

Text: Ephesians 4:12

11 And he [Jesus] gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; (EP 4:12, KJV).

Introduction:

The New Testament word translated “**teacher**” is *didaskalos*, from *didasko*, “...to give instruction,” therefore, “one who gives instruction” (VINE 1134-1135). Jesus used the word “teacher” to describe himself:

8 But be not ye called Rabbi: for one is your Master [Teacher], [even] Christ; and all ye are brethren (MT 23:8, KJV).

Jesus is the role model *par excellence* for the teacher. Jesus is referred to as teacher 45 times in the four gospels and 61 times if we include all the terms equivalent to teacher. (Download my free ebooklet, *Jesus the Master Teacher*, at <http://BusterSoft.com/JRCM/>.)

Jesus ministered as a prophet and teacher. We separate the ministry gifts to define and study them, but they can be combined. Luke lists five men that he classifies as prophets and teachers—this included Paul and Barnabas:

1 Now there were in the church that was at Antioch certain prophets and teachers; as Barnabas, and Simeon that was called Niger, and Lucius of Cyrene, and Manaen, which had been brought up with Herod the tetrarch, and Saul.

2 As they ministered to the Lord, and fasted, the Holy Ghost said, Separate me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have called them (AC 13:1-2, KJV).

Pastors have settled ministries, whereas other gift ministries generally have traveling ministries. A teacher usually travels from church to church, unless his ministry is combined with pastor or prophet. Other exceptions are a teacher in a Bible college and a teacher who uses mass media. Some see the pastor and teacher as one ministry gift, based on the grammatical structure of the Greek text. If so, some may develop the pastoral ministry more, others the teaching ministry more. I have treated them separately for teaching purposes.

The Teacher—A Divine Gift

1. All believers are to teach, according to Jesus' command in the great Commission:

18 And Jesus came up and spoke to them, saying, "All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth.

19 "Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit,

20 teaching them to observe all that I commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age" (MT 28:18-20, NASB).

2. Some people have a natural ability to organize knowledge and impart it to others. They may or may not have a calling to teach. Sinners certainly cannot fulfill a call until they are saved.

3. The ministry gift of teaching is a gift and calling from God. This gift should be developed and exercised like the other four gifts. (Some New Testament scholars see the ministry gifts of pastor and teacher as being one, based on the Greek grammatical structure.)

Dr. Ralph Earle gave his testimony to us students in a class at Nazarene Theological Seminary in Kansas City MO in the 1960s. He told us that the Lord called him to be a teacher and he remembered the time. This was after he was a minister. At one time, he wrote and studied up to 18 hours per day in his calling. He taught New Testament Greek for about 40 years and helped translate the New International Version.

The Lord also called Kenneth Hagin to be a teacher. This was sometime after he was in the ministry. Before his calling, he did not like to teach. After his calling, he said,

But one day—God gave me a gift! And when it came down into my spirit I was conscious it was in there! I found out you can stand before a small crowd of half a dozen people or before a large crowd, and never move, never even hardly lift your voice, never even hardly wave your arms, or lift your hand—but such a strong anointing of the Spirit of God comes that the Word of God comes flowing out of you like water out of a faucet. And what a blessing when it comes! I know a little, not a lot, but a little bit about this office because I've stood in it now for some time (HAGIN WOF FEB 76, 3).

The Teacher—A Waterer and Builder

Apollos is a New Testament example:

24 And a certain Jew named Apollos, born at Alexandria, an eloquent man, and mighty in the scriptures, came to Ephesus.

25 This man was instructed in the way of the Lord; and being fervent in the spirit, he spake and taught diligently the things of the Lord, knowing only the baptism of John.

26 And he began to speak boldly in the synagogue: whom when Aquila and Priscilla had heard, they took him unto [them], and expounded unto him the way of God more perfectly.

27 And when he was disposed to pass into Achaia, the brethren wrote, exhorting the disciples to receive him: who, when he was come, helped them much which had believed through grace:

28 For he mightily convinced the Jews, and that publickly, shewing by the scriptures that Jesus was Christ (AC 18:24-28, KJV).

1. One figure Paul used was that of a farmer. Paul planted the seed, Apollos watered it, and the Lord caused it to grow. One florist said that the waterer was the most important individual in growing flowers. He could ruin the flowers if he watered them wrongly.

6 I have planted, Apollos watered; but God gave the increase.

7 So then neither is he that planteth any thing, neither he that watereth; but God that giveth the increase.

8 Now he that planteth and he that watereth are one: and every man shall receive his own reward according to his own labour.

9 For we are labourers together with God: ye are God's husbandry, [ye are] God's building (1CO 3:6-9, KJV).

2. Another figure that Paul used was that of a house builder. An evangelist lays the foundation, using the figure of a house builder. Paul did the work of an apostle (including evangelist) and Apollos did the work of a teacher. A teacher builds the superstructure upon the foundation laid by an apostle.

The Teacher—A Vital Member of the Ministry Team

1. Teachers stabilize new Christians. He or she must teach the word of God accurately, according to his gift from the Head of the Church (Jesus). Then the saints will be properly grounded, refreshed, revived and will flourish. Luke said that Apollos "**helped them much**" (AC

18:27, KJV). Teaching should be a help.

2. New Testament teaching unites Christians. The church is bound together—proper believing does this. We are to learn the basics of Christianity and then build on them. We are to go beyond the "milk" and learn the "meat" of the Word of God:

1 Therefore leaving the principles of the doctrine of Christ, let us go on unto perfection; not laying again the foundation of repentance from dead works, and of faith toward God, 2 Of the doctrine of baptisms, and of laying on of hands, and of resurrection of the dead, and of eternal judgment (HE 6:1-2, KJV).

3. However, New Testament teaching will divide the flock from those who reject the fundamental truths about Jesus. Jesus is The Prince of Peace for those who accept him as their Savior. However, Jesus himself said concerning those who reject him,

34 Think not that I am come to send peace on earth: I came not to send peace, but a sword.

35 For I am come to set a man at variance against his father, and the daughter against her mother, and the daughter in law against her mother in law.

36 And a man's foes shall be they of his own household.

37 He that loveth father or mother more than me is not worthy of me: and he that loveth son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me.

38 And he that taketh not his cross, and followeth after me, is not worthy of me.

39 He that findeth his life shall lose it: and he that loseth his life for my sake shall find it.

40 He that receiveth you receiveth me, and he that receiveth me receiveth him that sent me.

41 He that receiveth a prophet in the name of a prophet shall receive a prophet's reward; and he that receiveth a righteous man in the name of a righteous man shall receive a righteous man's reward.

42 And whosoever shall give to drink unto one of these little ones a cup of cold water only in the name of a disciple, verily I say unto you, he shall in no wise lose his reward (MT 10:34-42, KJV).

Conclusion:

The ministry of the teacher is part of a team effort, necessary for the body of Christ. Let us recognize and support the teacher. Let us welcome his ministry.

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This study is taken from my eBook, *Ephesians*. You may download this book free at <http://BusterSoft.com/JRCM/>

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The Teacher

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