



**South India**  
Baptist Bible College & Seminary



## **SIBBCS ONLINE**

*Learn. Live. Lead.*

### **Mentor Handbook**

Guiding Holistic Formation in Four Areas

Spiritual | Personal | Interpersonal | Ministerial

Across 4 Levels of Growth: Foundation, Development, Maturity & Readiness

*“... what you have heard from me in the presence of many witnesses entrust to faithful men, who will be able to teach others also.” — 2 Timothy 2:2*

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## HOW TO USE THIS HANDBOOK

Dear Mentor, greetings from SIBBCS Online. If you are reading this handbook, we believe it is no accident. Most likely, one of our online students or applicants has reached out and asked you to walk alongside them as their personal mentor. This is a sacred invitation. Mentoring is more than a role, it is a ministry of presence, prayer, and guidance that can deeply shape the life of a future leader for God's kingdom.

If you sense the Lord is leading you to accept this responsibility, this handbook is where your journey begins. Inside, you will find all the information you need to understand what mentoring involves, how the process works, and what resources we have prepared to support you. Please take time to read it prayerfully and carefully before you commit to be a mentor to a student.

If, after reading, you feel unable to take on this responsibility, that is completely understandable. This handbook is provided as a guide, but the decision to mentor should always be made thoughtfully and prayerfully, considering your availability and willingness to invest in a student's growth.

Here's what you will find in this Mentor handbook:

- **Mentor Consent and Commitment Form (Next Two Pages):**  
This form gives you an overview of your role, time commitment, and what the mentoring journey will look like. If you agree to serve as a mentor, the same form must be completed and submitted digitally through the seminary website. It is provided there for your reference.
- **A Word From the Academic Dean:**  
A personal message sharing the vision of SIBBCS Online for theological education and why mentoring is a vital part of it.
- **Mentoring in our Online M.Div. Program:**  
A detailed explanation of what mentoring is and how it fits into our holistic formation model for students in the Online Master of Divinity Program. This is the major section in this handbook.
- **Mentor Report Forms of ALL 4 Levels:**  
Towards the end, you will find four report forms that help you and us evaluate the student growth and development covering all 4 aspects in the formation model. Each form is meant for a formation level such as Foundation, Development, Maturity, and Readiness. These 4 levels are sequential, to be completed over the time as the student journeys in the program from admission to graduation. These forms are provided there for your reference only; the actual submissions must be done online.

Please note: All the forms in this handbook are for your reference only. All official submissions are to be completed digitally on the seminary's website.

Thank you for considering this sacred task. If you choose to mentor, know that your presence and guidance can make a lasting impact in the life of a future servant leader. We are here to support you every step of the way.

## MENTOR CONSENT AND COMMITMENT FORM

*Dear Mentor,*

Thank you for your willingness to walk alongside a student in their pursuit of theological & ministerial training from South India Baptist Bible College & Seminary (Online Programs). This role is more than a responsibility, it is a sacred trust. You are being invited to participate in shaping a servant leader for God's kingdom.

The student you are mentoring is not only pursuing academic excellence but also spiritual and character formation. Mentoring is essential because true theological education is not just about information, it is about transformation.

This consent form clarifies the expectations, commitments, and the mutual trust required for this mentoring relationship. Please read carefully, pray about it, and submit this form digitally if you are able to commit to this journey.

### **Purpose of Mentorship**

The goal of mentorship is to:

- Walk alongside the student as they grow spiritually, personally, interpersonally, and ministerially.
- Encourage the student to reflect on their formation journey at every stage.
- Provide guidance, accountability, and prayer support through regular conversations.
- Submit reports to the seminary to help track progress of the student.

### **Your Role as a Mentor**

By agreeing to serve as a mentor, you commit to:

- Be a Spiritual Companion
  - Pray with and for the student regularly.
  - Encourage spiritual practices such as prayer, Scripture meditation, and worship.
- Guide Self-Reflection and Goal Setting
  - Help the student reflect honestly on their strengths and growth areas in all four aspects of formation:
    - Spiritual: Deepening relationship with God
    - Personal: Character, integrity, and emotional health
    - Interpersonal: Healthy relationships and communication
    - Ministerial: Ministry involvement and skill development
- Meet Consistently
  - Meet and talk to the student at least once in a month or two (in person or virtually).
  - Discuss the student's reflections and progress at each level.
- Encourage Openness and Grace
  - Maintain confidentiality and build trust.
  - Offer feedback with gentleness and honesty.
- Provide Mentor Reports
  - Complete a Mentor Reflection Report at the end of each level (4 levels in total).
  - Submit the report to the seminary for records and next steps.

### Time Commitment

- The M.Div. program spans 3–4 years, divided into 4 formation levels: Foundation, Development, Maturity, and Readiness.
- Students may go through each level for about 9–12 months (depending on their pace).
- You can expect minimum 3 - 4 meetings per level, plus prayer and ongoing encouragement.
- Meet with the seminary office on Zoom occasionally to receive support, updates, and guidance for your mentoring role.

### Important Notes

- **Spiritual & Ministerial Standing:** Mentors must be mature believers who are actively engaged in church or ministry, demonstrating integrity, character, and a Christlike example.
- **Mentor Gender:** For safety and openness, it is strongly recommended that the mentor be of the same gender as the student. However, an opposite-gender mentor is allowed if both the student and the seminary are comfortable with the arrangement and appropriate boundaries are maintained.
- **Location:** A mentor can be located anywhere and connect with the student either online or in person. If the mentor is not from the same locality, the mentor should establish communication with the student's local church to understand the student's context and discuss opportunities for ministry, observation, and guidance. In this case, mentors are encouraged to seek occasional updates from the church or pastor about the student's progress.
- **Confidentiality:** All mentoring conversations should remain private and be handled with discretion.

### Consent & Commitment

I have read and understood the expectations outlined above. I agree to:

- Serve as a mentor for the student named below.
- Fulfill the responsibilities described to the best of my ability.
- Maintain confidentiality and uphold Christian integrity in this role.

Mentor Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

City/State: \_\_\_\_\_

Gender: \_\_\_\_\_

Student Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Mentor Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

*Please note, this form is provided here for reference only, it has to be both filled & submitted digitally on the seminary's website.*

## **A WORD FROM THE ACADEMIC DEAN**

Dear Mentor,

Greetings in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Thank you for saying yes, not only to a role, but to a relationship. In serving as a mentor, you are entering into one of the most formative aspects of theological education: the quiet, attentive work of walking with another as Christ is being formed in them.

We live in a time where theological education can so easily become academic, rushed, and disconnected from the soul. In the midst of that, your role reminds the student that formation is not simply about knowledge, but about persons, and persons grow best not through pressure, but through presence, not through performance, but through prayerful companionship.

Students enrolled in the Master of Divinity Online Program at SIBBCS go through four stages of growth: Foundation, Development, Maturity, and Readiness. At each stage, they are invited to reflect on who they are becoming spiritually, personally, interpersonally, and ministerially. At the beginning of each level, they write goals, examine their experiences, and try, sometimes clumsily, sometimes courageously, to grow.

But no one grows alone.

Your role as a mentor is to walk alongside with gentleness. To ask questions that help the student see what God is doing. To identify growth they may not see in themselves. And sometimes, simply to sit in silence with them, listening to the Spirit's leading.

This handbook is here to support you as you support the student. It provides clarity about what to expect, how to navigate your mentoring relationship, and how to walk with student through each stage. You don't need to have all the answers. But we hope this resource gives you understanding, structure, and companionship for the path you now share with your student.

Please know how deeply we value your presence in this work. You are not merely filling a role, you are bearing witness to transformation, one life at a time.

With gratitude and prayer,  
Rajesh Madugula  
Academic Dean of Online Learning  
South India Baptist Bible College & Seminary.

## MENTORING IN OUR ONLINE M.DIV. PROGRAM

### Introduction to Formation Mentoring

*“My dear children, for whom I am again in the pains of childbirth until Christ is formed in you...”*  
— Galatians 4:19

Formation mentoring is a relational, prayerful journey in which a spiritually mature guide walks alongside a student, helping them become more fully the person God is shaping them to be, for His glory and for the sake of others.

This mentoring is not about offering solutions or instructions. It is about presence, listening, asking, encouraging, and praying. It is one of the few spaces in a student’s seminary journey where the focus is not on what they are doing, but *who they are becoming*.

As a formation mentor, you are entrusted with sacred work. You are not supervising a project. You are watching for signs of life, growth, and struggle in another person, and helping them pay attention to the gentle, persistent work of the Holy Spirit in all of it.

Theological education that focuses only on content leaves students under-formed. They may become skilled preachers, leaders, or good scholars, but lack depth, discernment, or rootedness in Christ.

In contrast, when theological education includes personal formation, students:

- Develop a stronger sense of calling and identity
- Learn to serve from a place of dependence, not performance
- Begin to integrate their theology with how they live, relate, and lead
- Are more likely to sustain faithful, humble ministry over the long haul

Mentors play a crucial part in this. While our faculty instruct in Scripture, Theology, Mission and Ministry, you walk beside the soul. You help them identify what’s really going on inside, in their relationships, and in their walk with God.

You may be wondering, I Am Willing But What If I Feel Inadequate?

That is a positive sign.

None of us is ever “fully ready” to walk beside another person’s formation. The good news is, you are not expected to be perfect. You are simply invited to be *present, attentive, and prayerful*. You will grow in wisdom as you mentor. And in doing so, you may also find that God deepens your own formation too.

## **The Vision Behind the Four-Level Formation Process**

*“He who began a good work in you will carry it on to completion until the day of Christ Jesus.”  
— Philippians 1:6*

### **Why a Four-Level Formation Process?**

Formation does not happen all at once. It unfolds over time, often quietly, shaped by seasons of growth, challenge, reflection, and surrender. Just as no one becomes a mature disciple in a day, no student completes seminary as the same person who entered it.

The four-level structure in the Master of Divinity Program: Foundation, Development, Maturity, and Readiness, offers a framework that scaffolds this gradual, sacred journey. It helps students reflect on who they are becoming, not only what they are learning. It also helps mentors accompany them with attentiveness and pastoral care appropriate to each stage. This process is not rigid. It respects that students come with different levels of spiritual depth, ministry experience, and personal maturity. But the levels provide a *shared rhythm*, a way for each student to ask the right questions at the right time, and for each mentor to walk with them accordingly.

### **A Glimpse Into Each Level**

#### ***Level 1: Foundation – Beginning to See***

A student enters into this level when he/she is admitted into the program. In this level, the student begins to slow down and reflect. They may feel uncertain or new to spiritual practices. The focus is on *awareness and desire*. They start asking, “Who am I before God? What do I long for spiritually? Where am I starting from?” As a mentor, your role is to listen well, ask open questions, and help them identify both hunger and hesitation.

#### ***Level 2: Development – Learning to Walk***

In this level, the student starts forming habits and facing challenges. Spiritual disciplines may feel routine or resisted. Emotions become more visible. Ministry demands start to stretch them. This is a time of tension and growth. Your mentoring here is encouragement and honesty. You help them not give up. You hold space for honest struggle and point them back to grace.

#### ***Level 3: Maturity – Becoming Rooted***

Here, students begin to live with more integrity between belief and action. They recognize their limits. They find strength in surrender. They may begin to guide others or hold responsibility in ministry. The focus is on consistency and inner depth. As a mentor, you help them integrate what they’ve learned and encourage deeper self-leadership. You identify the fruit you see and gently prepare them to serve others with humility.

#### ***Level 4: Readiness – Living Sent***

This level is the season of discernment and preparation. The student begins to ask: “What kind of person will I be after seminary?” There’s a letting go of what was, and a stepping toward what’s next. The focus is on calling, discernment, and the kind of leader they want to become. Here, the mentor offers presence more than instruction. You affirm their journey, help clarify their direction, and speak a final word of blessing as they prepare to be sent out.



## **An Integrated Journey**

In each level, students are meaningful and intentionally invited to grow in the following four core areas:

- **Spiritual:** Their relationship with God, their spiritual practices, and their capacity to listen and respond to the Spirit
- **Personal:** Their emotional health, self-awareness, habits, and inner life
- **Interpersonal:** Their way of relating to others, with honesty, empathy, patience, and clarity
- **Ministerial:** Their calling, strengths, growth areas, and posture in ministry or service.

These areas are deeply connected. A student cannot grow spiritually without growing in honesty. They cannot serve others well without knowing themselves. And they cannot endure in ministry without regular return to God as their anchor.

## **The Role and Calling of a Mentor**

*“We were gentle among you, like a nursing mother taking care of her own children. So, being affectionately desirous of you, we were ready to share with you not only the gospel of God but also our own selves...” — 1 Thessalonians 2:7–8*

### **A Ministry of Presence, Not Performance**

In a theological education system, filled with assignments, lectures, and deadlines, mentoring offers a slower space. It is the one place where students are not being evaluated on how much they know, but how they are *becoming*. In this space, the mentor’s task is not to give answers, but to walk *with* the student in attentiveness, reflection, and prayer. To be a mentor is to offer something that is increasingly rare: your attention, your trust, and your listening presence. That in itself is a gift to the student. Sometimes, the most transformative moment in a student’s life will not be a classroom insight, but a moment when a mentor said, “I see growth in you,” or “I’ve been praying for you.”

### **What a Mentor Is (and Is Not)**

A mentor is not:

- A supervisor or evaluator
- A therapist
- An academic advisor
- A theological expert

A mentor is:

- A spiritual companion
- A careful listener and encourager
- A steady presence amid growth and struggle
- A witness to God’s work in the student’s life

You are not expected to know everything. You are invited to pay attention, to ask wise questions, to offer a word in season, and to reflect gently on what you observe. This is a pastoral role, rooted in grace, not control.

### **Key Responsibilities of the Mentor**

Here are the primary ways mentors help the student in their formation process:

#### **1. Meet regularly with the student**

- Aim for at least one meaningful conversation over a month or two.
- You can meet over Zoom, phone, or in person, whatever is mutually possible
- Keep the space relational, reflective, and unhurried.

## 2. Read the student's formation goals and reflections

- At the beginning of each level, students will write a short reflection in their formation handbook (they are aware of this) and set their own goals in four areas: spiritual, personal, interpersonal, and ministerial for that specific level.
- Take time to know these goals and use that understanding to guide your conversation.
- During the level engage in conversations with the student on how they are progressing in their goals.
- You could also ask questions like below and listen to them:
  - "How have you seen God at work in you recently?"
  - "What's been unexpectedly difficult or unexpectedly meaningful?"
  - "What's helping you pray these days?"
  - "Where do you feel stuck, and what do you need from the Lord?"

## 3. Observe and write a mentor report at the end of each level

- Meet with the student at the end of each level and find areas of growth in relation to the goals they have set for themselves at the beginning of the level.
- You will be asked to report on all four areas of formation in the student life. These reports are not long, but they should be thoughtful and honest. You could find these forms towards the end of this handbook.
- These reports are to be submitted digitally to the seminary and you will be informed on where to submit these reports.
- Your words help the student track their growth, and help the seminary walk with them well.

## 4. Pray regularly for your student

- Not all mentoring happens in conversation, some of the most important work happens when you pray in private
- You may want to keep a short note or prayer list for your student
- Occasionally, feel free to send a message or Scripture of encouragement between meetings

## The Heart of a Mentor: Posture Over Technique

You don't need to have perfect mentoring "skills" to do this well. What truly matters is following:

- **Humility** – You are not here to shape the student into your image, but to help them listen to God
- **Patience** – Real change is often slow and hard to measure
- **Gentleness** – Students carry burdens and insecurities they may not share right away
- **Trust in the Spirit** – The work of transformation is God's. You are simply a faithful presence in it.

You may wonder whether your words matter. Whether the time you give makes a difference. Allow us to assure you, it does. In our years of ministry and education, we've seen it again and again: students remember those who *saw them*, who *stayed with them*, who *blessed them*, and who *saw God's presence* in their lives when they couldn't see it for themselves. That's what a mentor does.

## **Mentoring Philosophy and Practice**

*“Come alongside... not with loud answers, but with quiet faith.”*

### **Mentoring as a Spiritual Practice**

Mentoring in the formation process is not a skill set to master, it is a way of being present to another, with attentiveness to the Holy Spirit. You are not just helping someone achieve their goals; you are entering into a quiet ministry of *presence*, *prayer*, and *discernment*.

Think of your mentoring as something you do with God, not just for the student. Before each meeting, pause. Pray. Ask God to help you listen with patience, speak with kindness, and notice where He might already be at work.

### **The Heart Behind the Mentoring Practice**

Here are five key words to shape the way you carry this role:

#### **1. Presence**

Sometimes students are weary of being “taught” or “fixed.” They long for someone to simply sit with them. Presence is more powerful than advice. You don't need to fill every silence. Being with someone, without agenda, can itself be healing.

#### **2. Attentiveness**

Listen carefully, not just to words, but to tone, repetition, hesitation. What is not being said? What is being said with tears or laughter or tiredness? Often, your best question will arise from listening, not from a pre-planned list. A mentor who listens well invites the student to listen to their own life more deeply.

#### **3. Prayerfulness**

Even if prayer is not long, let it be sincere. Offer prayer at the end of your meetings, or even in the middle if something feels tender. Let students know you are holding them before God even between meetings. “I am praying for you,” said truthfully, is sometimes more powerful than advice.

#### **4. Gentle Guidance**

You may at times offer suggestions, observations, or stories from your own journey. Do this with gentleness. Avoid correcting too quickly. Instead, say:

- “Can I share something that helped me when I was in a similar place?”
- “Would you like a Scripture that comes to mind as you share this?”
- “Have you considered...?”

You are guiding, not steering. Gently help them name their path.

#### **5. Encouragement**

Some students carry shame or discouragement silently. You may be the only voice telling them, “I see growth.” Be specific in your affirmations:

- “I see more patience in how you’re handling things now.”
- “That decision shows real growth in discernment.”
- “Your willingness to identify that struggle is a sign of courage.”

People grow best when they are seen with grace, not pressure.

### **When Conversations Feel Stuck**

It is normal for some mentoring times to feel dry or difficult. Here’s what you can do:

- **If the student is quiet or reserved:**  
Be patient. Start with gentle, open questions:  
“What’s been on your heart this week or this month or lately?”  
“Has anything stayed with you from your readings or prayer times?”
- **If the student is overwhelmed:**  
Help them pause. You can say:  
“It sounds like there’s a lot on your shoulders. Would it help to just sit with one thing today?”
- **If there’s no spiritual language yet:**  
Not all students have had space to identify spiritual experiences. Ask instead:  
“Where have you felt joy or sorrow lately?”  
“Was there a moment when you felt held or stretched?”
- **If you’re not sure what to say:**  
Be honest. It’s okay to say, “I don’t know what to say right now, but I’m here with you,” or  
“Let’s pause and invite God into this.”

### **Mentoring Across Diversity**

At SIBBCS, students may differ from you in age, background, church, or life situation. Here are some gentle reminders:

- Don’t assume they’ve had the same formation experiences you have
- Respect their context, what is possible for them may differ from others
- Let them lead their goal setting; your role is to help them reflect, not control their pace
- Be sensitive to gender dynamics in conversation and comfort levels
- Hold confidentiality, unless there is risk of harm or a need for referral

You don’t have to impress the student. You simply need to love them well and walk with them a little while. Formation mentoring is slow work. But over time, it leaves deep roots. You may not see the full fruit of your presence, but what you plant may flourish in places you’ll never go.

## Understanding the Four Formation Areas

*“Keep a close watch on yourself and on the teaching. Persist in this, for by so doing you will save both yourself and your hearers.”*

*— 1 Timothy 4:16*

In the SIBBCS Master of Divinity program, each level of formation invites students to reflect and grow in four deeply interconnected areas:

- **Spiritual**
- **Personal**
- **Interpersonal**
- **Ministerial**

These areas are not compartments. Growth in one will often affect the others. And sometimes, stagnation or struggle in one area will be a doorway for God to deepen growth in another. As a mentor, your help students reflect, notice, and respond to how God is forming them as whole persons.

### Spiritual Formation

*“Remain in me, as I also remain in you...” (John 15:4)*

Spiritual formation refers to the student’s relationship with God, how they experience Him, respond to Him, and arrange their life in a way that deepens intimacy with Christ. This includes:

- Prayer habits (structured or spontaneous)
- Time in Scripture (not just for study, but for nourishment)
- Trust in God during trials
- Openness to correction and guidance
- Worship, rest, confession, surrender

Signs of growth may include:

- A more honest and consistent prayer life
- An increased hunger for Scripture
- A shift from performance to grace in their spiritual life
- Greater trust in God in uncertain or painful seasons
- A willingness to name doubts or dry seasons and stay faithful

Questions you might ask as a mentor:

- “How has your relationship with God felt lately?”
- “What has helped or hindered your prayer life this term?”
- “Where have you noticed God’s presence or absence?”

## Personal Formation

*“Above all else, guard your heart, for everything you do flows from it.” (Proverbs 4:23)*

Personal formation is about a student’s *inner life*. It includes emotional maturity, self-awareness, character, and the ability to care for their body, mind, and soul. Ministry can only be sustained when there is congruence between inner life and outer life. This includes:

- Identifying emotions rather than avoiding or hiding them
- Understanding their story and how it shapes them
- Setting healthy boundaries (with time, people, responsibilities)
- Dealing with patterns of shame, fear, anger, pride
- Living with integrity and self-control

Signs of growth may include:

- More honesty about personal struggles and patterns
- A desire to rest well, not just work hard
- Seeking healing from past wounds
- Learning to live with limitations without shame
- Facing fears or insecurities with growing maturity

Questions you might ask as a mentor:

- “How have you been tending to your own well-being?”
- “What have you noticed about yourself this season?”
- “Are there any recurring patterns you feel the Lord is bringing to your attention?”

## Interpersonal Formation

*“If it is possible, as far as it depends on you, live at peace with everyone.” (Romans 12:18)*

Interpersonal formation focuses on how the student relates to others, with honesty, humility, compassion, and presence. Ministry is always relational. This area helps students grow in their ability to build and sustain healthy, God honouring relationships. This includes:

- Listening well without defensiveness
- Speaking truth with love
- Receiving feedback and responding graciously
- Practicing forgiveness and reconciliation
- Living in community rather than isolation

Signs of growth may include:

- Willingness to have difficult but healthy conversations
- Increased empathy or patience toward others
- Less reactive responses in moments of conflict
- Identifying relationship struggles and seeking reconciliation
- Asking for help when needed

Questions you might ask as a mentor:

- “What relationship has God used to shape you this term?”
- “Where have you been challenged to grow in how you relate to others?”
- “Is there someone you’ve been avoiding or struggling with?”

## **Ministerial Formation**

*“Now it is required that those who have been given a trust must prove faithful.” (1 Corinthians 4:2)*

Ministerial formation addresses how the student is being shaped for their calling. This is not only about skill-building, but also about posture, how they serve, why they serve, and from what inner foundation they serve. This includes:

- Clarity of calling (even if it is still unfolding)
- Faithfulness in small activities and responsibilities
- Ability to serve with humility, not pride or fear
- Learning through failure and feedback
- Living out theology in real ministry situations

Signs of growth may include:

- Greater joy in serving, even in small or unseen roles
- Courage to take responsibility or lead where needed
- Reflection on ministry mistakes with openness
- Increased confidence anchored in Christ, not self
- Desire to serve people over tasks

Questions you might ask as a mentor:

- “Where have you sensed God using you recently?”
- “What have you learned through success or failure in ministry this term?”
- “What does it mean to serve from a place of rest, not just responsibility?”

## **Holding the Four Areas Together**

As a mentor, you don’t need to touch on all four areas in every meeting. Some seasons may focus more on one area than another. But across each formation level, you will begin to notice how they weave together.

When a student grows spiritually, they often become more self-aware. When they face relational strain, it may lead to prayer. When they feel stuck in ministry, it may uncover a deeper inner struggle. Your gentle attentiveness helps them see the connections.



## Understanding the Four Formation Levels

*“The path of the righteous is like the morning sun, shining ever brighter till the full light of day.”  
— Proverbs 4:18*

Spiritual and ministerial formation is not linear or mechanical. Growth does not always follow neat stages. However, it often unfolds in *levels*, each with its own invitations, struggles, and graces.

The four levels: Foundation, Development, Maturity, and Readiness, represent stages in the formation journey that help both the student and the mentor attend to what God may be doing at that point in their life. Each level invites reflection and growth in the four core areas: *Spiritual*, *Personal*, *Interpersonal*, and *Ministerial*. But the emphasis and tone shift gently from one level to the next.

### Level 1: Foundation

**Theme:** Beginning with Awareness

**Focus:** Slowing down, noticing, identifying beginnings

This level invites the student to pause and ask:

“Where am I right now in my life with God?”

“What kind of person am I bringing into this journey?”

Students may feel excitement, nervousness, or uncertainty. Many carry unspoken fears of not being good enough, not knowing enough, or not fitting in. This level creates space to *settle*, *reflect*, and *begin honestly*.

**Mentor’s role:** Be a safe presence. Listen gently. Encourage honest self-assessment. Don’t rush. Help them learn how to reflect. Pray with them and for them.

#### Signs of healthy formation:

- Starting simple spiritual practices (e.g., morning prayer, journaling)
- Identifying emotional or personal patterns honestly
- Reflecting on past wounds or influences
- Being open to feedback and community
- Showing desire for ministry, even without clarity yet

### Level 2: Development

**Theme:** Growing Through Struggle

**Focus:** Building habits, facing tensions, forming resilience

This stage involves the *stretch* that comes when initial enthusiasm meets reality. Students begin deeper theological reflection. They may encounter failure, inner resistance, or disorientation in ministry or personal life.

This is where growth becomes costly and meaningful.

**Mentor’s role:** Offer steady encouragement. Help the student stay grounded. Let them voice their frustrations and doubts without fear. Ask deeper questions. Help them trace God's faithfulness in the struggle.

**Signs of healthy formation:**

- Maintaining or adapting spiritual disciplines even in dryness
- Learning from relational tension rather than avoiding it
- Owning mistakes in ministry settings
- Facing emotional discomfort with increasing maturity
- Beginning to discern strengths and limitations

**Level 3: Maturity**

**Theme:** Living with Integrity

**Focus:** Integration of inner life and outer leadership

By this level, students are expected to show greater consistency in how they pray, lead, study, and relate. The questions shift from “What am I learning?” to “How am I living this out?” and “What kind of person am I becoming?”

There is usually a growing sense of calling, but also a growing awareness of limitations. This is a level of refinement.

**Mentor’s role:** Walk alongside as the student integrates theology and life. Reflect on long-term patterns. Affirm signs of faithfulness. Offer gentle correction when necessary. Help them go deeper, not just further.

**Signs of healthy formation:**

- Leading or serving with quiet confidence
- Growing in spiritual discernment
- Embodying humility even as responsibility increases
- Showing fruit of the Spirit in relationships
- Making decisions with prayerful, ethical awareness

**Level 4: Readiness**

**Theme:** Discerning and Being Sent

**Focus:** Calling, surrender, and preparation for life beyond seminary

This final level is not a conclusion, it is a threshold. The student stands at the edge of transition. Questions arise:

“Am I ready?”

“What is God asking of me in the next season?”

“Who will I be when this academic structure is no longer around me?”

Students may feel both clarity and fear. The temptation is to perform or impress. The invitation is to rest in God’s call and be faithful.

**Mentor’s role:** Bless. Encourage. Remind the student of their journey. Help them discern next steps. Pray words of sending and hope.

**Signs of healthy formation:**

- Clarity (or peaceful trust) in vocational direction
- Courage to step into new roles or unknowns
- Desire to serve, not to be seen
- A grounded sense of identity in Christ, not performance
- A heart to disciple others, not just lead them

**Note:**

These levels are meant to guide, not constrain. Some students may reach Level 4 having already tasted deep maturity. Others may need to linger in Level 2's wrestlings. God's pace with each soul is different, and always full of mercy. As a mentor, your wisdom lies not in measuring growth by comparison, but in *noticing* the quiet signs of formation, *trusting* the Spirit's work, and *responding* with care.

## **Sample Conversations and Questions for Mentoring**

*“The purposes of a person’s heart are deep waters, but one who has insight draws them out.”  
— Proverbs 20:5*

Each student is different. Some talk freely. Others need time and space. These questions will help you guide without pushing, and invite without controlling.

You may:

- Use 2–3 of these questions per meeting
- Let the student lead, pause if they dwell on something meaningful
- Follow the Spirit’s nudging; sometimes one simple question is enough

Let the tone of your conversation be curious, not evaluative, and always full of grace.

### **Questions for Beginning the Journey (Level 1 – Foundation)**

These questions help students reflect on where they are starting from.

#### **Spiritual**

- “How has your relationship with God felt lately?”
- “What does prayer look like for you these days?”
- “Has there been a moment recently where you felt God’s nearness or His silence?”

#### **Personal**

- “What are you learning about yourself as you begin this program?”
- “Where do you feel strong right now? Where do you feel unsure or tired?”
- “Is there anything in your past that’s shaping how you’re approaching this new season?”

#### **Interpersonal**

- “How do you typically handle conflict or misunderstandings?”
- “What does community mean to you right now?”
- “Is there a relationship that’s been especially life-giving or challenging lately?”

#### **Ministerial**

- “What drew you to ministry or to this degree?”
- “What experiences of serving others have stayed with you?”
- “Do you feel clear or unsure about your calling at this point?”

### **Questions for Seasons of Growth or Struggle (Level 2 – Development)**

These help students process deeper challenges, doubts, and changes.

#### **Spiritual**

- “Have your prayer practices changed lately?”
- “What are you learning about God in this season?”

- “Are there any spiritual practices you’re avoiding or drawn toward?”

### **Personal**

- “What patterns in yourself are becoming more visible?”
- “Are there any fears you’ve noticed shaping your decisions?”
- “How are you caring for your emotional and physical well-being?”

### **Interpersonal**

- “Is there someone you’ve been avoiding or struggling to understand?”
- “Have any conversations or conflicts challenged you recently?”
- “What does healthy communication look like for you?”

### **Ministerial**

- “Where have you felt stretched in your ministry responsibilities?”
- “Have you had any moments of failure or uncertainty in ministry? What did they teach you?”
- “Do you feel pressure to perform, or freedom to serve?”

## **Questions for Discernment and Integration (Level 3 – Maturity)**

These invite the student to connect inner life and outer ministry.

### **Spiritual**

- “How is your walk with God influencing your leadership or teaching?”
- “Are you finding rest and intimacy with God, or has ministry crowded that out?”
- “What Scriptures or themes has God been impressing on your heart?”

### **Personal**

- “What areas of your life feel most integrated right now? Which ones feel divided?”
- “How do you stay grounded when you feel pressured or praised?”
- “What are you learning about your identity beyond roles or performance?”

### **Interpersonal**

- “How have you grown in humility or empathy toward others?”
- “Are there people you’re discipling or mentoring? What are those experiences teaching you?”
- “How do you navigate disagreements in community?”

### **Ministerial**

- “What kind of leader are you becoming?”
- “How do you discern what to say ‘yes’ or ‘no’ to in ministry?”
- “How are you integrating theology and practice?”

## **Questions for Transition and Sending Soon (Level 4 – Readiness)**

These help students prepare for life beyond seminary.

### **Spiritual**

- “What spiritual habits do you hope to carry with you after graduation?”
- “What does dependence on God look like for you now?”
- “What kind of spiritual soil do you want to cultivate in the next season?”

### **Personal**

- “What areas of your character feel strengthened? Which still need attention?”
- “How do you plan to rest and grow personally as you begin ministry work?”
- “What fears or hopes do you carry about the next chapter?”

### **Interpersonal**

- “What kind of relationships will you need in the next stage, friends, mentors, accountability?”
- “Who has walked with you in this journey that you’d want to thank or stay connected with?”
- “How will you care for your relational life in a busy season?”

### **Ministerial**

- “What is God calling you to now?”
- “Where do you feel both equipped and unprepared?”
- “What would faithfulness look like for you in the next two years?”

### **Note:**

These are just sample questions, you can ask whatever feels natural and appropriate. Don’t worry about asking “perfect” questions. The best moments in mentoring come when we ask a simple question, wait, and let the student find their own words. And remember: sometimes, it’s not the question that matters, but the silence that follows.

## MENTOR REPORT FORM: LEVEL 1 – FOUNDATION STAGE

This form needs to be both filled & submitted digitally through the seminary website; the copy here is for reference only. Please use the assessment scale carefully and assign numbers thoughtfully.

Mentor Name: \_\_\_\_\_. Student Name: \_\_\_\_\_. Number of Meetings: \_\_\_\_.

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### 1. Spiritual Formation (Total Points Possible: 0-25)

Goal: At this foundational stage, the emphasis is on developing simple, sustainable practices of life with God. It's less about achievement and more about showing up, creating space to be attentive to God's presence in everyday life.

Please assess using the following scale:

5 Strongly                  4 Mostly                  3 Somewhat                  2 Slightly                  1 Not at all

Indicators:

- Has the student begun a regular practice of prayer, even if simple and short, and does it reflect sincerity rather than formality? \_\_\_\_\_
- Is the student approaching Scripture with openness, not just to gain knowledge, but to listen to God's voice? \_\_\_\_\_
- Does the student recognize God at work in ordinary moments, even when prayer feels dry or distant? \_\_\_\_\_
- Is the student taking time to reflect on their spiritual journey and share these insights honestly with their mentor? \_\_\_\_\_
- Has the student made an effort to try new spiritual habits (e.g., journaling, silence, or meditative reading), even imperfectly, with a desire to grow? \_\_\_\_\_

### 2. Personal Formation (Total Points Possible: 0-25)

Goal: This stage is about noticing what is within, patterns of thought, emotions, and behaviors, while learning to respond with honesty and grace. Growth begins with awareness.

Please assess using the following scale:

5 Strongly                  4 Mostly                  3 Somewhat                  2 Slightly                  1 Not at all

Indicators:

- Is the student learning to observe their inner life, what brings joy, stress, fear, or frustration, without ignoring or denying it? \_\_\_\_\_
- Does the student share truthfully about their personal challenges and victories during mentor conversations? \_\_\_\_\_
- Is the student willing to hear constructive feedback without defensiveness and take small steps toward change? \_\_\_\_\_
- Is there evidence of the student trying to manage time well, care for their body, and create balance in life, even if inconsistently? \_\_\_\_\_
- Is the student moving toward embracing their identity as loved by God, rather than being defined by performance or failure? \_\_\_\_\_

### 3. Interpersonal Formation (Total Points Possible: 0-25)

Goal: Begin practicing humility and grace in relationships. This includes listening well, engaging in community, and learning to navigate conflict with honesty and care.

Please assess using the following scale:

5 Strongly                      4 Mostly                      3 Somewhat                      2 Slightly                      1 Not at all

Indicators:

- Does the student genuinely listen to others, seeking to understand before speaking? \_\_\_\_\_
- Is the student practicing respectful communication, using words to build others up? \_\_\_\_\_
- Is the student showing a willingness to engage in church or small group life, not just for learning but for mutual care? \_\_\_\_\_
- When faced with disagreement, is the student reflecting on their response rather than reacting impulsively? \_\_\_\_\_
- Is the student intentionally affirming and supporting others, showing empathy and kindness in relationships? \_\_\_\_\_

### 4. Ministerial Formation ((Total Points Possible: 0-25)

Goal: Begin taking small but meaningful steps into ministry and reflecting on what God might be calling them toward. This stage is about observation, service, and early discernment.

Please assess using the following scale:

5 Strongly                      4 Mostly                      3 Somewhat                      2 Slightly                      1 Not at all

Indicators:

- Is the student showing a readiness to take part in simple acts of service without seeking recognition? \_\_\_\_\_
- When entrusted with small responsibilities, is the student faithful in following through? \_\_\_\_\_
- After serving, does the student take time to process what went well, what was challenging, and what God might be teaching? \_\_\_\_\_
- Is the student beginning to articulate why they feel drawn to ministry, even if their sense of call is not yet clear? \_\_\_\_\_
- Is the student receptive to feedback and willing to learn from experienced ministry leaders? \_\_\_\_\_

### Reflections & Remarks

Kindly summarize: How did the student progress toward the goals that they set at the beginning of this level? What did you observe in the student during this level? What encouragement, caution, or support would you offer going forward? Is the student ready to move to next level of formation, or would the student benefit from staying longer in this level?

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Date: \_\_\_\_\_. Signature of the Mentor \_\_\_\_\_.



## MENTOR REPORT FORM: LEVEL 2 – DEVELOPMENT STAGE

This form needs to be both filled & submitted digitally through the seminary website; the copy here is for reference only. Please use the assessment scale carefully and assign numbers thoughtfully.

Mentor Name: \_\_\_\_\_. Student Name: \_\_\_\_\_. Number of Meetings: \_\_\_\_.

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### 1. Spiritual Formation (Total Points Possible: 0-25)

Goal: Move beyond initial practices into practices that deepen trust in God, especially during seasons of dryness or struggle. This stage invites perseverance and depth.

Please assess using the following scale:

5 Strongly                  4 Mostly                  3 Somewhat                  2 Slightly                  1 Not at all

Indicators:

- Is the student sustaining regular prayer, Scripture reading, and reflection, even when it feels difficult? \_\_\_\_\_
- Has the student engaged in any new disciplines with openness to being formed? \_\_\_\_\_
- When prayer feels dry or God feels distant, does the student stay engaged rather than withdrawing? \_\_\_\_\_
- Is the student beginning to connect classroom learning with personal spiritual practice? \_\_\_\_\_
- Is the student seeking and welcoming guidance for spiritual growth beyond minimal requirements? \_\_\_\_\_

### 2. Personal Formation (Total Points Possible: 0-25)

Goal: Begin deeper self-examination and unlearning unhealthy patterns. Develop emotional honesty and resilience.

Please assess using the following scale:

5 Strongly                  4 Mostly                  3 Somewhat                  2 Slightly                  1 Not at all

Indicators:

- Is the student willing to identify fears, pride, or insecurities in conversation with the mentor? \_\_\_\_\_
- Is the student learning constructive ways to handle stress, fatigue, or disappointment? \_\_\_\_\_
- Does the student acknowledge areas needing change and take small steps toward them? \_\_\_\_\_
- Is the student open to counselling, accountability, or guidance rather than hiding struggles? \_\_\_\_\_
- Is there growing consistency between the student's faith and personal habits (time, money, integrity)? \_\_\_\_\_

### 3. Interpersonal Formation (Total Points Possible: 0-25)

Goal: Grow in the ability to love others well, resolve tensions, and lead relationally with humility.

Please assess using the following scale:

5 Strongly                      4 Mostly                      3 Somewhat                      2 Slightly                      1 Not at all

Indicators:

- When tensions arise, does the student aim for reconciliation rather than avoidance or aggression?  
\_\_\_\_\_
- Is the student demonstrating a genuine interest in others' feelings and perspectives? \_\_\_\_\_
- Does the student work well with others, valuing shared goals over personal credit? \_\_\_\_\_
- Is the student learning when to speak and when to listen, offering both truth and gentleness?  
\_\_\_\_\_
- Is the student actively participating in church or ministry groups as a learner and contributor?  
\_\_\_\_\_

### 4. Ministerial Formation (Total Points Possible: 0-25)

Goal: Engage more intentionally in ministry practice, learn from mistakes, and connect theology to real-life ministry contexts.

Please assess using the following scale:

5 Strongly                      4 Mostly                      3 Somewhat                      2 Slightly                      1 Not at all

Indicators:

- Is the student consistently serving in a chosen ministry setting with reliability? \_\_\_\_\_
- Does the student process both challenges and successes in light of Scripture and theology?  
\_\_\_\_\_
- Is the student flexible when plans change, or things don't go as expected? \_\_\_\_\_
- Is the student beginning to articulate spiritual gifts and areas of passion for ministry? \_\_\_\_\_
- Does the student seek and apply constructive feedback from others or mentor? \_\_\_\_\_

### Reflections & Remarks

Kindly summarize: How did the student progress toward the goals that they set at the beginning of this level? What did you observe in the student during this level? What encouragement, caution, or support would you offer going forward? Is the student ready to move to next level of formation, or would the student benefit from staying longer in this level?

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Date: \_\_\_\_\_. Signature of the Mentor \_\_\_\_\_.

## MENTOR REPORT FORM: LEVEL 3 – MATURITY STAGE

This form needs to be both filled & submitted digitally through the seminary website; the copy here is for reference only. Please use the assessment scale carefully and assign numbers thoughtfully.

Mentor Name: \_\_\_\_\_. Student Name: \_\_\_\_\_. Number of Meetings: \_\_\_\_.

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### 1. Spiritual Formation (Total Points Possible: 0-25)

Goal: Move from practicing disciplines to living from them, where prayer and Scripture become a natural part of life and ministry. Begin guiding others spiritually while remaining a learner.

Please assess using the following scale:

5 Strongly                      4 Mostly                      3 Somewhat                      2 Slightly                      1 Not at all

Indicators:

- Is the student engaging disciplines not as tasks, but as life-giving practices rooted in love for God? \_\_\_\_\_
- Does the student demonstrate the ability to prayerfully discern God's leading in key decisions? \_\_\_\_\_
- Is the student integrating theological insights into spiritual practices (e.g., applying learning to prayer and worship)? \_\_\_\_\_
- Is the student beginning to walk alongside others in spiritual growth with humility and care? \_\_\_\_\_
- Does the student show a groundedness in identity as a follower of Christ that is resilient amid pressures and success? \_\_\_\_\_

### 2. Personal Formation (Total Points Possible: 0-25)

Goal: Live with greater self-awareness, humility, and resilience. Integrate emotional health into leadership and ministry life.

Please assess using the following scale:

5 Strongly                      4 Mostly                      3 Somewhat                      2 Slightly                      1 Not at all

Indicators:

- Is the student embracing who they are, without pretense, while remaining committed to growth? \_\_\_\_\_
- Does the student respond to challenges with grace, rather than defensiveness or withdrawal? \_\_\_\_\_
- Is the student establishing sustainable practices of rest, work, and spiritual renewal? \_\_\_\_\_
- Is there evidence of integrity between professed beliefs and daily living choices? \_\_\_\_\_
- Does the student demonstrate a willingness to repent, adjust, and grow when made aware of mistakes? \_\_\_\_\_

### 3. Interpersonal Formation (Total Points Possible: 0-25)

Goal: Move from managing relationships to nurturing healthy communities. Practice leadership that is collaborative, gentle, and rooted in love.

Please assess using the following scale:

5 Strongly                      4 Mostly                      3 Somewhat                      2 Slightly                      1 Not at all

Indicators:

- Does the student lead in ways that serve others rather than seeking recognition? \_\_\_\_\_
- Is the student handling conflicts with maturity, aiming for reconciliation and justice? \_\_\_\_\_
- Is the student intentionally investing in at least one other person's growth, modelling Christlike care? \_\_\_\_\_
- Does the student use influence ethically, without manipulation or coercion? \_\_\_\_\_
- Is the student contributing to a culture of trust, inclusion, and encouragement in ministry settings? \_\_\_\_\_

### 4. Ministerial Formation (Total Points Possible: 0-25)

Goal: Take responsibility for significant ministry roles with theological depth and spiritual dependence. Integrate knowledge, skills, and character in real contexts.

Please assess using the following scale:

5 Strongly                      4 Mostly                      3 Somewhat                      2 Slightly                      1 Not at all

Indicators:

- Is the student able to plan, organize, and lead ministry initiatives with clarity and purpose? \_\_\_\_\_
- Does the student communicate biblical truth in a way that is both faithful and applicable? \_\_\_\_\_
- Is the student offering compassionate, wise care in real-life situations of need? \_\_\_\_\_
- Does the student show the ability to connect classroom learning to ministry challenges? \_\_\_\_\_
- Is the student maintaining faithfulness and joy under the realities of criticism, fatigue, and unmet expectations? \_\_\_\_\_

### Reflections & Remarks

Kindly summarize: How did the student progress toward the goals that they set at the beginning of this level? What did you observe in the student during this level? What encouragement, caution, or support would you offer going forward? Is the student ready to move to next level of formation, or would the student benefit from staying longer in this level?

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Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Signature of the Mentor \_\_\_\_\_

## MENTOR REPORT FORM: LEVEL 4 – READINESS STAGE

This form needs to be both filled & submitted digitally through the seminary website; the copy here is for reference only. Please use the assessment scale carefully and assign numbers thoughtfully.

Mentor Name: \_\_\_\_\_. Student Name: \_\_\_\_\_. Number of Meetings: \_\_\_\_.

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### 1. Spiritual Formation (Total Points Possible: 0-25)

Goal: Transition from seminary rhythms to a lifelong rule of life. Maintain spiritual vitality beyond structured academic support.

Please assess using the following scale:

5 Strongly                  4 Mostly                  3 Somewhat                  2 Slightly                  1 Not at all

Indicators:

- Has the student developed a realistic and sustainable spiritual rhythm for post-seminary life?  
\_\_\_\_\_
- Does the student demonstrate confidence in their identity in Christ and sense of mission?  
\_\_\_\_\_
- Can the student sustain prayer, Scripture reading, and worship when accountability systems are removed? \_\_\_\_\_
- Is the student prepared to guide others spiritually while remaining grounded personally?  
\_\_\_\_\_
- Does the student demonstrate trust in God while stepping into new roles or uncertainties?  
\_\_\_\_\_

### 2. Personal Formation (Total Points Possible: 0-25)

Goal: Enter ministry with resilience, humility, and practical readiness for sustainable leadership.

Please assess using the following scale:

5 Strongly                  4 Mostly                  3 Somewhat                  2 Slightly                  1 Not at all

Indicators:

- Is the student clear about their strengths, weaknesses, and limits as they enter ministry? \_\_\_\_\_
- Has the student planned practices for rest and renewal to avoid burnout? \_\_\_\_\_
- Can the student adjust gracefully to unexpected challenges and new environments? \_\_\_\_\_
- Does the student display openness to ongoing growth through reading, courses, or mentorship beyond graduation? \_\_\_\_\_
- Is the student demonstrating faith-filled courage rather than fear or control in uncertain ministry situations? \_\_\_\_\_

### 3. Interpersonal Formation (Total Points Possible: 0-25)

Goal: Move into ministry relationships with integrity, empathy, and the ability to build supportive networks.

Please assess using the following scale:

5 Strongly                      4 Mostly                      3 Somewhat                      2 Slightly                      1 Not at all

Indicators:

- Has the student identified and planned for a network of accountability and encouragement post-graduation? \_\_\_\_\_
- Does the student respond to criticism & praise without arrogance or discouragement? \_\_\_\_\_
- Is the student maintaining relationships marked by grace, respect, and boundaries? \_\_\_\_\_
- Can the student nurture others without neglecting their own growth? \_\_\_\_\_
- Is the student able to approach conflict constructively and biblically in ministry settings? \_\_\_\_\_

### 4. Ministerial Formation (Total Points Possible: 0-25)

Goal: Demonstrate readiness for vocational ministry or leadership roles with theological depth and Christlike character.

Please assess using the following scale:

5 Strongly                      4 Mostly                      3 Somewhat                      2 Slightly                      1 Not at all

Indicators:

- Has the student discerned a realistic and Spirit-led direction for ministry or next steps? \_\_\_\_\_
- Is the student capable in preaching, teaching, pastoral care, or their chosen ministry area? \_\_\_\_\_
- Does the student articulate a coherent theology of ministry lived out in practice? \_\_\_\_\_
- Is the student prepared to lead with humility and service, not power or control? \_\_\_\_\_
- Does the student demonstrate readiness to persevere through criticism, financial strain, and ministry complexity? \_\_\_\_\_

### Reflections & Remarks

Kindly summarize: How did the student progress toward the goals that they set at the beginning of this level? What did you observe in the student during this level? What encouragement, caution, or support would you offer going forward? Is the student ready to move to next level of formation, or would the student benefit from staying longer in this level?

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Date: \_\_\_\_\_. Signature of the Mentor \_\_\_\_\_.