



## The value of 'ownership'

Someone once asked me the question, "Suppose you rent a car, do you wash it before you return it?" Ehhm, no I thought, the rental company does that for you, right?

"And your own car, do you wash it?" I remember my first car - a VW Beetle - of course I washed it! A regular thing on Saturday mornings. That's "ownership. Because something is yours you care for it, cherish it, love it.

Last months I shared in several congregations from the Sermon on the Mount. Jesus chooses to invest 3 years in 12 disciples. It strikes me how quickly He sends them out! In Matthew 9 He instructs them to pray for workers, and in chapter 10 He sends them out Himself. In

the process they learn what it means to follow Jesus and are changed into His image.

Just before Jesus returns to heaven, He speaks those familiar words, "Go ye therefore..." (Matthew 28) Go. And earlier, "As the Father has sent Me, so I also send you" (John 20). Jesus makes the disciples part - indeed co-owner - of His mission, of God's plan. Prayer plays an important role in this.

I read in a book, "If you pray for your mountain to be moved, you shouldn't be surprised to wake up to a shovel" (If you pray for Jesus to move the 'mountain' in your life, you shouldn't be surprised to wake up next to a shovel...). Again, that same thought.

'Owning' does something to your motivation. It naturally bubbles up deep inside. When you become aware of Jesus' desire to bring people back into

relationship with His Father and how He wants to include you in that, you naturally want to respond to this call from your Master.

'Ownership' is one of the principles by which we shape Alongsiders. Therefore, the most important choices are not made at "headquarters," but, for example, when young people themselves prayerfully choose their younger brother or sister. When they prayerfully seek how they may walk up with their brother or sister. 'Ownership' teaches them, out of their relationship with Jesus and others, to make responsible choices, find direction, care, self-control, accountability, ...

Have you stepped in yet? Are you already a co-owner of Jesus' mission? And what does that look like? It's as if Jesus says: "I give you the keys, go, be My disciple, make disciples, get in, I want to walk with you.

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This News is sent out about 4 times a year in order to inform you well about the things that are happening in our lives and enables you to pray with us. Feel free to forward this letter to others.

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## ALONGSIDERS IN THE NETHERLANDS

Friday morning 08:53. Isaac arrives. He has been working on our team since spring 2022 - how happy we are with him! We begin with a good cup of coffee, a portion from God's Word, catching up and prayer. These are precious moments and the morning flies by.

Then we discuss some ongoing issues. On April 1, for example, there was a very cool event: the "closing" of the Cambodia trip, a moment of sharing and witnessing with all

involved. It was great to prepare that as a team in the weeks before. The evening was impressive. Participants shared about their experiences during the trip and what they had seen from the Lord. So cool! A moment we won't soon forget was at the end of the evening. As "elders," we stood around the "young people" and prayed for them. Devoted, blessed, encouraged. Everything that happened then was of course not in the script, and we had not thought of it - it was a 'holy' moment, in which we were allowed to experience together how powerful it is when we pull together and stand around each other.

Alongsiders is slowly growing in the Netherlands. At the moment we notice this especially in the materials we make and how they are widely used. That is encouraging to notice.

We hear back from many young people that they need good examples in their environment. They long to be part of a community. They are not looking for "perfect" but for real people who will show them how to follow the Lord Jesus in "real life. Brothers and sisters who are willing to share ordinary life with them. Not just at the times things are going well, not just on Sundays, but also when life goes through trial and error. They want to see how to do that and learn how - precisely through our weakness - God's strength becomes visible.

This week, ask the Lord how you can be such an example to someone around you.

Perhaps there is someone with whom you already have a natural connection, for example, because you have a shared interest (sports, studies, music, your field, ...) How can you help this person grow?

Pray for your own local church that it will be a safe place, a community, for their young people where they can "be" and grow into spiritual maturity.

A heartfelt greeting from all five of us!

Thank you for being, in various ways, our 'Alongsider'.

Mart-Jan & Talitha  
Joy, Micha and Amy

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### Financial support:

Alongsiders does not pay us a salary.

We're very grateful for those who want to support us financially.

If you want to do so, please use the Dutch bank details as stated below:

Foundation: Nehemia (ANBI)  
Please note: Project Alongsiders  
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