

EXERCISE:

Read the four Bible texts through and answer the four related questions.



Acts 1:1-8



Acts 13:1-12



Luke 9:1-6, Luke 10:1-11



Matt 28:16-20

Which command does Jesus give to his disciples/apostles?

Read the four stories and write down what you learn about the command Jesus gives and the principles Jesus taught us about sending out disciples.

What is the result of the disciples/apostles being sent out?

In Luke we see that the apostles are given the task of being sent out. In Acts 13:1-12 we read what the results are. Describe these.

Do the results match what Jesus said in Matt 28:16-20?

Which message are the disciples/apostles to bring?

In Acts 1:1-8 we read how Jesus chooses his disciples and gives them clear instructions about the message which they are to preach. Write this process down once again.

Is there anything else written in Acts 1 which is important?

What is a man of peace?

What is meant by Jesus in Luke 10:1-10 by a man of peace?

Describe whom the disciples are to look out for in the village.

What is their task regarding this?

Jesus speaks about the importance of making disciples. Do you want to learn to do this?



Matt 28:16-20

1. Is there a word from God for me personally in this text?
2. Is there a promise from the Father for my life?
3. Does Jesus ask me to do anything?
4. Decide to act upon this and ask Jesus to help you with this.

Going deeper

Discipleship is the secret to the spreading of the kingdom of God


When God created the earth He did something which enables us to still live today. God created every living thing so that it could multiply. Think about it. Imagine if there were no male or female mice. Baby mice would never be born and **at** a given moment there would no longer be any mice.

It is the same with people. Adam and Eve could reproduce, just like the plants and trees God created. Everything was able to multiply itself because God made creation seed-carrying.

Years ago at school I was amazed during biology lessons about how intricate the process involving flowers was. Pollen is transported by bees to the female stem. Those two together then form a new flower. How amazing that this form of multiplication can be seen through the whole of creation.

And so God's word is also like seed which is carried by a messenger to someone's heart. New life begins. His kingdom shall be made known and shall reproduce.

Bearing fruit, a command? What does Jesus say about this?


 *John 15:1-5,8,16*

In nature it is very normal for a chestnut to produce a chestnut tree and a mother ape does not bear an elephant but an ape.

What sort of fruit do we produce? That which lives in our heart, occupies our thoughts, controls us. Who we are. It is always God's intention that if we become like Jesus by His word, we will also reproduce this.

If God has filled our hearts with His love then we will produce this as fruit. If we truly know that God the Father loves us then we show this to others and they will accept these words of love and apply them in their own life.

What is a disciple?

 *Mark 2:14, Mark 6:1*

 *Luke 6:40*


 *1 Pet 2:21,22*

Jesus chooses His disciples himself. The disciples respond to this. Jesus continually explains to His disciples that which He has learned from God Himself. The disciples respond by either applying this or not. Only when they start doing this do they become disciples, not merely followers. They start to become like Jesus.

Are there examples in the OT and NT of discipleship?


 *Ex 33:11*

 *1 Kings 19:19-21*

 *2 Tim 1:2,6-9*

Throughout the whole Bible we come across pairs. A teacher with a student. It is not just a case of learning a lesson or an educator passing on knowledge. It is about becoming like the teacher and how they live with God. It is not about the teacher but the God of the teacher. The students whole being and life must be formed by this, not only by knowledge, but mainly by experience.

Disciples following their master!

 *Acts 1:1-3*

In the OT we know the schools of the prophets. Elijah had a whole group of people around him. They followed him as leader. Jesus and later Paul had various men and women around him. These people went all over the place with them and lived with their master, teacher and example. At the end of their training period something special always happened. The spirit of God in the master is carried over to the


student, often by the laying on of hands or sometimes by another means. This is then the start of a new season. The student is to stand on their own two feet, without their master.

The man of peace, who is that?

Jesus, but also Moses, Elijah and others, heard from God whom they were to choose as their successor. God knows the heart of man like no other. If we are called to make disciples it is important that we look for the man of peace. Someone who is open to God, someone looking for God though we cannot know that. If we ask God for such a person then He will show us.

 *Luke 10:5-7*

In this passage a man of peace is talked about, someone who has influence on others. On his family, his neighbours or his work. Jesus says we are to look for this sort of person and remain with them. We can teach these people what we ourselves have been taught by Jesus.


 *Acts 10:1-8, 19-23, 44-48*

Cornelius is a man like this. Peter heard from the Holy Spirit that he was to go to this man. The result is that many came to faith.


In Acts 16 we read that Lydia, a lady, was also someone like this.


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EXERCISE:

 You have reached a really important point in your Christian life. Are you going to remain a follower, a disciple, or are you going to make disciples? This is not an easy task because it will cost you everything. You no longer think about yourself and your own life but you are choosing now to be a blessing to others.

Have a good think about this and make a decision. Do you want to help others become a disciple of God?

 If you reach that point, then speak out your desire to God the Father. Tell him that you are available to be used and that which you have learned, you want to pass on to others.

 Discuss with your mentor how they found a man/ woman of peace. Talk about how you could find someone. Take a look together at your family, your neighbours, people at your work or in your street. Pray about this together and ask God to prepare the person you have on your heart for the gospel.


Mention the name or names lots in your prayers. You could even put a photo of the person in your Bible so that you think of them regularly.

Going deeper, part 2

Discipleship is the secret to the spreading of the kingdom of God

There is another phenomenon in creation. Namely that a seed has to fall into the ground and die so that it can bear real fruit.

What does Jesus say about this to his disciples?

 *John 12:24-26*

The conditions to fruitfulness in our lives as disciples are that we must die to our needs and seek the will of God. Die to our own strength, so that God's strength can work in us and through us.

What does it cost to be a disciple?



Luke 14:26,27,33



Matt 16:24,25

All these things are maybe difficult, but as we have learned in previous studies, it is about a love relationship, not some impossible task which God has thought up. Jesus Himself set the example. He could come to earth and carry out His task because He had a passionate love for the world and especially for those who were lost.

What is discipleship really about?



1 John 2:5,6

In discipleship it is about having Jesus as king of our lives. We have given Him the right to reign over our being. This leads to Him speaking and leading us to live a life of love and righteousness.

There are four basic attitudes which help us define a disciple:

- Being faithful to what you have heard
- Being willing to sacrifice yourself in service
- Being willing to obey what Jesus shows you
- Wanting to learn

In other words: faithful, available, submissive, teachable.
FAST

What are the 8 commands Jesus taught his disciples?



Mark 1:15



Matt 28:19 Acts 2:38



John 13:34 Luk 10:27



Matt 7:24



Luk 11:2,9



Matt 10:8



Matt 28:18,19



Matt 26:26-28

EXERCISE:



Discuss with your mentor how you are getting on with these 8 points above. Are there ones you struggle with or any obstacles in your way?



After part 6 you are given the task of finding someone you can disciple. Try to find someone already, pray about it (man/woman of peace). Start to already expect in your heart that you will find someone. With this person or people you are going to study part 1 of this series about the kingdom of God. This time not as a student, but as a mentor!

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