

PERFECTING THE TEACHER

A Passion for Teaching: Session 2

TRUTH CANNOT BE PASSED OUT UNLESS IT IS LIVED OUT!

Today we are quite confused as to the real meaning on “teaching”. Teaching is all too often expressed via a product instead of a person. We need to emphasize the “fleshing out” of our teaching. Truth does not impact a life as long as it remains in the laboratory, it must hit the streets. Philosophies have little influence as long as they stay on paper. Truth comes alive when it is seen in the laboratory of life – it is then that its impact is felt.

The greatest example of this is God Himself. When God wanted to express truth to mankind He rolled it all up in the life of His Son. Jesus was always God: *“In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things were made through him, and without him was not any thing made that was made.”* -John 1:1-3 But God knew that in order to convey Himself, His principles, His truth, He had to flesh it out. Mankind would never grasp His teachings until they were “fleshed out.” He could not mold us into His principles until He modeled them for us. Therefore, *“And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we have seen his glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth.”* -John 1:14. All that God had for the world in a baby at Bethlehem!

God had used other vehicles to express Himself to the people whom He loved so much. However, there was something lacking – imperfection could not adequately communicate perfection. Man was teaching above his living. So God sent His perfect Son so that perfect truth could be perfectly transmitted. *“Long ago, at many times and in many ways, God spoke to our fathers by the prophets, but in these last days he has spoken to us by his Son, whom he appointed the heir of all things, through whom also he created the world. He is the radiance of the glory of God and the exact imprint of his nature, and he upholds the universe by the word of his power.”* -Hebrews 1:1-3

We will never teach like Jesus, but the more we become like Him, the more effective our teaching will become. We will only be great proclaimers of God’s principles when we become great practitioners of God’s principles. Truth must be wrapped in flesh! Jesus, in the Great Commission, didn’t command us to teach all things, but to *“teach them to observe all things.”* Truth, principles, and precepts cannot be fully communicated unless they are “fleshed out”. Truth is translated to others by living, not just speaking. James Dobson has said, “Principles are caught, not taught.” We cannot expect people to believe what we talk if it is not consistent with our walk. Howard Hendricks has said, “Most of us teach above our living.”

Jesus taught this principle in the Sermon on the Mount, and He placed living before teaching: *“Therefore whoever relaxes one of the least of these commandments and teaches others to do the same will be called least in the kingdom of heaven, but whoever does them and teaches them will be called great in the kingdom of heaven.”* -Matthew 5:19

It should be the desire of a teacher, not just to teach the Word but to live it; to not be just hearers of the Word, but doers of the Word. When this occurs, we will really know the meaning of “teaching” and we will really impact lives. The truth must become incarnate!

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Theme: Be the best you can be!

True or False

- ___ 1. The most basic, core function of every New Testament church is teaching.
- ___ 2. Teaching the Word of God affects everything we do.
- ___ 3. Teaching affects the way we do evangelism, discipleship, ministry, fellowship, prayer, service, relationships, etc.
- ___ 4. Teaching is the one irreplaceable, indispensable, unchanging function of the church.
- ___ 5. The church is fundamentally a teaching-learning organization.
- ___ 6. Teaching the Bible is more important than vision, strategic planning, and effective organization.
- ___ 7. Teachers carry out the vital function of teaching God's Word.
- ___ 8. Teachers communicate knowledge, bestow wisdom, add value, give potential, build futures, and impart life.
- ___ 9. Teachers handle the two most precious things to God: His Word and His people!
- ___ 10. Teaching is a work of transformation.
- ___ 11. Teachers influence class members cognitively, affectively, and behaviorally.
- ___ 12. Teachers increase the depth of biblical knowledge in the church.
- ___ 13. Teachers heighten the level of commitment to Christ and the church.
- ___ 14. Teachers generate new leaders and workers for the church's ministries.
- ___ 15. The most powerful way to lead believers is by teaching them the Bible.
- ___ 16. Teachers have the greatest influence in the church for achieving her mission.
- ___ 17. The greatest leaders of the church are her teachers.

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Evaluation Sheet

Evaluate yourself by circling 1 – 5. 1 is weak, 5 is strong.

1. **I have a good attitude.**

1 2 3 4 5

2. **I have a daily Devotional Time.**

1 2 3 4 5

3. **I have a willingness to grow.**

1 2 3 4 5

4. **I am open to change.**

1 2 3 4 5

5. **The people who know me best would say that I am walking with God.**

1 2 3 4 5

6. **I will be faithful to prepare my Bible study lesson each week.**

1 2 3 4 5

7. **I will be faithful to outreach/evangelism/visitation.**

1 2 3 4 5

8. **I will do my best to personally exemplify the truths that I teach.**

1 2 3 4 5

9. **I love people.**

1 2 3 4 5

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[all the "true/false" answers were "true"]

9. The effective teacher always teaches from the overflow.

- Luke 6:45 – each Sunday, your heart should be full!
- If you are not **excited** about teaching your Sunday School class, then don't be surprised if your **members** are not excited about being in your class.
- Blessed is the class whose teacher thinks this Sunday's lesson is the **best one** he/she will ever teach!
- If you want to know the **temperature** of the class then stick the **thermometer** in the teacher's mouth.

10. If you stop growing today, you stop teaching tomorrow.

- "Heb 5:12-14 – trained by constant practice."
- Everything that God created with life He intended to **grow**.
- If the tree dies, it can bear no **fruit**.
- John 15:1-8 "he it is that bears much fruit"

11. Teaching is not the expression of mere words, it is the expression of life.

- You **communicate** with life, more than words!
- Life is the **vehicle** of effective teaching.
- You cannot **impart** what you do not **possess**. (Acts 3:6)
- Most of us teach **above** our living. (Rom 3:10)

12. As long as you live, you learn; and as long as you learn, you live.

- John 8:31-32 – "If you continue in my word"
- My Sunday School Class should drink from a **flowing river**, not a **stagnant pond**.
- John 7:37-38 – "out of his heart will flow rivers of living water"
- We don't want to put **live eggs** under **dead hens**.

13. God can't work through you until He first works in you.

- Phil 2:13 – “it is God who works in you”
- God works from the **inside-out**; not the **outside-in**.
- You are no better **publicly** than you have been **privately**.

14. If you want to strengthen your teaching – then strengthen yourself.

- Phil 3:13-14 – “I press on toward the goal”
- The **growing** process never stops.
 - **Past** – “forgetting what lies behind”
 - **Present** – “straining forward to what lies ahead”
 - **Future** – “I press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call”

15. If you want to become a change agent, then you must also change.

- 2Cor 5:17-18 – “he is a new creation, the old has passed away”
- Effective teaching comes only through an instrument of **change**.
- The more you **change**, the more you become an **instrument** of change in the life of others.

16. You cannot fully develop spiritually unless you develop in life's other areas as well.

- Luke 2:52 – “wisdom, stature, favor with God, favor with man”
- Four areas of development:
 - E. Intellectually**
 - F. Physically**
 - G. Spiritually**
 - H. Socially**
- A well-balanced lifestyle is what keeps our **fizz** from going **flat**!