

GOOD TEACHERS

I believe it would be impossible to place too much emphasis upon proper teaching of God's word. The importance of teaching is emphasized by Christ when He said, *"No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him: and I will raise him up at the last day. It is written in the prophets, And they shall be all taught of God. Every man therefore that hath heard, and hath learned of the Father, cometh unto me"* (John 6:44,45). Jesus clearly shows that the Father "draws" men as they are taught and hear and learn of the Father. This is the only way men can come to Christ. However, in order for this teaching, hearing and learning to take place there must be good teachers. What does it take to be a good teacher?

Good teachers will teach the truth. We need to follow the example of Ezekiel of old as he said, *"Thus saith the Lord God"* (Ezekiel 5:5). Time and again in his writing he says he is speaking that which the Lord spoke unto him. Paul told Timothy to *"preach the word"* (2 Timothy 4:2). The teaching of personal opinions or simply those things the people wish to hear is not good teaching. Paul told the Ephesian elders he *"...kept back nothing that was profitable unto you"* (Acts 20:20) and that he had *"not shunned to declare unto you all the counsel of God"* (Acts 20:27). One who refuses to teach all the truth, whatever the reason may be, is not a good teacher.

The apostle Paul told the young evangelist Timothy *"...the things that thou hast heard of me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also"* (2 Timothy 2:2). Note, he said these things should be committed to "faithful" men. No one can be effective in teaching others if he is not going to demonstrate faithfulness in his own life. He told this same Timothy to *"be thou an example of the believers, in word, in conversation, in charity, in spirit, in faith, in purity"* (1 Timothy 4:12). Those who would be good teachers need to talk and act in such a way as to reflect the word they are seeking to teach. I have known those who had a great deal of knowledge of God's word and could verbally present the word in an excellent way, however their effectiveness as teachers was destroyed by unfaithfulness in their own lives. If your speech, manner of dress or service to the Lord is not in harmony with God's word you cannot be a good teacher.

Paul also said these men would be "able" to teach others. To have the ability to teach demands a knowledge of the word. One cannot teach that which he does not know. To gain this knowledge one must be willing to make the sacrifice of time and effort necessary to study and learn the word of God. Many will acknowledge the truth of what I am saying but they will not devote the time or energy necessary to gain a knowledge of the Bible. Some will not even put forth the effort to attend the regular periods of Bible study available to them. These are neither "faithful" or "able."

Every Christian should have a desire to teach others. Paul expressed the attitude every Christian should have toward teaching others when he said to the Romans, *"So, as much as in me is, I am ready to preach the gospel to you that are at Rome also"* (Romans 1:15). Yes, we need good teachers but let us realize that, as Christians, being a good teacher is just another way of saying that I am faithfully serving the Lord for I cannot faithfully serve Him if I do not seek to teach others. In doing so, as Paul told Timothy, we *"shalt both save thyself, and them that hear thee"* (1 Tim. 4:16).

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