

(T) Welcome to **Discipleship training On The Air**. In this series about sharing from our quiet times you may learn to become a disciple of Jesus Christ. Two teachers will share from what they have learned from their quiet times. Every day during the past week we had a quiet time from a passage in the New Testament. Once a week we come together to share with one another what we have learned. As you listen to this programme, make notes in a notebook or record the programme. We will first explain how to have a quiet time. Then we will share the important truths and lessons from our quiet times and try to answer some difficult questions. Today's topic is A DISCIPLE SHARES WHAT HE LEARNS FROM JOHN 4:23 – 7:53.

(S) **POINT 1. HOW TO HAVE A QUIET TIME AND SHARE**

Have a time of fellowship with God or quiet time every day of the week from one of the seven assigned Bible passages. An easy quiet time method is called "The favourite truth" method. It has 5 steps. Step 1. Pray and ask God to speak to you. Step 2. Read one of the seven assigned passages. Step 3. Choose your favourite truth. It is the truth, verse or passage through which God is speaking to you, stimulating your thinking or touching your heart. Step 4. Meditate on your favourite truth. Meditate by doing the following four things. First. *Think* about the meaning of words. Second. *Ask* God what he intends to say to you. Third. *Relate* your favourite truth to your life by making a practical application. Fourth. *Write* the most important thoughts of your meditation in a notebook so that you may share them with others. Step 5. Pray your favourite truth for yourself. Then pray your favourite truth for someone in your family. Then pray your favourite truth for someone nearby. And finally, pray your favourite truth for someone far away. When you meet together with one friend or with other Christians in a house fellowship or discipleship group, take turns to share the meditation of one of your quiet times. You may also try to answer some questions from the assigned passages.

(T) **POINT 2. SHARING FROM JOHN 4:23 – 7:53**

This past week we have read, meditated and prayed from John 4:23 – 7:53. Now we will use our quiet time notes to share truths and lessons from the assigned passages and discuss some questions.

Sharing quiet times from John chapter 4.

I want to share from John 4:23-24 about what is true worship. Jesus says that God is Spirit and the true worshippers must worship God the Father in spirit and in truth.

First. People may not worship whomever they choose or however they like. The One whom we must worship is God, the Father, who revealed himself completely in Jesus Christ, the Son of God. Moreover, God is Spirit. He is not some kind of tree-deity or mountain deity that has to be worshipped on a specific mountain or in a specific building. People must worship God in truth. This truth is not anybody's truth. It is the truth that God revealed through all the Old Testament prophets and especially through Jesus Christ.

Second. People must also worship God in spirit. They worship God not just with true knowledge, but must worship God with a humble, spiritual attitude and with their whole heart. Such spiritual attitudes are remorse for sin, thankfulness for God's blessings, surrender of the self to God's sovereign will, dedication of life in service of God and praise of God's words and deeds. Only the Holy Spirit can produce these attitudes. Only when the Holy Spirit lives in the heart, can a person worship God in spirit.

Thus, true worshippers "must" worship God according to the truth of the Bible and under the control of the Holy Spirit. God seeks such worshippers. God demands such worship.

Sharing quiet times from John chapter 5.

(S) I want to share from John 5:16-24 about the claims Jesus made with respect to his relation to God the Father.

The first claim. The Jews hated Jesus for breaking the Sabbath when he healed an invalid. Jesus defended himself by saying, "My Father is always at his work and I, too, am working." Whatever the Father does, the Son also does. The Father and the Son work in full harmony. Jesus claimed, that by attacking the Son, the Jews were attacking the Father himself. Thus Jesus claimed that he was God.

The second claim. The Jews were amazed at his healing of an invalid. Jesus said that much greater works would follow. Like the Father, the Son will give spiritual life to the spiritual dead. On the Last Day of this present world he will resurrect all the dead and he will judge everyone.

The third claim. The Jews questioned the equality of Jesus Christ with God the Father. How could Jesus impart life and execute judgement? Jesus claimed that the Son was self-sufficient. Just like the Father, the Son had eternal life in himself. Whoever does not honour the Son also does not honour the Father.

The fourth claim. The only right response to the Son was not hatred or amazement, but faith. Those who respond in faith, will have eternal life, will not be condemned and will have passed from death into life.

(T) I want to share from John 5:31-47 about the witnesses of Jesus. There are five testimonies concerning Jesus Christ.

The first witness was the witness of Jesus concerning himself. The claims he made about himself are true and valid (John 8:14), but the Jews deny its reliability.

The second witness was the witness of John the Baptist. He testified that Jesus is the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world (John 1:29).

The third witness was the witness of Jesus' works. The works God gave Jesus to finish were his miracles and later his death. The miracles were signs that testify that God had sent Jesus with a commission.

The fourth witness was the witness of God the Father. God the Father especially testified about Jesus in all the Old Testament Scriptures. The Father also spoke from heaven and said, "You are my Son, whom I love; with you I am well pleased" (Mark 1:11).

The fifth witness was the witness of Moses. The Jews especially boasted in Moses, but they failed to understand what Moses testified concerning Jesus. Moses prophesied that Jesus would be God's greatest prophet. Jesus would speak God's words. Whoever did not listen to the words of Jesus would have to give an account to God. Moreover, the books of Moses are full of Christ-centred types. The Passover Lamb; the whole sacrificial ritual; the tabernacle with its furniture; the pillar of fire, the water from the smitten rock, the manna from heaven and the serpent lifted up on a cross during the exodus were all types of Jesus Christ. Moreover, certain people in the Old Testament, like Adam, Melchizedek, Joseph, Moses, Joshua, David, Solomon and others were also types of the coming Messiah.

All these witnesses concerning Jesus Christ give me the assurance that Jesus Christ is both a real historical person and a divine person. Jesus Christ is God who became man in our world and in our human history. And many people before, during and after his life on earth were witnesses of Jesus Christ!

Sharing quiet times from John chapter 6.

(S) I want to share from John 6:25-47 about the sovereignty of God and the responsibility of man. On the one hand, there are people who say that everything depends on "the free will of man". Man has the freedom to choose Christ or reject Christ. Everything is the responsibility of man. On the other hand, there are people who say that man has no responsibility at all, because God has already decided everything that will happen to him. Everything depends only on "the sovereign will of God". I think that both views are one sided and are not taught in the Bible. The Bible teaches both the sovereignty of God as well as the responsibility of man. The two truths always go together and cannot be separated in any discussion. In John chapter 6 Jesus makes this very clear.

On the one hand, God is absolutely sovereign. In verse 44 Jesus says, "No one can come to me unless the Father who sent me draws him." If God had not sent Jesus to the world to die for my sins, I could not have been saved at all. If God the Father had not sent another person to preach the gospel to me, I could not have believed in the gospel and would not have come to Jesus. If God had not sent his Holy Spirit to work in my heart, I would not have been convicted of my sin, I would not have been convinced of the truth and I would not have believe in Jesus. God is always first in drawing me to Jesus Christ.

On the other hand, man is also absolutely responsible. In verse 37 Jesus says, "Whoever comes to me I will never drive away." A person should not hesitate. A person should not think that perhaps he is not one of those that have been given to Jesus. Jesus promises that whoever comes to him will be heartily welcomed! Everyone who believes in Jesus Christ shall have eternal life. So, you and I are responsible to come to Jesus Christ and to believe in Jesus Christ. In John 6:36, Jesus rebukes the people, "You have seen me and still you do not believe." Jesus clearly places the blame for not believing on the unbelievers themselves. The unbelievers are fully responsible for their actions. Therefore, when you feel that God is drawing you, you must come to Jesus Christ!

(T) I want to answer a question from John 6:48-58. What is the meaning of "eating the flesh of Jesus and drinking the blood of Jesus"? In John 6:54 Jesus says, "Whoever eats my flesh and drinks my blood has eternal life." A few hundred years ago, some Christians started to interpret this very literally. They said that at the Lord's Table, the bread really changes and becomes the flesh of Jesus and the wine really changes and becomes the blood of Jesus. However, this is NOT what Jesus intended to say. The context makes very clear what Jesus intended to say. In John 6:35, he taught the people, saying, "I am the Bread of Life. He who comes to me will never go hungry, and he who believes in me will never be thirsty". Jesus was using *figurative language* as he often did. Jesus does NOT say that he is *material bread*. He says that he is the bread of life. He is *spiritual bread*. He intends to say, "Just like you eat ordinary bread to live physically, you need me, the bread of life, to live spiritually. The way to "eat" the flesh of Jesus is "to come to Jesus and to believe in him".

Now compare John 6:54 with John 6:40. The result of "eating the flesh of Jesus and drinking the blood of Jesus" is eternal life and the resurrection of the body. But that is exactly the same result when you "believe in Jesus". Thus the expressions "eating his flesh and drinking his blood" are figurative expressions for "believing in him".

When you eat and drink food, you take it into your body. Likewise, when you believe in Jesus, you take him into your heart.

Sharing quiet times from John chapter 7.

(S) I want to share from John 7:17, about the relationship between knowledge, love and obedience. In John 17:26 Jesus says that he has given knowledge of God to his disciples, so that God's love may be in them. In John 14:15 Jesus says, "If you love me, you will obey what I command." The relationship between these three is then: first knowledge, second love and third obedience. However, Ephesians 3:17-19 says that you must be rooted in love before you can grasp the knowledge of God. And John 7:17 says, that you must be willing to obey before you can find true knowledge. Now love and obedience comes before knowledge! Conclusion: Knowing God leads to loving God and loving God leads to obeying God. Then obedience to God leads to more love for God and more experiential knowledge of God!

All three: knowledge of the mind, love of the heart and obedience of the will are inter-dependent, influence one another and enrich one another. None of the three is really first. The sovereign grace of God is always first.

(T) I want to share from John 7:37-39 about the streams of living water. Jesus was at the Jewish Feast of Tabernacles in Jerusalem, which lasted seven days. The seven days of feasting was characterised by people dwelling in booths, by bringing offerings and by fetching water from the pool of Siloam. On each of the seven days of the feast, a priest would fill a pitcher with water from this pool and carry it back to the temple accompanied by a solemn procession. At the temple, amid the sounding of trumpets and the shouting and rejoicing multitudes he would pour the water through a funnel, which led to the base of the altar of burnt-offering. The symbolic rite of pouring water reminded the people of the Old Testament promises. Isaiah 44:3 promises, "I will pour water on the thirsty land, and streams on the dry ground; I will pour out my Spirit on your offspring and my blessing on your descendants." Isaiah 55:1 invites, "Come all you who are thirsty, come to the waters." And Isaiah 58:11 promises, "You will be like a well-watered garden, like a spring whose waters never fail." That is why in John 7:38 Jesus can say with confidence, "As the Scripture has said." On the last day of this feast, Jesus said, "If anyone is thirsty, let him come to me and drink. Whoever believes in me, as the Scripture has said, streams of living water will flow from within him. By this he meant the Spirit, whom those who believed in him were later to receive. Up to that time the Spirit had not been given, since Jesus had not yet been glorified." Jesus proclaimed that every one who believed in him would receive everlasting life, that is, complete salvation. He also promised that every one who believed in him would receive an abundant life. Christ is the real Source and Channel of eternal life and of abundant life for every one who comes to him and believes in him. However, the promise would not be fulfilled until Christ was glorified, that is, until he was crucified, resurrected, ascended into heaven and sat on the throne in heaven. Then only would he pour out the streams of living water into the hearts of believers. The apostle John explains that Jesus was referring to the outpouring of the Holy Spirit after his death and resurrection. It is through the Holy Spirit that Jesus Christ works rebirth, new life, and salvation in the hearts and lives of believers. And it is through the Holy Spirit that he makes Christians channels of abundant blessings for other people.

(S) ASSIGNMENT FOR NEXT WEEK

First. Divide John 8:1 – 11: 37 into seven passages. Every day have a quiet time from one passage. Record the meditations of all your quiet times in a notebook. Once a week meet with a friend or with a house fellowship or discipleship group and share from your quiet times.

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

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