

(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 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 1 CORINTHIANS 9-11.

(S) **POINT 2. SHARING FROM 1 CORINTHIANS 9-11**

This past week we have read, meditated and prayed from 1 Corinthians 9-11. 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 1 Corinthians chapter 9.

I want to share about **Christian giving**. The apostle Paul teaches that I and my fellow Christians should give support to the following Christian workers.

First. I and my fellow Christians should give support to those Christians who feed us with God's Word.

1 Corinthians 9:7-14 says, "Who plants a vineyard and does not eat of its grapes? Who tends a flock and does not drink of the milk? ... When the ploughman ploughs and the thresher threshes, they ought to do so in the hope of sharing in the harvest. If we have sown *spiritual seed* among you, is it too much if we reap a *material harvest* from you? ... The Lord has commanded that those who preach the gospel should receive their living from the gospel." Therefore, Christians should give support to those who preach the gospel and teach the Bible to them, even if they do not belong to their own local church (Gal 6:6).

Second. I and my fellow Christians should give support to those Christians who lead us in our local church.

1 Timothy 5:17-18 says, "The elders, who direct the affairs of the church well are worthy of double honour, especially those whose work is preaching and teaching. For the Scripture says, ... The worker deserves his wages." Therefore, Christians should give support to *the church elders* of their own local church who do their work well. The church elders and other church leaders may not demand support and the members may not neglect to give them support. Both must trust and obey God.

Third. I and my fellow Christians should give support to those Christians who do God's work in the world.

Philippians 4:14-18 says, "Not one church shared with me in the matter of giving and receiving, except you only. ... You sent me aid again and again when I was in need. ... I have received the gifts you sent. They are a fragrant offering, an acceptable sacrifice, pleasing to God." Therefore, according to 3 John 5-8, Christians should give support to *missionaries* and *itinerant evangelists* and show hospitality to them, even if they do not belong to their own local church. Of course such workers must be truthful and sincere. According to 2 John 9-11, Christians may never support false teachers. They may not even welcome them into their homes.

Sharing quiet times from 1 Corinthians chapter 10.

(T) I want to share from 1 Corinthians 10:13 about **being victorious in temptations**.

It says, "No temptation has seized you except what is common to man. And God is faithful; he will not let you be tempted beyond what you can bear. But when you are tempted, he will also provide a way out so that you can stand up under it." I want to share how God helps me to face temptations to sin.

First. In every temptation to sin, I experience what every other human being experiences.

"All temptations are common to man" means that all the temptations I get are temptations most people in the world also get. We get tempted by money and other materialistic things. We get tempted by food and drink, by laziness and sleep, by our sexual desires and by the pleasures of life. We get tempted to get angry and revenge ourselves when people hurt us. We get tempted to grab power and control others, to cheat and gain money, to tell lies and get out of a difficult situation. All these temptations and many others are temptations that I and all other human beings face and experience.

Second. In every temptation to sin, God proves his faithfulness to me in two ways.

One. God never allows any temptation to be bigger than my ability to overcome that temptation.

Two. God always gives me a way of escape from every temptation. The Bible says that God is sovereign. God allows me to be tempted as a test in which he does not desire that I fail. God wants to test my faith in him and my obedience to his commands. God's purpose is to develop my character and make me stronger and mature. But God never tempts me to sin and he never wants me to fail. That is why God sovereignly controls every temptation, whether it comes from my sinful nature, the evil world or the devil. The sinful nature in me, the world outside me or the devil around me is NOT more powerful than God! God is more powerful than any temptation! He never allows a temptation to be too strong for me. And he never allows the temptation to corner me so that I cannot escape from it. Certain temptations are unavoidable, but to be tempted does not mean that I am doing sin. Whenever I am tempted to sin, God challenges me to rely on him and obey him, because he is in the process of developing me.

Third. In every temptation to sin, God will give me a way of escape, so that I can remain standing.

Some practical ways of escaping temptations are the following: I could *pray* to God and he would help. I could *memorise* a Bible verse and God's Spirit would remind me of what God said to me. I could *avoid* wrong ambitions, like wanting to get rich. I could learn to recognise situations of temptation and avoid them. I could *flee* away from the temptation, like Joseph, who fled from a woman that tried to seduce him. I could *resist* the devil until he flees from me. Thus, when I rely on God, God will never permit me to be tempted by a temptation that is too strong for me and he will always give me a way to escape that temptation.

(S) I want to share from 1 Corinthians 10:14-33 about **the eating of food offered to idols.**

First. The strong and the weak Christians.

Paul spoke about the same matter in chapter 8. In chapter 8, Paul addressed *the strong Christians*, whose consciences allowed them to eat any food. There he taught that Christians have the freedom to buy food at the market and eat any kind of food, even if it was offered to idols. However, if that would cause their weaker Christian brothers to stumble into sin, then they should abstain from eating food offered to idols.

In chapter 10:14-22, Paul addressed *the weak Christians*, who reverted to idolatry when they ate food offered to idols. Some of the Corinthian Christians had worshipped idols before they believed in Jesus Christ. When they were still idolaters, they participated in the idol feasts in the temple and they ate the food that was first offered to the idols. After they had become Christians, they could not break with this association between eating food offered to idols and idolatry. In their consciences they still believed that eating food offered to idols was an act of worshipping the idols. For them, eating food offered to idols was idolatry. Therefore, Paul commanded these weak Christians to flee from idolatry and never eat food offered to the idols! The conclusion is this: If my conscience tells me not to eat certain food, then I should abstain!

Second. There are always demons hiding behind idols.

Paul explained that the idolaters, who offer food to their idols, are in reality offering to demons or evil spirits, and not to the living God. Idolaters participate in the table and cup of demons. Therefore, I and all other Christians may not participate in eating at idol festivals in the temple. We may also not participate in meals dedicated to idols or spirits in homes, because participating in the table and cup of demons is incompatible with participating in the Lord's Supper! Therefore, I want to carefully discern every situation when non-Christians invite me to eat with them.

Third. Eating meat that is sold on the market.

In chapter 10:23-33, Paul gives me and other Christians two important and practical principles concerning eating food offered to the idols. In a way, all meat sold on the market in the days of the apostle Paul was a sacrifice offered to idols, because the butchers burned a few hairs of the animal as a sacrifice to their idols. However, the reference here is to the meat that came directly from the temple and was sold on the market. The priests of idol worshippers ate a part of the animal sacrifices, but sold the rest on the market. Paul's first practical principle is, "Eat anything sold in the meat market without raising questions of conscience." Christians are free to eat all kinds of food sold in the world. "Not raising questions of conscience" could mean that the weak Christians should not ask whether the meat was offered to idols *before* they bought it. But the best meaning is that the weak Christians should not make such inquiries *after* they had eaten meat, which they had bought on the market, because they might discover that they had violated their own consciences. Christians are free to eat any food sold on the market. Should they *later* hear that they had eaten meat that was previously sacrificed to idols they still would not have committed any sin.

Fourth. Eating meat that is served in a non-Christian home.

Most of the Corinthian Christians had non-Christian relatives and would be invited to their homes for a meal. 1 Corinthians 5:9-11 teaches that Christians are under no obligation to break off their relations with non-Christians. Paul's second practical principle is, "Eat whatever is put before you without raising questions of conscience. But if anyone says to you, 'This has been offered in sacrifice to idols', then do not eat it." Christians are free to eat together with all kinds of people in the world. However, if a non-Christian or a weak Christian points out that the meat had previously

been offered to idols, then the Christian should confess his faith and abstain from eating such sacrificial food. Christians want to respect a non-Christian's understanding or a weak Christian's conscience concerning food offered to idols.

Fifth. Glorify God in whatever you do.

1 Corinthians 10:31 says, "Whether you eat or drink or whatever you do, do it all for the glory of God". Christians glorify God by having a good conscience, even when they eat food. All food is good and is a gift from God to be enjoyed. However, Christians also glorify God by loving Christians, whose consciences are weak, and by taking their well-being into consideration. The apostle Paul concludes by exhorting Christians to follow his example, as he follows the example of Christ (11:1). I want to follow Christ and the example of the apostle Paul. I want to glorify God in everything I do!

Sharing quiet times from 1 Corinthians chapter 11.

(T) I want to share from 1 Corinthians 11:2-16 about **women wearing a covering on their heads.**

Before the gospel came to Corinth, the Greek women generally lived in the background. The preaching of the gospel restored woman to a place of honour and new freedom. However, it appears that the Christian women at Corinth began to abuse their freedom. They desired complete equality with the Christian men. They neglected the difference between men and women by praying and prophesying in public just like the men did with their heads unveiled. That is, they took their hair down by removing the covering on their head. They prayed or prophesied with their hair hanging loose as if they were in uncontrolled ecstasy!

First. Paul's first argument in verse 3-6 is from culture.

Many ancient pictures and descriptions show that men walked in public with unveiled or uncovered heads, while women on the contrary were veiled in public. The covering consisted of a veil or a headband or a ribbon, which tied the long hair neatly together. In contrast to ordinary women, the immoral women in Greece were compelled to shave their heads or cut their hair very short. Consequently, immoral women did not wear a covering on their heads at all. In the Greek culture of that time it was considered that if a man would go about with his head *covered* he would dishonour his head. Likewise it was considered that if a woman would go about with her head *uncovered* she would dishonour her head. Paul argues, that if in ordinary daily life, a country's custom dictated that honourable women appeared in public with covered heads, then Christian women should also pray and prophesy with covered heads. In this way they would distinguish themselves in public from the immoral women. In a country where everybody agreed that it was shameful for a woman to have her hair shaved or cut short, Christian women should cover their heads with long hair. Paul's main point is that *whatever a woman is obliged to do under the ordinary circumstances in her culture, she must also do when she worships, prays or prophesies as a Christian*. If she does things that are against the culture in the country where she lives, she would dishonour God.

Second. Paul's second argument in verse 7-12 is from God's creation ordinance.

Galatians 3:28 teaches that with respect to salvation in Jesus Christ, Christian men and Christian women are *equally valuable and equally important* in God's eyes. Ephesians 5:21 teaches that Christian men and Christian women should treat one another with mutual respect and admiration. However, *equality* must not be confused with *being the same*. God created men and women to be *different*. Christian men and Christian women should therefore realise, respect and admire one another's differences. They should particularly respect and admire one another's special but different functions and positions that God has given to them within the various social relationships that exist on earth. Men and women have been given a different sex and a different appearance with respect to their physical being. Christian men and Christian women have been given different functions, responsibilities and positions within the Christian marriage relationship (cf. Eph 5:22-33; 1 Pet 3:1-7). Likewise, Christian men and Christian women have been given different functions, responsibilities and positions within the Body of Christ, which is the Christian Church.

In verse 7-12, the apostle Paul particularly teaches that their relationship to one another with respect to God's creation is different! The man was created in the image of God and *for the glory of God*. He reveals how beautiful a being God created as the crown of his creation. The woman was also created in the image of God, but *for the glory of man*. She reveals how beautiful a being God created *from the man*. The woman was not only created for the glory of the man, but also *for the man*. God's purpose for the woman was that she should be a helper for the man.

Because the woman was created by God *from the man and for the man*, the woman should always and everywhere have "a sign of authority" on her head, that is, a sign that she has authority and stands under authority. The apostle Paul teaches that "the covering on the woman's head" points to three things:

One. The covering on her head is "a sign of possessing authority", namely, that she is entitled to approach God, to pray and to prophesy.

Two. The covering on her head is "a sign of standing under authority", that is, that she stands in subjection to man particularly in the social and religious relationships between men and women, which God has instituted.

Three. The covering on her head is "the demand of nature". Although in Jesus Christ the woman shares the same benefits of salvation and is equally valuable in God's eyes as the man (Gal 3:28), the difference between the man and

the woman does not disappear! The Christian women in Corinth may not violate the ordinance of God's creation and they may not neglect the fact that they are different from men. The difference between men and women in physical appearance as well as in functions should remain in society and even in the Christian church!

Third. Paul's third argument in verse 13-16 is from common sense.

The very nature of things teaches that long hair is a disgrace to men, while long hair is given by God to women as a covering. *Nature* stands for the general notion all people in the world have by virtue of their being created human beings. The long hair is given to the woman as a sign of authority from God or a right. It is her glory and one of the things that distinguish her from the man. The word for "long hair" in the original means "hairdo". "The covering" is therefore not just her long hair, but "*her long hair neatly held together by means of a headband, ribbon or lace*". In verses 3-6, Paul has in view some kind of "covering", which would make a woman's hairdo look neat. In verses 13-16, he does not imply that such a covering, veil, or ribbon is required, because her "long hair" serves as her "covering". What is required is that her long hair is orderly and neat! *All women should have a neat hairdo, if necessary with the help of a veil, ribbon or lace. They should have this always, even when they pray or prophesy. That distinguishes the women from the men in society as well as in the Christian Church. The apostle Paul demands this practice in all the Christian churches (verse 2,16).*

(S) **ASSIGNMENT FOR NEXT WEEK**

First. Divide 1 Corinthians 13-16 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 build Christ's Church" and Internet on www.dota.net

Third. Listen every SATURDAY to WEDNESDAY on the radio to "Discipleship training on the air".