

30. Learning to Teach One Another

In our last topic, we saw that one of the ways that we show the love of Christ is by learning to submit to one another. We saw that spiritual leaders submit to the people they are leading by providing much spiritual food to help others grow, by helping others become qualified for spiritual leadership and by taking leadership with an attitude of willingness that provides a godly example to follow. We saw that younger Christians submit by learning to become submissive to one another and learning to develop an attitude of humility.

Today, we will be focusing on another way that we show the love of Christ as we learn to teach one another. Colossians 3:16-17 says, “Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom, teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord. And whatever you do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through Him.” In these verses, we see that as Christians we are to be teaching and admonishing one another. Since we have already had a topic on admonishing one another, the focus of this topic will be teaching one another.

We see that the basis for teaching one another is letting the Word of Christ dwell in us richly. The Word of Christ is the teaching of the New Testament so we see that we are to have the things that Christ taught dwelling in our hearts if we are going to be effective in teaching one another. This is why it is important to begin teaching the Word to our physical and spiritual children from the time of their physical birth or for spiritual children from their spiritual birth.

However, our goal is not just to teach them. Instead, these verses show us that we are to teach them so that they can teach others. Paul summarized this so well in 2 Timothy 2:2 where we read, “And the things that you have heard from me among many witnesses, commit these to faithful men who will be able to teach others also.” In this verse, we see that there are four spiritual generations: Paul, Timothy, faithful men, others also. We will be most effective in our teaching if we continually keep that third and fourth generation in our thoughts. That will greatly affect the way that we teach our Timothys (physical and spiritual children).

In order to teach people so that they can teach others, we must help them learn to let the Word of Christ dwell in us and in them richly. The word “dwell” means *to let the Word influence us for good*. Romans 12:2 says, “And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God.” Here, we see that our lives will be transformed as we learn to think Biblically instead of thinking the way that the world thinks. This involves hearing (Romans 10:17), reading (Revelation 1:3), studying (2 Timothy 2:15), memorizing (Psalm 119:11) and meditating (Psalm 1:1-3) on the Word of God as a pattern of life.

In this verse, we see that one of the ways that we teach one another is through music. Many times, it is much easier to remember something if we can sing it. Many verses have been put to music and we help our physical and spiritual children learn these verses as we sing them together. However, we will also see that there are many other ways that we are to teach one another as

Christians.

In 1 Corinthians 14:21-40, we see some of the ways that the early church taught one another when they gathered together as a whole church. (By the way, this is the only detailed description of a service of a New Testament church in the entire New Testament.) A study of this passage also helps us to realize the answer to a very important question. I often ask churches the question, “When the whole church gathers together to worship the Lord, who is the audience and who are the participants according to 1 Corinthians 14:21-40?”

The way that you answer that question will determine why you do what you do in the services when the whole church comes together. If a few people are the participants and the rest are the spectators, you will have one purpose for your church services. In contrast, if God is the audience and we are the participants, we will have a different purpose for our services. In the services in the synagogues in the New Testament times, there would be seven to nine people who would read various passages from the Old Testament. Luke 4:16 speaks of Christ and says, “So He came to Nazareth, where He had been brought up. And as His custom was, He went into the synagogue on the Sabbath day, and stood up to read.” We see in this verse that Christ was one of the participants that regularly read the Scriptures during the services in the synagogue at Nazareth.

A careful study of 1 Corinthians 14:21-40 shows that the early church adopted a similar pattern in the services of the church. 1 Corinthians 14:24 tells what will happen if unbelievers come to a church service and several people read or explained different passages of Scripture. That verse says, “But if all prophesy, and an unbeliever or an uninformed person comes in, he is convinced by all, he is convicted by all.” To prophesy mean to read what is written in the Word of God. 1 Peter 4:11 says, “If anyone speaks, let him speak as the oracles of God. If anyone ministers, let him do it as with the ability which God supplies, that in all things God may be glorified through Jesus Christ, to whom belong the glory and the dominion forever and ever. Amen.” Here, we see that when we speak, we are to speak the Word of God and not our own opinions.

If each person that reads or speaks shares the Word of God, glory will be brought to God because Isaiah 55:8-9 says, “‘For My thoughts are not your thoughts, nor are your ways My ways,’ says the Lord. ‘For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are My ways higher than your ways, and My thoughts than your thoughts.’” God also promises in Isaiah 55:11, “So shall My word be that goes forth from My mouth; it shall not return to Me void, But it shall accomplish what I please, and it shall prosper in the thing for which I sent it.” Then, Hebrews 4:12 tells us, “For the Word of God is living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.” As we teach one another by reading and explaining the Word of God to one another, God will accomplish His purpose and we will teach one another through the Word of God.

1 Corinthians 14:26 says, “How is it then, brethren? Whenever you come together, each of you has a psalm, has a teaching, has a tongue, has a revelation, has an interpretation. Let all things be done for edification.” Here, we see that the early church focused on various types of participation but that each one of the men got involved and participated. Some would just read the Word of

God while others would explain it. The next several verses talk about the way that those who explained the Word of God were to explain it.

1 Corinthians 14:27-28 says, “If anyone speaks in a tongue, let there be two or at the most three, each in turn, and let one interpret. But if there is no interpreter, let him keep silent in church, and let him speak to himself and to God.” Since Corinth was a center of the shipping trade, many boats with people of different countries and languages came to Corinth. As a result, God said that if a person spoke the Word of God in another language that there must be an interpreter or else that person was to keep quiet.

1 Corinthians 14:29-31 says, “Let two or three prophets speak, and let the others judge. But if anything is revealed to another who sits by, let the first keep silent. For you can all prophesy one by one, that all may learn and all may be encouraged.” Here, we see that it was normal to have two or three people speak. It was also normal for someone else to participate and explain a verse when one person did not know how to explain it. We see again that it was common for all to participate by sharing the Scriptures. We also see that this participation had two results: all learned and all were encouraged. The one who learns the most in a sermon is the one that speaks because he has spent much time preparing and learns during the week as he has prepared to speak. However, at the same time, each person is encouraged as the Word of God is explained. These are all forms of teaching one another.

1 Corinthians 14:32-33 says, “And the spirits of the prophets are subject to the prophets. For God is not the author of confusion but of peace, as in all the churches of the saints.” This shows us that each person was to prepare to speak so that the things that were shared would be clear and would build up others. That preparation included both much prayer and study. 1 Corinthians 2:9-11 says, “But as it is written: ‘Eye has not seen, nor ear heard, nor have entered into the heart of man the things which God has prepared for those who love Him.’ But God has revealed them to us through His Spirit. For the Spirit searches all things, yes, the deep things of God. For what man knows the things of a man except the spirit of the man which is in him? Even so no one knows the things of God except the Spirit of God.” As men prayed as they prepared, the Holy Spirit revealed to them how to make the Word of God clear so that all would be built up.

In 1 Corinthians 14:34-35, we read, “Let your women keep silent in the churches, for they are not permitted to speak; but they are to be submissive, as the law also says. And if they want to learn something, let them ask their own husbands at home; for it is shameful for women to speak in church.” God commands men to learn to take the spiritual leadership of their families. In Ephesians 5:25-27, we read, “Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself for her, that He might sanctify and cleanse her with the washing of water by the word, that He might present her to Himself a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing, but that she should be holy and without blemish.” This passage shows that one of the ways wives can help their husbands learn to take the spiritual leadership and teach their families is for the wives to ask questions at home so that the husbands will learn to explain the Word of God clearly to their families.

Then, in 1 Corinthians 14:36-37, we read, “Or did the Word of God come originally from you? Or was it you only that it reached? If anyone thinks himself to be a prophet or spiritual, let him acknowledge that the things which I write to you are the commandments of the Lord.” Here, we see that God says that the things in this chapter are not just the suggestions of God. They are the commandments of God. God wants every man to learn how to become the spiritual leader of his family and also grow and develop so that he can learn to teach the Word of God to others also.

However, this teaching is to occur in more than just the church services. In Acts 18:26, we read, “So he began to speak boldly in the synagogue. When Aquila and Priscilla heard him, they took him aside and explained to him the way of God more accurately.” Aquila and Priscilla realized that Apollos knew nothing of the death and resurrection of Christ even though he was very familiar with the Old Testament. As a result, they took him to their home and personally taught him about Christ. We see the results in Acts 18:27 and 28 where we read, “And when he desired to cross to Achaia, the brethren wrote, exhorting the disciples to receive him; and when he arrived, he greatly helped those who had believed through grace; for he vigorously refuted the Jews publicly, showing from the Scriptures that Jesus is the Christ.” We see that with some personal help in the home of Aquila and Priscilla, Apollos became a powerful teacher for Christ. We are also to help others learn to teach the Word of God in our homes and theirs.

Notice the following phrases that are used in the passage we mentioned earlier. We see that 1 Corinthians 14:24 says, “But if all prophesy, and an unbeliever or an uninformed person comes in, he is convinced by all, he is convicted by all.” 1 Corinthians 14:26 says, “How is it then, brethren? Whenever you come together, each of you has a psalm, has a teaching... 1 Corinthians 14:29 says, “Let two or three prophets speak, and let the others judge.” 1 Corinthians 14:31 says, “For you can all prophesy one by one, that all may learn and all may be encouraged.” Finally, 1 Corinthians 14:40 concludes by saying, “Let all things be done decently and in order.” These verses show that we are to help each person learn to teach and explain the Word of God so that they can help others.

Peter adds another very important instruction, when he says, in 1 Peter 3:15, “But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts, and always be ready to give a defense to everyone who asks you a reason for the hope that is in you, with meekness and fear.” Our goal should be to help every Christian learn to explain the Word of God to those who ask questions. May the Lord richly bless you as you help your physical and spiritual children learn to teach the Word of God to others.