

(T) Welcome to Discipleship training On The Air. In this teaching series, you will have an opportunity to learn about the practical life of the Christian community. Two teachers will teach from the Bible about Church building ministries. As you listen to this programme, make notes in a notebook or record the programme. Today's teaching is: TRAINING CHRISTIANS TO MULTIPLY. We will teach about the method to multiply the number of new Christians, to multiply the number of new disciples, and to multiply the number of new Christian workers!

(S) **POINT 1. THE PRINCIPLE OF SPIRITUAL MULTIPLICATION IN THE BIBLE**

First. The ministry of Jesus Christ was a multiplying ministry.

One. Jesus Christ makes disciples. Jesus Christ began his public ministry about December A.D. 26. Mark 1:15 says that he went into Galilee and proclaimed the good news of God, saying, "The kingdom of God is near. Repent and believe the good news". Jesus won people by either *involving them into his own life* or by *getting involved in their lives*. John 1:39-43 relates that he invited people to come and see his life and to follow him. And according to John 2, he got involved in their lives, in a marriage festival and in a Jewish Festival in Jerusalem. During this period, his disciples often came to listen to his teaching, but they still maintained their daily work as fishermen, tax collectors and other work.

Two. Jesus Christ trains disciples. After about a year, Jesus called certain men to follow him for the purpose of training. In Matthew 4:19 he says to some of his disciples, "Come, follow me and I will make you fishers of men". Luke 6:12-13 says that he prayerfully chose twelve of his disciples to be trained. Mark 3:13-14 relates that he chose them to be *with him* much of the time so that he might send them out as his apostles or missionaries later to preach the gospel, to plant churches, to teach people the Christian doctrines and to heal people. From that time onwards, his disciples followed him full-time, learned from him and received practical training from him. He sent them out two by two to various places to preach and to help the people. During the last two years of his public ministry, Jesus spent very much time alone with his disciples in order to teach and to train them for their future ministry.

Three. Jesus Christ sends disciples as workers or missionaries into the whole world. After three and a half years of teaching and training, and setting an example to his disciples in preaching, teaching and healing the people, Jesus Christ died on the cross and was resurrected. After his resurrection, he gave his disciples *the Great Commission*. In Matthew 28:18-20 he commanded, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptising them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age". This little group of disciples went everywhere and literally turned the Roman Empire upside down! (Act 17:6).

(T) **Second. The ministries in the Old and New Testaments were multiplying ministries.**

Spiritual multiplication means increasing the number of people who believe in God and obey his Word.

One. Spiritual multiplication in the Old Testament consists of passing knowledge of God and his will on *to your next three generations!* From the time God called Israel to be his people in the world, he commanded them to multiply spiritually. In Psalm 78:3-7 is written how the people of Israel passed on to their next three generations everything their fathers had told them about God and his will. We read, "God established the law in Israel, which he commanded our forefathers to teach their children, so the next generation would know them. ... and they in turn would tell their children. Then they would put their trust in God and would not forget his deeds but would keep his commands". God gave the *forefathers* the responsibility to pass on knowledge of himself and of his wonderful deeds and commands to their next three generations, which were *their own children, their children's children* and *their children's grandchildren!* In this way every generation of people in Israel received the opportunity to know God and his wonderful deeds, and to obey his commands. This principle of spiritual multiplication is again found in Joel 1:3. The word of the Lord that came to Joel was, "Tell it to your children, and let your children tell it to their children, and their children to the next generation". The responsibility and practice of every generation in Israel was that knowledge of God and his will should be passed on to their next three generations. This happened through families teaching their younger generations and through the work of the prophets.

(S) Two. Spiritual multiplication in the New Testament. In Matthew 28:18-20, *Jesus* commanded his own disciples to teach new disciples to obey all his commands. One of these commands to the new disciples was to go everywhere and make disciples and teach these disciples to obey all the commands of Jesus, including this Great Commission. The responsibility and practice of every generation of disciples of Jesus Christ therefore is to make new disciples and teach these new disciples to obey all the commands and teachings of Jesus Christ! In this way, never ending generations of new disciples and workers will come into existence!

Peter was one of Jesus' disciples. Peter in his turn preached the gospel and taught the new Christians. In the beginning, he worked mainly in Jerusalem, but later travelled, planted new churches, visited churches and wrote letters to the churches. Barnabas became a Christian disciple in the ministry of Peter. *Barnabas* in his turn preached the gospel and taught the new Christians. He travelled to Antioch and helped the new church to grow. He fetched Paul and involved Paul into his ministry at Antioch. *Paul* in his turn preached the gospel and taught the new Christians. He travelled, planted new churches in Asia and Europe, visited churches, trained new Christian workers, sent these new workers out to preach the gospel in many places and wrote letters to the churches.

1 Thessalonians 1:5-8 describes how spiritual multiplication took place at Thessalonica. Paul together with his co-workers Silas and Timothy preached the gospel at Thessalonica. The people living in this city *heard* how Paul and his co-workers preached the gospel with power and conviction and *saw* how they lived among them for their sakes. The Thessalonians began to *imitate* them and *follow* the Lord Jesus Christ, in spite of severe suffering. The Thessalonians in their turn *became a model* to all believers in their province, called Macedonia, and even in the neighbouring province, called Achaia! They preached the gospel everywhere in these two provinces and their faith in God became known everywhere. In 2 Timothy 2:2, Paul commands Timothy to multiply spiritually. He says, "The things you have heard me say in the presence of many witnesses entrust to reliable men who will also be qualified to teach others". The apostle Paul says that Timothy is responsible that knowledge of Jesus Christ and his commands is passed on to the next generation of faithful people and they again have the responsibility to teach their next generation! Note, Paul feels responsible that the Great Commission of Jesus Christ is passed on to the next three generations: to *Timothy*, to *faithful men* and to *others*.

(T) Third. What kinds of people are multiplied in a multiplying ministry?

Matthew 28 teaches that *disciples* must be multiplied, not just converts. *Disciples* are mature Christians, who know the teachings of Jesus and who obey the commands of Jesus. 2 Timothy 2 teaches that these disciples must be *faithful or reliable* and *able or qualified* to teach others. Psalm 78 teaches that these disciples should first come *from among one's own family members*. And 1 Thessalonians relates that these disciples come *from one's own province and the neighbouring provinces*. And Matthew 28 again teaches that these disciples should come *from every nation or group of people* in the world!

(S) POINT 2. THE MULTIPLICATION OF CHURCHES IN THE BIBLE

Spiritual multiplication means increasing the number of churches or house churches everywhere.

A good example of this is found in Acts chapters 13 and 14. Please read these two chapters for yourself. Let us take turns to share the truths we discover in these chapters:

(T) First. God takes the initiative to establish local churches.

The Holy Spirit may call certain people in the local church for a special work in his kingdom, like he called Paul and Barnabas. The Holy Spirit may also command the local church to set these workers apart for that work. In Acts 13, the Holy Spirit called Paul and Barnabas to go and proclaim the gospel to other cities and provinces.

(S) Second. The Christian workers make disciples.

Paul and Barnabas proclaimed the Word of God. They proclaimed Jesus Christ and his death and resurrection. They proclaimed forgiveness of sins through Jesus Christ, that is, justification by faith in Jesus from everything people could not be justified from before. When they were persecuted, they fled to other cities and continued to preach the Good News there. They challenged people to turn from their worthless idolatry to the living God. And they won a large number of disciples in several cities. In Acts 14:3, we read that after some time, in which these new Christians had an opportunity to grow, they returned to these groups of Christian disciples in order to strengthen them and encourage them.

(T) Third. The Christian workers appoint elders in each local church.

Paul and Barnabas, who told the good news to and made disciples of these new groups of Christians, appointed elders for them in each local church. Most of these local churches were meeting in houses. The Christian workers then committed these new elders to the care of the Lord Jesus Christ with prayer. From then onwards, these elders were responsible to lead the local church. According to Acts 20:17-35 and 1 Peter 5:1-4, the tasks of the elders are to be *the pastors (shepherds) of the people* of the local church, to be *the stewards or managers of the activities and property* of the local church, and to be *the teachers of the Word of God* in the local church. Their leadership should be characterised not by authoritarian rule, but by service! From then onwards, these elders were responsible and accountable directly to the Lord Jesus Christ, who is the Head of the Church.

(S) Fourth. The Christian workers continue to have influence in the new churches.

Paul continued to visit these churches himself once every few years, to send other co-workers to them to encourage them and to serve them, and to write letters to them. These letters are part of the Bible today. But Paul does not try to control or organise the new churches. That was no more his responsibility, but the responsibility of the local elders.

1 Timothy 4:14 and 5:17 teaches that *the body or group* of local elders must direct the affairs of the local church.

(T) **Fifth. The Christian workers give a report of their work.**

When Paul and Barnabas had completed their work, they gathered their own local church together and reported all that God had done through them. Notice that they did not simply report what *they* had done, but what *GOD* had graciously and powerfully done through them. They gave all the glory of their work only to God!

(S) **POINT 3. THE MULTIPLICATION OF CHRISTIAN WORKERS IN THE BIBLE**

Spiritual multiplication means increasing the number of disciples and Christian workers everywhere.

In Matthew 9:35-38 Jesus says that the harvest is plentiful, but the workers are few! According to Jesus Christ, what must be multiplied? According to Jesus Christ, the number of *workers* in his harvest must be multiplied. According to verse 38, the number of workers must be *increased by prayer*. But according to Matthew chapter 10, the workers must be *increased by training and sending the disciples!* Let us take turns to share how spiritual multiplication takes place.

(T) **First. Multiplication of converts by evangelism.**

In John 4:35-38, Jesus teaches that there are different kinds of workers in evangelism. He says, "One sows and another reaps". Some times the work of evangelism is sowing and sometimes the work of evangelism is reaping.

The sowers of course were Jesus and the Samaritan woman. Jesus had won the soul of the Samaritan woman. She in turn went to win the souls of the people living in her town. In the mean time, Jesus spoke to his disciples and said, "Do you not say, 'Four months more and then the harvest'?" Now the ordinary harvest in this region took place in April. Therefore, the time Jesus met the Samaritan woman was December. In December the physical harvest of grain was not yet ripe for harvest. But *the spiritual harvest of people does not have a specific season!* In this case, there was hardly any time between the sowing of the seed of the gospel and the reaping of the crop for eternal life! Jesus saw the procession of Samaritans coming across the fields towards the well and said, "I tell you, open your eyes and look at the fields! They are ripe for harvest." Jesus clearly implied that he was sending his disciples to harvest these people into his kingdom. The reapers were the disciples. In John 4:38, Jesus says, "I sent you to reap what you have not worked for. Others have done the hard work, and you have reaped the benefits of their labour". Both Jesus and the Samaritan woman had been working among the Samaritans. Jesus indirectly, via the Samaritan woman, and she, in turn, directly, among her townspeople. Now the Lord Jesus Christ sent his disciples to reap the crop for eternal life. *In the spiritual realm the usual pattern is that "one person reaps where another person has sown"*. In John 4:37, Jesus says, "The saying, 'One sows and another reaps' is true". Each worker in the kingdom of God is at the same time a reaper and a sower. He reaps that which has been sown by others. And he sows the seed which brings forth a harvest that will be gathered by others. Therefore, in God's sovereign plan, there will always be a harvest to reap! Sometimes Christian workers sow; they spread the gospel by all possible means. And sometimes Christian workers reap; they help people to receive Christ into their hearts and lives.

(S) **Second. Multiplication of disciples by discipleship training.**

In 1 Corinthians 3:5-11 and Ephesians 4:11-16, Paul teaches that there are different kinds of workers in God's kingdom. God assigned some workers to plant the seed of the gospel, that is, to evangelise. He assigned other workers to water the plants, that is, to care for the new converts or to disciple them. But in all the different works, it is only God who assigns the different tasks and only God who gives growth to each work! *He gives new life* through regeneration to people. *He gives growth* in their spiritual lives through the indwelling Holy Spirit. *He assigns tasks* to each Christian worker. Although they are all God's fellow-workers, they do not all have the same task. Some workers are assigned to lay the foundation, which is Christ. They evangelise, sow and reap. Other workers are assigned to build on this foundation. They make disciples and help them to grow to maturity in Christ. They help new Christians to maintain a continuous personal relationship with Jesus Christ, to have thorough knowledge of the doctrines of the Christian faith, and to become more and more Christlike in their character and behaviour.

(T) **Third. Multiplication of workers by equipping for service.**

In Ephesians 4:11-12, Paul teaches that Jesus Christ gave certain Christian workers a special spiritual gift and task to equip all the other Christians for their works of service! Their task is to equip some Christians to spread the gospel, some to make disciples and others to train more workers. The important thing to remember is that these equippers are responsible to see that all the Christians under their care become mature Christians and are equipped to do some work of service.

(S) **POINT 4. THE ESSENCE OF A DISCIPLE MAKING MINISTRY**

First. A disciple making ministry multiplies the number of Christian workers.

The essence of a disciple making ministry is to make disciples who will make disciples! It is to multiply *the number of people who do the disciple making*. It is to multiply workers! It is third-generation disciple making, that is, to make

disciples, who will make disciples! It reproduces both disciples and workers! It multiplies the number of new disciples and it multiplies the number of new workers!

(T) **Second. A disciple making ministry becomes a movement.**

A ministry which multiplies both new disciples and new workers becomes a movement! This movement will spread inside families, inside friendship circles, inside the churches, to the working places, to other churches, to other groups of people, to other cities and provinces and even to other countries! Jesus Christ calls his Church to multiply spiritually in every country of the world!

(S) **ASSIGNMENT FOR NEXT WEEK**

First. Teach new believers what the Bible teaches about training Christians to multiply spiritually. Encourage every Christian to be a part of a disciple making ministry, which multiplies the number of new converts, the number of new disciples and the number of new workers.

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”.