

Teachers

Turn to 1 Corinthians 12

What is it to be a teacher according to the Bible?

1 Corinthians 12:27 says

27 Now you are the body of Christ and individually members of it.

28 And God has appointed in the church first apostles, second prophets, third teachers, then miracles, then gifts of healing, helping, administrating, and various kinds of tongues.

In order to understand what it is to be a teacher, we need to understand the appointment, the callings of God. Note that God is the one calling and appointing the apostles, prophets and teachers. Men are not involved in the initiation of the appointments of God. This is God's choice, God's prerogative. You cannot train for or buy such an appointment.

It should then be obvious that the teachers mentioned here has NOTHING to do with what we have been trained to believe about teachers or teaching. What the world promotes in schools, religious organizations and training programs is called rhetoric. Rhetoric originated in Greece in the 5th century BC by a group known as the Sophists. The Sophists were expert in oration and debate; they are the ones that developed the formula for a teaching or a sermon.

Rhetoric is all about communication methods, regardless of the substance, the content of what is communicated. It is believed, especially in political circles, that you can convince people of almost anything if you communicate it just right.

Rhetoric was incorporated into the early church along with other Greek and Roman paganism, ideals and practices. It is the Sophists who introduced the practice of paying the pastors and teachers. Rhetoric has NOTHING to do with the teachers mentioned here in 1 Corinthians 12. It should also be obvious that you cannot be trained to be a teacher.

1 Corinthians 1:26 says:

26 For consider your calling, brothers: not many of you were wise according to worldly standards, not many were powerful, not many were of noble birth.

27 But God chose what is foolish in the world to shame the wise; God chose what is weak in the world to shame the strong;

28 God chose what is low and despised in the world, even things that are not, to bring to nothing things that are,

29 so that no human being might boast in the presence of God.

There were not many who were called by God as scholars; not many are trained in rhetoric. Training, or a lack of training in the wisdom of the world will not affect whether you are called or not.

12:31a says

31 But earnestly desire the higher (better, best, greatest) gifts (God to man).

Turn to Matthew 20

Do you think the appointment or calling of an apostle, prophet, or teacher is out of your league? Do you think that there is no way that you could be called as one of these? Why then would verse 31a instruct us to earnestly desire the higher gifts? Since the appointment of God is HIS BUSINESS, what gives you the right to think that you are disqualified?

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During my life I have observed that people think that if they receive the best gift, that gift will make them greater and better than anyone else. These titles of apostle and prophet are twisted in the religious realm to convey authority and rulership upon a religious leader. The authority to rule as a lord or a master is just not conveyed by these appointments or callings of God.

How does one earnestly desire? Is this just a simple, passive mental activity or what? Let's see what it means.

Matthew 20:25

25 But Jesus called them (*his apostles*) to him and said, "You know that the rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them, and their great ones exercise authority over them.

26 It shall not be so among you. But whoever would (*wills, desires to*) be great among you must be your servant,

27 and whoever would (*wills, desires to*) be first among you must be your slave,

28 even as the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many."

Which comes first, the greatness or the service? The service of course! If someone earnestly desires to be first, to be the greatest the best, then they need to start serving, not ruling.

The messiah, the Son of Man is the example of service. How did he serve? He served as he walked by the spirit. He was the slave of all as he sold out completely to his heavenly Father.

Similarly, these best gifts, the appointments of apostle, prophet and teacher are callings and appointments to provide the best service, NOT the highest position of authority or rulership. The earnest desire for the best, the higher, the first appointments expresses itself in SERVICE. This service is performed by walking by the spirit.

What if no one wants you to serve? What if you are criticized for serving? What if your service is rejected? You are in very good company! They did the same to Jesus Christ and the apostles.

Does a servant or a slave get to do their own will? NO! Whose will do they do? Their lord's will!
Turn to Ephesians 4

Think of the last time you received a gift of some sort. That gift provided some kind of service or benefit to you, the receiver – otherwise its a worthless gift. Those with the calling of an apostle, prophet or teacher are to be a gift which provides beneficial service to the body of Christ.

Ephesians 4:7

7 But grace was given to each one of us according to the measure of Christ's gift.

8 Therefore it says,

"When he ascended on high he led a host of captives,
and he gave gifts to men."

11 And he gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the shepherds and teachers,

12 to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ,

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God appoints the individuals and Jesus gives them as gifts to the Church. Who is to do the work of ministry? The saints! Who is to equip the saints for this work? Those appointed by God and given as gifts to the body of Christ.

What work are the appointed ones and the saints to do? What they desire, their own will? NO. The work that the religious organizations and the religious leaders order them to do? NO!

Ephesians 2:10 says that

...WE are HIS (God's) workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works which GOD prepared (ordained, appointed) beforehand, that we should walk in them.”

We are to do the works that GOD wills for us to do, whatever he reveals to us as we walk by the spirit.

Turn to Exodus 3

Who does the appointing? God! Who gives such an individual to the body of Christ as a gift? Jesus Christ!

Where are the organizations, the religious hierarchy, the schools, training programs for such appointments? They are not mentioned in the scriptures. The IDEA that a person must go to a particular school, pay lots of money or be appointed by some man in order to receive an appointment from God shuts down many who are genuinely appointed by God. This IDEA, this ERROR acts as a filter that influences people to cast aside God's appointment, God's calling.

Sin consciousness and the IDEA, the ERROR that you have to somehow become good enough to deserve such an appointment is another such filter. Looking at the flesh, the past, and ones own opinions of ones own abilities influences people to cast aside God's appointment, God's calling.

Well, there is no justification for these religious ideas in the scriptures! God appoints the individuals, NOT MAN, NOT religious leaders, NOT religious or academic organizations! You cannot apply for such an appointment! You cannot work for one, but you can DESIRE an appointment.

In Exodus 3 is the example of such an appointment by God, and how the man almost cast aside the appointment because he had a low opinion of his own capabilities.

Exodus 3:1

1 Now Moses was keeping the flock of his father-in-law, Jethro, the priest of Midian, and he led his flock to the west side of the wilderness and came to Horeb, the mountain of God.

2 And the angel of the LORD appeared to him in a flame of fire out of the midst of a bush. He looked, and behold, the bush was burning, yet it was not consumed.

Exodus 3:3

3 And Moses said, “I will turn aside to see this great sight, why the bush is not burned.”

4 When the LORD saw that he turned aside to see, God called to him out of the bush, “Moses, Moses!” And he said, “Here I am.”

5 Then he said, “Do not come near; take your sandals off your feet, for the place on which you are standing is holy ground.”

6 And he said, “I am the God of your father, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob.” And Moses hid his face, for he was afraid to look at God.

7 Then the LORD said, “I have surely seen the affliction of my people who are in Egypt and have heard their cry because of their taskmasters. I know their sufferings,

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Exodus 3:8

8 and I have come down to deliver them out of the hand of the Egyptians and to bring them up out of that land to a good and broad land, a land flowing with milk and honey, to the place of the Canaanites, the Hittites, the Amorites, the Perizzites, the Hivites, and the Jebusites.

9 And now, behold, the cry of the people of Israel has come to me, and I have also seen the oppression with which the Egyptians oppress them.

Oh, happy day! God has come down to deliver the children of Israel! He has heard their cry and seen their oppression. Wonderful!

The angel continues by calling and appointing Moses. Note that there are no other people around. This is a private conversation. This is an appointment, a calling of God and it is done in private!

Exodus 3:10

10 Come, I will send you to Pharaoh (*the Egyptian king*) that you may bring my people, the children of Israel, out of Egypt.”

11 But Moses said to God, “Who am I that I should go to Pharaoh and bring the children of Israel out of Egypt?”

12 He said, “But I will be with you, and this shall be the sign for you, that I have sent you: when you have brought the people out of Egypt, you shall serve God on this mountain.”

Wait a minute, I thought God was going to do the delivering! Now he says he is sending Moses, who has been a shepherd for 40 years. Moses responds with his personal opinion; “Who am I? I'm just a shepherd!”

Moses is putting more importance on his flesh and his occupation than on the words which God is speaking to Moses. This is how the IDEAS of the world work, they influence people to ignore and cast aside God's word. Feelings of failure, sin consciousness, a lack of self worth, religious doctrines and the opinions of the neighbors are much more important than what God reveals. We have been well trained by the world and religion to ignore the voice of God and His words to us. So, His words and His appointments are cast aside.

Sometimes it is said, “...if I had known that it was God speaking to me, I would have responded.” That may be so, but in this record, Moses knows exactly who is speaking to him. In spite of this he is hanging on to the excuses that are so human. Moses thinks that he is not good enough for this appointment.

Exodus 4:10

10 But Moses said to the LORD, “Oh, my Lord, I am not eloquent, either in the past or since you have spoken to your servant, but I am slow of speech and of tongue.”

Moses is still looking at his flesh and offers up another excuse. He still is not good enough.

Moses is being sent to Pharaoh in Egypt. That means that Moses will have to translate what God is saying into the Egyptian language. Moses knows well enough that it is his responsibility as a prophet to express what God reveals to him. He just does not feel up to the task.

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Exodus 4:11

11 Then the LORD said to him, “Who has made man’s mouth? Who makes him mute, or deaf, or seeing, or blind? Is it not I, the LORD?”

12 Now therefore go, and I will be with your mouth and teach you what you shall speak.”

God will make sure that Moses receives detailed instructions on what he is to speak. Not only will God reveal to Moses what to speak, but He will TEACH, He will INSTRUCT him what he shall speak.

Exodus 4:13

13 But he said, “Oh, my Lord, please send someone else.”

Moses is not convinced. He is overwhelmed with this appointment. Speaking directly with God makes no difference. The method of communication is not enough to help him change his mind.

It is the same today. People will hang on to their error, sin consciousness and excuses whether the call of God is communicated in a whisper or an audible yell. The manner in which revelation is given to you does NOT determine whether you believe the revelation or not. You must not attribute your response to revelation based upon the manner in which it is communicated to you. Our response (positive or negative) is not God's fault.

Exodus 4:14

14 Then the anger of the LORD was kindled against Moses and he said, “Is there not Aaron, your brother, the Levite? I know that he can speak well. Behold, he is coming out to meet you, and when he sees you, he will be glad in his heart.

15 You shall speak to him and put the words in his mouth, and I will be with your mouth and with his mouth and will teach you both what to do.

16 He shall speak for you to the people, and he shall be your mouth, and you shall be as God to him.

It was not the manner of revelation that convinced the reluctant Moses to accept the appointment of God. God had to handle Moses' objections, fear and unbelief. Look how negative Moses was throughout this entire conversation with the angel. He did not say or confess one positive thing. Not once did the angel reprove him for being negative or unbelieving. In spite of his negative attitude and excuses, Moses was called by God to deliver the children of Israel.

Turn to 2 Corinthians 5

In all fairness, Moses is one of a handful of people who had the mental strength to be able to have such a conversation with an angel, the agent of God. Moses was not afraid to be honest with God and to open his heart to him. God knows everything about you; what you think before you think it, what you speak before you speak it. How does a human conduct a conversation with God? I don't know how Moses did it, but he did. Moses was honest with God and received some honest answers. He was a wonderful, mighty man of God.

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So, we have handled several popular excuses that have been drilled into us by the world to influence us to cast aside and ignore the calling of God.

- The appointments and callings of God are not initiated or conveyed by religious organizations, training programs or religious leaders. His calling is not dependent upon the action of some other human being.
- You cannot be trained for such callings and appointments of God.
- The appointments and callings of God are not influenced positively or negatively based upon your attitude, feelings, or opinion of yourself. No one ever deserves such a call and no one will ever be good enough to receive such an appointment.
- Did Moses need diplomatic recognition from Pharaoh to go to Egypt? Did Aaron need official recognition from the children of Israel to appear before Pharaoh and deliver messages from Moses to him? NO! Moses and Aaron moved as God told them to move. That was all the permission they needed. Anyone called or appointed by God has all the permission they need to start serving as directed by God.
- Your response to the callings and appointments of God is not determined by the manner in which the revelation is given to you.

2 Corinthians 5:16

16 From now on, therefore, we regard no one according to the flesh (*including ourselves*). Even though we once regarded Christ according to the flesh, we regard him thus (*according to the flesh*) no longer.

17 Therefore, if anyone is in Christ (*remember Ephesians 2:10?*), he is a new creation. The old has passed away; behold, the new has come.

Get to know your newly created spiritual self, created IN Christ Jesus. We have a new identity, a spiritual identity which has nothing to do with the flesh. We are identified with Christ. We are members in particular of His body. It is not our flesh that receives the appointment and calling of God it is the newly created spiritual self.

Romans 6:6 says that

“We know that our old self (*the old self of the flesh, our old identity*) was crucified with him in order that the body of sin might be brought to nothing, so that we would no longer be enslaved to sin.”

Our former identity of the flesh, its sins, shortcomings and excuses were all crucified with Christ. That old identity of the flesh is nailed to the cross! Leave it there! From now on, walk in newness of life by walking by the spirit. Take on that new spiritual identity which is identified with Christ. That new spiritual identity is completely sufficient, completely able to take on an appointment and calling of God.

Turn to 1 Corinthians 1

Now, what is preaching and what is teaching; what is the difference? Who do we preach to and who do we teach?

When I was being trained in rhetoric by a religious organization, one thing that was emphasized to me

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on several occasions is that I was NOT to PREACH. “No one likes to be preached to...” I was told. As you will discover, this is a most disgusting and devilish proverb.

1 Corinthians 1:17

17 For Christ did not send me to baptize but to preach the gospel, and not with words of eloquent wisdom (*rhetoric*), lest the cross of Christ be emptied of its power.

Paul was not sent to draw attention to himself and his speaking abilities. It is not Paul who is so wonderful and powerful, it is Christ and His accomplishments!

1 Corinthians 1:18

18 For the word of the cross is folly to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God.

Preaching is an absolute necessity, regardless whether the audience likes it or not! We are NOT marketing a religious corporate organization that needs to increase its influence and income by attracting more and more members! We are speaking and expressing words which God has us speak, we are working works which God appointed for us to work!

Preaching is an announcement; you can take it or leave it. You can believe it or not.

1 Corinthians 1:19

19 For it is written,

“I will destroy the wisdom of the wise,
and the discernment of the discerning (*in the things of the world*) I will thwart.”

20 Where is the one who is wise? Where is the scribe? Where is the debater of this age? Has not God made foolish the wisdom of the world?

21 For since, in the wisdom of God, the world did not know God through wisdom, it pleased God through the folly of what we preach to save those who believe. (*it is God who does the saving*)

22 For Jews demand signs and Greeks seek wisdom,

23 but we preach Christ crucified, a stumbling block to Jews and folly to Gentiles,

24 but to those who are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God. **25** For the foolishness of God is wiser than men, and the weakness of God is stronger than men.

26 For consider your calling, brothers (*and sisters*): not many of you were wise according to worldly standards, not many were powerful, not many were of noble birth.

27 But God chose what is foolish in the world to shame the wise; God chose what is weak in the world to shame the strong;

28 God chose what is low and despised in the world, even things that are not, to bring to nothing things that are,

29 so that no human being might boast in the presence of God.

30 And because of him you are in Christ Jesus (*it is because of God we have a continuous, unbroken fellowship with Christ Jesus; it is not because of our own efforts*), who became to us wisdom from God, righteousness and sanctification and redemption,

31 so that, as it is written, “Let the one who boasts, boast in the Lord.”

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1 Corinthians 2:1

1 And I, when I came to you, brothers, did not come proclaiming to you the testimony of God with lofty speech or wisdom. (*Rhetoric*)

2 For I decided to know nothing among you except Jesus Christ and him crucified. (*How is this communicated? By Preaching!*)

3 And I was with you in weakness and in fear and much trembling,

4 and my speech and my message were not in plausible words of wisdom (*rhetoric again*), but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power, (*he was working, serving as he walked by the spirit*)

5 that your faith might not rest in the wisdom of men but in the power of God.

6 Yet among the (*spiritually*) mature we do impart wisdom, although it is not a wisdom of this age or of the rulers of this age, who are doomed to pass away.

7 But we impart a secret and hidden wisdom of God, which God decreed before the ages **for our glory**. **8** None of the rulers of this age understood this, for if they had, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory.

9 But, as it is written,

“What no eye has seen, nor ear heard,
nor the heart of man imagined,
what God has prepared for those who love him”—

10 these things God has revealed to us through the Spirit. For the Spirit searches everything, even the depths of God.

11 For who knows a person’s thoughts except the spirit of that person, which is in him? So also no one comprehends the thoughts of God except the Spirit of God.

12 Now we have received not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit who is from God, that we might understand the things freely given us by God.

If you understand any of the spiritual realities of life – if you understand a teaching delivered by one who is appointed as a teacher in the body of Christ, it is because of the spirit of God functioning in you. Teaching is instruction. It can be very detailed instruction or short and simple instruction.

1 Corinthians 2:13

13 And we impart this in words not taught by human wisdom but taught by the Spirit, interpreting spiritual truths to those who are spiritual.

The teacher is to teach as he or she is directed, guided and taught by God.

14 The natural person (*the unsaved man or woman who does not have holy spirit in them, who are not born from above*) does not accept the things of the Spirit of God, for they are folly to him, and he is not able to understand them because they are spiritually discerned. (*this includes the old self of the flesh*)

15 The spiritual person judges (*discerns*) all things, but is himself to be judged (*discerned*) by no one.

16 “For who has understood the mind of the Lord so as to instruct him?” **But we have the mind of Christ.**

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What is preaching? It is an announcement, a heralding forth.

Generally, who do we preach to?

The “natural” man or woman and those who are young believers, who are not yet spiritually mature.

What is teaching? It is instruction. As we will discover in the next teaching, it is not always spiritual instruction.

Generally, who do we teach?

Those believers who are more spiritually mature.