your appreciation by being prompt.

[] **Ministry team communication**

Your Primary Mentor will meet regularly with any other mentors, church liaison and pastors to discuss how to best serve you. By coming together in *koinonia*, the team can discuss and evaluate how they are doing and how they can meet your needs better, especially spiritual needs. **Please know that every problem has a spiritual dimension.** The team will pray more effectively by communicating often. The mentors of all Participants meet as a group at least four (4) times per year.

Members of the ministry team will also meet with you on a regular basis to examine themselves and let you examine them. This is a time to evaluate how the team is doing and how you are doing, to make sure both are on target. The Lord commands us in Scripture to examine ourselves. (Psalm 26:2; I Corinthians 11:28; II Corinthians 13:5)

Participant Policies

[] **Appointments and Commitments**

Any plans made for activities should be discussed with and approved by your Primary Mentor. This includes setting up your regular schedule of mentor meetings, bible studies and other ongoing church activities. (Activities on Sundays with your church family are approved because they will be with you.)

72 hours (three days) notice is needed for approval. Activities are usually planned this much in advance anyway, but this leaves time for discussion – and making sure you have a plan of protection. We want to foster good communication, with all the details, not just part of the story and part covered up. (Detailed plans answer the questions who, what, where, when, how, and why).

This type of accountability is necessary in any family, and as you mature in Christ, it will become more natural to plan this way and communicate with others in this way.

[] **Family Visits**

Because you need time to re-group, we already recommended that prior to entering this time of discipleship you resolve any conflicts you had with family and relatives. We also recommended that your family be involved in your discipleship and help keep you accountable. Relationship issues will be addressed as part of your discipleship curriculum. If you are not married or do not live with your family or your family is not approved to live with, we ask that you abide by the dating rules listed below.

You are not to go to urban communities (i.e. Kansas City, St. Louis, etc.) for at least the first eight weeks. You are not to go to the community where you came from -- you need a plan of protection. Visits to family members that you do not live with must be accompanied by an approved person to keep you accountable.

Family visits with children should be supervised if at all possible. These arrangements may be adjusted at the discretion of your Primary Mentor; however, adjustments are an **earned** privilege, **not a right** to be demanded.

[] **Compensation during orientation**

You are not to accept money from anyone except your Primary Mentor during orientation. You are not to get paid for your volunteer service during orientation. If someone wishes to compensate you for the assistance they receive, or if there is any question about what to do, they should communicate with your Primary Mentor.

You must be accountable to your financial mentor, if one has been provided. Discuss all money, goods, or services received during your entire time of discipleship with your financial mentor. Even after receiving wages from employment, you should not receive gifts of money directly from contacts made as a result of participating in this program.

[] **Employment**

After your intense time of discipleship, and it has been approved, you are expected to start looking for a job. Your Financial Mentor will help you with any preparatory needs for employment and job search.

[] **Owning a motorized vehicle**

You will work with your financial mentor to budget car payments, cost for fuel, insurance, and maintenance of the car. If your financial mentor recommends to your Primary Mentor that you be considered to own a car, your Primary Mentor must approve the plan for when and how you get the car, how you will maintain the car, and how you will use the car.

[] **Dating**

God has blessed you with this time of discipleship to help you become pure and to become the person the Lord wants you to be.

While you participate, involvement in a romantic relationship is not permitted unless you are married and with your spouse. This restriction includes all of the following behaviors:

- A. Going out with a person of the opposite gender (Matthew 6:34; Philippians 4:6)
- B. Having phone conversations with a person of the opposite gender
- C. Writing a letter or email to a person of the opposite gender

This involves being honest with yourself. Don't play the "*just friends*" game or try to cover up your desire for a romantic relationship. Take it to the Lord. *Focus on Jesus*, for this first year, and let him build your character. A dating relationship now will distract you, and it can cause you to jump the fence.

As with family relationships, dating policies may be adjusted at the discretion of your Primary Mentor after 12 months. Permission may be granted to date if sufficient maturity in Christ has been demonstrated and/or your individual circumstances warrant consideration (i.e. marital reconciliation).

FINANCIAL ARRANGEMENTS

As a part of your discipleship, your Primary Mentor and/or financial mentor will help you set up a budget and teach you biblical principles of stewardship (managing the resources God has provided). Accountability to both of your mentors regarding the use of your money should be expected. Please do not treat this as an intrusion, but an important part of your discipleship.

Your mentor(s) will help you arrange to pay off outstanding fines and restitution, personal and family needs, and other necessities, after you have begun working.

The way you handle your money reflects clearly the way you handle your life and your relationships.

As a part of the *Christian Neighbor Discipleship Manual*, I have read and agree to the above stated *Financial Arrangements* indicated by my signature below.

(Participant Signature)

Date

(Witness)

Date

Waiver of Liability

I, _____, do not hold Rural Reentry Ministry, my Primary Mentor, my local church, or any other person or organization involved in my discipleship program liable for any injury, loss, or damage that may occur to me or my property during my time of discipleship or on any activity approved or authorized, or otherwise.

Furthermore, I do not hold Rural Reentry Ministry, my Primary Mentor, my local church, or any other person or organization involved in my discipleship program liable for any medical expenses incurred during my time of discipleship or on any activity approved or authorized, or otherwise.

As a part of the *Christian Neighbor Discipleship Manual*, I have read and agree to the above *Waiver of Liability*, indicated by my signature below.

(Participant Signature)

Date

(Witness)

Date

SAMPLE CHRISTIAN NEIGHBOR DAILY SCHEDULE

(For Orientation Period)

Monday-Friday

- 6:00am Arise, shower, shave, dress, make bed, individual breakfast
- 7:00am Prayer (30 minutes)
Devotional, TableTalk (20 minutes)
Read Bible (20 minutes)
Read Christ's Call to Discipleship (20 minutes)
- 8:30am Biblical and practical disciplines class with the Primary Mentor
- 10:30am Supervised volunteer project time
- 12:00 noon LUNCH - per daily instructions from Primary Mentor
- 1:00pm Supervised volunteer project time
- 4:00pm Personal time to read / study time
- 5:00pm Dinner... preferably with someone involved in discipleship program
- 6:00pm Wash dishes/clean-up
- 7:00pm Evening activities (for example, meetings with mentors, prayer meeting/Bible study at church, basketball, social activity)
- 9:30pm Christian Neighbors Only -- prayer time together
- 11:00pm Bedtime (11:30pm on Friday and Saturday only)

Saturday Your day to sleep in, relax, do your weekly chores, and visit with members of your church family; all plans are approved ahead of time by your Primary Mentor

Sunday Attend morning and evening worship services at your church. Spend the afternoon with a different family from your church and eat lunch/dinner with that family. This family will host you for the entire day.

At the end of your orientation period, you are expected to:

1. Look for and obtain a full time job (with the help of your church)
2. Meet with your Primary Mentor (or another qualified volunteer, approved by the Primary Mentor) for ongoing biblical and practical discipleship four (4) times each month
3. Continue to meet weekly with your mentors
4. Continue to spend Sunday with church families (including meals)
5. Become an active member and participant of your local church
6. Continue to participate in programs as mandated in acceptance conditions and/or parole.