

(T) Welcome to **Discipleship training On The Air**. In this teaching series you may learn to become a disciple of Jesus Christ. This is the fourth day that two teachers explain the good news from the Bible. The good news in the Bible answers 5 questions of people: One. “How do we know that God exists?” Two. “Why is there so much suffering and death in the world?” Three. “What is the solution to the problem of suffering and death?” Four. “Which response does God require of people?” Five. “What may every Christian expect from the new life in Christ?” As you listen to this programme, make notes in a notebook or record the programme. Today’s teaching is: A DISCIPLE KNOWS THE RESPONSE THAT GOD REQUIRES OF PEOPLE.

(S) Yesterday we saw how God solved the problem of sin, suffering and death. What is the right or appropriate response to God for everything that God has done for you? The Bible clearly teaches that God requires you to make a response to him. The Bible teaches five appropriate responses to God.

(T) **THE FIRST RESPONSE. GOD REQUIRES PEOPLE TO CONFESS.**

Let me read Romans 10:9. “If you confess with your mouth, ‘Jesus is Lord’, and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved.” The first response that God wants people to make is *to confess* with their mouth “Jesus is Lord!”

What does it mean to confess Jesus as Lord? Let me read Matthew 10:32-33. “Whoever acknowledges me before men, I will also acknowledge him before my Father in heaven. But whoever disowns me before men, I will disown him before my Father in heaven.” Let me also read Romans 10:10,13. “It is with your heart that you believe and are justified, and it is with your mouth that you confess and are saved. ... Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved.” *To confess* literally means “to declare publicly”, “to acknowledge openly” or “to bear testimony to your conviction”. *Confession is the response with your mouth*. But note that the response with your mouth is *the result of the faith in your heart*. God wants you to openly tell people that you believe that Jesus Christ is *the only* Saviour and Lord and that he is *your* Saviour and Lord. Jesus promises that if you confess him openly in the presence of other people, he will openly confess that you belong to him. However, Jesus warns that you cannot be a secret Christian. If you disown him in the presence of other people, then he will deny that you belong to him. When you believe in Jesus Christ with your heart, then you can and should confess him with your mouth! Romans 10:9-10 says that when you believe with your heart, then you are *justified*, that is, then all your sins are forgiven and God declares that your relationship with him is right. When you confess with your mouth through prayer, then you are *saved*, that is, you are saved from the guilt and shame of your sins and saved from the kingdom of darkness. To be justified and to be saved happens at the same time in your life and are only two different terms to describe the new life that you have received.

How can you practically confess Jesus Christ as your Lord?

One. *Confess to God through prayer*. Pray to God and tell him openly that you believe that Jesus Christ died for your sins and was resurrected. Ask him to come into your heart and life through the Holy Spirit, which is the Spirit of Christ. Two. *Confess to people through testimony*. You could tell your family, friends, colleagues and others that you have become a Christian.

Summary. *God wants all people to CONFESS that Jesus Christ is the Lord. Confession is the response you make with your mouth and is a result of faith in your heart.*

(S) **THE SECOND RESPONSE. GOD REQUIRES PEOPLE TO REPENT.**

Let me read Mark 1:14-15. Jesus went into Galilee proclaiming the good news of God. He said, “The time has come. Repent and believe the good news!” The second response that God wants people to make is *to repent and believe* the gospel.

What does it mean to repent? Let me read Acts 26:17-18. Jesus Christ said to the apostle Paul, “I am sending you to the Gentiles to open their eyes and turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan to God, so that they may receive forgiveness of sins and a place among those who are sanctified by faith in me.” Because suffering is the result of sin, God requires repentance. *Repentance* means “to turn from darkness to light” and “to turn from the power of Satan to God”. *To repent* literally means “to change your mind”, or “to reform your life”. To repent is *to change your allegiance* away from Satan to God. To repent is *to change your thinking* away from human opinions to what God says in the Bible. To repent is *to change your attitude* away from pride and self-righteousness to feeling sorry for the wrong you have done and desiring to do what is right. To repent is *to change your speaking* away from self-defence and lies to speaking the truth. To repent is *to change your behaviour* away from doing what is wrong in God’s eyes to doing what is right in God’s eyes. But notice, Jesus says, “repent and believe the gospel”. Repentance is only complete when you believe the good news that Jesus Christ died for you and was resurrected.

What are the characteristics of genuine repentance? One. According to 2 Corinthians 7:10-11, “Godly sorrow brings repentance that leads to salvation and leaves no regret, but worldly sorrow brings death”. Some people do not really repent; they only have *worldly sorrow*. They are sad and sorrowful, because their sins have been found out. They have been exposed and have lost face (have been made ashamed). They are sad because they have lost a lot of money through their wrongdoing or suffer because God punishes them for their sins. But people, who genuinely repent, have *godly sorrow*. They will be serious about what is right and wrong and concerned about the consequences. They will be alarmed about what is wrong and long for the things that are right. They will be angry at what is wrong and willing to see justice done. Two. According to Ezekiel 33:14-16, when people repented, they returned the things they had stolen and they gave back what they took in pledge for loans. Three. According to 2 Chronicles 34:3-7, when people repented, they broke their idols and altars, crushed them into powder and scattered them over the graves of other idolaters. Four. According to Acts 19:18-20, when people repented, they openly confessed their evil deeds and publicly burned their occult books.

How can you practically repent? One. You could openly confess the evil things that you have done, especially to those you have wronged. Two. You can return all the things you have stolen. Three. You could publicly break your idols and house altar, crush them to powder and scatter them. Or publicly burn all the bad books and magazines, etc. in your possession. In all these cases, believing in the gospel must follow repentance!

Summary. *God wants all people to REPENT from their sins and believe in the gospel. Repentance means to change your mind and to reform your life. Repentance is the response you make with your behaviour, and it is made complete by the faith in your heart.*

(T) THE THIRD RESPONSE. GOD REQUIRES PEOPLE TO RECEIVE.

Let me read John 1:12. “To all who received him, to those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become the children of God.” The third response that God wants people to make is *to receive Jesus Christ into their hearts and lives*.

What are the implications of receiving Jesus Christ? According to Ephesians 3:16-17, Christ will dwell in my heart through faith. And according to Colossians 2:6-7, after I have received Christ, I should continue to live in him, and be rooted and built up in him. One. To receive Jesus Christ is another way of *believing* in Jesus Christ. Let me give an illustration. If I say to you that I want to give a special gift to you, then two possible things can happen in your mind: either you don’t believe that I am telling the truth and so you will not receive the gift, or you really believe in your heart that I am telling the truth and so you receive the gift out of my hands! Likewise, God promises to give Jesus Christ to you. If you believe that God speaks the truth, then you will receive Jesus Christ into your heart and life! When you receive Jesus Christ, then he gives you the right to become a child of God. Then you are *born again*, that is, you have become a new creation through the work of God’s Spirit in you. Two. When you receive Jesus Christ into your heart and life, then you ought to receive him as your *Lord*, that is, as your Owner and Master. To receive Jesus Christ into your heart and life therefore means to allow him to control your life. It means to obey what he says. It means to live your life in dependence of him. And it means to grow in your relationship with him.

How can you practically receive Jesus Christ? In Revelation 3:20, Jesus himself says, “Here I am! I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears my voice and opens the door, I will come in.” When you hear the good news today and believe that all this is true for you personally, then express the faith in your heart by receiving Jesus Christ into your heart and life through a prayer. Simply pray, “Lord Jesus Christ, I believe that you died for my sin and was resurrected. I open the door of my heart and life. I ask you to come into my heart and life. I ask you to be my Saviour and Lord. I will trust you and obey you for the rest of my life. Amen.”

Summary. *God wants all people to RECEIVE Jesus Christ into their hearts and lives. Receiving is the response by which you begin a new relationship with Jesus Christ. To receive Jesus Christ means to trust and obey him.*

(S) THE FOURTH RESPONSE. GOD REQUIRES PEOPLE TO LOVE.

In Mark 12:30-31 Jesus says that the most important commandment is, “Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength. The second is this: Love your neighbour as yourself. There is no commandment greater than these.” The fourth response which God wants people to make is *to love him, to love themselves and to love other people*.

What does it mean to love God with all your heart, soul, mind and strength? The *heart* is regarded as the “wellspring of human life” (Proverbs 4:23), “the seat of emotions” (Psalm 4:7), “the faculty to know and fellowship with God” (Deuteronomy 6:6), “the place where Christ through the Holy Spirit dwells in the believer” (Ephesians 3:17). It is *the seat of life and spiritual life*. The *soul* is regarded as “the human life” that God gave to people at the creation and it is distinct from all other forms of life on earth (Genesis 2:7). It is “the immaterial, spiritual being” of man (Mark 8:35-37) and equal to his *spirit* (Ecclesiastes 12:7). It is *the seat of the mind, will and emotions*. The *mind* is regarded as “the faculty of knowing, reasoning, remembering and deciding” (Romans 12:2). The *strength* is a person’s “will-power, effort, action and spiritual power” (Ephesians 1:19). The four words overlap one another. Together the heart, soul, mind and strength represent all the God-

given human faculties. God's whole-hearted love for us must not be answered in a half-hearted manner! We must love God with all our thoughts, words and deeds, with all our emotions and positive attitudes, with all our will-power and with all our effort. In short, we must love God with all our God-given abilities. This kind of love is true devotion to God!

How can you practically love God? One. To love God with all your God-given abilities. Two. To love other people with patience and kindness and all the other virtues of 1 Corinthians 13. Three. To love yourself as a unique and precious person, whom God loves and want to use.

Summary. *God wants all people to LOVE him wholeheartedly, self-sacrificially and with the practical virtues of 1 Corinthians 13. Love is the response you make with all your God-given abilities. Love is expressed in the quality of how you live.*

(T) THE FIFTH RESPONSE. GOD REQUIRES PEOPLE TO FOLLOW.

Let me read Luke 9:23. Jesus says to all people, "If anyone would come after me, he must deny himself and take up his cross daily and follow me." The fifth response that God wants people to make is *to follow Jesus Christ*. What do you do when you follow Jesus? One. According to John 6:66-69, you will continue to follow Jesus Christ, when you believe that only he is the Saviour and that only he has the words of life. Two. According to Matthew 11:28-30, you should take up the yoke of Christ and join him in carrying his yoke. This yoke is literally a wooden beam that binds two oxen together to work together. Spiritually, this yoke means that you join Jesus Christ in his work in the world, serve together with him and bear fruit for him. Jesus is the Leader in this team, and you follow Jesus wherever he leads. Sometimes your work will be in the Church and other times your work will be in society. You must deny your own interests in order to give yourself to the interests of Jesus Christ. However, this does not mean that you have to give up your job or family. Jesus calls you to follow him and serve him within your job and family. Three. According to Luke 9:23, the yoke is sometimes a cross that the follower must carry. This means that you are willing to bear the rejection, shame and suffering that sometimes accompanies the followers of Jesus Christ. Four. As you follow, you learn from Jesus and obey his teaching. How can you practically follow Jesus? One. Make a decision to follow Jesus and start to learn from him and obey his teachings. Two. According to John 3:19-21, walk in the light, that is, in God's truth, love and righteousness. Don't get involved in any secret activity and avoid all moral and spiritual evil things. Three. According to Matthew 4:19, take up the yoke of Jesus and join him in his work in this world. Get involved in some Christian service.

Summary. *God wants all people to FOLLOW Jesus Christ. Following is the response you make by beginning to be a disciple of Jesus Christ. Following is joining him as his disciple in order to learn from him, obey him, serve him and glorify him by walking in the light.*

(S) ASSIGNMENT FOR NEXT WEEK

First. Consider if you want to respond to God. If you are ready to make a response to God, choose one or more of the above-mentioned responses as your starting point of believing in Jesus Christ. Tomorrow we will discuss "What a Christian may expect from the new life in Christ". Listen tomorrow to "Discipleship training on the air".

Second. 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".