

(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 TITUS 1-3.

(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 TITUS 1-3**

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

(S) I want to share from Titus 1:1-3 about **the life which God promised before the beginning of time.**

First. God's plan concerning whom he would save existed from eternity.

God's plan of salvation consists of choosing Christ to be the Saviour (Mt 12:28) and of choosing certain people from every nation to be saved (Mt 22:14). Christian salvation is objectively given and promised from eternity to God's elect (1:1). Before time began to roll along in its never-ending course, before the creation of the world, hence *from eternity*, God's grace was *given* and eternal life was *promised* to God's elect. This is the consistent teaching of the Bible. For example, 1 Corinthians 2:6-10 says that the Christian message is about "God's secret wisdom ... that God destined for *our glory before time began*". Ephesians 1:4 says that "God chose *us* in Christ *before the creation of the world* to be holy ... and predestined *us* to be adopted as his sons". 2 Thessalonians 2:13 says, "*From the beginning* God chose *you* to be saved". 2 Timothy 1:10 says that God's grace was given to *us before the beginning of time*. And here Titus 1:2 says that God promised eternal life to *his elect before the beginning of time*. The consistent teaching of the Bible is that from eternity, God's plan included the salvation of the people he chose.

Second. God's plan concerning whom he would save was hidden for a long time before it was revealed.

Before the New Testament period, the truth that Christian salvation would be given to people of *all nations* and that *non-Jews (Gentiles) would be considered as complete equals with the Jews* was hidden. It was hidden in the sense that it was not yet fully revealed, not yet fully proclaimed, not yet fully realised and not yet fully understood by the people of the Old Testament period.

Christian salvation was foreshadowed and prophesied in the Old Testament. For example, in Genesis 22:18 and Galatians 3:8 God promised that through the seed of Abraham, which is Christ, he would bless all the nations on earth. In Psalm 72:8-11 God prophesied that the Messiah would rule to the ends of the earth and that all kings would bow down to him and that all nations would serve him!

But Christian salvation was not yet made manifest until the beginning of the New Testament. Ephesians 3:5-6 speaks of *a mystery*, which was a truth that was formerly hidden but now revealed. The fact that salvation would be given to Jews and non-Jews on a completely equal basis was not made known to people in the former Old Testament generations as it now has been revealed to the New Testament apostles. Ephesians 3:9-10 says that this wonderful truth was kept hidden for the past ages until it was made known through the Christian Church!

Third. God's plan to save people from all nations is now fully manifested by means of proclaiming the gospel in the whole world.

With the first coming of Jesus Christ and the proclamation of the gospel, *the truth that Christian salvation would be given to people of all nations and that non-Jews (Gentiles) would be considered as complete equals with the Jews*, was made manifest! Romans 16:25 says that God's plan of salvation was hidden for long ages in the past even though the prophetic writings of the Old Testament spoke about it. But the Old Testament writings were not the property of all the nations until the gospel went out into all the world! Titus 1:3 says that at God's appointed season, he made this truth (word) known through the preaching he entrusted to his apostle Paul. (Eph 3:6-10, Col 1:26-27; 2 Tim 1:9-10). God's decree to graciously give eternal life to his elect existed from eternity, was hidden during the Old Testament period, but was made manifest during the present New Testament period!

Because I believe in Jesus Christ and am now obeying him, the truth that *God chose me before the beginning of time to be his possession* gives me great assurance of my salvation! I want to praise him with the words of Romans 11:36, "From him and through him and to him are all things. To him be the glory for ever! Amen."

(T) I want to share from Titus 1:5-9 about the requirements for elders.

After Paul's first imprisonment in Rome, he was released and probably travelled to Crete, an island in the Mediterranean Sea. There he and his co-worker, Titus, preached the gospel and started several disciple groups in several cities. But because Paul had promised to visit the churches in Asia Minor, he departed, leaving Titus in charge to organise the churches so that they could function independently. He wrote this letter to Titus, to remind him of his task, but also to confirm his authority among the Cretans and to serve as teaching so that we today may know how to appoint elders.

According to 1 Timothy 3:1-7 and Titus 1:6-9, elders may only be appointed when they fulfil the following requirements:

First. Requirements concerning his personal behaviour.

With regard to his desires and temperament, an elder must be self-controlled. And with regard to money, he must be honest and not make the gathering of earthly possessions his goal.

Second. Requirements concerning his family life.

With regard to women, he must be an example of faithfulness to his wife as his one and only marriage-partner. With regard to his children, he must lead them to trust and obey Christ and respect parents.

Third. Requirements concerning his ministry abilities.

With regard to maturity, he must not be a recent convert or an immature Christian. With regard to the Bible, he must hold to sound doctrine and be able to use the Bible when he teaches and corrects Christians, or refutes false teachers.

In my church we use the requirements of 1 Timothy 3:1-7 and Titus 1:5-9 to choose and appoint elders.

Sharing quiet times from Titus chapter 2 and 3.

(S) I want to share from Titus 2:1-10 about the responsibilities of various groups in the church.

In Titus chapter 1 the apostle Paul taught how the various Christian churches on the island should be organised. In Titus chapter 2 he teaches how Christian individuals and Christian families should conduct themselves. He focuses his attention on five groups of people: the older men, the older women, the younger women, the younger men and slaves. I want to share about two of these groups. Paul, Timothy and Titus know that older women are far better suited to teach and train younger women than they.

First. The requirements for young women.

The younger women must be *trained* by the older women, that is, the older women should bring the younger women to their senses, encourage, advise and even stimulate them to walk in God's way.

They should especially be trained to love their husbands and children.

They ought to conduct their lives in self-control and purity. This means, that they ought to become women with mature judgement and proper restraint, especially scrupulously avoiding every form of immorality. Getting involved in

immorality is often related to people who are away from their home. Therefore, the younger women should be busy at home, that is, their attention should be concentrated on their own families and in their own homes! While they perform their tasks in the family, the younger women must take care that the constant strain of domestic duties does not make them irritable and unreasonable. Therefore they ought to remain kind to their children and house-servants.

Finally, Christian women should be subject to their husbands, so that no one will malign the word of God. Christian women are equal with men in their spiritual standing before God and in their value and dignity as humans. But they may not think that this entitles them to forget *God's ordinance at creation* with regard to the relationship to their husbands (Gen 3:16). Colossians 3:18 still teaches that God's ordinance has not changed after the first coming of Jesus Christ. In the New Testament period, wives must still submit to their husbands as is fitting in the Lord.

Second. The requirements for young men.

The young men should also exercise self-control in every respect. This means, that they too ought to be men with mature judgement and proper restraint.

1 Timothy 5:2 teaches that young men should treat young women "as sisters, with absolute purity". They should relate to women in accordance to God's moral law, and especially avoid every form of sexual immorality.

Christian workers like Titus should set an example in every aspect of life to young men. Their example should be in both their teaching and their conduct! Christian workers should take care that they practise what they preach! Titus must show the young men incorruptibility (integrity) and dignity (seriousness) in all his actions. And in all his speaking, he must show them a way of speaking which brings health (soundness) to people and which cannot be condemned by anyone.

I want to encourage the young men and women in our church to follow these biblical requirements.

(T) I want to share from Titus 2:11 about the idea of some people that all people who have ever lived will eventually be saved.

Titus 2:11 says, "The grace of God that *brings salvation to all men* has appeared" (different than NIV). If this verse is considered all by itself out of its context, it would seem that God's grace gives salvation to every person who has ever lived. It would seem as if the Bible teaches *universal salvation* and that no one would eventually be lost. However, this verse must be interpreted in its context. The words *all men* in verse 11 refer to *believers from different kinds of social classes*. Titus 2:1-10 speaks of five different classes of believers: the older men and women, the young women and men and the slaves. And Paul teaches that God's grace is not limited to one social class! In Titus 2:12-14, he teaches that God's grace has appeared to Christians. He says that God's grace has taught "us" Christians to say "no" to ungodliness and worldly passions. So Titus 2:11 refers to "us", for whom Christ died in order to purify for himself a people that are his very own! It is thus very clear that Titus 2:11 does not refer to all people who have lived on earth, but only to all the Christians. It does not teach salvation of all people on earth and in history. It rather teaches that God's grace that brings salvation has appeared to Christians from all classes of society!

(S) I want to share from Titus 2:15 about the task of Christian workers.

The apostle Paul says that the task of Christian workers is to teach, encourage and rebuke people with all authority. They should be able to do these things and they should actually do these things. They should teach the truths of the Bible, encourage the people who feel discouraged and rebuke the people who are disobedient or sinful. Paul also writes, "Do not let anyone despise you." As a Christian worker, I should not permit my work and message to be rejected because of my age or any other thing that has nothing to do with the truth of my message.

Titus chapter 3 says that Christian workers should also be able to *remind* people of their Christian duties (3:1), *avoid* getting involved in foolish arguments and debates with false teachers (3:9) and *warn* people who bring division in the church (3:10). I believe that our church should train the Christian workers to do all these responsibilities well!

(T) I want to share from Titus 3:10-11 about church discipline.

In this passage, the offenders are Christians who form a party or group inside the church or who maintain a heretical teaching. Titus 1:11 and 13 says that they must be *silenced* and *sharply rebuked* so that they will become sound in their faith! Titus 3:11 says that they must be *warned* and if they refuse to listen, they must be *excluded* from the Christian fellowship. Sometimes it is necessary to exercise church discipline. The Bible teaches three different kinds of discipline among Christians: self-discipline, mutual discipline and church discipline.

First. Every Christian must exercise self-discipline.

Matthew 18:7-9 teaches that every Christian is responsible not to cause another person to stumble into sin. He must remove every occasion for others to be tempted and fall into sin. Luke 6:39-42 teaches that every Christian should first remove the plank in his own eye, before he takes out the splinter in another person's eye. He must first allow the Holy Spirit to transform him in any area, before he tries to change another person in that same area. Romans 16:17-18 teaches

that every Christian has the responsibility to stay away from people who teach things contrary to what Jesus Christ and the apostles have taught in the Bible and who cause divisions in the church. All these responsibilities are called self-discipline.

Second. All Christians must exercise mutual discipline.

Galatians 6:1-2 teaches that all Christians should watch over the lives of their brothers and sisters and *gently restore* those who are overtaken in some trespass. Matthew 18:15-16 teaches that all Christians have the responsibility to *privately rebuke* another brother or sister who sin against them. If the offender does not listen, then they should take one or two other Christians along with them and again rebuke the offender. These responsibilities are called mutual discipline.

Third. The Christian leadership must exercise church discipline.

Matthew 18:17-19 teaches that when mutual discipline does not cause the offender to repent and convert his life, then the church as represented by their elders must discipline the unrepentant offender. If the offender refuses correction, then the church must remove his church membership. The elders must make a public statement to the church that this person is no longer regarded as a Christian. 2 Thessalonians 3:15 teaches that a brother or sister who does not live according to the Christian teaching should be *warned within the presence of the other brothers and sisters*. Titus 3:10-11 teaches that the offender should be *warned at least two times*. 2 Thessalonians 3:6,14 and 3 John 9-10 teach that the elders should *call the attention of the church to the unrepentant offender's conduct*, so that they will not be contaminated by his sin. 2 Thessalonians 3:14 teaches that the church should *withdraw their association on intimate terms* with the unrepentant offender. Finally, Titus 3:10-11 and 1 Corinthians 5:4-5 teach that the church must *remove* the unrepentant offender from the church, that is, they must drive him out of the church.

Four. The purpose of church discipline should never be revenge, but restoration.

One. The purpose of church discipline is first of all *to win the offender back to repentance and conversion*. If he repents, then according to 2 Corinthians 2:5-11 and Luke 17:3 the church must *forgive* him, officially *restore* his church membership, *comfort* him in his hurt feelings and *reaffirm* their love to him.

Two. Another purpose of church discipline is *to maintain the welfare of the church*. Matthew 12:25 says that every kingdom divided against itself will be ruined and every city or household divided against itself will not stand. Therefore, church discipline keeps the church standing and gives the Christians a healthy fear of sin and a stronger desire to live a holy life according to God's Word.

Three. Above all, the purpose of church discipline is *to maintain the glory of God!*

I will faithfully continue to teach the Bible truths, including the truth concerning church discipline!

(S) **ASSIGNMENT FOR NEXT WEEK**

First. Divide Hebrews 7-8 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".