

(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 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 ROMANS 13:1 – 16:27.

(S) **POINT 1. SHARING FROM ROMANS 13:1 – 16:27.**

This past week we have read, meditated and prayed from Romans 13:1 – 16:27. Now we will use our quiet time notes to share truths and lessons from the assigned passages and discuss some questions.

(T) **Sharing quiet times from Romans chapter 13.**

I want to share from Romans 13 about the Christian's behaviour towards the governing authorities. The apostle Paul teaches in Romans 13:1-2, "Everyone must submit himself to the governing authorities, because ... the authorities that exist have been established by God." Which authorities did God establish on earth? The Bible distinguishes between 7 different "authority-submission relationships" that have all been established by God. Let us take turns to share these 7 authority-submission relationships.

(S) The first authority-submission relationship. God has authority over man. In James 4:7 we read, "Submit yourselves to God." God is our Creator and as such has absolute right and authority to determine how we should relate to him and how we should behave.

(T) The second authority-submission relationship. Man has authority over the earth. In Genesis 1:28 we read, God said to man, "Fill the earth and subdue it. Rule over the fish of the sea and the birds of the air and over every living creature that moves on the ground." God has given man the responsibility as well as accountability to be a steward over the earth and all its resources. Man may investigate and discover all the wonderful things on earth. Man may practice science in order to subdue the earth. However, man must also preserve the earth. Man may not destroy, pollute, misuse, abuse or waste the resources on earth.

(S) The third authority-submission relationship. The husband has authority over the wife. In Colossians 3:18-19 we read, "Wives, submit to your husbands, as is fitting in the Lord. Husbands, love your wives and do not be harsh with them." God created male and female and God also instituted the marriage relationship. The goal of marriage is not selfish human happiness, but rather another way to reveal the living God to people. In a good Christian marriage, the husband will show the love that God has for people by loving his wife in the way God loves his people. And he will show how God leads people by the way he leads his wife. In a good Christian marriage a wife will show how people should submit to God and respect God by submitting to her husband and by showing respect to him. The authority a husband should have over his wife has nothing to do with the arrogant dominance or cruel violence that many husbands in the world show their wives. A husband does not own his wife. A Christian husband must exercise his authority in his family only in love and kindness. And the Christian wife must submit to her husband only as his helper and his best team member. She gives him all kind of suggestions and practical help and does this with respect.

(T) The fourth authority-submission relationship. The parents have authority over the children. In Colossians 3:20-21 we read, "Children, obey your parents in everything, for this pleases the Lord. Fathers, do not embitter your children, or they will become discouraged." Children are only "children" as long as they are dependent on their parents. When they are still "children", they must do everything their parents say, as long as it is not against the commands and teachings of the Bible. But children stop to be "children" when they become mature adults and especially when they leave their parent's home or when they marry. According to Ephesians 6:4, it is especially the task of the father to bring up his children in the instruction and training of the Lord. The Bible especially warns the father not to anger or discourage his children by an unloving or authoritarian way of relating to them.

(S) The fifth authority-submission relationship. The government rulers have authority over the people in their country. In Romans 13, the rulers of a government have the authority to do good to their subjects and to punish the evildoers. Of course, to determine what is "good" and what is "evil" is not the prerogative of the government leaders, but of God. God has clearly revealed in the Bible what is "good" and what is "evil" in his eyes. The subjects must honour the leaders when they deserve it and they must pay all their taxes. In 1 Peter 2:13-17 we read that the Christians must do good in their country and thus silence the ignorant talk of foolish people. No government has total authority over its people, because all authority ultimately belongs to God. Whenever a government on earth begins to violate the clear commands and prohibitions in the Bible, then

Christians must resist them with respect. All illegitimate authority must be resisted, but it must be resisted with respect. Acts 5:29 teaches that we must obey God rather than man.

(T) The sixth authority-submission relationship. The employer has authority over his employee. In Colossians 3:22-4:1, Ephesians 6:5-9 and 1 Peter 2:18-23 we read that employers must be fair, not show favouritism and not threaten their employees. On the other hand, employees must respect their employers and do their work wholeheartedly. Employees must also do what their employers ask, unless the employers require from their employees to violate God's clear commands and prohibitions that are revealed in the Bible. For example, an employee may not obey his employer's demand to pay a bribe or to be corrupt in business.

(S) The seventh authority-submission relationship. Christian leaders have authority over all the believers that are placed under their care. 1 Thessalonians 5:12-13 and Hebrews 13:7,17 teach that Christian leaders must lead by example, prayer, teaching the Bible, love, correction and discipline and Christians should obey and respect their leaders.

(T) Conclusion. All authority ultimately belongs to the God who revealed himself in the Bible and in Jesus Christ. God has delegated limited authority to people over God's earth, to husbands over their wives, to parents over their children, to governments over their subjects, to employers over their employees and to the elders in the Church over the members of their Church. Thus, all authority delegated to people is *limited* in nature. Nobody has absolute authority in any area. Nobody may exercise his limited authority in his own way. All authority must be exercised in the way in which God teaches in the Bible.

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

(S) I want to share from Romans 14 about the weak and the strong Christians. *The weak Christians* are Christians who believe or are convinced that eating only clean food is right and that Christians must observe special days. These weak Christians were generally Jews who had observed the Old Testament ceremonial law all their life before they converted to Jesus Christ. *The strong Christians* are Christians who believe or are convinced that eating all and any kind of food is right and that Christians do not have to celebrate special Christian festivals. These strong Christians were generally Gentiles who converted to Jesus Christ. In the church at Rome there were both Jewish and Gentile converts to Jesus Christ and consequently there was a difference of opinion about these *disputable matters*. Let us take turns to share how weak and strong Christians should relate to one another in the Christian church.

(T) First. The weak and strong Christians must accept one another. They may not pass judgement on disputable matters. They may not judge one another's convictions about disputable matters. Therefore, eating only clean food or eating all kinds of food is both right. And observing certain festivals or not observing any festivals are also both right. These are disputable matters, that is, matters about which the Bible allows different views.

(S) Second. The strong may not cause the weak to stumble, and the weak may not enforce their rules on the strong. For example, the strong Christians could make the weak Christians stumble by eating meat or drinking wine in the presence of the weak Christians, who believe that those practices are wrong. On the other hand, if the strong Christians believe that those practices are right, then the weak Christians may not force the strong Christians to give up eating meat or drinking wine. Both groups of Christians should do what builds one another up. They should refrain from doing things that would break one another down.

(T) Third. The weak and the strong Christians must both be fully convinced in their own minds what they believe is right and what they believe is wrong. In matters that are not disputable, all Christians must agree and their agreement must be based on the clear teachings and commands of the Bible. However, in matters that are disputable, like eating certain kinds of food and celebrating certain festivals, each Christian should have a personal conviction. Romans 14:5 says, "Each one should be fully convinced in his own mind". And Romans 14:23 says, "The man who has doubts is condemned if he eats, because his eating is not from faith; and everything that does not come from faith is sin."

(S) Fourth. The weak and the strong Christians may not propagate their personal convictions about disputable matters. They may have strong personal convictions about the disputable matters, but they may never propagate their convictions about these things to other people. Romans 14:22 says, "Whatever you believe about these things keep between yourself and God."

#### **Sharing quiet times from Romans chapter 15.**

(T) I want to share from Romans 15:8-9 about God's promises and God's mercy. Romans 15:8-9 says, "Christ has become a servant of the Jews on behalf of God's truth, to confirm the promises made to the patriarchs so that the Gentiles may glorify God for his mercy." From the beginning of time, God intended to gather his elect people from both the Jewish nation and the non-Jewish (Gentile) nations in the world. In the first 11 chapters of the Bible God reveals his plan for all the nations in the world. In Genesis 12 God calls Abraham out of the Chaldean nation to be the patriarch of his special nation of believers in the world. He promised to Abraham that through one of his descendents he would bless all the families of all nations on earth (Genesis

12:3). Only Abraham's grandson, Jacob, became the father of the natural or national nation of Israel (Genesis 32:28). All God's promises in the Old Testament were not made to this natural or national nation of Israel, but were rather made to the spiritual nation of Israel that consisted only of the believers during the Old Testament period. Numbers of these believers during the Old Testament period were not Jews, but Gentiles. All the believers from Adam to Jacob were not Jews. Tamar the Canaanite, Rahab the Canaanite and Ruth the Moabite (cf. Matthew 1:3-5) were not Jews. And Isaiah 56:3-8 teaches that all the non-Jewish aliens from the Babylonian and Medo-Persian Empires that bound themselves in faith to the God of the Bible at the end of the exile were never excluded from belonging to God's Old Testament people! God never stopped to extend his mercy to the non-Jewish nations in the world. In Isaiah 45:22 God calls, not only Jews, but also non-Jews (Gentiles) from every country in the world to come and belong to him. He says, "Turn to me and be saved, all the ends of the earth; for I am God, and there is no other." Finally, 2 Corinthians 1:20 teaches that all God's promises in the whole Bible are for every believer in Jesus Christ, whether he was originally a Jew or a Gentile! During his first coming Jesus Christ fulfilled God's Old Testament promises to the patriarchs. And because these promises included the Gentiles, the Gentile believers gave glory to God for his mercy that included them.

(S) I want to share from Romans 15:18-20 about Paul's view of his own ministry. First. In Romans 15:18 he says, "I will not venture to speak anything except what Christ has accomplished through me in leading the Gentiles to obey God." Paul does not say, "*What I have accomplished through Christ*", but he says, "*What Christ has accomplished through me*." Paul is humble about his ministry. He does not want to receive any glory for what he is doing. He wants to give all the glory to Christ. It is not Paul who is doing great things, but it is Jesus Christ who is doing great things. Second. In Romans 15:20 he says, "It has always been my ambition to preach the gospel where Christ was not known, so that I would not be building on someone else's foundation." This is a historical passage, in which Paul relates his personal ambition. Because this historical passage is not evaluated or interpreted, we may not derive a teaching or command from his statement. Paul's example of not preaching the gospel where it had already gone, is his personal job-description, but is not a teaching or command for other Christians. Christians may preach the gospel in areas where other Christians have preached the gospel before!

#### **Sharing quiet times from Romans chapter 16.**

(T) I want to share about Romans 16:16 about greeting one another with a holy kiss. What does the Bible say about this way of Christians greeting one another?

First. The holy kiss must be an expression of affection. In Luke 7:36-50 Simon did not give Jesus a kiss, but the sinful woman did not stop kissing his feet. Thus when Christians express affection, they should express it in a way that is sensitive towards their culture. In the time of Jesus the sign of affection was a holy kiss.

Second. The holy kiss must be an expression of sincerity. In Luke 22:47-48, Judas betrayed Jesus with a kiss. His kiss was not sincere. The Christian kiss should be real and sincere.

Third. The holy kiss must be an expression of holiness. A holy kiss always implies three parties: the two people kissing and God! It symbolises that Christ's love for them is mutually shared. In 1 Thessalonians 5:26 we read that this holy kiss is for all the church members, including the church members you may not like. The holy kiss helps to maintain the harmony and peace between the brothers and sisters in the church.

Fourth. The holy kiss must be an expression of love. In 1 Peter 5:14 we read, "Greet one another with a kiss of love." The kiss should be an expression of patience, kindness and especially forgiveness among Christians. The members of the Christian churches in the time of the Bible exchanged kisses. We read about that in both the church of Rome in Italy and in the church of Corinth in Greece. There is evidence that the holy kiss passed into common Christian usage in the Western church until the 13th century. It is still continued in the Coptic church in Africa and in several modern churches in the East and the West.

#### **(S) POINT 2. ASSIGNMENT FOR NEXT WEEK**

First. Divide 1 Corinthians chapters 1-4 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".