

(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 first explain how to have a quiet time. Then 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 TIMOTHY 4-6.

(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 TIMOTHY 4-6**

This past week we have read, meditated and prayed from 1 Timothy 4-6. 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 Timothy chapter 4.

(S) I want to share from 1 Timothy 4:1-5 about **Christians who abandon the faith and follow false teachings.**

First. The driving power of false teachers.

The Holy Spirit warns Christians that soon after the beginning of Christianity, some Christians will give up following the truth of the Bible and instead will follow all kinds of false teachings. He says that false teachings originate with *evil spirits or demons*, who deceive people. In Luke 8:12, Jesus says that the purpose of the devil is to take away the word of God from the hearts of people, so that they will not believe and be saved. In John 8:44, Jesus says that the devil is the father of lies. In Matthew 4:5-6, the devil even quotes the Bible in order to mislead people. In 1 John 4:1-6, the apostle John says that false prophets are guided by the spirit of antichrist. The antichrist is the spirit of falsehood and speaks from the viewpoint of the world that is sinful and opposed to Christ. Thus, false teachers and false prophets are influenced or guided by evil spirits and therefore their teachings and sermons are lies.

Second. The character of false teachers.

False teachers are described as *hypocritical liars*. They talk in a pious and learned way in order to cover up their real intention to catch people. On the inside, these false teachers are insincere pretenders.

They are also described as *people who have seared their consciences*. They have rejected the convicting work of the Holy Spirit (Jn 16:8) by constantly ignoring the truth in the Bible, arguing against their conscience and stifling the warnings of other Christians. They began to *grieve* the Holy Spirit through living in sin (Eph 4:30). Then they *resist* the Holy Spirit through refusing to obey (Act 7:51). Finally they *sin against* the Holy Spirit by wilfully choosing the lies of demons above the truth of the Bible. These false teachers have hardened their hearts against God and the Bible.

Third. The teachings of the false teachers.

In the second century, this particular group of false teachers developed into a syncretistic cult, called Gnosticism. They occupied themselves with mystic and occult knowledge. This cult elevated their so called *knowledge* above the

Christian *faith*. They believed that the God of the Old Testament was evil, because he created this evil world. They regarded created matter as evil. This led to two kinds of cults. The *ascetic Gnostics* shunned creation, shunned marriage, food and everything connected to this creation, because they believed that these things would contaminate them. Paul speaks about this group here in 1 Timothy 4:1-5. The *licentious Gnostics* indulged in creation and in every kind of sin, because they believed that these things could not contaminate their spirit. Paul speaks about that group in 2 Timothy 3:1-9. John speaks about them in 1 John 3:4-10 and Revelation 2:15-24. And Peter speaks about them in 2 Peter 2:12-19.

Today, such false teachers still exist. I want to remain watchful against them. Whenever certain teachers exalt human reason above God's revelation in the Bible, reject the Old Testament, or believe that sin is not rebellion against God, or claim that man can save himself, then the teachings of this cult raises its ugly head again.

(T) I want to share from 1 Timothy 4:4-5 about **the Christian attitude towards asceticism and secularism**. These false teachers shunned marriage and eating certain foods. In Genesis 2:24 God has definitely instituted marriage as his institution in every culture and for all time on earth. Whoever rejects marriage as an institution, or tries to replace it with *living together* or with *having concubines*, etc. rejects God! In Genesis 9:3 God has also instituted the eating of all kinds of food as something man may enjoy. In Mark 7:19 Jesus declared all kinds of foods *clean*. Here in 1 Timothy 4:4-5, Paul says, "Everything God created is good and nothing is to be rejected if it is received with thanksgiving, because it is consecrated by the word of God and prayer".

First. Asceticism is rejected. Everything that God created is good and is for man to enjoy.

Second. Also secularism is rejected. Everything that God created is consecrated, that is, is set apart for holy use by the teachings about creation in the Bible and by the prayers of Christians. Christians acknowledge that God created everything with a good purpose and that they are dependent on God for everything. Therefore I read the Bible every day and therefore I pray for my food and for everything else in my life.

(S) I want to share from 1 Timothy 4:6-12 about **the responsibilities of Christian leaders**. Paul urges Timothy to train himself to be godly and to set an example for the believers in speech, in life, in love, in faith, and in purity.

Physical training, like exercises or sports, certainly have value. Christians are not against a healthy body. But a healthy body is temporary, only for this life. Besides training of the body, training of the spirit is needed.

Spiritual training, like making every effort to live a godly life of faith, love and hope, has even more value. A healthy spirit is eternal, not only for this life, but also for the life in heaven. A Christian leader like Timothy has a responsibility to train himself constantly. Five areas of spiritual training are especially mentioned. A Christian leader must deliberately show other believers how a Christian should behave in speech, in conduct, and in relationship to people, to God and to God's law.

One. Speech. The book of Proverbs teaches me wisdom with regard to speech and conduct. The way I talk to people, what I say, how I say it and when I say it is important. My speech should build up people and not hurt them.

Two. Life. My life consists of my customs, habits and the ways I deal with people. My behaviour should encourage people and not scare them.

Three. Faith. My faith is especially my knowledge, trust and obedience, which I ought to show in my relationship to God. It is dependent on my knowledge of the truths of the Bible, my trust in God's promises and my obedience to God's commands.

Four. Love. My love consists of patience and kindness and all the characteristics of love described in 1 Corinthians 13, which I ought to show in my relationship to other people.

Five. Purity. My purity is my conformity to the Ten Commandments, and especially my sexual purity in relationship to people. I am praying that the leaders of my church will train themselves in godliness and will set an example for all the believers in speech, in life, in love, in faith and in purity.

(T) I want to share from 1 Timothy 4:13-16 also about **the responsibilities of Christian leaders**. The apostle Paul urges Timothy to read the Bible to people, to preach the gospel to non-Christians, to teach the Bible truths to Christians and to use his spiritual gift in the Church. He also urges Timothy to set an example so that all other people may see the progress in his Christian life.

First. Reading the Bible to other people.

During those days only very few Christians possessed a Bible. Therefore, one of the most important tasks of Christians, who possess a Bible, was to read the Bible in public to other people! This is what I am doing. I am reading the Bible to my own family at home every day. I am reading the Bible as much as possible to the people in the Church. Now I want to discover the possibilities to go and read the Bible to groups of people in other houses or in the countryside.

Second. Making visible progress in Christian growth.

1 Timothy 4:15-16 say that the two important areas of visible growth is my life and my doctrine. Without sound doctrine, I cannot live a sound Christian life. And without a sound Christian life, my doctrines have no meaning. Therefore, I want to devote myself to study the Bible and have sound doctrines. And I want to devote myself to obey those truths and live them out in my daily life. In this way, my example will have a great influence on other people. The Bible says it will draw them to Christ and they too will be saved!

Sharing quiet times from 1 Timothy chapter 5.

(S) I want to share from 1 Timothy 5:3-16 about **the widows in the church.**

First. 1 Timothy 5:3-8 speaks about the widows who are really in need.

Deuteronomy 10:18 says, "God defends the cause of the fatherless and the widow". Acts 6:1-7 describes the appointment of deacons especially to serve the needs of widows! And James 1:27 teaches, "Religion that God our Father accepts as pure and faultless is this: to look after orphans and widows in their distress". Therefore, the church should support widows who are really destitute, who have nobody else to support them. Widows who have children and grandchildren should be supported by their own families. And widows who can be employed by younger women, like for example in cleaning the house, should be supported by those women (5:16).

Second. 1 Timothy 5:9-16 speaks about the widows who are employed by the church.

This group of women possessed the necessary qualifications for the performance of certain spiritual and charitable functions in the church. They are an example of *the female assistants* mentioned in 1 Timothy 3:11. They are widows who are older than sixty, who in the past have been faithful to their husband and have successfully brought up children, who have shown hospitality to travellers, assisted people who are persecuted and have a reputation of good deeds. According to Titus 2:4-5 their tasks seems to be going from house to house in order to train the younger women to love their husbands and children, to be self-controlled and pure, to be busy at home, to be kind, and to be subject to their husbands.

(T) I want to share from 1 Timothy 5:17-22 about **the relationship towards elders.**

First. Elders who do their work well, should be respected and supported.

1 Timothy 5:17 teaches that the task of all the elders is to direct the affairs of the local church. The local church should not be led by just one pastor or elder, but according to 1 Timothy 4:14, by *a body of elders*. The task of some elders in the body of elders is to preach and to teach. The task of other elders is to manage or direct the activities of the church. Elders who do their work *well*, should receive *double honour*, that is, they should be highly esteemed and they should be supported financially if necessary.

Second. Elders who sin, should be rebuked publicly.

1 Timothy 5:19-20 teach that any accusation against an elder should be maintained only if there is more than one witness. However, elders who walk in sinful ways must not be spared! They must be disciplined in the presence of all the other elders, so that everybody will be filled with godly fear of wrong-doing. As a teacher, it is my duty to teach these commandments to all church leaders in my church.

Sharing quiet times from 1 Timothy chapter 6.

(S) I want to share from 1 Timothy 6:1-2 about **the relationship between employers and employees.**

In Paul's time, the Roman Empire still had slaves. As the gospel was preached all over the world, many slaves as well as masters became Christians. The question then arose what they should do about the institution of slavery. Paul advocated neither outright revolt against slavery, nor the continuation of the present status of slavery. He taught the principle that slaves should respect their masters and masters should be kind to their slaves. When slaves replace their ill-will, dishonesty and laziness by willing service, integrity and hard work, then the cruelty and brutality of the masters will most probably change into kindness and fairness. And the other way round. Christ's grace working from the inside slowly changes the outward form of slavery until it is totally destroyed. The principle in God's kingdom is that when people change, also their institutions change. Likewise, I believe that Christians should not be involved in revolts, but should rather change wrong institutions by their godly behaviour!

(T) I want to share from 1 Timothy 6:6-10 about **the relationship between godliness and money.**

First. Godliness should never become a means to financial gain.

1 Timothy 6:5 says that some people think that godliness is a means to financial gain. The false teachers taught their false teachings for a price. They specialised in teaching new doctrines that Christians had not heard before. They made an outward show of their religion. In this way they tried to catch these Christians in their trap. In the mean time they charged exorbitant fees for their teachings! They thus misused religion for making money! Today there are still such people, who ask a lot of money for their religious teaching. Beware of these false teachers!

Second. Godliness is expressed in contentment.

Christians should not chase after making as much money as possible. They should rather learn to work for their daily living and be content with whatever God gives them. Christians should be content when they have food to eat, clothes to wear and a shelter to live in.

Third. Godliness can be lost by greed.

1 Timothy 6:9-10 says, "People who want to get rich, fall into temptation and a trap and into many foolish and harmful desires that plunge men into ruin and destruction. ... Some people, eager for money, have wandered from the faith and pierced themselves with many griefs". Money in itself is not evil, but when people give money the first place in their lives, then money becomes the root of many evils. Many people are greedy for money and make money in various dishonest ways. For example, they steal or rob. Or they withhold the wages of their employees. Or they are dishonest and cheat in business transactions. Or they give bribes and take bribes in business transactions. Or they demand exorbitant interest on their loans. Or they extort money out of people by threats. Or they buy lottery tickets, hoping to win, or they gamble at games they play, or they make bets about almost anything. All these are wrong ways to make money! All these ways cause very many people to loose all their money and accumulate huge debts! Corruption in the area of money causes many griefs! The worst consequence of the love of money is that it often causes people to turn their backs on God and backslide into the world.

Fourth. Godliness is expressed in sharing money.

1 Timothy 6:17-19 teaches that the rich Christians ought to be generous and should be willing to share what God has entrusted to them. Wealthy Christians can help support Christians in need. They can also give money to advance the kingdom of God! For example, they can support a travelling evangelist! I have decided to teach all the Christians in my church about *money*, about *honesty* in acquiring money and about *contentment* in whatever God gives me.

(S) **ASSIGNMENT FOR NEXT WEEK**

First. Divide 2 Timothy 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 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".