

(T) Welcome to **Discipleship training On The Air**. In this Bible study series you may learn to become a disciple of Jesus Christ. Two teachers will do Bible study together about one important aspect of being a disciple of Jesus Christ. We will use a very easy Bible study method called the five steps method. As you listen to this programme, make notes in a notebook or record the programme. The fourth series of 5 Bible studies is about living in the world. We will be studying the following 5 Bible topics: “Money in the world”, “Truthfulness in the world”, “Temptations in the world”, “Spiritual warfare in the world” and “Suffering in the world”. Today’s Bible study is: A DISCIPLE IS TRUTHFUL AND RIGHTEOUS IN THE WORLD.

(S) **STEP 1. READ**

Let us read Leviticus 19:11-18,31-37. Let us take turns to read one verse each.

(T) Leviticus 19:11-18,31-37. “Do not steal. Do not lie. Do not deceive one another. (S) Do not swear falsely by my name and so profane the name of your God. I am the Lord. (T) Do not defraud your neighbour or rob him. Do not hold back the wages of a hired man overnight. (S) Do not curse the deaf or put a stumbling block in front of the blind, but fear your God. I am the Lord. (T) Do not pervert justice; do not show partiality to the poor or favouritism to the great, but judge your neighbour fairly. (S) Do not go about spreading slander among your people. Do not do anything that endangers your neighbour’s life. I am the Lord. (T) Do not hate your brother in your heart. Rebuke your neighbour frankly so you will not share in his guilt. (S) Do not seek revenge or bear a grudge against one of your people, but love your neighbour as yourself. I am the Lord. ... (T) Do not turn to mediums or seek out spiritists, for you will be defiled by them. I am the Lord your God. (S) Rise in the presence of the aged, show respect for the elderly and revere your God. I am the Lord. (T) When an alien lives with you in your land, do not mistreat him. (S) The alien living with you must be treated as one of your native-born. Love him as yourself, for you were aliens in Egypt. I am the Lord your God. (T) Do not use dishonest standards when measuring length, weight or quantity. Use honest scales and honest weights, an honest ephah and an honest hin. I am the Lord your God, who brought you out of Egypt. (S) Keep all my decrees and all my laws and follow them. I am the Lord.”

(T) **STEP 2. DISCOVER**

Let us discover and discuss some important truths in this Bible passage. “Which truth in this passage is important for you?” or “Which truth in this passage touches your mind or heart?” Think and write your answer in your notebook. After a few minutes take turns to share your discoveries with one another.

(S) An important truth for me in this passage is Leviticus 19:17, which says, “Rebuke your neighbour frankly.” I think one of the most difficult things to do for me is to rebuke a family member or friend when they have done something wrong. I want to learn to do this, because this is what God demands.

(T) An important truth for me is Leviticus 19:15, which says, “Do not pervert justice; do not show partiality to the poor or favouritism to the great, but judge your neighbour fairly.” I live in a world where most people judge others by being unfair towards people who have no social status and by acquitting people who have money and power when they are guilty. God hates injustice and will punish the wicked judges. I want to develop truthfulness in speaking justice.

(S) **STEP 3. QUESTION**

Let us try to understand all the truths in this passage and ask our questions about the things we still do not understand. “Which question about anything in this passage would you like to ask?” Think and write your question in your notebook. Then discuss the questions and try to find answers.

1<sup>st</sup> Question is about **truthfulness in speaking**. Which laws does the Lord give for truthful speaking?

(T) One. In verse 11, do not lie and do not deceive one another. Two. In verse 12, do not swear falsely. Three. In verse 16, do not go about spreading slander. Four. In verse 17, rebuke your neighbour frankly. Five. In verse 31, do not turn to mediums or seek out spiritists.

When you speak, there are three very important questions to ask yourself. One. “Is what I want to say the truth?” Two. “Will what I want to say build the other person up?” Three. “Can I say in love what I want to say?”

2<sup>nd</sup> Question. Can truth be found everywhere and with everybody?

(S) No. You can never find the truth from mediums and spiritists! Leviticus 19:31 says, “Do not turn to mediums or seek out spiritists for you will be defiled by them.” In many countries there are people who maintain contact with evil spirits and try to sell to people the things these evil spirits say. Many people in the world are gullible and cannot discern truth from lies and so they fall prey to these mediums and spiritists. Jesus says that Satan and all his evil spirits are liars. Nothing they say can be trusted. God forbids Christians to listen to these

mediums and spiritists. In Leviticus 20:6, God warns, "I will set my face against the person who turns to mediums and spiritists." The conclusion is that God demands that Christians receive their truth only from God, from Jesus Christ and from the Bible, and that they stay away from mediums and spiritists.

3<sup>rd</sup> Question. How can a disciple build others up by speaking?

(T) You build another person up by not slandering his name. Leviticus 19:16 says, "Do not go about spreading slander among your people." The original word refers to a travelling merchant who gossips about the latest scandals and thereby wins clients for himself. Because all people are sinners, it is easy to gossip about everybody's sins, weaknesses and failures. God forbids gossip and slander. You build the other person up when you rebuke him frankly. Leviticus 19:17 says, "Rebuke your neighbour frankly so you will not share in his guilt." According to this verse, silence about his sin can develop into hating him in your heart, but a frank rebuke is an expression of your love for him. By rebuking him frankly, you do not become guilty of being a silent accomplice of his sin and you do not become guilty of turning your hatred into revenge. How should you rebuke another person frankly? In Matthew 18:15-17, Jesus teaches, "If your brother sins, go and show him his fault, just between the two of you. If he listens to you, you have won your brother over. But if he will not listen, take one or two others along, so that every matter may be established by the testimony of two or three witnesses. If he refuses to listen to them, tell it to the church; and if he refuses to listen even to the church, treat him as you would a pagan or a tax-collector." This is the only way to protect a person from losing face and at the same time to build him up. The conclusion is that God demands truthfulness in all situations of sin and wrongdoing.

4<sup>th</sup> Question is about truthfulness in possessions. Which laws does the Lord give for truthfulness with regard to other people's possessions?

(S) One. In verse 11, do not steal. Two. In verse 13, do not defraud your neighbour or rob him. Three. In verse 13, do not hold back the wages of a hired man overnight. Four. In verse 35, do not use dishonest standards when measuring length, weight or quantity. Use honest scales and honest weights.

5<sup>th</sup> Question. In the light of many rich people, who use dishonest and unfair methods to get rich, don't the poor people have the right to acquire possessions by stealing and robbing these rich people?

(T) No. God will punish those rich people, who use dishonest and unfair methods to become rich. But God does not give people the right to take matters into their own hands. If everybody would steal and rob, then the world will turn into complete chaos. With regard to material possessions, God commands people two things. First. In 2 Thessalonians 3:10-12, the apostle Paul gives the following rule: "If a man will not work, he shall not eat." He commands people to settle down and earn the bread they eat. And in Ephesians 4:28 he says, "He who has been stealing must steal no longer, but must work, doing something useful with his own hands, that he may have something to share with those in need." Thus God demands that all people must work for their own living! Second. God commands people to focus on the highest priority in their lives and to trust God to take care of the rest. In Matthew 6:25,32-33, Jesus teaches, "Do not worry about your life, what you will eat or drink; or about your body, what you will wear. Is not *life* more important than food, and the *body* more important than clothes? ... The pagans run after these things, and your heavenly Father knows that you need them. But seek *first* his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well." The conclusion is that God demands truthfulness about your possessions. Your possessions should be acquired by honest work on the one hand and by trust in God on the other hand. A Christian may never acquire possessions by stealing, robbing or fraudulent methods.

6<sup>th</sup> Question. What are fraudulent methods for acquiring possessions?

(S) In Leviticus 19:13, holding back the wages of your employees or labourers and thus gaining interest on money, which rightfully belongs to others, is a fraudulent method of gain. In Leviticus 19:35, using dishonest standards for measuring length of cloth, weighing vegetables or measuring the quantity of raw materials, is a fraudulent method of gain. There are many other fraudulent methods of acquiring gain, which are mentioned in the Bible. The giving and receiving of bribes is a fraudulent method. The making of money through gambling, through betting at the horse races and through selling or buying lottery tickets are fraudulent methods. The demanding of exorbitant interest on loans is a fraudulent method. The extortion of protection money is a fraudulent method. Everybody knows of other methods that are fraudulent. Even if this happens in every town in the world, God still sees these fraudulent methods and he will punish these crooked people for their dishonesty.

7<sup>th</sup> Question is about truthfulness in administering justice. Which laws does the Lord give for truthful administering of justice?

(T) One. In verse 14, do not deceive a weak or ignorant person, like a deaf or blind person. Two. In verse 15, do not pervert justice, by showing partiality to the poor or favouritism to the great. Instead, judge your

neighbour fairly. Three. In verse 16, do not do anything that endangers the life of another person. Four. In verse 33-34, do not mistreat an alien, but treat him as one of your own nation.

8<sup>th</sup> Question. How is justice perverted?

(S) One. People who make their own laws, especially when these laws contradict the laws of God in the Bible, pervert justice! In many countries today, justice is not based on the laws of God in the Bible. Instead, the laws are based on some modern ideology or on “the sense of justice” of the majority of people. For example, if the majority of people think that taking drugs should be legalised, then using drugs, selling drugs and pushing drugs are no longer regarded as wrong. In these countries justice is never an objective system of laws, but keeps changing as the ideology of people changes or as “their sense of what is right and wrong” changes. Their legal system and their laws are a product of what the people decide is right and wrong. Usually, everything that promotes their personal ambitions is regarded as “right” and everything that hinders them is regarded as “wrong”. Their legal system and laws are therefore completely arbitrary and often at heart very selfish and unjust. However, the God who has revealed himself in the Bible is the sovereign Lord and King of the universe and he has revealed to all the people of the world what is right and what is wrong in his eyes! Right and wrong should therefore be based on God’s revelation, which has been recorded in the Bible, and not on people’s arbitrary decisions.

Two. People who show partiality to the poor and favouritism to the great pervert justice. This kind of justice is made dependent on a person’s status in society. If he is an influential person, rich or powerful, the judges are often afraid to provoke him and they tend to administer justice in his favour. If he has no importance in society, is poor or powerless, then the judges are often biased and give him an unfair verdict. In this situation, the legal system is not independent from the political, social and economic systems in the country. Politicians and powerful businessmen often appoint the judges and these judges will then only say what these people want them to say. However, the God who has revealed himself in the Bible demands that the same justice should be administered to everybody alike. The laws with regard to what is just and fair may not be determined by people, but should be a codification of the will of God as it is revealed in the Bible. In Deuteronomy 16:18-20, God demands the following requirements for all judges in the world: “They shall judge the people fairly. Do not pervert justice or show partiality. Do not accept a bribe, for a bribe blinds the eyes of the wise and twists the words of the righteous.” The conclusion is that God demands truthfulness in administering justice to everyone, no matter what his social position may be.

(T) STEP 4. APPLY

After brainstorming with one another and recording a list of *possible applications*, consider which possible application does God want you to turn into a *personal application*. application in your notebook.

(S) It always seems to be difficult to speak the truth to one’s family and one’s friends. People often speak half-truths and lies in order to please them. People do this, because they are afraid that they might be rejected. But this Bible study has shown me to speak the truth to my family and also to my friends. God demands truthfulness whenever I speak to people and I want to obey God. I will rather risk losing some family members and friends than losing God.

(T) I want to exercise truthfulness in speaking justice. Because of my position as teacher, people often come to me to administer justice. God demands truthfulness in the administering of justice. Therefore I have decided to be fair and just to all people, no matter their social status or nationality. I will follow the just laws of the Bible when I seek to discover what is true and just.

(S) STEP 5. PRAY

Don’t forget to pray as a response to God.

(S) ASSIGNMENT FOR NEXT WEEK

First. How truthful are you in your relationships with your family and friends? How truthful are you in speaking justice and in doing business? Learn to obey the laws of God in the Bible.

Second. Prepare next week’s Bible study. The Bible study topic is “Temptations in the world.” And the Bible passage is Matthew 4:1-11. Join a house fellowship that does Bible study. 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”.