

(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 15:1 to JOHN 18:27.

(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 15:1 – 18:27**

This past week we have read, meditated and prayed from John 15:1 – 18:27. 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 15.

(S) I want to share from John 15 verse 4 and 12 about the relationship to Christ and to other Christians. Jesus says, "Remain in me" and "Love each other". It seems to me that *the allegory of the vine and the branches* can be divided into two parts. In verse 1-11 Jesus commands his disciples "to remain in him" and in verse 12-17 he commands them "to love each other". The two most important things Christians must do are these two commands: "to maintain in a personal relationship with Christ: and "to walk in love with one another". First. What does it mean, "*to remain in Christ*"? Verse 4 says, "Remain in Christ" and verse 9 says, "Remain in Christ's love". But verse 5 says, "Christ remains in us" and verse 7 says, "Christ's word remains in us". Christ makes it possible for me to remain in him and his love, because he remains in me and his word remains in me. But although Christ is first to speak his word to me and first to show his love to me, I have the responsibility to make an effort to maintain a personal relationship with Christ and to exert myself in respect to Christ's Word and Christ's love.

Second. What does it mean, "*to love each other*"? Verse 13 says that to love each other is to lay down my living life for others. It is to spend my time, efforts and possessions on others so that they may experience the love of Christ through me.

These two commands are inseparable. Verse 10 says that if I obey Christ's commands, then I will remain in his love. And verse 14 says that if I do what Christ commands, then I am truly his friend. The great lesson I learn from this passage is that my relationship to Christ cannot be separated from my relationship to my brothers and sisters. Loving Christ means loving my brothers and sisters. And not loving my brothers and sisters means not loving Christ. "Remaining in Christ's love and loving each other are inseparable!"

I have a question from verse 6. Can Christians backslide and go to hell? Jesus says, "If anyone does not remain in me, he is like a branch that is thrown away and withers; such branches are picked up, thrown into the fire and burned."

(T) Remember that this is an "allegory" and not direct teaching. An "*allegory*" is an extended "metaphor" and a "metaphor" is an implied comparison. The relationship between Christ and Christians can be compared to several aspects of the relationship between a vine and its branches. Jesus clearly explains some aspects, like who the vine and the branches are. He does not explain what the fruit is and who the branches are that do not bear fruit, but these can be explained from the context. However, aspects like how God is a gardener that prunes should not be interpreted, because neither Christ nor the context interprets them.

Although the dead branch is connected to the vine, there is no living relationship between the vine and the dead branch. Although there exists an outward relationship, there is no inward relationship. The allegory first of all refers to the people of God in the Old Testament, the Jews, who had a close contact with God and should have borne fruit, but did not. They will be cut off the vine. But this is also a warning for Christians in the New Testament. Those who come in close contact with Christ through an outward relationship, but have no living inward relationship with Christ, will also be cut off the vine and thrown into the fire of hell. Christ stresses the responsibility of each person who is brought into close contact with Christ: If he rejects the words of Christ, the light of Christ and the Spirit of Christ, then there will come a time when all further work in him ceases. He will be rejected and cast into hell. In order for “the branch” to live, the living Christ must be in that branch! And that would be very clear if “the branch” bears fruit. If Christ is not living in a Christian, that Christian will not be saved. Conclusion. This verse does not teach that a born-again Christian can later still turn away from Christ and go to hell. But it does teach that a nominal Christian, who is not born-again, even though he behaves outwardly like a Christian, will be rejected and thrown into hell.

(S) I want to share about the hatred of the world against Christians. “The world” is here the realm of evil, the society of wicked people and institutions, who oppose Christ and his kingdom. In the early days of the apostles, those Jews and their leaders who rejected Christ as the Messiah represented this evil world. That is why Jesus says that this evil world would put them out of their synagogues and even kill them. The reason this world hates Christians is because Christians no longer belong to that world, but belong to Christ, whom the world hates. Christ chose them out of the world by drawing them away from the world and into his kingdom. The Christians no longer want to do evil, no longer condone evil and no longer allow evil to go on unchecked. Christians repent from their own evil, preach against evil, expose evil and fight against evil. The evil world hates this opposition to their evil cause. The world is guilty of their sin, because Christ’s words and works revealed Christ and God to the world in a very clear way. The world saw the light and heard the truth and still rejected it. Therefore, the sin and hatred of the world is without excuse.

Sharing quiet times from John chapter 16.

(T) I want to share from John 16:7-11 about the work of the Holy Spirit.

First. Jesus says that it is for the good of the disciples that he is going away, so that the Holy Spirit will come. The departure of Jesus in his bodily form is not a tragedy, but an advantage and a triumph. While on earth, Jesus was *with* his disciples, but through the Holy Spirit, Jesus Christ will live *in* his disciples! While on earth at this time, Jesus still had to die on the cross and be resurrected and thus *merit* the salvation of people. But through the Holy Spirit, Jesus would *apply the merit* of salvation to the hearts and lives of believers!

Second. Jesus says, that when the Holy Spirit comes, “he will *convict the world* of guilt in regard to sin and righteousness and judgement: in regard to sin, because men do not believe in me; in regard to righteousness, because I am going to the Father, where you can see me no longer; and in regard to judgement, because the prince of this world now stands condemned”. The work of the Holy Spirit is to “expose” the sin of people, “convince” them of the truth and to “convict” them of their guilt.

The Holy Spirit will *convict the world with respect to sin*, that is, lay bare the sin of the world, especially the fact that they rejected and killed Jesus Christ. He will also awaken the consciousness of guilt in many, and they will repent and believe in Jesus.

The Holy Spirit will also *convict the world with respect to righteousness*. The world, here represented by the Jews, was about to crucify Jesus and thus brand him as an unrighteous person, as a criminal (John 18:30). But by means of the resurrection, God placed his stamp of approval on Jesus and marked him as the Righteous One (Acts 3:14). This conviction of God’s righteousness at the same time means the condemnation of the world’s wickedness.

The Holy Spirit will also *convict the world of judgement*, because the prince of this world now stands condemned. According to Revelation 12, the death and resurrection of Jesus will cause the devil to be hurled out of the presence of God and he will no longer be able to accuse God’s people. According to John 12:31-32, the devil will be driven out of his position of control in this world, so that Christ can draw many people of every nation and language all over the world to himself. And according to Matthew 12:29, the devil is bound and people are robbed out of his power and brought into the kingdom and powerful control of Jesus Christ (Colossians 1:13). At the Second Coming, the devil’s condemnation will be made manifest to the entire universe when he is cast into the fire of hell (Revelation 20:10). Anyone who continues to follow the advice of the devil and refuse to repent and turn to Jesus Christ stands condemned along with the devil (cf. John 3:18,36).

This prophecy of Jesus started to be fulfilled in Acts 2. In verse 23 the apostle Peter convicts the Jews of sin, saying, “You, with the help of wicked men, put Jesus to death by nailing him to the cross”. In verse 22 and 24 he convicts them of righteousness, saying, “This Jesus was a man accredited by God to you by miracles, wonders and signs, which God did among you through him ... and God raised him from the dead” In verse 34-35 he convicts them of judgement, saying, “The Lord said to my Lord: ‘Sit at my right hand until I make your enemies

a footstool for your feet.’ The result of this conviction was that the Jews were cut to the heart and said, “Brothers, what shall we do?” And Peter urged them, saying, “Save yourselves from this corrupt generation.” Save yourselves from this wicked world. And that day about 3 000 were added to their number!

(S) I want to share from John 16:12-15, about the work of the Holy Spirit. In verse 12, Jesus says that he has much more to say to them, but they cannot bear all the truth now. That is because the work of Jesus, his death and resurrection, had not yet been completed, and because the disciples would still deny him and flee away from him.

In verse 13 he says that the Holy Spirit would guide them into all the truth. The Holy Spirit would not drive and force them, but lead them like a guide. He will be concerned with all the truth and not just part of the truth. Some Christians today always emphasise certain popular truths or half-truths. The Holy Spirit never stresses one truth at the expense of another truth. The apostle Paul says, “I have not hesitated to proclaim to you the whole will of God” (Acts 20:27).

This prophecy of Jesus goes into fulfilment as follows: “The Spirit will come” goes into fulfilment in the book of Acts. “The Spirit will guide you into all the truth” goes into fulfilment particularly in the Letters of the apostles. “The Spirit will tell you what is yet to come” goes into fulfilment particularly in the book of Revelation. Finally, the Holy Spirit will glorify Christ. He will empower the disciples to preach Christ. He will apply the salvation work of Christ to the lives of believers. The Holy Spirit will take what Christ has done, is doing and will do as the theme of his teaching.

Sharing quiet times from John chapter 17.

(T) I want to share from John 17 about the prayer of Jesus. This prayer may be divided into three parts. First in John 17:1-5 he prays for himself. In John 17:6-19 he prays in particular for his eleven disciples. And in John 17:20-26 he prays for all believers in the world. In his prayer with regard to himself, Jesus glorifies the Father and asks the Father to glorify him. Jesus glorified the Father by fulfilling his God-given assignment on earth, that is, to make atonement for sins. He asks the Father to glorify him with the glory he possessed in heaven before he became man on earth. The Father would glorify Jesus by his death, resurrection, ascension and enthronement in heaven. In this way Jesus would triumph over sin, the evil world, the devil and the brokenness and corruption of the whole universe.

In his prayer for his eleven disciples, he acknowledges that they belong to God the Father and were given to him. He had revealed God and God’s words to them. They accepted the words, believed and obeyed them. And now Jesus would send them into the world with the Great Commission. Jesus prays for their unity, for receiving the fullness of joy, for their protection against the devil and for their sanctification by the work of Christ and by the word.

In his prayer for all the believers in the world, he especially prays for their unity, so that the world will believe that God sent Christ. He also prays that they may be with him, so that they may see his glory. And he prays that God’s love and he himself may be in them continually.

(S) ASSIGNMENT FOR NEXT WEEK

First. Divide John 18:28 to 21:25 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”.