

(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 ACTS 11:19 to 14:28.

(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 ACTS 11:19 TO 14:28.**

This past week we have read, meditated and prayed from Acts 11:19 – 14:28. 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 Acts chapter 11.**

(S) I want to share about the spreading of the church into other countries. In Acts 8:1-4, we already saw that a great persecution broke out against the Christians in the first church at Jerusalem. The Christians fled and scattered in all directions. And wherever they went, they preached the gospel. Now here in Acts 11:19-26 we read about what happened to some of these Christians who had left Jerusalem. In the beginning they only preached the gospel to Jews, but soon afterwards some of them began to preach the gospel also to the non-Jews (Gentiles) in Antioch in Syria. Acts 11:27 says, "The Lord's hand was with them, and a great number of people believed and turned to the Lord." When the news reached the church at Jerusalem, they sent Barnabas, who was a close co-worker of the apostle Peter, to Antioch. He saw what God was doing in this country and rejoiced. Barnabas was an encourager and he encouraged people to remain true to the Lord Jesus Christ with all their hearts. He brought many more people to believe in the Lord Jesus Christ. When the work began to be too much for him, he travelled a long way to Tarsus, where Paul was working. He brought Paul to come and help him in the work at Antioch and for a whole year they worked together and taught a great number of people. What I learned is that this *missionary work was initiated by God himself and not by a decision of the Jerusalem church*. God allowed the persecution to take place that scattered the Christians. And God's hand was with the Christians who preached the gospel wherever they went. God can move the hearts of people as well as their feet to go and preach the gospel to people in other countries. And *God can open the hearts of people in other countries to accept the gospel*.

**Sharing quiet times from Acts chapter 12.**

(T) I want to share about how God is close to those who are persecuted as Christians. King Herod arrested some Christians and put the apostle James to death. He was the first of the apostles to be martyred for his faith in Christ. King Herod also arrested the apostle Peter and intended to put him on trial during a public festival. Peter was kept in prison. He was bound with two chains either to the floor or to the two soldiers, who guarded him inside his prison cell. Two other guards stood on the outside of the prison door. His prospects were not good, because James was already put to death. Meanwhile, the church met together in the house of Mary, the mother of Mark, and they prayed earnestly to God for Peter. The night before Peter was to be tried, an angel stood suddenly in his prison cell. The chains on Peter fell off his wrists. The angel told Peter to put on his cloak and sandals. Then he took Peter unnoticed passed the first and second guards. The outside prison gate opened by itself before the angel. They walked the length of one street and then the angel suddenly disappeared. After Peter visited his

brothers and sisters in Jerusalem, he left for another place to continue preaching the gospel. What I find so amazing is that *God really cares for Christians that are persecuted*. King Herod and other rulers can never stop the preaching of the gospel. Nobody can frustrate God's plan to bring the good news to all the nations in the world! In the process of preaching the gospel, many Christians are persecuted and sometimes some are even killed. But when it is not yet their time to go to heaven, *God opens prisons, saves the lives of preachers and sometimes even removes their persecutors, in order to finish his missionary work on earth!* I am encouraged! Persecutions will not be able to stop God's work through Jesus Christ and the Christians!

(S) I want to share how God punished one persecutor. Because nobody could find Peter, king Herod was angry and executed the poor guards. Herod was cruel and punished innocent people. But God had his plan for king Herod. God saw all the evil that king Herod did and heard everything king Herod said. And God did not let him escape without punishment. One day, king Herod sat on his throne, wearing his royal robes and delivered a public address to the people. The people gave him the honour that belongs only to God. Because king Herod accepted this honour and did not praise God, an angel came and struck king Herod down with a terrible sickness. King Herod was eaten by worms and died. At the right time, God removed the great persecutor of Christians. After that we read in verse 24, "The word of God continued to increase and spread." *Persecutors come and they also go, but the gospel will always continue on and on and nobody can stop it until the final victory is won*

### **Sharing quiet times from Acts chapter 13.**

(T) I want to share about the missionary work of the church. One day, while the church leaders were praying, the Holy Spirit commanded them to set apart two of their best workers, Barnabas and Paul, for a special work that God had assigned to them. In verse 4 and 5 we read that the Holy Spirit sent these two men on their way and they proclaimed the word of God in several cities of other countries. What I learn is that *this missionary journey of Paul and Barnabas was not initiated by a decision of the church, but initiated by God himself!* God directs the missionary work everywhere in the world. He calls different people to go to places and to do special work for him. From the beginning of the book of Acts, we can see how God always takes the initiative. And we see how new local churches were planted everywhere as a result of God's sovereign initiative and the obedience of those he called.

(S) I want to share about Paul's sermon in Antioch in Pisidia. First. Paul began his message by telling the people *about God*. He told them how God sovereignly chose Abraham and his people to become God's people; how God led them with power and mighty signs out of their slavery in Egypt; how God showed great patience with the rebellious Israelites for 40 years as they wandered in the desert; and how God overthrew the idolatrous nations in Canaan in order to give his people a place to live. Second. Paul told them *about the kind of people God uses in his service*. God chose people like king David, of whom God said, "David ... is a man after my own heart; he will do everything I want him to do." God uses people who trust and obey him! Also Jesus according to his human nature was born in David's family! Third. Paul told people *the message of salvation*. God brought the Saviour, Jesus Christ to Israel, but the leaders of Israel did not recognise him. The leaders of Israel crucified Jesus, but on the third day God raised him from the dead. Many people saw the resurrected Jesus and they became his witnesses. Fourth. Paul told people *how they could be saved*. In verse 38-39 is written that through Jesus the forgiveness of sins is proclaimed to people. Everyone who believes in Jesus is justified from everything he or she could not be justified from by keeping the law of Moses. The sins of people are forgiven and they are saved from eternal punishment by believing in Jesus. From the sermon of Paul I learn that three things are really important in preaching the gospel. One. Who God is. Two. What Jesus Christ did to save people. And three. What people must do to be saved.

### **Sharing quiet times from Acts chapter 14.**

(T) I want to share about one of the marks of an apostle of Jesus Christ in the Bible. In Acts 14:3 we read, "The Lord confirmed the message of his grace by enabling them to do miraculous signs and wonders." In Matthew 10:1 and 8, Jesus gave his apostles authority to drive out evil spirits, to heal every disease and sickness, to cleanse those who have leprosy and to raise the dead to life again! In Mark 16:14 and 20 we read that the eleven disciples of Jesus "went out and preached everywhere, and the Lord worked with them and confirmed his word by the signs that accompanied it." And later in 2 Corinthians 12:12, the apostle Paul says, "The things that mark an apostle - signs and wonders and miracles - were done among the Corinthians with great perseverance." The important truth I learn is that, although God still does miracles today, he especially did miracles through the apostles of Jesus Christ in order to prove to the people that they were truly the apostles of Jesus Christ.

Throughout the Bible, *miracles were especially manifested at times when God revealed himself and his plan to the people of the world*. For example, when God revealed himself and his words through the prophet Moses, he gave Moses the authority to do miracles. Moses could turn a staff into a snake and turn his hand into leprosy (Exodus 4:1-9), and God used him to execute ten terrible plagues over Egypt (Exodus 7-12). God gave Moses the authority to divide the red sea and lead the Israelites on dry feet through the sea (Exodus 14)! Later, when

God revealed himself and his words through the prophets Elijah and Elisha, he gave them authority to do many miracles. Elijah had the authority to multiply flour and oil for a widow and raise her dead son to life again. He also had the authority to call fire from heaven in order to prove that idols are dead and the God of the Bible is alive (1 Kings 17-18)! Elisha had the authority to multiply the food of another widow and also to raise her dead son to life again. He also had the authority to heal from leprosy and to cause leprosy as a judgement. He had the authority to cause his servant to see God's army all around them to protect them. But he also had the authority to cause his enemies to be blinded and not see anything at all (2 Kings 4-6).

When God revealed himself and his words through Jesus Christ, Jesus performed more miracles than anyone else in the history of mankind! Jesus healed the sick, caused cripple people to walk again, made the blind see and caused the deaf to hear. He drove out demons, commanded storms to calm, multiplied food for a great number of people and even caused dead people to be raised from the dead. The resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead is a miracle itself!

Finally, when God revealed himself and his words through the apostles of Christ and used them to write down the New Testament scriptures, he gave them authority to do all kinds of miracles. For example, we read in Acts 2:43, "Everyone was filled with awe, and many wonders and miraculous signs were done by the apostles." They healed the sick, they cast out evil spirits, they raised the dead and through their preaching they led thousands to the Lord Jesus Christ! Hebrews 2:3-4 concludes, "This salvation was first announced by the Lord and was confirmed to us by those who heard him. God also testified to it by signs, wonders and various miracles."

*Conclusion. God used signs, wonders and miracles to prove that the words in the Bible really came from the living God!*

**(S)** I want to share about the appointment of the leaders in a new church. In Acts 14:21-23, we read that after the apostles and their co-workers made disciples in various places and encouraged and strengthened them for some time, they appointed elders for each local church. It seems logical that those who plant new churches also appoint the first elders for these churches. After a church was established, the members of a church choose and appoint new elders in accordance with the qualifications required in 1 Timothy 3 and Titus 1. I want to help my church to have leaders who qualify according to the Bible. One other thing I learned was that the apostles did not appoint just one leader over every church, but they appointed a group of elders for each local church. Thus, *a church should not have just one leader, but should have a group of elders leading the church.*

**(T) ASSIGNMENT FOR NEXT WEEK**

First. Divide Acts 15:1 to 17:34 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".