

Section II

Establish Congregations that Obey Christ



Practical Work

The purpose of this section is that we make disciples that obey Jesus above all else.

In the Bible we find a shepherd named Titus. See in Titus 1:5 how the Apostle Paul left this shepherd on the island Crete to help the new Christians. Paul told Titus to complete what was lacking in the new congregations on Crete. You may have met Mr. Wise in Section 1. If not, let me introduce him. He is a shepherd. He is not a real person, but he is like Titus in the Bible.

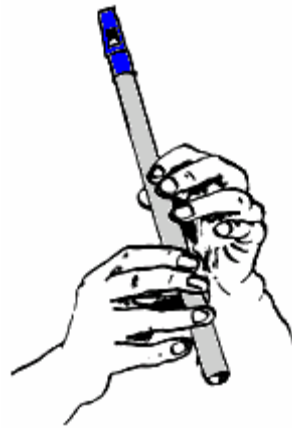
In Section I Mr. Wise told the good news about Jesus to a woodworker named Learner. He used Bible stories. Learner told the same stories to his family. Now Learner's family and several friends have received Christ and been baptized. Mr. Wise is like the wise man in the Bible who built his house on the solid rock, which is Jesus Christ. He uses stories to help the new believers grow as obedient disciples of Jesus Christ. These stories relate events that happened in history.

Learner lives where people persecute followers of Jesus. His friend Mr. Foolish is a salesman who tries to sell different things that nobody wants. He is also like the foolish man in the Bible who built his house on sand.

Mr. Foolish arrives at Learner's woodworking shop to tell him, "I heard you became a Christian. I did, too. Tourists will buy more souvenirs from me if I'm a Christian. Here, look. You might want to buy one, too." He takes a small bamboo whistle from a sack. "It is a bird whistle. Blow it and the birds sing to you. I will show you." He blows the whistle and three dogs start howling.

Learner replies, "I follow Jesus to serve God, not to make money. I am telling all my friends about Him."

- Help your congregation memorize John 14:15.
- Help your congregation to memorize the seven basic commands of Christ, listed above.
- Write a short song that lists Jesus' seven basic commands, if someone has not yet done it. This makes it easy for others to learn them. Ask others to help you.
- Help your congregation obey God out of love, not fear.
- Ask everyone in your congregation to obey Jesus' basic commands before any man-made rules.



“These are the Seven Basic Commands of Christ in their simplest form:

- Repent, believe and be transformed by the Holy Spirit
- Baptize new believers
- Love
- Break bread
- Pray
- Give
- Make disciples.”

Mr. Wise continues, “Let us look in the Bible to see what a church really is.” He relates to Learner and his brother, Helper, How the First Christians Obeyed Jesus.

Exercise

Please find in Acts 2:36-47 what Mr. Wise asks the two men:

- How soon were new believers baptized and added to the church?
- Where did they break bread to celebrate the Lord's Supper?
- How did they show in a very practical way their love for each other?
- What did the Lord do for the new, obedient church, to make it grow?

Learner listens carefully. “Now I understand what a church is! It is people who gather and obey Jesus. The first Christians honored Christ. They remembered what He taught and obeyed His words with fervor and joy. My family is going to honor Jesus like those first Christians did.”

“Good,” Mr. Wise answers. “With the power of the Holy Spirit, they obeyed the seven basic commands of Christ from the beginning. God's blessing and joy come to congregations that obey Christ in love.”

Mr. Foolish laughs. “You? You need to learn the entire Bible before you can go out and teach others! Goodbye!” Later that day Mr. Wise arrives. He taught Learner the woodworking trade and enjoys coming to Learner's shop to work with him and talk. Learner complains, “Mr. Foolish says I have to know the whole Bible before I can teach others.”

Mr. Wise warns, “No, my brother in Christ! We do not simply listen and listen, and listen more, to God's words. We put them into practice a little at a time as we learn them. Otherwise they do us little good. Let me remind you of The Two Builders. Jesus told His followers about them so we would know how important it is to obey His words, from the beginning of our new lives as Christians.”

Exercise

Please read this story in **Matthew 7:24-29**. If you do not have the Bible in your language ask someone who does to tell it to you. While you go through this story, answer the questions below that Mr. Wise has prepared for Learner:

- What is the difference between the two men who both heard the words of Jesus?
- Who is the Rock, the foundation for everything good? What must we do, to build our life and ministry on this Rock?

Learner exclaims, “Then it is not enough simply to listen to Jesus' words! We must know what Jesus commands us to do, but knowing is not enough. We must put the commands of Christ into practice”

Mr. Wise smiles as he helps Learner finish a table. “Yes! He says in John 14:15, ‘If you love me, obey my commands.’ We HEAR and DO, HEAR and DO, HEAR and DO. We do not HEAR, HEAR, HEAR, and maybe do later.” “I see.”

“The way to build on the Rock Jesus Christ is to obey Him in childlike faith and love. God blesses our loving obedience to Jesus.

He does not promise to bless us simply because we have much knowledge of His Word. Shortly before Jesus returned to Heaven, He gave us our orders for the rest of our lives on earth. We find these orders, called the Great Commission, in Matthew 28:18-20. Jesus tells us to make disciples. He tells us to start by baptizing them and then to teach them to obey all the things that He commanded.

“We become disciples by obeying all of Jesus’ commands. We make disciples by teaching others to obey all His commands. Making disciple starts with loving obedience. That’s the foundation. A true church is a group of people gathered together to obey Jesus in love. The first church on earth began immediately to obey all the commands of Jesus Christ.”

They hear someone singing. Learner’s younger brother, Helper, enters the shop carrying a guitar. “Can you fix this, Learner? It came unglued. Oh, hello, Mr. Wise. I’m glad I found you! I overheard a policeman saying that you hold unauthorized meetings. You are in danger. You must leave this area at once.”

Mr. Wise groans. “I cannot leave yet. I must help your family and friends to become a strong congregation first, of obedient disciples of Jesus. Then I can leave and take the gospel to another place.”

Helper says, “I’m not a follower of Jesus Christ, but Learner told me about Him and I want to know more. What does Jesus command men to do?”

Mr. Wise explains, “It starts with faith. Jesus commanded many other things. We can summarize them under seven general commands. We do not obey these commands to earn salvation. When we belong to Jesus, obedience is natural. We obey Him because we love and respect Him. To obey His commands shows that His life is in us.”

Learner asks, “What are His commands?”

