

TEACHERS IN THE LOCAL CHURCH

Lesson 22

I. INTRODUCTION.

A. God Calls Mankind to Salvation Through Teaching, Hearing, and Learning.

1. Sinners are to be taught (Jn. 6:44-45).
2. Saints are to be taught (Mt. 28:19-20).
3. The knowledge that is taught to saints and sinners is the inspired word of God and it is taught by the Holy Spirit through the Apostles (Lk. 12:12; Jn. 14:26; 1 Cor. 2:13). Today, Bible teachers use the same words of the Apostles to teach sinners and saints.

B. The Local Church Is a Teaching / Educational Institution.

1. One mission of the local church is to teach God's word (1 Tim. 3:15). The local church is not the originator of truth, but it is the proclaimer and protector of the truth. When we lose sight of this mission we cease to be pleasing to God!
2. This mission is accomplished through education only. God depends upon education. God made man teachable, therefore, teachers are included in the organization of the local church.
3. Local churches are judged by Christ based on the teaching (doctrine) permitted in them (Rev. 2:14-16, 20-25).
4. Some present-day conditions in the local church: a) shortage of teachers due to a lack of desire to teach, a fear of criticism, too lazy to prepare a lesson or deal with under-motivated students; b) untrained and poorly qualified teachers; c) little to no curriculum or unorganized curriculum; d) improper learning environment (improper classroom facilities); e) less Bible teaching and more "fun and games"; f) lack of teacher training classes; and, g) lack of parental concern for good Bible classes (parents who don't care about the quality of teaching or the need for their children to get their lesson prepared).
5. Remember the warnings of old (Judg. 2:10; Hos. 4:6).

C. Local Churches in the NT Were Teaching Institutions.

1. Sinners were taught (Acts 4:1-2, 18; 5:21, 25, 28, 42; Rom. 6:17; Eph. 4:20-21; Col. 1:28; 1 Tim. 2:7; 2 Tim. 1:11).
2. Saints were taught (Acts 2:42; 11:26; 15:35; 18:11; 20:20; Rom. 15:4; 16:17; 1 Cor. 4:17; Col. 2:6; 2 Thess. 2:15).

II. TEACHERS IN THE LOCAL CHURCH. **

A. God Wants "Teachers" in the Local Church (Acts 13:1; 1 Cor. 12:28-29).

1. Members of the local church are to be teachers, not just the evangelist (1 Tim. 4:6, 11, 13, 16: 6:2; 2 Tim. 4:2; Tit. 2:7). Elders are also to be teachers (Eph. 4:11; 1 Tim. 5:17; Tit. 1:9).
2. Each Christian has a responsibility to teach in some way (Heb. 5:11ff). Each one is expected to teach. Each one should want to teach. Each one should want to be a better teacher. Yes, there are biblical warnings against teaching without a controlled tongue (Jas. 3:1ff), but that should not hinder us from wanting to be a teacher.

B. Who Is a "Teacher"?

1. Gr. *didaskolos*, "teacher", see a Bible concordance for its many passages. The other related Greek words are *didaktikos* (able to teach), *didaktos* (teach, instruct), *didasko* (to teach), *didakee* and *didaskalia* (that which is taught [doctrine], and the act of teaching).
2. A teacher (*didaskolos*) teaches (*didasko*) doctrine (*didakee*) to the student.

C. Teachers' Qualifications (2 Tim. 2:2).

1. "The things which you have heard from me".
 - a) The New Testament gospel is to be passed on through teaching.
 - b) A teacher must learn and teach the doctrine of Christ, not the doctrines of men (Acts 2:42; 13:12; 2 Jn. 9-11; for the teachings of men see Mt. 15:9; 16:12; Jn. 7:16-17; Eph. 4:14; Col. 2:22; Heb. 13:9; Rev. 2:14, 15, 24; etc.).
2. "Faithful men".
 - a) Gr. *pistos*, "to be trusted", "trustworthy", "reliable", see a Bible concordance for its many passages. The word "men" in "faithful men" is from the Greek word *anthropos* meaning "a human being, male or female". These qualifications are for both male and female teachers.
 - b) A teacher must be trustworthy and reliable in character, life, and attitude toward God's word.
3. "Able to teach others also".
 - a) Gr. *hikanos*, "sufficient in ability", "enough", see a Bible concordance for its many passages.
 - b) A teacher must have a sufficient ability to accurately instruct others in the word of God. According to 2 Timothy 2:15, a teacher must handle the word of God "accurately" ("rightly") through proper study and interpretation of the scriptures (word studies, observing the context, background studies, etc.). He or she should never "twist" the scriptures through improper interpretation (2 Pet. 3:16).

D. Teachers' Roles.

1. The three roles of a teacher grow out of the three qualifications outlined above.
2. Three roles of a teacher:
 - a) *"The things which you have heard from me"* – the teacher as a Bible student. The Bible teacher is first a Bible student. The Bible class teacher cannot teach what he or she does not know. Effective teaching demands consistent learning. A teacher who stops learning fails as a teacher.
 - b) *"Faithful men"* – the teacher as a leader. The Bible teacher is a visible and influential person. The Bible teacher has the power to mold and transform the minds, attitudes, and lives of the students. A trustworthy, reliable teacher will be a good leader.
 - c) *"Able to teach others also"* – the teacher as one who discipled others. The Bible teacher makes disciples by teaching them after baptism (Mt. 28:20). The Bible class teacher should follow the example of Jesus as he made disciples. Jesus was committed to God, he befriended his students, he role-modeled the truth, he served his students, and he always taught the truth.

E. Teachers' Concerns.

1. "Am I practicing what I teach?" (Ezra 7:10).
2. "Am I teaching with boldness?" (Acts 18:24-26; 28:30-31).
3. "Am I open to a greater understanding of God's word?" (Acts 18:26).
4. "Am I teaching error innocently?" (Acts 18:24-26; 19:1-5).
5. "Am I willing to teach in the midst of opposition?" (Acts 5:21-29; 18:9-11).
6. "Am I teaching with enthusiasm?" (Rom. 12:7; 1 Pet. 4:11).
7. "Am I teaching God's word or teaching what pleases my students?" (2 Tim. 4:3-4; Gal. 6:6-10).
8. "Am I teaching correctly now and am I learning more to teach better later?" (Heb. 5:11 – 6:3).
9. "Am I teaching what I do not know ... Am I teaching error ... Am I teaching without proper preparation ... Am I teaching something that will lead someone to hell?" (Jas. 3:1-2; 1 Tim. 1:7; Mt. 15:14).

** This lesson has focused on the need and place of a Bible teacher in God's plan for the organization of the local church. For those interested in becoming better Bible teachers there are several inexpensive "how to" books on teacher training written by brethren. In addition to reading the Bible (the best teacher-training manual available), you may want to read the following good books: *Teaching: The Heart of the Matter* by John A. Smith; *Stairway to Teaching* by Bobbie Miller; *Success at Bible Teaching* by Sam Binkley and Martin Broadwell; *A Generation*

That Knows Not God by Bob and Sandra Waldron; *Effective Study and Teaching of God's Word* by Glen Barnhart; and, *At the Feet of the Master Teacher* by Daniel H. King, Sr.

III. CONCLUSION.

- A. More Trustworthy Teachers Are Needed in the Local Church Who Will Say, "I Have a Responsibility to My Lord, I Have a Responsibility to My Congregation, I Have a Responsibility to My Bible Class."
- B. More Encouragement from the Students is Needed for the Teachers in the Local Church (Gal. 6:6).

Lesson Twenty-Two Discussion

1. What three things does God use to "draw" mankind to Himself (Jn. 6:44-45)?
2. In order to "make disciples", there must be "_____ (them)" and "_____ (them)" (Mt. 28:19-20).
3. What is one mission of the local church? List the ways that some local churches have lost sight of this mission.
4. What is the teaching situation like in many local churches and what can be done to correct it?
5. A poor teaching organization in the local church may lead to what two problems (Judg. 2:10; Hos. 4:6)?
6. Who is a teacher? What scriptures show that God wants teachers in the local church?
7. What three qualifications of a teacher are given by Paul in 2 Timothy 2:2?
8. What three roles does a teacher have? How can a teacher be faithful and unfaithful in each of these roles?

9. What three things did Ezra set his heart to do (Ezra 7:10)?

10. List the positive qualities of Apollos as a teacher (Acts 18:24-28).

11. Both Peter and Paul were willing to teach in the midst of _____.

12. What admonition is given to teachers in Romans 12:7 and 1 Peter 4:11?

13. What temptation do teachers face according to 2 Timothy 4:3-4?

14. According to Hebrews 5:11 – 6:3, what does God expect of all Christians?

15. What warning does James give to teachers in James 3:1-2? Why this warning?