

MORAVIAN WOMEN'S ASSOCIATION

Devotional Notes

March 2013

Theme: Following in Christ's Footprints

Not too long ago once you had trained for a job you were very likely to stay with it for the rest of your life, perhaps moving up the ladder as you gained experience in your chosen field. I know many women left work to have families, and then perhaps went into something a little different later on, but not usually any major change. Nowadays it is quite different. Many young people attend university, studying subjects of their choice, but then have to move into totally different areas as jobs are not available, and then perhaps undertake further or different training. Some people change course half-way through their working lives either by choice or necessity. Others can never even step into the job market, or lose their jobs entirely because of the economic situation.

In the New Testament we read of Jesus calling his twelve closest followers away from their normal jobs to join him in a totally new venture. We know 4 were fishermen and another a tax collector but we are not given the trades of the rest of the apostles. They had all probably been in the crowds surrounding Jesus, and they had probably chatted with him so that he had got to know them before he chose this particular 12. But what a change of lifestyle this was for them, leaving their chosen careers, steady incomes and family homes to travel around with Jesus and help him in the tasks of preaching the Gospel, teaching the people and healing the sick.

In the last paper in December, we saw them all at the furthest point north, Caesarea Philippi, before making their way gradually back down to Jerusalem. Jesus felt the time had now come to face the music there in the capital, but he realised that his disciples still needed some hands-on experience to carry on his work after he was gone. So whilst in the area of Perea on the east bank of the Jordan he sent out 70 of his followers (not just the 12 disciples) on a training mission. **Please now read Luke 10:1-12.**

This was no easy task he gave this large group, some of whom would be more experienced than others at working with Jesus, but since they went in pairs perhaps one of them would have more experience than the other. Luke is the only Gospel writer who tells of them reporting back to Jesus, and this would be what we call a de-brief today. **Please read Luke 10:17-20.**

Despite the difficulty of the task they had been given, these followers returned with joy, giving a good account of their experience, and Jesus was obviously very encouraged by the results of this exercise, so that he felt able to carry on with his journey. He was in turn able to encourage these 70 followers to keep on in their work and service for him and God.

Hilary Smith

1. Perhaps the members of the group would like to speak about any retraining they have done and how easy or difficult they found it.
2. The call to serve the Lord extends way beyond those who are called to ordained ministry, and there are many ways in which we can all serve the Lord both inside and outside the church, and quite often this will need training of some kind.
 - a) Have you ever considered how the Lord might be calling you to work for him?
 - b) How might you encourage others to train for and take up new tasks within the church?