

(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 12-16.

(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 1 CORINTHIANS 12-16**

This past week we have read, meditated and prayed from 1 Corinthians 12-16. 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 12.**

I want to share from 1 Corinthians 12:4-7,12-26 about **how the church should function**.

Paul uses the functions of the human body to illustrate the functions of the Body of Christ. The Bible teaches three important principles how the Church should function.

First. The Church should preach the gospel of salvation in Christ.

Without faith in Jesus Christ, no one will be saved. Jesus says, "If you are not born-again, you cannot enter the kingdom of God" (John 3:3,5). And here the apostle Paul says that the only way a person can become a member of the Church, is when he is "baptised with the Holy Spirit into the Church", that is, when he is born again (12:13). No one is born a Christian. A Christian must be born again!

Second. The Church should welcome diversity.

Although there is only one Body of Christ, it consists of many different members. The members differ with regard to the different spiritual gifts they have received, the different services to which they are called and the different ways in which the Holy Spirit manifests his work through them in the Church. For example, one Christian may have received the spiritual gift of teaching. He has been called to serve as a teacher for children and he manifests his teaching ability especially in drawing illustrations and telling good Bible stories. Another Christian has also received the spiritual gift of teaching. But he has been called to serve as a teacher for adults and manifests his teaching ability especially in leading good Bible Studies for adults. The members also differ with regard to the different places they have been assigned in the Church. For example, one Christian with the spiritual gift of showing mercy has been assigned to help the poor members of the local church. Another Christian with the same spiritual gift of showing mercy has been assigned to help the blind and disabled in the community.

The characteristic of the real Church is not uniformity, but diversity. *Uniformity* means that all the members are expected to behave the same and to do the same activities. Uniformity leads to disunity, strife and conflict, because many members cannot find room in that church to function with their spiritual gift and service. But *diversity* can lead to real unity, because the service of every Christian is needed and every Christian needs the service of the others. The

Church can only be what it should be and do what it should do if it possesses all those diverse members and if all those members are governed from one centre, namely its Head, Jesus Christ.

Third. The Church members should be mutually dependent.

In the Church there is no reason for inferior or superior feelings and evaluations. The eye needs the ear and the hand needs the feet. Each member is necessary for the functioning of the Church. Each member should show concern for the other members. That means, that they should fulfil the “one another responsibilities” to one another. They should fulfil these responsibilities towards members of their own local church as well as to the members of the Body of Christ world-wide.

I therefore desire to preach the gospel of salvation to others, to serve other people with my God-given spiritual gift and to gladly allow them to serve me with their spiritual gift.

(S) I want to share from 1 Corinthians 12:28 about **the important spiritual gifts.**

It says, “In the church, God has appointed *first* of all apostles, *second* prophets, *third* teachers ...”. In this letter, the apostle Paul teaches that the most important spiritual gifts are apostles, prophets and teachers. In Ephesians 4:11 he teaches that the important spiritual gifts are apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors and teachers!

First. The apostles of Christ.

They were a unique group. They consisted of the disciples, whom Jesus himself chose, called, trained and sent. They were the eye-witnesses of his death and resurrection. Paul also belonged to this group. There are no more such apostles, because according to Acts 1:21-22 no one would qualify. But there are still *the apostles of the churches*. They are Christians, whom the local church chooses and sends out to especially plant new churches everywhere. Today, we call such people missionaries or church planters.

Second. The prophets.

The prophets of the Old Testament were regarded as people who spoke the words of God and revealed Gods messages to the people. They could say, “Thus says the Lord” and their words were recorded in the Bible. Jesus says that John the Baptist was the last such a prophet (Mt 11:13). According to 1 Corinthians 14:3, the prophets of the New Testament or people with the gift of prophecy were people who proclaimed or preached God’s Word as revealed in the Bible especially during the beginning period when there was not yet a written New Testament. They also spoke to people for their strengthening, encouragement and comfort. There are still such prophets today. They proclaim the Bible in the power of the Holy Spirit and touch the hearts of people. Today, we call such people preachers.

Third. The three greatest spiritual gifts.

According to the teaching of the Bible, the very important spiritual gifts in the local church are the missionaries, the preachers, the evangelists, the pastors and the teachers. According to 1 Corinthians 12:28 those who plant new house churches, those who proclaim the gospel and those who teach the Bible to others are the greatest spiritual gifts in the Christian Church. According to 1 Corinthians 12:31, Christians should eagerly desire these *greater* gifts. But Christians do not necessarily get what they desire, because according to 1 Corinthians 12:11 God the Holy Spirit decides which spiritual gift he gives to every Christian.

**Sharing quiet times from 1 Corinthians chapter 13.**

(T) I want to share from 1 Corinthians 13:4-5 about **the characteristics of Christian love.**

Christian love is defined in terms of patience, kindness, etc. Therefore, patience and kindness are kinds of love. They express love in a particular way.

“Love is patient”.

*Patience* is the love that can wait. It is love waiting to begin and ready to do its work when God calls it. It does not enforce kindness, but can wait to show kindness. It does not rush in to act, but can wait for God’s prompting to show love. Thus patience is the reins that God uses to control the expression of love. While patience waits, it expresses itself in the beautiful ornament of a meek and quiet spirit. It waits for God to work things out in people’s lives as well as in circumstances. It endures difficulties, like provocation, pain and people’s weaknesses, without getting irritated, discouraged or angry.

(S) “Love is kind”.

*Kindness* is the love that acts. It looks for a way to be helpful and do good works. It is friendly and gentle instead of critical and repulsive. A Christian cannot be a friend to everyone, but he can show gentleness to everyone (Phil 4:5). Kindness does not let a chance go by to do good to others.

(T) “Love that is not jealous” is generous.

*Generosity* is the love which does not envy when it is in competition with others Christians, who are in the same line of business. It does not resent, but rather appreciates what others are, possess and can do. It gives credit and honour to people who deserve it.

(S) “Love that does not boast” is modest.

*Modesty* is the love after you have acted, after you have shown patience or kindness, etc. It forgets what it has done. Modesty has a moderate estimate of its merits and accomplishments. It does not exaggerate, nor give excessive knowledge to others. It does not deliberately try to impress others, brag or show off. It deliberately draws no attention to itself.

(T) “Love that is not proud” is humble.

*Humility* is the love before you act. It is not puffed up with its own importance, abilities, possessions or accomplishments, but instead has a modest self-appraisal before God and others. It does not advertise its own strengths nor does it hide its own weaknesses. It is realistic about what it can do. It does not arrogantly assert itself, domineer or belittle others, but instead counts others better than itself.

(S) “Love that never behaves rudely” is courteous.

*Courtesy* is the love in social interaction. Courtesy is love in little things. It has good manners and tact in every situation. It is polite, kind, considerate and sympathetic in manner or approach. It is sensitive to other people’s habits, culture and values. It is thoughtful about other people’s needs and feelings.

(T) “Love that is not self-seeking” is unselfish.

*Unselfishness* is the love in the exercise of rights. Unselfishness does not seek its own rights or great things for itself. Instead it seeks to advance God’s cause and God’s kingdom in other people. It does not pursue selfish ambitions, like position, status, power, fame, possessions, pleasures, nor its own advantage. It does not misuse another person for whatever reason.

(S) “Love that is not easily angered” is meek.

*Meekness* is the love in one’s temperament, in one’s inner nature. Meekness or gentleness has the inner strength to rather suffer injury than to inflict it. It tamely submits to the injury and hurts caused by others or by circumstances. It is not easily provoked to react negatively, nor does it quickly take things, which other people say or do, as personal attacks. Instead of touchiness, anger, cruelty, obstinacy and rebellion, it is submissive under provocation.

(T) “Love that does not keep a record of wrongs” is forgiving.

*Forgiving love* is the love in broken relationships. Instead of venting resentment, defending its own self-righteousness vehemently or trying to enlist others to take its side against an offender, it forgives and forgets. It does not take revenge. It does not dig up the old wrongs that were done in the past.

Let us make it our life-goal to practice Christian love. Every year we could concentrate on another aspect of Christian love.

#### **Sharing quiet times from 1 Corinthians chapter 14.**

(S) I want to share about **the gift of prophecy.**

Christians with this gift may be called *prophets*. They are inspired preachers of the Bible and according to 1 Corinthians 14:3, they build Christian character, encourage Christians to do God’s will and comfort those who experience trials. They openly speak and proclaim God’s already revealed message in the Bible in a very persuasive and convicting way. 1 Corinthians 14:24-25 says that prophets bring people’s thoughts, motives, attitudes, words and actions, which were previously concealed, into the light. They sometimes foretell some future event, but then they must be tested. 1 Corinthians 14:26-40 says that in a Christian meeting, no more than three Christians may prophecy and the other prophets must carefully weigh what is said. Although a prophet gives authoritative instruction, Christians should not follow any prophet without reservation. In Acts 17:11 we read, “These Christians examined the Bible every day to see if what Paul said was true.” All prophets, their teachings and their conduct, must be tested to see if they are true or false. All their prophecies or preaching must be examined by all the Christians and by the standard of the Bible to ensure that no human opinion is proclaimed as God’s Word. I like to be taught and trained. But although I might be less experienced than others, I too have the responsibility to see if what preachers say is the truth or not.

#### **Sharing quiet times from 1 Corinthians chapter 15.**

(T) I want to share from 1 Corinthians 15 about **the resurrection body.**

When Jesus Christ returns at his second coming, then all the people, who have lived on earth, will rise from the dead. John 5:29 says that those who have done good will rise to live, while those who have done evil will rise to be

condemned. 1 Corinthians 15:42-44 describes what kind of a body those, who believe in Jesus Christ, will receive. The resurrection body will be raised *imperishable*. It can never die again. Death has been conquered forever. It will be raised in *glory*. It will share in the fruits of Christ's work and also share in his glory. It will be raised in *power*. Sickness, pain, disabilities and all other weaknesses will be overcome and the body will have power to live eternally. It will be raised a *spiritual body*. It will be a real body that is renewed and governed by the Holy Spirit. For the Christian, *death* is no more a terrible enemy, but the deliverance from the perishable, weak and natural body. Although I am always sad when people, whom I love, die, the hope of the future resurrection makes me very glad. Death and resurrection is the gateway to this reality and to a closer fellowship with Christ than ever before.

### **Sharing quiet times from 1 Corinthians chapter 16.**

(S) I want to share about **Christian giving**.

1 Corinthians 16:2 says, "On the first day of every week, each one of you should set aside a sum of money in keeping with his income, saving it up, so that when I come no collections will have to be made." The Christians at Corinth were exhorted to set aside a certain amount of income on the first day of every week and then to save it up until it was collected or to deposit it in the collection-box. The reference is not to a collection during the church service, but to a personal responsibility of every Christian. Paul trusted the Christians and treated them as responsible members of the church. Each Christian, whether rich or poor, should decide together with God how much of his income he ought to set aside. Then he should give it to those who need it when they need it. Thus, instead of being hurriedly and ineffectively collected, Christian giving should be regular and systematic.

### (T) **ASSIGNMENT FOR NEXT WEEK**

First. Divide 2 Corinthians 4-7 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](http://www.dota.net)

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