

### *Teachers Part 3*

Turn to 1 Corinthians 1

Part 2 of this series closed with the following statement:

“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.”

As a visionary and a teacher works, people will attempt to identify that person in terms that they already understand. They may ask “Where did you receive your training?”, “What organization do you work with?” or “What church do you attend?”. These questions become a wonderful teaching opportunity!

1 Corinthians 1:12

**12** What I mean is that each one of you says, I follow Paul, or I follow Apollos, or I follow Cephas, or I follow Christ.

**13** Is Christ divided? Was Paul crucified for you? Or were you baptized in the name of Paul?

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, lest the cross of Christ be emptied of its power.

Christ is not divided. Although people may follow this or that denomination or theology or teacher, there is no godly spiritual significance to these worldly distinctions and divisions. God paid a price for us; the price was the death of His only begotten son. Christ paid a price for us; the price was his life. We are not to become sold-out to anything else in this life; we are not to be sold-out to any organization or theology or any other man or woman. We belong to God through the accomplishments of Christ. We work in God's field, in God's building as stated in 1 Corinthians chapter 3. We are members of the body of Christ as stated in Romans 12, 1 Corinthians 12, and in Ephesians.

Turn to Ephesians 2

There may be many challenging questions and teaching opportunities, but what is the purpose, the goal, the mission of the visionaries, including the teachers?

Ephesians 2:4

**4** But God, being rich in mercy, because of the great love with which he loved us,  
**5** even when we were dead in our trespasses, made us alive together with Christ—by grace you have been saved—

**6** and raised us up with him and seated us with him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus,  
**7** so that in the coming ages he might show the immeasurable riches of his grace in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus.

**8** For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God,

**9** not a result of works, so that no one may boast.

**10** For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared

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beforehand, that we should walk in them.

In verse 10 we come to understand that all the believers are created in Christ Jesus for good works which God Himself prepared or appointed for us beforehand. We are to walk in these works; these works are our life-style, our practice; we are constantly engaged in these works that God appointed for us to do.

Can we get any more specific than this?

Ephesians 2:19

**19** So then you are no longer strangers and aliens, but you are fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God,

Note that there is no “leadership household”, no “followers household”, no “disciples household” or any such division. We are members of the household of God!

Elsewhere, Paul does recognize some family households, but in this context, it is very plain that we are all members of the household of God. This household of God is synonymous with “the body of Christ”.

Ephesians 2:20

**20** (*this household of God is*) built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus himself being the cornerstone,

**21** in whom the whole structure, being joined together, grows into a holy temple in the Lord (*who gives the growth? God does!*).

**22** In him (*the Lord*) you also are being built together into a dwelling place for God by the Spirit.

The work of building this structure, this dwelling place for God, is done by way of holy spirit in the believers. This work requires that each one of us functions as we were called to function and as we are spiritually inspired to function. God has authorized and enabled us to do these works which He appointed for us to do.

Ephesians 4:1

**1** I therefore, a prisoner for the Lord, urge you to walk in a manner worthy of the calling to which you have been called,

**2** with all humility and gentleness, with patience, bearing with one another in love,

**3** eager to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.

This is a spiritual walk not a five-senses walk. Read Acts, Corinthians, Galatians and see how Paul put these words into action. See how he would bear with one another in love. This does not mean that Paul accommodated evil. He walked by the spirit. This is HOW we walk worthy of our calling. We are humble to the spiritual wisdom and inspiration given to us. We serve with gentleness and patience; these are fruit of the spirit! We bear with one another in love, another fruit of the spirit. Romans 14 and 15 gives more details on this bearing with one another in love.

We have spiritual unity; nothing will affect that unity one way or another. However we are to maintain that unity in the bond of peace. As we mature, walking by the spirit we can become more and more adept at carrying out these verses.

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Ephesians 4:4

**4** There is one body and one Spirit—just as you were called to the one hope that belongs to your call—

Christ is NOT divided into different denominations, non-denominations, or corporate entities. There is but ONE BODY!

There is one gift of holy spirit; just ONE, which is given to anyone who is born from above. This is the new spiritual self which is created in Christ Jesus.

There is ONE HOPE, not two or three, JUST ONE. In Ephesians 2 it is declared that there is now ONE NEW MAN in place of the Hebrew and Gentile. The original hope of the Hebrews has not been done away with, but it continues on! Now, because of the accomplishments of Jesus Christ the Gentiles have access to this ONE HOPE. Yes, we do have additional details regarding this hope of our calling, but that does not change the truth that there is but ONE HOPE. This ONE HOPE is far greater than the return of Christ which is but one small aspect of this hope.

Romans 15:4 testifies:

**4** For whatever was written in former days (*before Pentecost*) was written for our instruction, that through endurance and through the encouragement of the Scriptures we might have hope.

This scripture bothered me for a long time; what does the old testament have to do with our hope? I was under the incorrect impression that there were at least two hopes. Now that I know there is ONE HOPE, this verse makes sense and it fits with the rest of the scriptures.

Ephesians 4:5

**5** one Lord, one faith, one baptism,

We have ONE LORD. The ONE FAITH is the Faith of Jesus Christ. There is but ONE BAPTISM which has absolutely nothing to do with water or any action of any other man. Romans 6 testifies that we have been baptized, immersed into Christ, not water!

Since we have ONE LORD, we do not have any business making anything or anyone else lord in our lives. We do not sell out to any other cause, influence, organization, feeling or relationship.

Ephesians 4:6

**6** one God and Father of all, who is over all and through all and in all.

Over all the things that are listed in the previous verses, there is but ONE GOD not two, three or more. It is by way of the accomplishments of our Lord that the ONE GOD is our Father. Our heavenly Father is OVER ALL and THROUGH ALL and IN ALL. No one is left out! The ONE BODY of Christ is the Household of God. You and I are part of the dwelling place of God by way of the ONE gift of HOLY SPIRIT. This dwelling place is in the Kingdom of God.

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.

Now we will learn about the gifts which Christ gave to men.

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Ephesians 4:11

**11** And he gave the apostles (*plural*), the prophets (*plural*), the evangelists (*plural*), the pastors (*plural*) and teachers (*plural*), (*why?*)

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

The visionaries are to EQUIP the saints for the work of the ministry, for building up the body of Christ. This work is much bigger than one apostle, one prophet, one evangelist, one pastor or one teacher. There are to be multiple visionaries of every kind functioning in the body of Christ. It is the height of human egotism to imagine that there is anything like a “man of God (singular) of this world”. If anyone wants to believe in that, then they might as well as believe in the pope.

This work of equipping the saints and the saints performing their work requires that all of us in the body of Christ function together to our full capacity.

It is interesting to compare Ephesians 4:12 to 2 Timothy 3:16 and 17 which state:

2 Timothy 3:16

**16** All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness,

**17** that the man (and woman) of God (the spokesman for God) may be competent, equipped for every good work.

The better equipped you are the better you can follow through with your calling and the work of equipping the saints for their work.

Don't misunderstand. We do not stop walking in the spirit to study the scriptures with the five senses. Not at all. In fact to the flesh, the scriptures and the revealed Word of God is just foolishness. (Check 1 Corinthians 2:6 – 16). Studying, researching and understanding the scriptures requires the functioning of your newly created spiritual self. It requires that you walk by the spirit.

Ephesians 4:13

**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,

This unity of the faith is NOT the unity of the spirit. This is the unity of the believers practice, how the believers conduct themselves. Right now there is little unity in the believers practice and conduct. It is very much divided. However, when Christ returns, we will attain to the knowledge of the Son of God and to mature manhood or adulthood.

Ephesians 4:14

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

We are not to be children, spiritually. We are to grow up and become spiritually mature. Here is mentioned doctrine or teaching which is produced by human cunning, craftiness and deceiving schemes. These are polluted intentions, words and deeds which are so designed to toss and carry the believers (unwillingly) where others would have us to be carried.

Ephesians 4:15

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

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head, into Christ,

(Revised English Bible: Rather we are to maintain the truth in a spirit of love; so shall we fully grow up into Christ. He is the head,)

In other words we are to “be truthful” or “lovingly truthful” in our words, deeds and intentions. This “speaking the truth in love” has been yanked out of context almost as often as 1 Corinthians chapter 13. Instead of being affected and influenced by the doctrines and teachings which are produced in deceitful schemes, we are to be truthful in our words deeds and intentions. We don't represent, practice, teach or allow ourselves to be influenced by the doctrines of devils or religion.

Notice that “every wind of doctrine” or teaching is not very specific. This is a good thing! God in Christ in the visionary can work to expose and demolish the various twisted doctrines even before they are taught.

In addition, we GROW UP in every way into Christ who is THE HEAD. Growth implies change, it implies maturation. In this case it is a continual process. As we grow we increase in our spiritual abilities and our skills. We should be accustomed to and welcome the changes that come with growth. Growth and change should be our comfort zone.

This admonition to grow is also very freeing! Consider a child who is just learning how to ride a bicycle. Does a child typically ride a bike perfectly, the first time? NO! When the child loses balance and falls, has the child sinned or has the child broken some rule and done wrong? NO! Did the child deserve punishment and that's why he or she fell? NO! Well, so it is in our spiritual walk! We start out as unskilled children. Sometimes we fall off our bikes and skin our knees. So what? This has nothing to do with sin or wrongdoing. This is not a religious walk! We don't grow up in denominational or religious legalism. We grow up into Christ. This growth happens as we are spiritually nurtured, equipped and strengthened. Without spiritual nourishment the saints will starve. Starving saints do not grow or accomplish very much.

Remember that these scriptures are not religious commandments contained in ordinances, they are NOT law! Doctrine, reproof, correction and instruction in righteousness has very little to do with sin or wrongdoing. It has everything to do with equipping the visionaries, who work to equip the saints so that we can all grow up into Christ, we can all become spiritually mature.

Ephesians 4:16

**16** from whom (*the head, Christ*) 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.

You see, as members in particular of the body of Christ, we have been given the ability, the calling and the permission to function spiritually within the body of Christ. It is our duty, our responsibility, our privilege and our joy to function in the body of Christ.

Instead of being carried about unwillingly by deceitful doctrines and teachings which shut down the saints, all of us are to grow up into Christ who is the head of the body. We are to do what the head

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directs us to do! Since there is ONE LORD and ONE BODY there must be just ONE HEAD and that is Christ. As visionaries and believers, we represent and obey no other.

Turn to 2 Corinthians 5

Growing up into Christ who is the head means that we grow in our ability to represent Christ in this world. This is also known as the Hebrew concept of “Agency”. This concept of Agency is much more than the western concept of the power of attorney. In the western concept of the power of attorney, one performs legal acts on behalf of another. In the Hebrew concept of Agency, the Agent acts AS the one he or she represents.

If we can grasp this concept of Agency, we can more fully understand 2 Corinthians 5:20 and 21  
2 Corinthians 5:20

**20** Therefore, we are ambassadors for Christ, God making his appeal through us. We implore you on behalf of Christ, be reconciled to God.

**21** For our sake he made him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.

Paul says that we are ambassadors for Christ. “Ambassadors” is a descriptive synonym of our spiritual Agency which we have as a result of the accomplishments of Jesus Christ. We represent and carry out HIS WILL in the physical realm, not our own will.

Then he says “...God making His appeal through us...”. Understand that Christ is the Agent of his heavenly Father. Christ is God's Agent, and we are Christ's Agent!.

Verse 20 ends with “We implore you on behalf of Christ, be reconciled to God”.

Not having an understanding of the concept of Agency, this wording falls flat.

This phrase could literally be understood as follows:

*“We implore you AS CHRIST, be reconciled to God”*

That statement communicates our identification with Christ and our God given position of authority we have to act as the Agents of Christ in the physical realm. However, it is really bigger than that. Remember that Christ is God's Agent. So this statement could be accurately understood as follows:

*“We implore you AS GOD, be reconciled to ME (God)”*

Do you think that I have gone to far, that this is just too much? Does not Ephesians 5:1 say that we are to be imitators of God? How are we to do that if not by the authority and power of an Agent?

Haven't we all read 1 John 4:17b which states “...as HE (GOD) IS so are we in this world”?

Remember, this is not a five senses authority conferred upon men by men. This is spiritual authority conferred upon believers by God through the accomplishments of Christ. It is only as we walk by the spirit that we fulfill our responsibility to walk with this authority and power.

It will require some growth and changing to begin moving on our authority and responsibility which this Agency confers upon us. This Agency is our authority and responsibility to act upon the will of the one who has made us an Agent. No one can act as an Agent performing his or her own will.

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It is as we perform the work of an Agent that a visionary and a teacher has the boldness to teach what needs to be taught. We walk in love by faithfully and truly performing God's will as an Agent of Christ. Turn to Ephesians 4

In the remainder of Ephesians 4, 5 and 6, Paul gives instruction on what the believers were to do to grow and to be equipped to do the work of the ministry. Note that in 2 Corinthians 3 this ministry is called the “ministry of the spirit” and “the ministry of righteousness”. This is not called “the ministry of the scriptures”!

In a similar manner, the visionaries and teachers of our day and time are to teach and instruct the contemporary believers the specific details regarding how they are to grow and be equipped so that they can carry out their work. These epistles do not contain all the details that we will ever need in order to carry out God's will. Remember, this is the ministry of the spirit! The work of the visionaries, the work of the saints require that together we all walk by the spirit. It requires that together we continue to grow in our ability and skill to walk by the spirit.

1 Corinthians 3:9 says that the visionaries are God's fellow workers. The saints are God's field, God's building. God directs this work. He knows what needs to be done and exactly who is the best to do it.

To conclude this series, let's re-read Ephesians 4:11 – 16

**11** And he (*Christ*) gave (*as a gift to the household of God*) the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the pastors and teachers, (*why?*)

**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 (*purpose*) we may no longer be children, tossed to and fro by the waves and carried about (*unwillingly*) by every wind of doctrine (*teaching*), by human cunning, by craftiness in deceitful schemes.

**15** Rather, ~~speaking~~ (*maintaining*) the truth in love (*performing the work of an Agent, truthfully in word and deed according to the will of God*), we are to grow up in every way into him who is the head, into Christ (*not into any other man or organization. Spiritual growth requires spiritual nourishment*),

**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.

Turn to John 4

Specifically, for our day and time, the critical need is for the believers to obtain spiritual nourishment. They are starving and will not grow much without it. They need to be loved as God would have them loved. For a start, this means that the visionary and the teacher does not feed off of those they serve. The believers have been a prey to the devil spirit realm for a long, long time. The devil considers God's people to be a pasture where he feeds himself. Visionaries and teachers can expose his working and stand against him, bringing deliverance to God's people.

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Finally, what nourishes the visionary, how does the teacher obtain his or her nourishment? Jesus declares this about himself in John 4:34

**34** Jesus said to them, My food (*my nourishment*) is to do the will of him who sent me and to accomplish his work.

That is what nourishes the visionaries, including the teachers.