

Were you ever present when your George invited Jesus into his life? I wish you many such experiences and that they would be frequent. What then?

*Jesus came and spoke to them, „All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, even to the end of the age.“ (Matthew 28:18-20)*

George believed and the life of God began to work in him. In the third of our four fields, George is to grow to maturity that will bring forth harvest. (These are not the four soils according to Mark 4!) Under the clear instructions of the Lord Jesus, we are to baptize the new disciples after they are „won“ and then to teach them to observe all He commanded. In the evangelical circles, we have stressed out the word „teach“ of this task. If „discipleship“ is anywhere practiced, I see it only in the form of imparting information, mainly as discipleship „lessons.“ Jesus says to His disciples: „teach those made disciples to observe all that I have commanded you.“ I totally agree that information is extremely important to our new George. He knows very little about the Lord, yet, and does not know the Word in a broader perspective; though he has read and thought about some passages during Discovery. Limiting the teaching to information only, however, has many times brought surprising distortions and also many sad departures...

Did you notice that love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness... are named as „fruits of the Spirit“? (Galatians 5:22) I protest when someone passes off love as a mere „noble emotion“ – real love is much more than that. However, the fruits of the Spirit such as love, joy, peace and all the others contain emotions!

According to John 14:23 Jesus says:

*He who LOVES me will KEEP my WORD.*

We don't like this concept in our culture at all – it's about obedience. But for Jesus, it is one integral whole: As His disciples we need to know His Word, let's say (a) INFORMATION. But a proper knowledge of Jesus and God's Word contributes to (b) LOVE Him more and more, and as a result we also experience love, joy, peace, etc. in a new way. Because of His Word and of our growing devotion to Him, we also (c) DECIDE in a new way. I mean that we

gladly keep the learned Word for the very love towards Jesus. The Lord puts it as mutually inseparable parts of discipleship: (a) information – (b) emotion – (c) decision (=obedience). Whoever loves me will keep my word.

A very skilled and experienced sister was mentoring two new disciples who were really devoted to the ministry. They were reading God's Word, praying (even by Skype and so), learning new things and developing very nicely! They also worked hard, served; they were willingly involved in all kinds of activities. After some time – especially when the fruit of their diligent ministry somehow did not come in expected abundance – they were a bit parched, actually losing their motivation to activities they had been happy to do. The development of their knowledge of God's Word and of Jesus continued great! They made significant decisions and strived wonderfully to keep the Word. But in the heat of the battle, the intimacy with Jesus, the natural joy of devoted – quite emotional – love for the Lord Jesus, was somewhat lost. So it was necessary to slow down a little and bring balance back into their lives...

Sometimes we have an idea about discipleship that it must be hard work for us as „disciple-makers“; to prepare and then have two or three hours of individual sessions each week. How about a twenty-minute phone call? You tell the new George what you yourself are excited about in God's Word, ask him what he discovered in the text you mentioned last time, have a chat about what he's learning about Jesus in it and what he's taking away for himself, pray together over the phone, and arrange the next meeting again in person... With some Georges it's possible to have short phone meetings two or three times a week!

*Lord Jesus, you have invested your love, energy, time, teaching, explaining, perseverance in your disciples. And this meant beginning of a massive movement... Thank You that we can learn from You.*