“Christian training? What is it?“ some believers wonder.
The apostle Paul writes to his friend Timothy (2 Timothy 2:3-6): *(3) Join with me in suffering, like a good soldier of Christ Jesus. (4) No one serving as a SOLDIER gets entangled in civilian affairs, but rather tries to please his commanding officer. (5) Similarly, anyone who competes as an ATHLETE does not receive the victor’s crown except by competing according to the rules.* And then comes the word about the FARMER who works hard to see the harvest.
The apostle Paul uses strong images here: a soldier and an athlete. A soldier goes through training and only then can he fight and endure hardships to win victory for his Commander. Without training, it would just be a bunch of guys who can hurt each other with the weapons…
The athlete undergoes training diligently and then competes fairly according to the rules. Training is absolutely essential for any athlete! However, training usually means performing the same activities over and over again! However, repeated practice of key skills makes us stronger, more skilled, more confident. Through training, we aim for better skills, for ease, in our case for more pleasant and understandable communication, for „mastery“ and inner freedom, too!

We have come to the conclusion that if we calmly think about some STANDARD SITUATIONS, pray and also practice – like the soldier or athlete – our ministry out there is much more effective and in a way much easier! If, in addition to abundant prayers, I have also practiced well, then I have mental space in my spirit to pray and listen to Jesus even during a natural, active conversation with George…!

Watch briefly with me how Jesus himself led the training. In Luke 9, he sent his 12 disciples to the surrounding villages. In Luke 10 – he sends out 72 of them and tells them at the very beginning: *Workers are few. Ask the Lord of the harvest to send more workers.* (Luke 10.2) They should care not only about their own specific ministry, but also about other workers – about the whole harvest!
Then the Master adds: *I am sending you out like sheep among wolves.* (Luke 10:3) Jesus sends his disciples as the weak among the strong! If we feel that we are weak, we are on the right side!

He then gives them incredibly detailed and sometimes rather strange instructions: *(4) Do not take a purse or bag or sandals; and do not greet anyone on the road. (5) When you enter a house, FIRST SAY: ‘Peace to this house.’ (7) Stay there, eating and drinking… Do not move around from house to house. (9) Heal the sick who are there and TELL THEM… (10) But when you enter a town and are not welcomed, go into its streets and SAY…* (Luke 10,4-10)
When it comes to sharing the Good News some believers say they „are waiting for the right opportunity“. Notice carefully that the Lord Jesus sends his disciples to ACTIVELY CREATE those OPPORTUNITIES! Not to wait for them…
And notice also that the Master puts specific words in the mouths of his disciples! Verse 5: *SAY* – verse 9: *TELL them* – verse 10: *SAY*. He teaches them specific sentences how to react in standard situations. Or at least how to start.
And the last sentence, before Jesus sent them out, reads: *„Whoever hears you hears me, and whoever rejects you rejects me…“* (Luke 10:16) As if he said to them: „I myself stand behind your words.“
And do you know how this Jesus‘ training event turned out? *The seventy-two returned with JOY!* (Luke 10:17) This is also our experience when we go out to meet people!

This was Jesus‘ training! He gives instructions to the disciples, what they should and should not do, puts specific words in their mouths, sends them to meet people in the environment where those people normally live and when they return, He listens to what they did and how they were there…
When we try out different skills and tools with each other, it’s very important preparatory training! This is how the Lord Jesus did it with his disciples and then also the apostle Paul! This sets us up to actively create opportunities out there. Even with people we don’t know at all yet! Sometimes we encounter more interest among strangers than among long-time acquaintances! And above all, our internal barriers break through it…

*Lord Jesus, You have thought out your training really well… And the fruit didn’t take long to come…*