

(T) Welcome to **Discipleship training On The Air**. In this teaching series you may learn to become a disciple of Jesus Christ. Two teachers will teach from the Bible what is a disciple of Jesus Christ. As you listen to this programme, make notes in a notebook or record the programme.

Today's teaching is: A DISCIPLE USES THE BIBLE.

God has given the Bible to us not just to increase our knowledge, but also to change us! We will learn what is the responsibility of a Christian with regard to the Bible. Then we will consider why it is important to do Bible Study. Finally, we will learn the practical ways to use the Bible.

(S) **POINT 1. THE RESPONSIBILITY OF A CHRISTIAN WITH REGARD TO THE BIBLE.**

Jesus says, "Whoever has my commands and obeys them, he is the one who loves me (Jn 14:21)." How can we get a grip on the words and commands of Jesus? You can get a firm grip on the words of Jesus by *hearing* the Bible for example through radio programmes, by *reading* the Bible, by *studying* the Bible, by *memorising* Bible verses, by *meditating* on Bible truths, by *applying* Bible truths and by *passing on* the words of Jesus Christ to other people.

(T) **POINT 2. THE IMPORTANCE OF DOING BIBLE STUDY.**

Why is it important to do Bible Study? Let us study the lives of a few people in the Bible.

First example. Jesus Christ.

Let us read Luke 2:46-47. Jesus was "sitting among the teachers, listening to them and asking them questions. Everyone who heard him was amazed at his understanding and his answers." How did Jesus study the Word of God? Jesus started at an early age to study the Word of God. He learned by listening, by asking questions and by discussing the Word of God with other people who were also studying the Bible. Jesus knew the Word of God very well. Later in his life, he used the Word of God to teach the truth, to answer questions, to refute false teaching and to expose hypocritical life. For example, in Luke 10:25-26 we read, "On one occasion an expert in the law stood up to test Jesus. "Teacher," he asked, "what must I do to inherit eternal life?" Jesus replied, "What is written in the Law? How do you read it?" Often Jesus answered people's questions by asking them what was written in the Bible about that question. You can also answer people's questions with the truths written in the Bible. But then you must first study the Bible yourself.

(S) **Second example. The apostle Paul.**

Let us read Acts 17:2-4. "As his custom was, Paul went into the synagogue, and on three Sabbath days he reasoned with them from the Scriptures, explaining and proving that the Christ had to suffer and rise from the dead". "This Jesus I am proclaiming to you is the Christ," he said. "Some of the Jews were persuaded and joined them". How did Paul study the Word of God? Paul's custom was to find a group of people with whom he could study the Word of God. They met together every week. Paul reasoned with them from the Bible, explained things from the Bible, proved things from the Bible and tried to persuade them to believe the truth of the Bible. Paul "reasoned" with them from the Bible means that Paul and the other people discussed the truths in the Bible. During a Bible Study, one person should not become the teacher, but all the people should discover and discuss the truths together. In another city, Paul had such Bible discussions every day for two years! (Acts 19:8-10).

(T) **Third example. The Bereans, who were interested in becoming Christians.**

Let us read Acts 17:11. "The Bereans were of more noble character than the Thessalonians, for they received the message with great eagerness and examined the Scriptures every day to see if what Paul said was true." How did the Bereans study the Bible? They studied the Bible every day in order to discover the truth in the Bible for themselves. They wanted to discover the truth for themselves, because they wanted to develop their own convictions about what the Bible said and not depend on another person's convictions. The word "examine" literally means to first investigate the truth by searching and by asking questions and then to formulate your own convictions about the truth so that you can discern and appraise the truth.

(S) **Fourth example. Ezra.**

Ezra was a great Bible teacher. Let us read Ezra 7:10. "Ezra had devoted himself to the study and observance of the Law of the Lord, and to teaching its decrees and laws in Israel."

How did Ezra study the Bible? Ezra devoted himself to three things: first to study the Bible, then to practise the teachings of the Bible and finally to teach the truths of the Bible to others. Ezra is a good example for all Bible teachers. Before you teach a truth from the Bible to others, you must first study this truth in the Bible yourself and then practise this truth from the Bible in your own life! Jesus was angry with the Jewish teachers, who were called teachers of the law and Pharisees, because they did not practise what they preached (Matthew 23:3).

(T) **Fifth example. General Joshua and king David.**

Joshua 1:8 says that general Joshua should not let the books of the Bible depart from his mouth. He should meditate on it day and night, so that he may be careful to do everything in it. Then he will be prosperous and successful. In Psalm 1:1-3 king David says, "Blessed is the man who does not walk in the counsel of the wicked or stand in the way of sinners or sit in the seat of mockers. But his delight is in the law of the Lord, and on his law he meditates day and night. He is like a tree planted by streams of water, which yields its fruit in season and whose leaf does not wither. Whatever he does will prosper." What are two very important parts of Bible Study? One important part of Bible Study is to meditate on the Bible truths as much as possible. The other important part of Bible Study is to apply or obey what God says in the Bible.

(S) Thus, the Bible teaches us the following **five important principles with regard to doing Bible Study**. The first principle of Bible study is to *form a group* of people who would like to study the Bible, preferably every week. The second principle of Bible study is to *investigate* the truth by searching the facts in the Bible, by asking questions and by listening to one another's point of view. The third principle of Bible study is to *discuss* the truths in the Bible passage. The group leader should explain the meaning of difficult words and prove every point from the Bible. The fourth principle of Bible study is to *meditate* on what God intends you to know, to believe, to be and to do. And then to *apply* the truth God wants you to apply. The fifth principle of Bible study is to *formulate* the main truths as your own convictions, conclusions and applications.

(T) **POINT 3. THE PRACTICAL USE OF THE BIBLE.**

First. Read the Bible every day.

Read the Bible for yourself and make it your goal to read through the whole Bible as soon as possible. The Bible has 1187 chapters. You can read through the Bible in one year if you read 3 to 4 chapters every day. If you read 1 chapter each day, you can read through the Bible in 3 years and 3 months.

Read the Bible to your family. Deuteronomy 6:6-7 says, "These commandments that I give you today are to be upon your hearts. Impress them on your children. Talk about them when you sit at home and when you walk along the road, when you lie down and when you get up." After the main meal every day, you could read a passage of the Bible to your family. If possible, discuss the Bible passage and pray together.

Read the Bible to other people. In 1 Timothy 4:13 Paul says to Timothy, "Devote yourself to the public reading of Scripture, to preaching and to teaching." Look for opportunities to read the Bible aloud to non-Christians. Many times this will be the only opportunity for them to hear the Good News about God. Also read the Bible to Christians in Christian meetings.

(S) **Second. Memorise Bible verses every day.**

Memorise at least one Bible verse every week. How do you memorise Bible verses?

Write a Bible verse on a card or in a notebook. First, write the title or topic of the verse at the top, then the reference of the verse, then the text of the whole verse and the reference of the verse again. Finally write the reference of the verse on the back of the card or page. When you memorise, always start at the beginning, at the topic, the reference and the first line. Review the new verse every day for about five weeks to make sure that you will remember it. Also review the previous verses that you have memorised at least once a week to make sure that you will not forget them. When you come together as a group, check the last Bible verse that you have memorised two by two.

Every Sunday, you can participate in such meditation and memorisation of Bible verses via this radio programme.

(T) **Third. Study the Bible every week.**

Study the Bible for yourself and also study the Bible together with a small group or house fellowship. Form a small group of people who want to study the Bible together. When you come together, everybody should participate in searching, discussing, sharing and applying the truth. It is the best if you meet once a week for Bible Study and prayer. A very easy method of doing Bible study is called the "The five steps method of Bible study". It has the following 5 steps.

Step 1. Read. Read the Bible passage together. Take turns in the group to read one verse each.

Step 2. Discover. Ask the following question, “Which truth in this passage is important for you? Or “Which truth in this passage touches your mind and your heart?” Discover one or two truths that you understand, think about them and write your thoughts in your notebook. Then everyone in the group takes a turn to share what he has discovered.

Step 3. Question. Ask the following question, “Which question about anything in this passage would you like to ask this group?” Everyone thinks and writes at least one question in his notebook. Then everyone in the group takes a turn to read his question to the group. The group chooses a few of these questions. Then the group tries to answer these questions by discussing them together in the group.

Step 4. Apply. Ask the following question, “Which truths in this passage are possible applications for Christians? The group brainstorms and records a list of possible applications. Then ask the next question, “Which possible application does God want you to turn into a personal application?” Everyone thinks and writes his personal application in his notebook. The group members may share their personal application, but should not be forced to do so.

Step 5. Pray. Take turns to pray shortly about one truth in the passage that God has taught you.

Thus, the five steps of Bible study are: to read, to discover, to question, to apply and to pray. Every Monday, you can participate in such Bible studies via this radio programme.

(S) Fourth. Meditate a Bible passage every day.

The best way to meditate a Bible passage every day is to have a daily quiet time. Christian meditation has four steps:

Step 1. Think about the meaning of the different words in the Bible passage.

Step 2. Pray softly to God and ask him what he intends to say to you.

Step 3. Relate the truths in the Bible passage to your personal life or to the world in which you live.

Step 4. Write the most important thoughts of your meditation in a notebook.

Thus, the four steps of Christian meditation are: to think, to pray, to relate and to record.

Every Wednesday, you can participate in such sharing from quiet times from the New Testament via this radio programme.

(T) Fifth. Apply the truths of the Bible to your life.

God has given the Bible to you, not only to increase your knowledge, but also to change your life! There are three important steps to remember.

Step 1. Possible applications. Any specific truth in the Bible may have more than one possible application. Think together in the small group how a few truths may have several different applications for your personal lives and for the world in which you live.

Step 2. Personal application. When you pray softly, ask God what he intends you to know, to believe, to be or to do. Choose one application out of the list of possible applications. Begin immediately with what God wants you to do.

Step 3. Progress in application. Every day in your prayer ask God to help you to do your personal application. Every week share with your group the progress that you are making in your spiritual life or in your personal application.

(S) Sixth. Pass on the truths of the Bible to others.

Witness by telling someone what you have read, studied or memorised in the Bible. Matthew 28:19 says, “Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you.” Jesus commanded his disciples to make disciples by teaching other people to obey all the teachings and commandments of Jesus Christ. Pray and ask God to lead you to a person whom you could teach to obey the truths of the Bible.

(T) **POINT 4. ASSIGNMENT FOR NEXT WEEK**

First. If you want to become a disciple of Jesus Christ, start to use the Bible. Read and study it. Meditate and memorise it. Apply it and pass it on to other people.

Second. See the workbooks “Go and make disciples” and Internet on www.dota.net

Third. Listen on short wave radio every SATURDAY to WEDNESDAY to “Discipleship training on the air”.