

## Point The Way

How can we help new converts? One suggestion is that we point the way. At the end of the day, there is ultimately nothing we can do to force people to grow in Christ (1 Peter 2:2). So whether we offer a 4-week training class for a growing Christian, a 13-week training class for a growing Christian, or a 4-week training class for a growing Christian, does not matter. If someone really does not want to grow, they are either going to say no 4 times, 13 times, or 26 times.

However, new Christians do need material to help them grow in the initial stages of their faith. They need encouragement, and we should constantly stress the importance of Bible studies during church assemblies and during other opportune times. We need to faithfully proclaim the word and encourage people to read it for themselves. In short, we point the way for others to develop maturity in Christ for themselves. On this point, we should not falter. If people need admonishing or encouraging, we should do it -- immediately.

But if, after our best efforts, they decide not to "*walk worthy of their vocation*" (Ephesians 4:1), that is their decision, and we need to make the decision that we are not going to chase all of them down if they do. We can contact and encourage if they go astray, but what else practically can be done before discipline is taken? You might ask, "Is that what Jesus would do?" That is exactly what Jesus did! Jesus did not hook His finger in people's noses to make sure they were following Him. When you read through the gospels, Jesus always cast His net extremely wide. Everyone was invited to follow, but He did not chase people down if they were not committed. Think of the rich young ruler in Luke 18:18-25. The call was to follow Him, not be dragged kicking and screaming behind Him. All He did was point the way -- to Himself.

Whatever approach your congregation uses to help people reach their maximum potential in the kingdom of God really does not matter. Commit to pointing the way with people with excellence so we can see Christians become all that God has planned for them.

Adapted From Steven Furtick