

## *Teachers Part 2*

Turn to 1 Corinthians 3

In part one of this series we examined what is it to be a teacher according to the Bible. In 1 Corinthians 12:28 we learn that it is God who appoints or calls the apostles, prophets and teachers. It is God who calls the visionaries in the body of Christ. In Ephesians 4:11 we learn that it is Christ who gives those appointed as visionaries to the body of Christ as gifts of God's grace. As a gift, these visionaries are to provide services to the body of Christ. These services have the impact the benefit of equipping the individual saints for the work of ministry.

Note that ALL VISIONARIES engage in teaching at one time or another.

So all the visionaries are to serve the believers. The visionaries do not exist to be served. As we learned in Ephesians 2:10, we all are created by God, in Christ Jesus for good works which God has ordained or appointed for us to do. We are all to do the works which HE directs us to do. In other words, we are to do the works of God.

As visionaries, our work DOES NOT consist of promoting our own appointment or calling of God. Our work DOES NOT consist of attempting to obtain a larger and larger audience.

1 Corinthians 2:16b (last verse of that chapter)

...But we have the mind of Christ.

1 Corinthians 3:1

**1** But I, brothers (*and sisters*), could not address you as spiritual people, but as people of the flesh, as infants in Christ.

In spite of having the mind of Christ, the believers in Corinth had not matured much. They remained as people of the flesh, thinking the things of the flesh and conducting themselves as Gentiles, not as believers. When it came to teaching, the apostle Paul knew his audience and expressed himself accordingly.

1 Corinthians 3:2

**2** I fed you with (*spiritual*) milk, not (*spiritual*) solid food, for you were not ready for it. And even now you are not yet ready,

Paul was inspired to feed them spiritual milk, not spiritual meat. Now he explains to the believers how their spiritual immaturity is affecting their behavior.

1 Corinthians 3:3

**3** for you are still of the flesh. For while there is jealousy and strife among you, are you not of the flesh and behaving only in a human way?

**4** For when one says, "I follow Paul," and another, "I follow Apollos," are you not being merely human?

**5** What then is Apollos? What is Paul? Servants (*to the body of Christ*) through whom you believed, as the Lord assigned to each.

**6** I planted, Apollos watered, but God gave the growth.

**7** So neither he who plants nor he who waters is anything, but only God who gives the growth.

**8** He who plants and he who waters are one, and each will receive his wages according to his labor.

**9** For we are God's fellow workers. You are God's field, God's building.

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Paul set the example. We do not allow people to regard the visionaries as “rock stars” or as anyone extra special. This kind of behavior is to be confronted and stopped. Believers don't need a “star” visionary; they need strengthening and instruction so that they can mature and begin functioning themselves!

There is no special spiritual significance to WHO is appointed or called by God. As the visionaries perform their work as assigned by God, then God gives the increase. God is the significant one, not the visionary. God gives the increase in the believers. We work among those that God raises up as God directs. Then God gives the increase.

How are the visionaries to be regarded? The answer is in 1 Corinthians 4:1

**1** This is how one should regard us, as servants of Christ and stewards of the mysteries of God.

Visionaries are servants of Christ and stewards of the mysteries of God PERIOD!

The wages mentioned here are not physical wages, they are the eternal rewards of the future. An appointment or calling of God is not an employment opportunity. If you go back and examine the callings of God given to different individuals, there is no mention of any employment terms or employee benefits. Paul left us an example for us to follow. 2 Thessalonians chapter 3 is one place where he records this example.

To repeat, the spiritual significance, the emphasis of our work is NOT ourselves or our particular calling. It is NOT the number of believers among whom we work. The significance, the emphasis of our work is God who gives the increase. God is the ONLY source of life, God is the ONLY source of the increase.

Turn to Deuteronomy 5.

In part 1, teaching is basically defined as giving instruction. In this context it is spiritually inspired instruction – teaching what God wants taught to the audience which He supplies. Now it would be very difficult to teach or give instruction on a subject which the teacher does not know. A teacher must be a master of the information that is to be taught. A teacher must be a good learner, a good student.

Now questions may arise - “Why have teachers, why go to all this trouble? Why doesn't God himself speak to us and teach us himself?”

The answer is this – He has done this before. The event is recorded in Deuteronomy 5.

Deuteronomy 5:1

**1** And Moses summoned all Israel and said to them, “Hear, O Israel, the statutes and the rules that I speak in your hearing today, and you shall learn them and be careful to do them.

**2** The LORD our God made a covenant with us in Horeb.

**3** Not with our fathers did the LORD make this covenant, but with us, who are all of us here alive today.

**4** The LORD spoke with you face to face at the mountain, out of the midst of the fire,

**5** while I stood between the LORD and you at that time, to declare to you the word of the LORD.

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For you were afraid because of the fire, and you did not go up into the mountain. He said:

Deuteronomy 5:6

**6** “I am the LORD your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery.

**7** “You shall have no other gods before me.

So, God spoke directly with the believers and gave them the instruction of what we call the “ten commandments”. Verse 22 continues and records the response of the believers.

Deuteronomy 5:22

**22** “These words the LORD spoke to all your assembly at the mountain out of the midst of the fire, the cloud, and the thick darkness, with a loud voice; and he added no more. And he wrote them on two tablets of stone and gave them to me.

**23** And as soon as you heard the voice out of the midst of the darkness, while the mountain was burning with fire, you came near to me, all the heads of your tribes, and your elders.

**24** And you said, ‘Behold, the LORD our God has shown us his glory and greatness, and we have heard his voice out of the midst of the fire. This day we have seen God speak with man, and man still live.

**25** Now therefore why should we die? For this great fire will consume us. If we hear the voice of the LORD our God any more, we shall die.

**26** For who is there of all flesh, that has heard the voice of the living God speaking out of the midst of fire as we have, and has still lived?

**27** Go near and hear all that the LORD our God will say and speak to us all that the LORD our God will speak to you, and we will hear and do it.’

Hebrews 12:18 refers to this event:

**18** For you have not come to what may be touched, a blazing fire and darkness and gloom and a tempest

**19** and the sound of a trumpet and a voice whose words made the hearers beg that no further messages be spoken to them.

**20** For they could not endure the order that was given, “If even a beast touches the mountain, it shall be stoned.”

**21** Indeed, so terrifying was the sight that Moses said, “I tremble with fear.”

Turn back to Deuteronomy 5

God spoke to the people himself. Although they believed for a time, they did not continue believing.

Deuteronomy 5:28

**28** “And the LORD heard your words, when you spoke to me. And the LORD said to me, ‘I have heard the words of this people, which they have spoken to you. They are right in all that they have spoken.

**29** Oh that they had such a mind as this always, to fear me and to keep all my commandments, that it might go well with them and with their descendants forever!

**30** Go and say to them, “Return to your tents.”

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**31** But you, stand here by me, and I will tell you the whole commandment and the statutes and the rules that you shall teach them, that they may do them in the land that I am giving them to possess.’

**32** You shall be careful therefore to do as the LORD your God has commanded you. You shall not turn aside to the right hand or to the left.

**33** You shall walk in all the way that the LORD your God has commanded you, that you may live, and that it may go well with you, and that you may live long in the land that you shall possess.

**6:1** “Now this is the commandment, the statutes and the rules that the LORD your God commanded me to teach you, that you may do them in the land to which you are going over, to possess it,

The believers could not bear to hear the word of God directly from God. They asked for Moses to hear directly from God. Then they would hear the word of God from Moses who would TEACH them what was commanded to be taught. It has been that way ever since.

As a prophet, Moses received the word of God by revelation and spoke it to the people. He also functioned as a teacher, teaching the believers to the end that they could practically apply the commandments of God. Teaching is a very important part of the functioning of all those who are appointed and called of God, regardless of the appointment.

Since the accomplishments of Jesus Christ and the availability of being born from above, things have changed a bit. Christ is now our intermediary and we all have direct access to Christ. Remember, we have the mind of Christ, we have Christ in us! Now we need the visionaries functioning in order that we can carry out what is recorded in Ephesians 4:11

**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,

**13** until we all attain to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to mature manhood, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ,

**14** so that we may no longer be children, tossed to and fro by the waves and carried about by every wind of doctrine, by human cunning, by craftiness in deceitful schemes.

**15** Rather, speaking the truth in love, we are to grow up in every way into him who is the head, into Christ,

**16** from whom the whole body, joined and held together by every joint with which it is equipped, when each part is working properly, makes the body grow so that it builds itself up in love.

In short, we need the visionaries to help us become spiritually mature so that we can begin functioning in our own appointments and callings of God.

Turn to Exodus 35

Up until this point, we have considered teaching which consists of instruction in the revealed word of God. We think of the revealed word of God such as scripture and spiritual instruction. However, that is not all there is to it.

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Exodus 35:30

**30** Then Moses said to the people of Israel, “See, the LORD has called by name Bezalel the son of Uri, son of Hur, of the tribe of Judah;

**31** and he has filled him with the Spirit of God (*holy spirit*), with skill, with intelligence, with knowledge, and with all craftsmanship (*by way of holy spirit*),

**32** to devise artistic designs, to work in gold and silver and bronze,

**33** in cutting stones for setting, and in carving wood, for work in every skilled craft.

**34** And he has inspired him to teach, both him and Oholiab the son of Ahisamach of the tribe of Dan.

**35** He has filled them with skill to do every sort of work done by an engraver or by a designer or by an embroiderer in blue and purple and scarlet yarns and fine twined linen, or by a weaver—by any sort of workman or skilled designer.

Exodus 36:1

**1** “Bezalel and Oholiab and every craftsman in whom the LORD has put skill and intelligence to know how to do any work in the construction of the sanctuary shall work in accordance with all that the LORD has commanded.”

**2** And Moses called Bezalel and Oholiab and every craftsman in whose mind the LORD had put skill, everyone whose heart stirred him up to come to do the work.

Turn to Acts 27

By way of the holy spirit which was upon Bezalel and Oholiab, God filled these two men with practical abilities. God also inspired them to teach their skills to the other craftsmen. These inspired teachings were no less the word of God than the revealed word of God which Moses received. What they taught was practical instruction. So, there may come times in a teacher's life when an inspired teaching is given regarding practical matters and skills.

Note that just because you have holy spirit, there is no guarantee that you will be filled with practical wisdom like these men. Moses did not have the ability to teach the craftsmen. Also note that there is no special appointment or calling of God called “craftsman”, either then or now. Even so, the craftsmen had holy spirit upon them and they were able to impart inspired practical instruction.

In Acts 27, the apostle Paul was on a ship that was in the middle of a fierce storm. He preached to the sailors and passengers that they would all live through this challenge; only the ship would be lost. He was required to give the people some short practical instruction on what to do.

Acts 27:30

**30** And as the sailors were seeking to escape from the ship, and had lowered the ship's boat into the sea under pretense of laying out anchors from the bow,

**31** Paul said to the centurion and the soldiers, “Unless these men stay in the ship, you cannot be saved.”

Paul knew by revelation that the sailors needed to stay with the ship and he knew by revelation he needed to instruct the soldiers what to do.

**32** Then the soldiers cut away the ropes of the ship's boat and let it go.

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Acts 27:33

**33** As day was about to dawn, Paul urged them all to take some food, saying, "Today is the fourteenth day that you have continued in suspense and without food, having taken nothing.

**34** Therefore I urge you to take some food. For it will give you strength, for not a hair is to perish from the head of any of you."

**35** And when he had said these things, he took bread, and giving thanks to God in the presence of all he broke it and began to eat.

**36** Then they all were encouraged and ate some food themselves.

**37** (We were in all ~~276~~ 76 persons in the ship.)

**38** And when they had eaten enough, they lightened the ship, throwing out the wheat into the sea.

Again, Paul gave them very short concise practical instruction on what they needed to do in order to survive this ordeal.

Turn to Mark 4

Understand that you should not put revelation and inspired teaching into a box. All that we have read and learned so far has little to do with what we have been instructed regarding the functioning of a teacher. So far, none of the records we have read involve teachings from the written scripture!

You would think that teaching always involves enlightening the understanding of those being taught. Well, lets see if this is a valid assumption.

Mark 4:1

**1** Again he began to teach beside the sea. And a very large crowd gathered about him, so that he got into a boat and sat in it on the sea, and the whole crowd was beside the sea on the land.

Isn't this interesting! Jesus did not rent a facility, he did not pass fliers around to let everyone know he was going to teach at a particular place. He taught where he was and adapted to the conditions in which he found himself. A teacher can teach anywhere, any time that you are spiritually inspired to teach, whether it is convenient or inconvenient.

Mark 4:2

**2** And he was teaching them many things in parables (*a parable is a figure of speech which is a continued simile or a comparison by continued resemblance*), and in his teaching he said to them:

**3** "Listen! A sower went out to sow.

**4** And as he sowed, some seed fell along the path, and the birds came and devoured it.

**5** Other seed fell on rocky ground, where it did not have much soil, and immediately it sprang up, since it had no depth of soil.

**6** And when the sun rose, it was scorched, and since it had no root, it withered away.

**7** Other seed fell among thorns, and the thorns grew up and choked it, and it yielded no grain.

**8** And other seeds fell into good soil and produced grain, growing up and increasing and yielding thirtyfold and sixtyfold and a hundredfold."

**9** And he said, "He who has ears to hear, let him hear."

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Where in the scriptures was any of this written when Jesus delivered this teaching? None of it was in any of the scriptures. Yet Jesus taught as he was inspired to teach. In this case he imparted instruction in parables.

What was the impact? Why did he do this?

Mark 4:10

**10** And when he was alone, those around him with the twelve asked him about the parables.

**11** And he said to them, "To you has been given the secret of the kingdom of God, but for those outside everything is in parables,

**12** so that "they may indeed see but not perceive, and may indeed hear but not understand, lest they should turn and be forgiven." (*this is a prophecy of Isaiah which was fulfilled by the teachings in parables*)

In this record, was Jesus teaching to enlighten their understanding? NO!

A teacher teaches what God wants taught. The impact or the reason why a particular teaching is inspired is God's business. We cannot put the act of teaching into a box and limit how, when, where and where we teach!

I said earlier in part one of this series that we preach to the unsaved and those who are spiritually immature. We teach those who are spiritually maturing. I should have made the distinction that this has to do with teaching the hidden wisdom of God as 1 Corinthians 2:6 and following report. Notwithstanding that, a teacher teaches as he or she is inspired, regardless of the time, place, audience or lack of an audience.

In Luke 24, after his resurrection, Jesus accompanied two of his disciples on the road. In verse 27 it is recorded that

"And beginning with Moses and all the Prophets, he interpreted to them in all the Scriptures the things concerning himself."

Here Jesus taught just two believers the written scriptures regarding himself. He did not wait for a particular day of the week, time of day, a particular place or a certain number of people to be present. As they walked, he taught just two men.

So, regardless of the circumstances a teacher imparts inspired instruction as directed by God by way of the new spiritual self, regardless of the circumstances.

Turn to 2 Timothy 4

There have been times that I was inspired to teach, and other times that I was inspired to teach individual believers, when no one showed up at the appointed time and place. I wondered why I had been so greatly inspired? God knew that no one would be there to hear the teaching! That is when I learned that God is always there for His people. In those circumstances, He was prepared to strengthen and encourage his people, even when they did not want to take the time to hear.

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2 Timothy 4:1

**1** I charge you in the presence of God and of Christ Jesus, who is to judge the living and the dead, and by his appearing and his kingdom:

**2** preach the word; be ready in season and out of season; reprove, rebuke, and exhort, with complete patience and teaching.

This requires patiently teaching, teaching and re-teaching as the word is revealed to the visionary who is appointed to teach.

2 Timothy 4:3

**3** For the time is coming when people will not endure sound teaching, but having itching ears they will accumulate for themselves teachers to suit their own passions,

Sound teaching is inspired, revealed teaching. Teachers do not teach what the audience desires to hear, they teach what God wants them to hear. We are not in a popularity contest! The world continues to supply plenty of teachers who will provide instruction in what the audience wants to hear. The only thing that you can do with popularity is to turn it into cash. Then the world will call that one an “influential leader”. That is not the calling or appointment of God.

2 Timothy 4:4

**4** and will turn away from listening to the truth and wander off into myths.

How was the visionary Timothy supposed to respond to those who wandered off?

2 Timothy 4:5

**5** As for you, always be sober-minded, endure suffering, do the work of an evangelist, fulfill your ministry.

The visionary Timothy was to stay the course, he was to continue to function and stand. He was to fulfill his appointment and calling of God no matter what anyone else did.

Remember that the visionary is God's fellow workers, toiling away, serving among the believers who are God's field, God's building. That is who the visionary works for, serving as God desires his people to be served, teaching what HE wants taught, regardless of the impact or the response.