

(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 8:1 to 11:37.

(S) **POINT 2. SHARING FROM JOHN 8:1 TO 11:37**

This past week we have read, meditated and prayed from John 8:1 – 11:37. 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 8.

(T) I want to share from John 8:1-11 about the woman caught in adultery. The notes in the Bible state that it cannot be proved with certainty if this passage formed a part of the original Gospel of John. The most important manuscripts of the Bible do not contain this passage. However, neither can anybody prove that it did not originally belong to the Gospel of John. Augustine, an early church father, said that certain people had removed this passage from their manuscripts, because they were afraid that women would appeal to this passage as an excuse to also commit adultery. Whatever the case may be, the passage contains nothing in contradiction with the rest of the Bible and therefore we should continue to use it for our education.

The teachers of the Law were Pharisees who copied, interpreted and taught the Law. They hated Jesus and tried to get him killed. They brought a woman, who was caught in the act of adultery, to Jesus in order to use her as a tool to trap Jesus. The Law in the Old Testament states that a person caught in adultery must be put to death (Leviticus 20:10). If Jesus would say, "Do not stone her", then he would disobey the Law of Moses. If he would say, "Stone her", he would disobey the Roman law, which forbade the Jews to put anyone to death. The trap did not work, because Jesus gave neither answer. Instead, he remained quiet for a time. Then he answered, "Let him who is without sin among you be the first to throw a stone!" Their sin was that they were plotting to murder the Messiah! This was an even bigger sin than the woman committed. Jesus thereby said that the teachers of the Law were not qualified to execute the Law of Moses. One by one these teachers of the Law went away, not only because they were convicted of their sins, but also because they were defeated by the argument of Jesus. Jesus did not condemn the woman as unfit for the kingdom of God, because he had come into the world, not to condemn people, but to save them. There is a place for adulterers and adulteresses in the kingdom of God, if they stop to live in adultery. That is why Jesus said to her, "Go now and leave your life of sin!"

I have a question from John 8:31-36. What is the true meaning of 'freedom'?

(S) Today 'freedom' is desired by more and more people as well as by countries in the world. Under freedom they understand the freedom to think what you like, say what you like and especially do what you like! For them, freedom is freedom from the authority of parents, freedom from the authority of the government and, the worst, freedom from God! In this passage Jesus teaches that such a freedom does not exist. In this way nobody is free!

First of all, in verse 34 Jesus says, "I tell you the truth, everyone who sins is a slave to sin." The Jews were thinking in *physical* terms. They thought that they were the true children or descendants of Abraham. Jesus was thinking in *spiritual* terms. All natural people are slaves of sin and unable to deliver themselves from this bondage. Jesus wiped out the distinction between a Jew and a non-Jew (Gentile) with respect to their standing before God and God's Law by saying that *everyone* is a slave to sin! No natural person is free!

Second. Jesus says that the way of salvation is the same for a Jew and a non-Jew. Only Jesus Christ can set both of them free. Only by the death of Jesus Christ are people set free from their sins. And only by keeping the teachings of Jesus can people know the truth that leads to real freedom.

Third. Jesus warns that a slave has no permanent place in the family like a child has. Abraham's true children will remain in the family, while Abraham's slaves like Hagar and Ishmael, would be driven out. The Jews who continue to be a slave of sin will be driven out of God's family, while both Jews and non-Jews (Gentiles), who are set free by Jesus Christ, will belong to God's family.

Fourth. The words "if" the Son sets you free and "if" you hold to my teaching, makes people responsible for the choice they make, while the action to set people free remains with Jesus Christ! Thus, true freedom only exists when you are bound to Jesus Christ and his teaching. True freedom is not freedom from all boundaries or

authorities. True freedom is freedom within boundaries, which Jesus Christ sets. True freedom exists only under the authority of Jesus Christ and his Word!

Sharing quiet times from John chapter 9.

(T) I want to share about suffering for the truth. Jesus healed this blind man on a Sabbath day. The Pharisees had been telling the people that Jesus was a deceiver and that everyone who confesses Jesus to be the Christ would be expelled from the synagogue. Now his neighbours brought the man, who was healed from his blindness, to the Pharisees to show them the great miracle that had taken place, and to prove that Jesus was not a deceiver. The facts defeated the Pharisees and so they tried crooked ways of arguing to prove that Jesus was a deceiver. They argued: All people who are from God keep the Law. Jesus does not keep the Sabbath commanded in the Law. Therefore, Jesus is not from God. Later they changed their argument as follows: Only people who are from God can open the eyes of the blind. Jesus is not from God. Therefore, Jesus cannot have opened the eyes of the blind man. The Pharisees tried every way of crooked arguing in order to brand Jesus as a deceiver. Nevertheless, they failed! The healed blind man defeated the Pharisees with their own way of arguing. He argued: God hears only people who are from God. Jesus was heard by God and healed me. Therefore, Jesus is from God! When the Pharisees saw they could not even win the argument, the only thing left for them to do was to cause suffering. They arrogantly abused the healed blind man and they threw him out of the synagogue. This meant that he was in a religious and social sense excluded from Israel. I want to be like this man. I will not say false things about Jesus just to escape suffering from the religious authorities. I would rather suffer with Jesus now, than later suffer in hell.

Sharing quiet times from John chapter 10.

(S) I want to share about the story of the good shepherd. Everyone in Israel knew the life of shepherds. A village might have only one big sheep pen, in which several flocks of sheep were kept during the night. A watchman guarded them during the night. In the morning, the shepherds would come to lead their flocks to grass and water. The watchman knew the shepherds and opened the gate for them. Each flock of sheep knew the voice of their shepherd and would not follow another shepherd. But also the shepherd knew his sheep, sometimes even by name. The shepherd loved his sheep and would defend them against wolves and even against lions and bears, as king David did.

This story is an 'allegory'. An allegory is an extended metaphor. A 'metaphor' is an implied comparison. For example, "The Lord is my shepherd" (Psalm 23:1). It is implied that the Lord is just like a shepherd. An allegory is an extended metaphor. For example, Jesus can be compared to several aspects of a good shepherd. However, we should not attempt to explain every characteristic of the symbol. In John 10 Jesus interprets "the sheep pen", "the door", "the sheep", "the good shepherd" and "the flock". Some symbols, for example, the "thief, robber, stranger, and hired hand", can be interpreted by the historical situation. Other symbols, like the "watchman" and "the wolf", should not be interpreted, because neither Jesus nor the context interprets them. The main idea should be grasped. In John 10, the main theme is Jesus, who is the good shepherd. And he is contrasted with the religious leaders of his time, who were evil shepherds.

Jesus is the true and perfect shepherd. He entered by the way God predicted in the Old Testament. He knows every true believer by name. Moreover, the believers know Jesus as their true shepherd and will only follow him. Jesus led his sheep by example, by walking in the front of them. The Pharisees, however, were like thieves and robbers. They avoided the door, Jesus Christ and were trying to control the people of Israel through intimidation. They threatened to exclude everyone who did not do what they said. They did not lead the people of Israel, but drove them on with threats. True believers would run away from them. Jesus, like a true shepherd, laid down his life for believers on the cross. But the Pharisees destroyed true spiritual life. Jesus is the shepherd of this sheep pen, namely the believers in Israel, as well as the shepherd of many other sheep pens in the world. Both Jewish and non-Jewish believers form one flock in this world.

This allegory teaches me how important it is to enter through the gate into the community of believers. Jesus Christ is the gate. How important it is to know Jesus Christ personally and intimately. How important it is to follow Jesus and obey his voice. Only when I follow close behind him, will he protect me from the people who want to control me and destroy me. This allegory also teaches me that there are different sheep pens, but only one flock of believers in the whole world, namely the Church of Christ or the kingdom of Christ.

(T) I want to share from John 10:27-28 about the assurance of salvation. Jesus says, "My sheep listen to my voice; I know them, and they follow me. I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish; no one can snatch them out of my hand." Jesus sovereignly promises three absolute certainties: True believers receive life that will never end. They cannot backslide in such a way that they perish. They cannot be snatched away from Jesus! But who are true believers? Jesus says, true believers are known by Jesus; they will obey his voice; and they will follow Jesus and no other religion, philosophy or value-system. I have memorised these two verses, because they

remind me of my responsibility and of the promise of Jesus Christ. No Christian needs to doubt the promise of Jesus. But also no one can call himself a Christian if he does not fulfil his responsibility.

Sharing quiet times from John chapter 11.

(S) I want to share from John 11:9-10 about the time God gives to complete my God-given task. The disciples warned Jesus not to return to Judah, because there were Jews who wanted to kill him. Jesus answered that every day has a fixed amount of time during which there is light. A man must walk while there is light. Jesus meant that God has given him a definite allotted time to do and to finish his work on earth. That time cannot be lengthened by any measure the disciples like to take, nor can any plot of his enemies shorten it. Likewise, God the Father has also given me a definite allotted time to live on earth and do my God-given task. As long as I walk in the light of God's plan, I don't have to fear anybody or any circumstance. I will not suffer any real injury and I will not fail! What a wonderful assurance that God is on the throne of the universe and that he controls every person and circumstance.

(T) I want to share from John 11:25-26, in which Jesus speaks about the death and resurrection of believers. Jesus said, "Our friend, Lazarus, has fallen asleep." In the Bible the comparison of death with sleeping is often used. For example, in Matthew 27:52 is written, "the bodies of many holy people who had fallen asleep were raised to life". This comparison implies that there will be a glorious awakening on the other side. This awakening from the "sleep of death" is called "the resurrection" in the Bible.

The Bible speaks very comforting about the death of believers in Christ: Death of believers is "precious in the sight of the Lord" (Psalm 116:15); "a being carried away by angels to Abraham's side" (Luke 16:22); "a going to Paradise" (Luke 23:43); "a going to the heavenly Father's house with many rooms" (John 14:2). Death of believers is "a departure from this world in order to be with Christ" (Philippians 1:23); "to be away from the body and at home with the Lord" (2 Corinthians 5:8); "a gain" and "far better than staying in this world" (Philippians 1:21,23).

Although "death" is compared to "sleeping", the Bible does not teach that the dead person is in a total state of unconsciousness or "that his soul is sleeping". *The soul is unconscious with respect to this world*, which it has left. The soul of the dead person does not see or know any people on earth (Isaiah 63:16). In Ecclesiastes 9:6-10 is written that "the dead know nothing", "never again will they have a part in anything that happens" on this present earth. In Luke 16:23-31, we read that the departed dead people are not asleep, but fully awake. They are well aware of their eternal condition of suffering in hell or of comfort in heaven. Although the rich man thinks of his five brothers who are still on earth, he does not know how they are doing and cannot communicate with them at all. The Bible teaches that the souls of dead people do not roam around their house or around the grave. They are not conscious of anything that happens on earth. They cannot have any contact with the people still living on earth. And they cannot plan or work or have any influence on the people still on this present earth. But the souls of the dead believers are very conscious with respect to the world, to which they have departed! They are awake with respect to God and Christ and the people in heaven, like Abraham. They live in the presence of God, speak with God, worship and serve God.

Jesus says, "I am the resurrection and the life". The sentence may also be translated with "The resurrection and the life is Christ". The resurrection and the life are rooted in Christ. Only because Christ was resurrected and lives forever, will believers also be resurrected and live forever!

Then Jesus says, "He who believes in me will live, even though he dies." Here the believer is pictured in relationship to physical death. The person who continually believes in Christ, although he will die physically, he will live, that is, he will be resurrected from death and possess everlasting and glorious life in heaven.

Then Jesus says, "and whoever lives and believes in me will never die." Here the believer is pictured in relationship to eternal death. Everyone who lives spiritually and believes continually in Christ, will never taste everlasting death, that is, will never be separated from God's presence and will never be condemned to the destruction of hell.

(S) ASSIGNMENT FOR NEXT WEEK

First. Divide John 11:38 to 14:31 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".