

What are your names and how long have you been in relationship with each other?

Pastor Paula: *Pastor Paula Seales and Patricia Jones. We have been in a discipleship mentoring relationship for the past 2 years.*

How did you meet?

Pastor Paula: *We met at Mel Trotter Ministries as co-laborers in the mission work there. Pat was prompted by the Spirit to ask me to be her mentor.*

What does the discipling relationship look like?

Pat: *When I think of my past and what God is doing in my life now, I am so grateful. I am glad there is someone like Pastor Paula who is willing to teach me. I have so much to learn. I look forward to our Women's Bible Study and glad that I can call on my sister in Christ, my friend, day or night, to share my concerns and pray for each other. I am learning to set good boundaries and what a healthy relationship looks like - something previously absent from my life. I feel loved and valued.*

Pastor Paula: *I appreciate how real we can be with each other. There's mutual encouragement and support so that there's never an "I am better than you" posture. In fact, I am open to the Spirit's voice even through my mentee. No formal discipleship plan is in place. What seems to work is listening, being present when needed, reference to the Word of God or asking, "What is God teaching or doing now?" All of this with some accountability and much sisterly love for someone who needs to know the love of God.*

How has this relationship helped us to love and follow Jesus and become more and more like him in our attitude and actions?

Pat: *Folks including my family tell me that I look different. I am not the "old Pat", but a new creation in Christ Jesus. I learned to depend on God more, to let go and let God handle my difficult situations. I have received much support and love, and feel valued desiring to show others this same kind of love. I learned to "get off my couch" and get more involved. Pastor Paula encouraged me to use my gifts of intercession, hospitality and helper so I joined Madison volunteers on Fridays during the pandemic to serve the community.*

Pastor Paula: *We don't always choose the folks we wish to mentor. God brings them to us and gives us the grace to love them unconditionally. I also learned that discipleship is not just about relationships but being a servant with the kind of humility Jesus demonstrated - a humility of knowing God's will and choosing to be obedient for the sake of someone else.*