

DOTA 037 MEMORISATION 08
A DISCIPLE PRAYS REGULARLY (JOHN 15:7)

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T = teacher 1 S = teacher 2

(T) Welcome to **Discipleship training On The Air**. In this meditation and memorisation series you may learn to become a disciple of Jesus Christ. Two teachers will meditate on the meaning of a Bible verse about one characteristic of a disciple of Jesus Christ and then memorise it together. As you listen to this programme, make notes in a notebook or record the programme. In this second series God teaches that there are 5 things that characterize the life of a new Christian: Christ, the Bible, prayer, fellowship with other Christians and witnessing. The topic of today's meditation and memorisation is: A DISCIPLE PRAYS REGULARLY.

(S) **POINT 1. MEDITATION OF THE NEW BIBLE VERSE**

The new Bible verse that we will meditate and memorise is John 15:7. We will ask one another questions in order to help us to meditate on the truths written in the Bible. Let me read John 15:7.

The memorisation verse is: Prayer. John 15:7. "If you remain in me and my words remain in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be given you." John 15:7.

(Question). The verse begins with the word "if". What are the implications of the word "if"?

(T) The word "if" implies that this promise about Jesus Christ giving answers to your prayers is conditional. If you fulfil the condition, then Jesus Christ will fulfil his promise! However, if you do not fulfil the condition, then Jesus Christ will also not fulfil his promise. Non-Christians as well as Christians must realise that all prayers in the world are subject to the conditions of Jesus Christ.

(Question) Which conditions does Jesus Christ set for answering prayers?

(S) Jesus Christ sets two conditions for answering prayers. The first condition to be sure that Jesus Christ will answer your prayers is the indispensable necessity that you remain in Jesus Christ and in his love (John 15:5,9). The second condition to be sure that Jesus Christ will answer your prayers is the indispensable necessity that the words of Jesus Christ remain in you and your life. Thus, the only prayers that are answered in this world are prayers to Jesus Christ and prayers in the name of Jesus Christ!

(Question) The first condition. What does it mean, "to remain in Jesus Christ"?

(T) In John 15:5 Jesus says, "I am the vine; you are the branches. If a man remains in me and I in him, he will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing." And in John 15:9 he says, "As the Father has loved me, so have I loved you. Now remain in my love. If you obey my commands, you will remain in my love." Thus, Jesus Christ remains in Christians and Christians should remain in Jesus Christ!

First. Jesus Christ remains in Christians! Jesus Christ loves us. He came to this world to seek and to save the lost people in this world. His love caused him to give up his position in heaven, take on the human nature and live among us on earth. His love made him die on the cross for our sins. After his death on the cross, Jesus Christ was resurrected. He ascended into heaven and from there poured out his Holy Spirit on all those people, who believed that he died for their sins. Through his Holy Spirit, Jesus Christ lives in the hearts of believers and works out his plan of salvation in believers. Thus, Jesus Christ remains in the believers through the Holy Spirit. The Bible says, "Don't you know that you yourselves are God's temple and that God's Spirit lives in you?" (1 Corinthians 3:16) If Jesus Christ is NOT YET in you, then hear his words in Revelation 3:20, "Here I am! I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears my voice and opens the door, I will come in!" Open the door of your heart and pray to Jesus Christ and ask him to come into your life and live in your heart.

Second. Christians should remain in Jesus Christ and in his love. The relationship between Jesus Christ and you has responsibilities on both sides. On the one hand, if Jesus Christ does not remain in you, you cannot be a believer at all. The Bible says that if you do not have Jesus Christ in your heart, you do not belong to Jesus Christ (Romans 8:9-10). On the other hand, if you do not remain in Jesus Christ, you show that you never really belonged to Jesus Christ. It is your responsibility is to remain in Jesus Christ.

What does it mean to remain in Jesus Christ? "To remain in Jesus Christ," means to commit yourself to have a continuous personal relationship with Jesus Christ. It means to exert yourself to continue your life with Jesus Christ. It means to devote yourself to Jesus Christ and his purposes for your life. The word "remain" is written in the present continuous tense, which means that this relationship between you and Jesus Christ should continue day after day. Without this exertion or continued effort, there will be no salvation, no growth and no fruit bearing!

(S) How can any human make such an effort to continue with Jesus Christ?

(T) The Bible gives a wonderful promise. Philippians 2:12-13 says, "Continue to work out your salvation with fear and trembling, for it is God who works in you to will and to act according to his good purpose."

God never commands you to do something for which he does not also give you the grace to do it. His responsibility is to work in you the willingness and the power to act. Your responsibility is to use what you receive, that is, to work out your salvation by exerting yourself to remain in Jesus Christ.

(Question) The second condition. What does it mean to let the words of Jesus Christ remain in you?

(S) The second condition to be sure that Jesus Christ will answer your prayers is indissolubly connected to the Bible. You must remain in the words of the Bible and the words of the Bible must remain in you.

First. Christians should remain in the words of Jesus Christ in the Bible. In John 8:31-32, Jesus says, "If you remain in my word, you are really my disciples. Then you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free." Here your responsibility is to remain in the words of Jesus in the Bible. You can remain in the words of Jesus Christ in the Bible by means of the following seven disciplines. You should *hear* the words of Jesus Christ wherever it is preached or taught. You should acquire a Bible and *read* the words of Jesus Christ in the Bible everyday. You should *study* the words of Jesus Christ in a small Bible study group every week. You should *memorise* the important words of Jesus Christ regularly. You should *meditate* the words of Jesus Christ, that is, think about their meaning for your personal life and pray how God would have you apply them to your personal life. You should learn how to make practical applications and *put the words of Jesus Christ in the Bible into practice* in your own life (cf. Matthew 7:24; John 15:10). And you should *pass the words of Jesus Christ in the Bible on* to other people by preaching and teaching and witnessing. These, then, are the seven practical ways of remaining in the words of Jesus Christ in the Bible: hear it, read it, study it, memorise it, meditate it, practise it and pass it on to others.

Second. Christians should let the words of Jesus Christ in the Bible remain in them. In John 15:7 your responsibility is different than your responsibility in John 8:32. Here your responsibility is to allow the words of Jesus Christ in the Bible to influence you and change you! By reading, studying and practising the words of Jesus Christ, the words of Jesus Christ come into your mind, heart and life. Thereafter, you must allow the words of Jesus Christ that are in your mind, heart and life to become the dynamic or energising force in you that takes complete control over you. The words of Jesus Christ in you should control your thoughts and convictions, your motives and desires, your attitudes and feelings, and your words and deeds. Jesus warned, "Everyone who hears these words of mine and does not put them into practise is like a foolish man who built his house on sand" (Matthew 7:26). If you only gather knowledge of the words of Jesus Christ in the Bible, but do not put them into practise in your mind, heart and behaviour, then your life will be blown over and crash into pieces. You must allow the words of Jesus Christ in the Bible to become the greatest influence in your life! The words of Jesus Christ must be the dominant influence that determines the convictions and beliefs you have. It must be the dominant influence that determines the motives and attitudes you express. It must be the dominant influence that determines what you talk about and that determines what you give your life to. Then only does the words of Jesus Christ remain in you!

(Question) May Christians ask for whatever they wish?

(T) Yes, Christians may ask for anything they wish. However, true Christians will not ask for anything they wish, because they know that certain things do not please God. The Christian who remains in Jesus Christ and lets the words of Jesus Christ remain in him, will only ask for things that are in accordance with the will of Jesus Christ. He will not ask for things that are against Christ's character or against Christ's revealed will in the Bible. Remember, Jesus Christ is the visible image of the invisible God (Colossians 1:15) and that God speaks his final words to us in Jesus Christ (Hebrews 1:1). In 1 John 5:14 is written, "This is the confidence we have in approaching God: that if we ask anything according to his will, he hears us." Thus, whenever Christians pray and ask for things that are according to God's will, they may pray with great confidence. For example, if Christians would ask God for things that would gratify their greed or make them successful in selfish power and worldly fame, then God will not answer their prayers.

Jesus Christ does not promise that God will give to Christians everything that they ask for in prayer. The assurance of answered prayer is dependent on the words, commands and teachings of Jesus Christ and it is also dependent on the Christian's relationship to Jesus Christ. But Christians, who exert themselves to continually remain in Jesus Christ and who commit themselves to be controlled by the words of Jesus Christ, may pray with great confidence. Their prayers will be heard and will be effective and powerful! James 5:16 says, "The prayer of a righteous man is powerful and effective." The righteous man lives right with Jesus Christ and will only wish for things that are in accordance with the revealed will of Jesus Christ.

The Bible verse continues to say, "and it will be given you". The promise of Jesus Christ is certain! If you commit yourself to continually remain in Jesus Christ and to let the words of Jesus Christ control your inner and outward life, then Jesus Christ will also keep his promise! This links prayer to how you live and what you believe. This makes praying not only a hard work, but also very hopeful and effective. God, as a loving Father, rejoices to give things to those who are his children and who live like his children!

One thing still needs to be said. Jesus Christ promises that God will give answers to your prayers. However, he does not specify the time that he will answer your prayers. Sometimes God is testing your patience and faith in him. Then you have to ask with perseverance.

The immediate context of prayer is bearing fruit. John 15:8 says, "This is to my Father's glory, that you bear much fruit, showing yourselves to be my disciples." And verse 16 says, "You did not choose me, but I chose you and appointed you to go and bear fruit - fruit that will last. Then the Father will give you whatever you ask in my name." God especially wants Christians to bear much fruit and to bear lasting fruit. Thus Christians will especially pray for much fruit and lasting fruit. And God the Father will especially give them much fruit and lasting fruit. There is an important relationship between praying and fruit bearing. A true Christian will pray that he may be able to bear much fruit and lasting fruit. And he will bear much fruit and lasting fruit, as an answer of God to his prayer.

Conclusion. Prayer is powerful and effective only when you exert yourself to continually live in Jesus Christ and when you commit yourself to let the words of Jesus Christ control every aspect of your life.

(S) POINT 2. MEMORISATION OF THE NEW BIBLE VERSE

The method of memorising a new Bible verse has four steps:

Step 1. Meditate and understand the Bible verse before you memorise it.

Step 2. Write the Bible verse on a card or in a notebook. Write topic at the top. The topic today is "Prayer". Beneath that, write the Bible reference of the verse. The Bible reference today is John 15:7. And beneath that, write the whole verse.

Step 3. Memorise the verse in the right way. Always start with the name of the topic, the Bible reference and the first line of the verse. It is a good practice to learn the Bible reference twice, first at the beginning of the verse and then at the end of the verse.

Step 4. Review the new Bible verses every day for five weeks. And review the old Bible verses at least once every three weeks.

(T) Let us memorise the Bible verse together. Then let us take turns to say that part of the verse alone without looking at the Bible or notebook.

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(S) Why is it important to memorise Bible verses without one mistake?

(T) Because it is very hard to unlearn mistakes that you have memorised. Moreover, it is much easier to memorise and review, to recall and use Bible verses when you have memorised them without one mistake.

(S) POINT 3. REVIEW OF THE LAST BIBLE VERSES YOU HAVE MEMORISED

Let us review the last 5 Bible verses that we have memorised without looking at our notebooks.

The series "Christian assurances", verses 3-5 and the series "the new life", verses 1-2.

(T) Assurance of victory. 1 Corinthians 10:13. No temptation has seized you except what is common to man. And God is faithful; he will not let you be tempted beyond what you can bear. But when you are tempted, he will also provide a way out so that you can stand up under it. 1 Corinthians 10:13.

(S) Assurance of forgiveness. 1 John 1:9. If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness. 1 John 1:9.

(T) Assurance of God's guidance. Proverbs 3:5-6. Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways acknowledge him, and he will make your paths straight. Proverbs 3:5-6.

(S) Christ. 2 Corinthians 5:17. "Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has gone, the new has come!" 2 Corinthians 5:17.

(T) Word. Matthew 4:4. Jesus answered, "It is written: 'Man does not live on bread alone, but on every word that comes from the mouth of God.'" Matthew 4:4.

(S) POINT 4. ASSIGNMENT FOR NEXT WEEK

First. Daily review the last five memorised Bible verses once every day for 5 weeks.

Second. See the workbooks "Go and make disciples" and Internet on www etc.

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