

Teachers of Righteousness

by Dr. Brian J. Bailey

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“Teachers of Righteousness”

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Preface

The teaching profession is unquestionably the oldest and the largest of all vocations, for a vocation it surely is. Without this profession it would be impossible for one generation to pass down to the following generation their learning, as one generation builds upon the knowledge and experience of another. The methods vary, but essentially they are oral and written.

It was through oral tradition that Isaac and Jacob, dwelling in tents with Abraham (Heb. 11:9), were taught by the patriarch. Abraham in turn had been taught by his father Terah whilst in Ur of the Chaldees, the accounts of the previous generations and of the age before the flood, passed on down through Noah and his sons. We must remember that Noah was still living when Abraham was born. Their longevity of life enabled many generations to receive instruction from their godly forefathers.

However, even before the death of Noah, knowledge had been corrupted by the so-called Mysteries of Babylon promulgated by Nimrod and his wife Semaramis. We are told that even Abraham's forefathers had served other gods (Josh. 24:2). From a scriptural standpoint, spiritual truths as we know them today were not put in written form until Moses, that great man of God, did so under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit.

These writings are what the Jews call the first five *Books of Moses* and what we in the western and Christian world term Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers and Deuteronomy. These books together with the other 34 books (compiled by such

diverse scribes as Samuel, David, Solomon, and the 16 prophets as well as Ezra) form what is called the Old Testament. Later, the Early Church compiled the other 27 books into a separate format called the New Testament. Together they are the canon of Scripture which the saints of all succeeding ages have accepted as being inspired by the Holy Spirit.

The Apostle Paul makes this point in writing to his beloved son in the faith, Timothy, when he says, *“All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works”* (2 Tim. 3:16-17). Therefore, it is primarily for the instruction in these Scriptures that God gives teachers. Their purpose is to cause the people to understand the law and the Scriptures (Neh. 8:7-8).

Perhaps a quote from Abraham Lincoln will encourage every teacher, “I will study and get ready, and perhaps my chance will come.” It is a fact that, paraphrasing Donald Trump in one of his books, there is, in reality, “no overnight success.” In fact, it is always the well-prepared artist or professional, one who is always humble, always hard working, always studying, who receives recognition overnight. Lincoln, in this respect, could be an example for anyone seeking to be a Teacher of Righteousness.

Another important piece of advice, again quoting Donald Trump — “deliver the goods.” As Teachers of Righteousness, we must be prepared, both through study and prayer, and then the Lord will see us through when our opportunity to teach comes.

Introduction

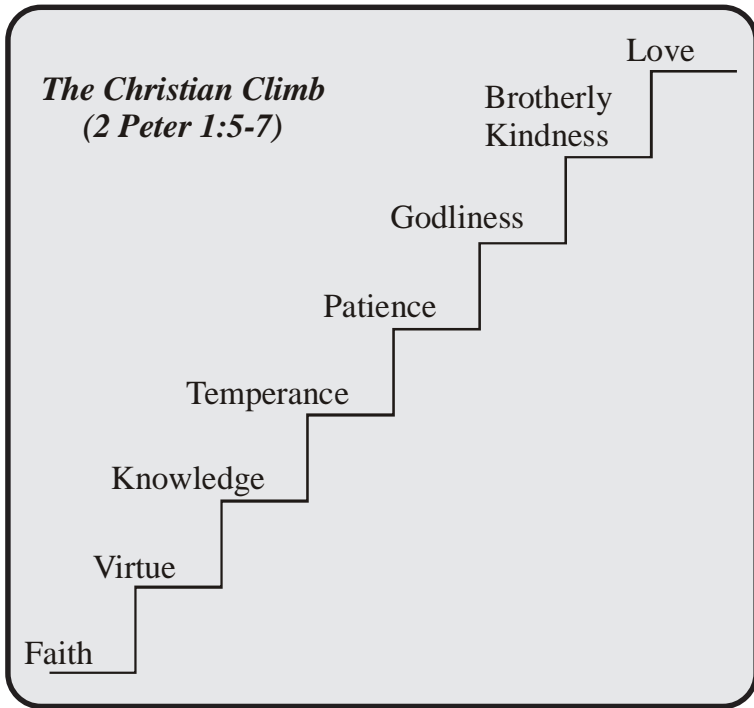
When in Ujung Pandang in the Celebes, where two other pastors and myself were holding a seminar, we stayed at a hotel in that city. While we were having a meal at the restaurant, we invited an American who was eating at a table alone to join us.

He informed us that he was an ophthalmologist who spent one month a year in that beautiful country of Indonesia giving classes to his fellow ophthalmologists in local hospitals. He explained that his technique was to watch eye operations that the local doctors performed, and then he would ask for patients who required a more advanced form of surgery. Afterwards, he would gather the doctors around him as he performed several of these operations and then watch whilst they in turn performed similar operations which were just one grade above those that they had been afore capable of doing.

Our American friend used the analogy that when he had left the hospital, all those surgeons had climbed one step higher in their surgical expertise. Conversely, other teams who had come in with equipment that was unavailable to the Indonesians and performed outstanding operations (we might say at the top of the ladder with the applause of their colleagues) left the resident Indonesian surgeons still standing on the same step where they had stood before the teams had come.

Our attitude, therefore, in teaching must be to determine where the congregation is standing and see that they have all climbed

another step up the ladder of Christian development by the time we leave. To illustrate this truth, let us look at the exhortation of the Apostle Peter in 2 Peter 1:5-8. We have placed it in the form of a diagram.



Clearly the Apostle Peter is saying that we must stand on the first step of the Christian climb, which is faith, before we can experience virtue. Likewise, all these steps must be sequentially experienced before reaching the top of the ladder, which is love. With these truths in mind, we will now look at the keys to the life and ministry of a teacher.

Chapter One

The Life of the Teacher

In looking back on our own personal experiences, we realise that the life of the teacher often had a greater impact than his words. This is perfectly scriptural, for King David in Psalm 51:6 said to the Lord, “*Thou desirest truth in the inward parts.*” The lessons that we seek to impart to others must be seen in our own lives. The Apostle Paul told the Corinthians, “*Ye are our epistle written in our hearts, known and read of all men*” (2 Cor. 3:2). Therefore, the truths that a teacher expounds should first be worked out in his own life.

It is one of life’s enigmas. Often the teacher will think that in seeking to teach others the ways of righteousness, he will save himself, and that it does not matter how he himself lives. The Apostle Paul rightly condemned this thinking when writing to the Romans in Romans 2:21-23, “*Thou therefore which teachest another, teachest thou not thyself? thou that preachest a man should not steal, dost thou steal? Thou that sayest a man should not commit adultery, dost thou commit adultery? thou that abhorrest idols, dost thou commit sacrilege? Thou that makest thy boast of the law, through breaking the law dishonourest thou God?*”

I think that we would all agree that the husbandman must first be partaker of the fruit. Similarly, the teacher should be the first to experience the truth that he is teaching. There is an air of credibility and authority behind the one who stands

before others and is able to give a personal testimony, when declaring some fresh truth, to back up his teaching. In fact, our teaching should be spiced with anecdotes and personal illustrations in order to bring life to our lessons. The Lord could say of Himself that His words were spirit and life. Recitation of doctrine without the anointing is merely the giving of the letter of the law (which killeth); it is the Spirit-breathed Word that gives life (2 Cor. 3:6). It is the anointing that causes our breaking of the Bread of Life to become a life-transforming experience for others.

Then, too, the dress and mannerisms of the teacher need to be addressed. It is noteworthy that the priests of old, who were essentially the teachers in the Age of the Law, wore distinctive robes. This custom brought a certain solemnity to the presentation of the divine truths as the priests expounded upon the Scriptures while dressed in their priestly garments.

We must consider that the truths that we minister are indeed going to determine the eternal destiny of the hearers. Although we should at times exude the joy of the Lord, nonetheless, there

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lives of others.**

must also be a seriousness and gravity in our manner that apprehends our students concerning their high and holy calling. Even worldly people acknowledge the importance of dressing for the occasion; and what greater occasion have we than the opportunity to propound the laws of God.

Chapter Two

The Preparation of the Teacher

John Cotton Dana, the first president of the Special Libraries Association and a pioneer in library advertising and in library printing said, “Who dares to teach must never cease to learn.”

Study is, of course, the first step in a teacher’s preparation. The Apostle Paul, when writing to his beloved son in the faith, told him: “*Study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth*” (2 Tim. 2:15). And whilst the wise man said, “*much study is a weariness to the flesh*” (Eccl. 12:12), there is no other way whereby we may acquire the knowledge that a teacher must possess in order to rightly instruct others.

How then should one study? Again the wise man helps us, “*And moreover, because the preacher was wise, he still taught the people knowledge; yea, he gave good heed, and sought out, and set in order many proverbs. The preacher sought to find out acceptable words: and that which was written was upright, even words of truth. The words of the wise are as goads, and as nails fastened by the masters of assemblies, which are given from one shepherd*” (Eccl. 12:9-11). Let us with care examine these words of wisdom.

Firstly, Solomon, who himself was the preacher in Jerusalem and one of the foremost teachers and authors of all times, obviously spent years being prepared for his task of

manifesting the wisdom of God unto all ages. That preparation was at the feet of his father David, the sweet psalmist of Israel, a prophet, king, and also teacher of the ways of God, as he himself declares in Psalm 51:13, “*Then will I teach transgressors thy ways; and sinners shall be converted unto thee.*”

Here we must interject a truth. Teachers do specialise. We see that clearly in secular schools, where one teacher will instruct a class in mathematics, and another will teach history, or English or a foreign language. It is manifestly clear that teachers do not seek to teach the whole spectrum of knowledge. They confine themselves to the subject they enjoy and feel comfortable learning.

Thus with the great Solomon, his training was to know wisdom, justice, judgment and equity as Proverbs 1:3 informs us, “*To receive the instruction of wisdom, justice, and judgment, and equity.*” His book on Ecclesiastes teaches us the path and life of one who regretfully does not walk in the ways of the wise.

In his own words, Solomon declared that he was an old and foolish king who will no more be admonished. He also tells us that God gives to the man that is good in His sight wisdom, knowledge and joy (Eccl. 2:26).

This is confirmed by Daniel 1:17, “*As for these four children (speaking of Daniel and his three friends), God gave them knowledge and skill in all learning and wisdom.*” We cannot

overemphasise that the ability to learn comes from God, as does our understanding.

Therefore, in looking at “The Preparation of the Teacher,” we sense that it is actually preparation for a divine office (Eph. 4:11). God gives the grace or ability to function in the office of His choice for our lives. We need to know our calling and the specific area in which our gift is to function. Here we will experience the leading of the Holy Spirit as He quickens the truths that He wishes to impart and make real in our lives so that we, in turn, may share them with others.

Seek Out

Returning to Ecclesiastes 12:9, we see that the teacher must seek out truths. As Proverbs 25:2 explains, “*It is the glory of God to conceal a thing: but the honour of kings is to search out a matter.*” This is referred to as the hidden manna of God’s Word that is reserved for the overcomer (Rev. 2:17). A very important truth is now given to us confirming that which we have mentioned before concerning “The Life of a Teacher;” a life must go *with* the teaching.

Why do some teachers of the Word propagate false doctrine? It is because their lives do not conform to the truth of God’s Word. God then gives them over to some form of false doctrine as we find in Ezekiel 20:25, “*Wherefore I gave them also statutes that were not good, and judgments whereby they should not live.*”

The overcomers, however, are privileged to feed upon the hidden manna of the Word, which are essentially the deeper and hidden truths of the Holy Scriptures.

Set in Order

Now we see from Ecclesiastes 12:9 that the teacher “...*gave good heed, and sought out, and set in order many proverbs.*” Here is a lesson for all teachers and preachers. The whole of God’s creation is a creation of order, and we, who are the highest of His creation here on earth, are created for order. We function best when there is law and order — for law and order bring forth the fruit of peace (Ps. 119:165). We are able to work best when everything is in its proper place, and when there is symmetry, whether it is at home or in the workplace.

A friend of mine once had a vision of the Lord’s last day in His father’s carpenter shop. He had just finished a piece of furniture. He then placed His tools in their appropriate places, folded His apron neatly, and put it in its accustomed place. Going to the door, He lovingly glanced back upon that scene of the finished piece of furniture and the quiet workplace with every tool, table, and chair in place.

No matter what area of life we consider, when there is order there is also a sense of progression. Now that is especially true when it comes to learning. Since a God of order created us, we learn through order. Thus the art of a teacher is to take students from one level to another by small and well-ordered steps.

To use an illustration, a teacher takes his students on the journey of life from one place to another in an easy progression. For example, in the field of mathematics, from the identification of the numbers to simple addition, we introduce subtraction, followed by multiplication, then division. Later, upon that solid foundation, one may go on to the more complex disciplines of geometry, algebra, and calculus. Without the sound foundation of the elementary principles, all other lessons would flounder, and the problems would prove to be insoluble. Whilst that is very clear in the field of mathematics, it is even more important when it comes to spiritual truths.

At this point I would like to give an illustration that was given to me many decades ago but has never left me. In Athens, Greece, there are many monuments to the bygone years called the “Golden Age” of Greek culture and life. Whilst we cannot commend Greek culture, I did learn this unforgettable lesson. As we were walking along with a guide into an Athenian park, he led us down a row of columns, which he said had been erected long before the time of Jesus. Then we came to one that had fallen a mere 20 years before. When we asked why the column had fallen, our guide led us to the foundation, and we saw how a blade of grass that had penetrated through the rock had broken it. Thus the actual column was perfectly sound, but it was brought down by a faulty foundation.

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In the Christian life, the teacher has to heed the words of the Apostle Paul in 1 Corinthians 3:10, *“According to the grace of God which is given unto me, as a wise masterbuilder, I have laid the foundation, and another buildeth thereon. But let every man take heed how he buildeth thereupon.”* That foundation is, as Paul states, Jesus Christ. It is the simple message of salvation — of faith in the finished work upon the cross of Calvary. Therefore, Jesus Christ is the Chief Cornerstone of our foundation, from whom all other measurements are taken (Eph. 2:20-21).

The Apostle Paul then continues in 1 Corinthians 3:12-15, *“Now if any man build upon this foundation gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, stubble; Every man’s work shall be made manifest: for the day shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire; and the fire shall try every man’s work of what sort it is. If any man’s work abide which he hath built thereupon, he shall receive a reward. If any man’s work shall be burned, he shall suffer loss: but he himself shall be saved; yet so as by fire.”*

Therefore, the teacher must lay a good foundation firstly in his own life and then in the lives of those to whom he ministers. The foundation will be discussed in detail in the chapter devoted to it.

We must emphasise in “The Preparation of a Teacher” that the Lord will lead him through many experiences to make the truths that he teaches a personal reality. These we will discuss

as we consider the various teaching plans that are in the Church.

The teacher has to systematically study the areas to which he is called of God. This is achieved by comparing Scripture with Scripture (as did the Bereans). We must have copious notes in books, clearly marked with the subject, so that easy reference might be made to them, cross referencing where possible. For myself, I have known that my principal area of teaching lay in the books of the Bible. Therefore, I tried over the years to study each book of the Bible, following references when possible to similar truths found in other books of the Scriptures.

Thus, by the time this book was being written, I had already written and printed over 40 books, many of which are commentaries on books of the Bible with a predominate message of leading people to Zion, including truths that are eschatological in nature. There are certain subjects that I have sought to assiduously avoid, such as marriage and the family, for I have no children and therefore no personal experience in raising them.

There is such a joy when you find your calling in this ministry of teaching and are in the field of God's choice for your life, for He gives that wisdom, knowledge and understanding with joy (Eccl. 2:26). Although it is hard work, it becomes such a joyous labour of love. Thus we continually praise and glorify Him in our work and attitude.

Chapter Three

Great Teachers

In any given profession, the young and old alike receive such wonderful inspiration from those who are the recognized masters of their craft.

When I had to take courses in Switzerland to receive a Hotel Director's patent, it was with such admiration that I watched the master chefs preparing a banquet for the members of the Swiss Federal Council. I had the opportunity to observe the demeanour of the Hotel's Director as he directed the staff and greeted some important guests in one of the most prestigious hotels of that particular city.

In addition, I visited the British House of Commons to listen to the accomplished debaters of that day. However, it was particularly instructive to listen to Winston Churchill address some 60,000 at Blenheim Palace, as that master orator held the crowd spellbound with his well-chosen words and appropriate pauses, causing them to hang upon his every word.

Later when I entered Bible College, we students would take every opportunity to listen to the great preachers and teachers in their respective pulpits. Those who had long since departed for happier homes above also were an inspiration. We students savoured their written words. We would eagerly devour any scrap that we could concerning their lifestyle and manner of

teaching or preaching, hoping that in so studying we might, by the process of osmosis, have part of their mantle rub off on our tender beings.

Let us look at some of the great teachers in the history of the Church from early times. Although not extensive, we trust that it will be a source of inspiration to you, gentle reader.

Jerome

(A.D. 347-420)

Jerome is best known and remembered as the translator of the Latin Vulgate version of the Holy Scriptures. Although his life could be said to be tumultuous, with much of his writing thought to be controversial, the reason we have included him is because of a dream that he had in his early life. This dream found him being drawn before the judgment seat of Christ, accused of being a proponent of Cicero, the pagan philosopher. The effect was to ensure that all his life he warned against the teachings of those pagan scholars. This incident from his life is a warning that we would do well to heed, that we might teach the unadulterated Word of God and not vain philosophy, as Paul warns in Colossians 2:8, *“Beware lest anyone cheat you through philosophy and empty deceit, according to the tradition of men, according to the basic principles of the world, and not according to Christ.”*

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The Venerable Bede
(A.D. 673-735)

From the age of 7 until his death at the age of 62, this man lived in the monastery of Jarrow in Northumbria in the north of England. He was known for his piety and for the sweetness of his disposition, from which thankfulness to the Lord flowed constantly. He was certainly the foremost historian of his day, and to him we are indebted for his magnificently researched work, *The Ecclesiastical History of the English People*. His prayer, however, could well be the prayer of every teacher of the Word: “And I pray Thee, Loving Jesus, that as Thou hast given me to drink in with delight the words of Thy knowledge, so Thou wilt grant me to attain one day to Thee, the Fountain of all wisdom and appear forever before Thy Face.”

This sense of deep gratitude to the Lord for being permitted to know, understand, and teach His Word should ever be welling up within our hearts, so that we, who have this privilege of being set aside from many of the labours of this world to study eternal truths, might be truly appreciative of our high and holy calling.

John Wycliffe
(A.D. 1328-1384)

This godly man was perhaps the foremost theologian that Oxford University has produced. He received his Bachelors, Masters, and Doctorate in Divinity from that

university. His knowledge of the Scriptures was profound, and was encapsulated in a life of purity and unswerving courage and tenaciousness in presenting evangelical truths. His mastery of the language of the common man gave him an eloquence unmatched by any of his rivals and adversaries, who were numerous in that day of popery.

In the matter of his sermons and lectures against the demands of Pope Urban V (who had decreed that King Edward III should surrender all tribute money for the last 33 years) he was supported by the King and parliament. Wycliffe was a chaplain to the King, and the Crown's delegate to the papal court in presenting the King's refusal to pay the tribute money. There he saw the excesses of the sumptuous living conditions of the pope and his bishops.

Wycliffe enjoyed popularity amongst the masses, and his name was also revered beyond the British Isles. His writings are said to have influenced John Huss, who in turn influenced Martin Luther. Therefore, by some he is looked upon as the Father of the Reformation.

Pope Gregory XI condemned him and called for his arrest in 1377, but he was supported by the King and John of Gaunt and continued writing until his death. He is best known in the world of literature for his translation of the Bible into Middle English. From this version, through the work of William Tyndale and Miles Coverdale, eventually we received the Authorized Version of 1611.

After leaving Oxford, Wycliffe became rector of Lutterworth Parish. There the Lollard movement, which was the prelude to the Protestant movement in England, had its headquarters. Teachers and preachers were sent out from there so well taught by John Wycliffe that they reproduced themselves and were a vibrant force for Christ for some 150 years after Wycliffe's death.

From Wycliffe we learn a very important lesson that we shall see also in the life of John Wesley — that we should seek to teach others that they in turn may teach others, since the scriptural principle is that it is our seed that possesses the inheritance that God has chosen for us (Isa. 54:1-3).

John Wesley
(A.D. 1703-1791)

Although an open-air preacher who founded his own congregations (called Methodists because of Wesley's methodical method of preaching and establishing the congregations), he nonetheless was also a prolific writer. His writings provided a clear understanding of the truths that he preached and taught.

Essentially, apart from the basic doctrine of salvation by faith in Christ, he taught extensively on Christian perfection and brought multitudes into the blessing of true holiness. He also realised the necessity of a good infrastructure.

In so doing he laid the foundation for a work that has endured throughout the centuries that followed. His colleague George Whitefield (who had perhaps greater meetings than Wesley) in comparing their two ministries said that at the end of his life, John Wesley would have a more enduring ministry because of his infrastructure.

While he was known for his personal piety and indefatigable energy, often preaching five times a day, it was his personal diary and 44 sermons that made a lasting impact upon succeeding generations. Therefore, for teachers, the lesson that we may learn from John Wesley is the need for personal experiences in Christ that have a sound biblical base and can be easily expounded upon by word and the written page so that others may enjoy them, too. By his raising up of teachers with the same zeal, and his prolific writing that laid a firm doctrinal foundation, the Methodist movement grew even more after the death of the founder. As it is said of Abel, “*he being dead yet speaketh*” (Heb. 11:4). Thus, propagating true personal holiness and a knowledge of Christ to our own generation will enable the Lord to give us a seed that will endure to many generations.

John Wesley broke new ground, because whilst Martin Luther certainly was the instrument that the Lord used to restore the doctrinal truth of salvation by faith, it was John Wesley who was accorded the privilege of restoring the Church to personal holiness. Wesley enabled us to fulfil our Lord’s commandment to be perfect even as our Heavenly Father is perfect (Mt. 5:48).

One factor that is worthy of note is that Wesley sold his books very cheaply so that the poor would be able to purchase them, and thus he ensured mass distribution. This is important, for the more widely our books are read, the more the possibility there is of having eternal fruit. Many writers seek to have financial remuneration here upon this earth and therefore curtail the eternal rewards that they might otherwise have had through a more open-handed attitude.

F.B. Meyer
(A.D. 1847-1929)

Meyer was one of the best-loved Bible teachers of his day and a noted Keswick Theologian. He emphasised the order of *Fact, Faith, and Feeling* — the Facts being essential before Faith can come. Then after Faith, we Feel the blessedness of the experience into which Faith has brought us. His teaching could well be a guide to every teacher, having us make sure that our Facts are correct. This requires research and a deep knowledge of the Holy Scriptures so that what we propound is not contradicted by any other verse. The Scriptures interpret Scripture, and as we compare Scripture with Scripture we are going to lead our hearers on a sure path and build a solid foundation in their lives. Faith is based upon Facts, for we can only invite people to believe Biblical truths. It is the high calling of the teacher to seminate truth without adulteration. The pure truth of God's Word must flow from our lips.

Chapter Four

Laying a Firm Foundation

It is to Hebrews 6:1-3 that we must now turn in order to understand the scriptural foundation that the anointed teacher must lay in the lives of those to whom he ministers.

In Hebrews 5:12, the Apostle Paul chided his readers by stating that they all should be teachers — not that they all should possess the ministry gift of a teacher, but rather that they should have the ability and desire to instruct others in Biblical truths. Instead, they are such as have need of the milk of the Word of God and are unable to feed on the strong meat of the Word.

Hebrews 6:1-3 says, *“Therefore leaving the principles of the doctrine of Christ, let us go on unto perfection; not laying again the foundation of repentance from dead works, and of faith toward God, Of the doctrine of baptisms, and of laying on of hands, and of resurrection of the dead, and of eternal judgment. And this will we do, if God permit.”*

The Apostle Paul is first making an appeal to teachers not to lose sight of the goal to which all teaching must lead — namely, perfection in Christ. Although teachers must move on from the elementary truths of the gospel, it is clear that Paul expects these principles to be well taught, for they form the foundation stones of the Christian life. These elementary principles are:

1. The foundation of repentance from dead works.

Essentially, repentance is the renouncing and turning away from sin and walking in the opposite direction of sin. In doing this, that sin which once reigned in the believer's life is now replaced by the corresponding virtue (fruit of the Spirit). An analogy might be in the work of a gardener, when he pulls up a weed from the ground he is so lovingly tending, and replaces it with a beautiful flower.

The dead works from which we must turn (and which we must actually hate) are listed for us in Galatians 5:19-21, "*Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are these; Adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, Idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, Envyings, murders, drunkenness, revellings, and such like: of the which I tell you before, as I have also told you in time past, that they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God.*"

These are, in effect, the 17 sins that will separate us from the love of God. If these sins are not thoroughly dealt with in the teacher's and the believer's heart, then they will bring down even the most beautiful and mature ministry gift of Christ. It would be similar to the Athenian pillar, which came crashing down after having stood for so many years and having been admired by countless generations.

The fruit of the Spirit that must replace those dead works are listed in Galatians 5:22-23, "*But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith,*

Meekness, temperance: against such there is no law.” These are similar to the other virtues of Colossians 3:12-13 — bowels of mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind, forbearance, and forgiveness (which we may interpret as being the chief spices of Song of Solomon 4:14).

Another analogy that may be used for laying the right foundation is the parable of Jesus from Matthew 7:24-27, *“Therefore whosoever heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them, I will liken him unto a wise man, which built his house upon a rock: And the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell not: for it was founded upon a rock. And every one that heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them not, shall be likened unto a foolish man, which built his house upon the sand: And the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell: and great was the fall of it.”*

Thus, those that obey the teachings of the Word of God lay a foundation of rock (and remain in spite of all the storms of life), whilst those who walk in disobedience and allow the works of the flesh to grow in their lives lay a foundation of sand and come tumbling down. How great has been the fall of many choice ministers of God who have foolishly neglected the garden of their heart, becoming critical, covetous, and lustful even in old age.

2. Faith toward God. The teacher must carefully define faith as being a gift of God as is clearly stated in Ephesians 2:8,

“For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God.” Romans 4:8 and 16 says, “Blessed is the man to whom the Lord will not impute sin... Therefore it is of faith, that it might be by grace; to the end the promise might be sure to all the seed; not to that only which is of the law, but to that also which is of the faith of Abraham; who is the father of us all.”

It is through faith that all the blessings of God are transmitted to the believer. Here are some of those blessings:

- a. Understanding — It is *“through faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God, so that things which are seen were not made of things which do appear”* (Heb. 11:3).
- b. Being pleasing to God — *“But without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him”* (Heb. 11:6).
- c. Wisdom — *“If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him. But let him ask in faith, nothing wavering. For he that wavereth is like a wave of the sea driven with the wind and tossed”* (Jas. 1:5-6).
- d. Christian perfection — *“This only would I learn of you, Received ye the Spirit by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith? Are ye so foolish? having begun*

in the Spirit, are ye now made perfect by the flesh?”
(Gal. 3:2-3).

- e. Righteousness — “*Even as David also describeth the blessedness of the man, unto whom God imputeth righteousness without works, Saying, Blessed are they whose iniquities are forgiven, and whose sins are covered*” (Rom. 4:6-7). It was not works or sacrifices that restored David into the presence of God after he had sinned with Bathsheba, as he said, “*For thou desirest not sacrifice; else would I give it: thou delightest not in burnt offering*” (Ps. 51:16).

It was a mighty act of God that restored him. Because of David’s faith, God washed David from his iniquity and created within him a clean heart, and restored unto him the joy of God’s so great salvation. (See also Psalm 32:1-2 and Romans 4:3-8.)

3. The doctrine of baptisms. The word translated from the Greek, “baptizo” (“I baptize”) must be understood by the teacher and carefully explained to his students. The Greek word is a transliteration, not a translation.

We need to explain the context in which it is used in the Greek language. It was used to describe a boat that had sunk or a piece of cloth that was immersed in a dyeing fluid to change the colour of the cloth. Therefore the act of baptism means to be totally immersed. Essentially there are four baptisms:

- a. Water baptism — a ceremonial act whereby the candidate is completely immersed in water, signifying that he is being buried with Christ and rising again in newness of life to walk with Christ.
- b. The baptism in the Holy Spirit — Christ called it the “Promise of the Father” and it first occurred on the Day of Pentecost (Acts 2:1-4). It is when the believer is filled and immersed in the power of the Holy Spirit, with the initial sign of speaking in other tongues.
- c. The baptism of fire — often occurs at the initial infilling, but not necessarily. This baptism was promised by John the Baptist through the ministry of Jesus (Mt. 3:11). The teacher should encourage his students to be immersed in the holy fire that burns away the dross and gives us a holy desire to preach the gospel and turn many to righteousness.
- d. The baptism of sufferings — described by the Apostle Paul in 2 Corinthians 1:5 as the sufferings of Christ that must abound in us. It is termed also “the fellowship of His sufferings” (Phil. 3:10). The teacher should explain that it is only through suffering that we shall reign with Christ. The Apostle Paul warned the Romans: *“And if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together”* (Rom. 8:17).

4. The laying on of hands. This act is biblically enjoined for the following reasons:

- a. To bless, as even the Lord laid His hands upon the children to bless them. The patriarchs did so in bestowing blessings on their offspring (Gen. 48:14).
- b. To impart a virtue or gift. Joshua was filled with wisdom because Moses had laid his hands upon him. Paul imparted a spiritual gift to Timothy by the laying on of hands (Deut. 34:9, Num. 27:22-23, 2 Tim. 1:6).
- c. To pray for the sick (Jas. 5:14).
- d. To ordain for the ministry (Num. 27:18, Acts 13:3).

5. The resurrection of the dead. This is one of the most blessed hopes for the Christian, for even as Christ is risen, so shall we arise.

As teachers we must emphasise the certainty of the Resurrection for it is intrinsically linked to the resurrection of Christ even as Paul says, *“But if it is preached that Christ has been raised from the dead, how can some of you say that there is no resurrection of the dead? If there is no resurrection of the dead, then not even Christ has been raised. And if Christ has not been raised, our preaching is useless and so is your faith. More than that, we are then found to be false witnesses about God, for we have testified about God that he raised Christ from the dead. But he did not raise him if in fact the dead are not raised. For if the dead are not raised, then Christ has not been raised either. And if Christ has not been raised, your faith is futile; you*

are still in your sins. Then those also who have fallen asleep in Christ are lost. If only for this life we have hope in Christ, we are to be pitied more than all men” (1 Cor. 15:12-19).

Moreover, the teacher must exegete very carefully — we are given a spiritual body, and that as one star differeth in glory from another, so it is in the resurrection. Then the teacher must encourage the students to strive to attain unto all that Christ has purposed for us.

6. Eternal judgment. All must appear before the Judgment Seat of Christ to give an account for the deeds done in the body (2 Cor. 5:10). In order to show how precise this judgment is going to be, the teacher should rehearse often the warning of our Lord: *“But I tell you that men will have to give account on the day of judgment for every careless word they have spoken”* (Mt. 12:36 NIV). In so doing, we promote holiness and Christian perfection, since the Apostle says, *“For in many things we offend all. If any man offend not in word, the same is a perfect man, and able also to bridle the whole body”* (Jas. 3:2).

7. Going on unto perfection. The life of the student should be progressive as should that of the teacher. May we consider the words of the Apostle from Hebrews, *“Let us go on unto perfection... and this will we do if God permit”* (Heb. 6:1-3). We see the sovereignty of God the Father in all things. Our ability to know and teach deeper truths depends upon whether we qualify in the eyes of the Father.

Chapter Five

Going on unto Perfection

Now the teacher must skilfully teach the way to perfection. It is not sufficient to give that exhortation, “*Let us go on unto perfection*” (Heb. 6:1).

The teacher must clearly show the way and the steps to be taken by the students in their quest for holiness. Yet we read in Isaiah 28:9-10, “*Whom shall he teach knowledge? and whom shall he make to understand doctrine? them that are weaned from the milk, and drawn from the breasts. For precept must be upon precept, precept upon precept; line upon line, line upon line; here a little, and there a little.*”

Therefore, as with teaching in the secular field, so it is with the spiritual — teachers must ensure that their students are well founded upon the elementary truths before they can be taught the meat of the Word.

The Apostle Paul wrote, “*And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ: Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ*” (Eph. 4:11-13). We may summarise this passage by stating that the purpose of the teacher is to bring his pupils to perfection and maturity.

Surely this would not be contested, but would be recognised by all.

In the case of an orchardist, the farmer sows his seed and then carefully nurtures the young plants, such as apple trees, until they grow to maturity and bring forth apples that are mature and perfect, without blemish. In some cases, entering them into horticultural exhibitions in the hope of winning a first prize. Would that not be the expression of the heart of the Heavenly Husbandman who desires to bring many sons to glory? Indeed, the Captain of our salvation was made perfect through sufferings (Heb. 2:10).

Perfection Defined

It is the goal of the teacher to present every man perfect in Christ (Col. 1:28) and to teach every man the whole counsel of God as a means by which to bring him to this perfection (Acts 20:27). The Apostle Paul told Timothy that, *“All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works”* (2 Tim. 3:16-17).

Looking again in Hebrews 6:1-3 where Paul exhorts us to go on unto perfection, *“Therefore leaving the principles of the doctrine of Christ, let us go on unto perfection; not laying again the foundation of repentance from dead works, and of faith toward God, Of the doctrine of baptisms, and of laying on of hands, and of resurrection of the dead, and*

of eternal judgment. And this will we do, if God permit.” The word “perfection” in the Greek text is “teliothes,” the meaning of which is given as “completer,” and therefore “consummator or finisher.” In other words, we are to fulfil the work that we were designated to perform before the foundation of the world. When the Lord commands us to be perfect even as our Father in heaven is perfect (Mt. 5:48), the Greek word “teliothes” is again used, signifying a wholeness of character, which from the context could be understood as “goodness.” Now we need to examine the many scriptural aspects of perfection as enunciated in the Bible.

Spiritual Aspects of Perfection

1. Completing our God-appointed task (Heb. 6:1)
2. Wholesomeness (Mt. 5:48)
3. The control of our tongue (Jas. 3:1)
4. Perfection as revealed through righteousness — Noah, Daniel, and Job (Ezek. 14:14, 20)
5. Perfection manifested through purity (1 Th. 4:3)
6. Perfection in the sight of God — perfection toward God
7. Perfection of heart

1. Perfection as the completing of our God-appointed task

— The all-consuming desire of the Apostle Paul was to hit the mark of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus. This he eloquently expressed with much passion in the following passage, *“Not as though I had already attained, either were already perfect: but I follow after, if that I may apprehend that for which also I am apprehended of Christ Jesus.*

Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended: but this one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus” (Phil. 3:12-14). The sense of “perfect” here is clearly not referring to moral or spiritual perfection, but to that of fulfilling God’s goal for his life. In a heavenly vision, it was clearly shown me that God had ordained us for specific purposes before the foundation of the world, and we are to seek to attain these goals. Thus, the teacher is to encourage each student to press toward the particular heavenly goal that God has ordained for his life. This obviously would include seeking God for the particular giftings that He wishes us to receive and develop. Furthermore, we are to fulfil the missionary trips and the ministry He appoints us to in churches, schools, seminars, and conventions.

2. Perfection as wholesomeness — *“Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect”* (Mt. 5:48). In this passage, we have a clear-cut commandment of Jesus.

The context in which this commandment is given relates to the goodness of the Heavenly Father, *“That ye may be the children of your Father which is in heaven: for he maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust”* (Mt. 5:45). Thus we see the goodness of God manifested as He even feeds and cares for the wicked.

This is demonstrated throughout Scripture. Beginning in Genesis, God protected Cain with a mark, even though Cain had killed the righteous Abel (Gen. 4:1-15). Ishmael received the promise that he would become a great and mighty nation, even though the Lord knew that he would become one of the principal antagonists of both Israel and the Church through Islam.

We have countless other cases of God's goodness to the undeserving. For example, we can contrast the lives of two kings. First, there was the righteous King Hezekiah, whom God graciously healed in response to his pleas after he had been told, through the prophet Isaiah, that he would die. God further promised him an additional 15 years of life (2 Ki. 20:1-10).

Then there was one of the most wicked kings, Jeroboam I of Israel, who led the nation of 10 tribes into complete apostasy through his idolatrous ways, yet was healed of the Lord after being smitten for his impiety.

We read of this account in the following passage of Scripture, *“And it came to pass, when king Jeroboam heard the saying of the man of God, which had cried against the altar in Bethel, that he put forth his hand from the altar, saying, Lay hold on him. And his hand, which he put forth against him, dried up, so that he could not pull it in again to him. The altar also was rent, and the ashes poured out from the altar, according to the sign which the man of God had given by the word of the LORD. And the king answered and said unto*

the man of God, Entreat now the face of the LORD thy God, and pray for me, that my hand may be restored me again. And the man of God besought the LORD, and the king's hand was restored him again, and became as it was before” (1 Ki. 13:4-6).

This manifestation of God's goodness in the realm of healing was made clear to me when I was a young pastor in France. There, after nearly every service, we would pray for the sick and God would graciously heal. Yet after people had received their healing and had even seen the Lord perform some of the most remarkable miracles, they nonetheless left the church. They did not return once they had received that for which they had come.

I suggested to the Lord that He not heal them immediately but rather wait until they had accepted Him as their Saviour, and then He could heal them. However, He made it abundantly clear to me that His goodness, manifested in this case through His healing power, was like a tree whose branches went over the wall of the church and those on the outside were to be blessed as well as those on the inside (cf. Gen. 49:22).

The principle of the goodness of God is given to us by the Apostle Paul when he wrote to the wicked, declaring: “*Or despisest thou the riches of his goodness and forbearance and longsuffering; not knowing that the goodness of God leadeth thee to repentance?*” (Rom. 2:4). This virtue of goodness is the very nature of God, as He declared to Moses

in Exodus 34:6, *“And the LORD passed by before him, and proclaimed, The LORD, The LORD God, merciful and gracious, longsuffering, and abundant in goodness and truth.”*

The prophet ecstatically exclaims, *“For how great is his goodness, and how great is his beauty!”* (Zech. 9:17). It is as though the perfection of His beauty is manifested through His goodness. Paul further declares that the goodness of God is seen in bringing us, the Gentiles, into the true olive tree of God when He rejected the rebellious Israelites. Romans 11:22 says, *“Behold therefore the goodness and severity of God: on them which fell, severity; but toward thee, goodness, if thou continue in his goodness: otherwise thou also shalt be cut off.”* The teacher should seek to provoke his students to good works, both the faithful and unfaithful alike. Ephesians 6:8 states, *“Knowing that whatsoever good thing any man doeth, the same shall he receive of the Lord, whether he be bond or free.”* Paul exhorts his faithful son in the Lord concerning those over whom he has charge, *“That they do good, that they be rich in good works, ready to distribute, willing to communicate”* (1 Tim. 6:18). To Titus, Paul writes exhorting him to show himself as a pattern of good works in all things (Tit. 2:7).

Our desire is to be like Jesus, who was anointed by God and went about doing good (Acts 10:38). Let us do likewise, and by our good example incite our students to be purveyors of the goodness of God through Jesus Christ our Lord.

3. Perfection as seen in the control of our tongue —

Let us firstly consider the words of James in his epistle 3:1-13, *“My brethren, be not many masters, knowing that we shall receive the greater condemnation. For in many things we offend all. If any man offend not in word, the same is a perfect man, and able also to bridle the whole body. Behold, we put bits in the horses’ mouths, that they may obey us; and we turn about their whole body. Behold also the ships, which though they be so great, and are driven of fierce winds, yet are they turned about with a very small helm, whithersoever the governor listeth. Even so the tongue is a little member, and boasteth great things. Behold, how great a matter a little fire kindleth! And the tongue is a fire, a world of iniquity: so is the tongue among our members, that it defileth the whole body, and setteth on fire the course of nature; and it is set on fire of hell. For every kind of beasts, and of birds, and of serpents, and of things in the sea, is tamed, and hath been tamed of mankind: But the tongue can no man tame; it is an unruly evil, full of deadly poison. Therewith bless we God, even the Father; and therewith curse we men, which are made after the similitude of God. Out of the same mouth proceedeth blessing and cursing. My brethren, these things ought not so to be. Doth a fountain send forth at the same place sweet water and bitter? Can the fig tree, my brethren, bear olive berries? either a vine, figs? so can no fountain both yield salt water and fresh. Who is a wise man and endued with knowledge among you? let him show out of a good conversation his works with meekness of wisdom.”*

As we examine this passage we realize how very passionately James is making the point that if we can control the most unruly member of our bodies, we can then control all. Without controversy, our words flow out of our mouth at times without consideration of the damage that they might do to others. We would do well to ponder our words.

The Lord plainly stated, *“But I say unto you, That every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give account thereof in the day of judgment. For by thy words thou shalt be justified, and by thy words thou shalt be condemned”* (Mt. 12:36-37).

As we have seen, this Apostle, who is the half-brother of our Lord and speaks in the same forceful manner, developed the teachings of Jesus in this realm of our own words. King David had much wisdom concerning the tongue. In Psalm 39:1 we read, *“To the chief Musician, even to Jeduthun, A Psalm of David. I said, I will take heed to my ways, that I sin not with my tongue: I will keep my mouth with a bridle, while the wicked is before me.”* His son, King Solomon, also taught concerning the tongue in the following passages of Scripture:

- a. Proverbs 10:20 — *“The tongue of the just is as choice silver...”*
- b. Proverbs 12:18 — *“...the tongue of the wise is health.”*
- c. Proverbs 15:2 & 4 — *“The tongue of the wise useth knowledge aright... A wholesome tongue is a tree of life...”*
- d. Proverbs 18:21 — *“Death and life are in the power of the tongue: and they that love it shall eat the fruit thereof.”*
- e. Proverbs 21:23 — *“Whoso keepeth his mouth and his tongue keepeth his soul from troubles.”*

The following adage may sum up these many Scriptures that we have quoted: The wise studiously avoid speaking quickly. Being in an executive position myself, I seek to have my efficient, able, and understanding secretary screen all calls. She then makes copious notes so that I can have time to consider how I should respond. In so doing, I seek to fulfil David's prayer in Psalm 17:2, "*Let my sentence come forth from Thy presence.*"

It could be repeated in another form by quoting Isaiah 58:13, "*If thou turn away thy foot from the sabbath, from doing thy pleasure on my holy day; and call the sabbath a delight, the holy of the LORD, honourable; and shalt honour him, not doing thine own ways, nor finding thine own pleasure, nor speaking thine own words.*" King David said, "*The spirit of the LORD spake by me, and his word was in my tongue*" (2 Sam. 23:2). As teachers, may we share this same testimony as David and open our mouths with wisdom, having the law of kindness ever in our tongues.

4. Perfection as revealed through righteousness — The connection between perfection and righteousness is revealed through the lives of these three virtuous men: Noah, Daniel, and Job. Each of these men is called perfect and righteous, as we see in the following passages of Scripture.

Genesis 6:9 speaks thus of Noah, "*These are the generations of Noah: Noah was a just man and perfect in his generations, and Noah walked with God.*" Although the word "perfect" is not specifically used of Daniel, nonetheless of him it is

said, "... *neither was there any error or fault found in him*" (Dan. 6:4) which is a definition of perfection (see "perfect" in Webster's Dictionary).

Concerning Job, Scripture says, "*There was a man in the land of Uz, whose name was Job; and that man was perfect and upright, and one that feared God, and eschewed evil*" (Job 1:1). The Lord expressly said, "*And the LORD said unto Satan, Hast thou considered my servant Job, that there is none like him in the earth, a perfect and an upright man, one that feareth God, and escheweth evil?*" (Job 1:8).

Also in Job 2:3, "*And the LORD said unto Satan, Hast thou considered my servant Job, that there is none like him in the earth, a perfect and an upright man, one that feareth God, and escheweth evil? and still he holdeth fast his integrity, although thou movedst me against him, to destroy him without cause.*"

These three were termed righteous in Ezekiel 14:14 and 20, "*Though these three men, Noah, Daniel, and Job, were in it, they should deliver but their own souls by their righteousness, saith the Lord GOD.... Though Noah, Daniel, and Job, were in it, as I live, saith the Lord GOD, they shall deliver neither son nor daughter; they shall but deliver their own souls by their righteousness.*"

Let us examine the qualities of righteousness as they apply to perfection. The 17 qualities of a righteous man are listed in the following passage of Ezekiel 18:5-9:

17 Qualities of a Righteous Man

- a. *But if a man be just,*
- b. *do that which is lawful and right,*
- c. *And hath not eaten upon the mountains,*
- d. *neither hath lifted up his eyes to the idols of the house of Israel,*
- e. *neither hath defiled his neighbour's wife,*
- f. *neither hath come near to a menstruous woman,*
- g. *And hath not oppressed any,*
- h. *but hath restored to the debtor his pledge,*
- i. *hath spoiled none by violence,*
- j. *hath given his bread to the hungry,*
- k. *and hath covered the naked with a garment;*
- l. *He that hath not given forth upon usury,*
- m. *neither hath taken any increase,*
- n. *that hath withdrawn his hand from iniquity,*
- o. *hath executed true judgment between man and man,*
- p. *Hath walked in my statutes,*
- q. *and hath kept my judgments, to deal truly; he is just, he shall surely live, saith the Lord GOD.*

We must never forget the admonition of the Apostle John when he warns in 1 John 3:7, “*Little children, let no man deceive you: he that doeth righteousness is righteous, even as he is righteous.*” Righteousness should not be confined to outward acts of piety and good living but should also be understood to be a gift from God, as David writes in Psalm 24:5, “*He shall receive the blessing from the LORD, and righteousness from the God of his salvation.*”

As Paul states in Philippians 3:9, “*And be found in him, not having mine own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith.*” Then the Lord also, in His teachings on the Mount, said, “*Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled*” (Mt. 5:6).

Let the teacher be one who dwells in Psalm 45:7 and “*... lovest righteousness, and hatest wickedness: therefore God, thy God, hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness above thy fellows.*” A teacher who hungers and thirsts after righteousness and is filled with His righteousness will likewise create that consuming desire in his students.

5. Perfection manifested through purity — the will of God is clearly defined in this aspect of perfection by the following verses, “*For this is the will of God, even your sanctification, that ye should abstain from fornication: That every one of you should know how to possess his vessel in sanctification and honour; Not in the lust of concupiscence, even as the Gentiles which know not God*” (1 Th. 4:3-5).

It is noteworthy that the second step on the ladder of spiritual attainments given by 2 Peter 1:5 is virtue — meaning sexual purity (refer to Christian Climb Chart on p. 10). Therefore, beloved Teachers of Righteousness, let us major on emphasising the necessity of sexual purity to our students. We should be vessels that are set apart from all kinds and

manners of sexual impurity. It is one matter to teach our students to be pure, and a completely different matter to be living examples of purity and to show them the way.

The key lies in the prayer of David, when after having sinned with Bathsheba, he cries unto the Lord, “*Create in me a clean heart, o God; and renew a right spirit within me*” (Ps. 51:10). We are to enjoin, and even beseech our students to cry out this prayer as a deterrent to sin when they are tempted.

The importance of the heart can be seen in the teaching of our Lord when He said, in response to the question concerning external washings, that the disciples transgressed the traditions of the scribes and Pharisees with respect to the fact that they had eaten without first washing their hands.

We read of this account in Matthew 15:17-20, “*Do not ye yet understand, that whatsoever entereth in at the mouth goeth into the belly, and is cast out into the draught? But those things which proceed out of the mouth come forth from the heart; and they defile the man. For out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, blasphemies: These are the things which defile a man: but to eat with unwashen hands defileth not a man.*”

We can give no greater admonition than that of King David to his beloved son Solomon in Proverbs 4:23, “*Keep thy heart with all diligence; for out of it are the issues of life.*” Regretfully, Solomon did not heed his father’s teachings, and he gave his heart to all kinds of pleasures, including many women.

The result was that because of his divided heart, God too divided his kingdom. Yet Solomon, giving instruction to others, wrote, *“My son, give me thine heart, and let thine eyes observe my ways”* (Prov. 23:26). Perhaps this was written for his successor, Rehoboam, who walked in the latter ways of Solomon, *“And he did evil, because he prepared not his heart to seek the LORD”* (2 Chr. 12:14).

The teacher should give to his students understanding of the grace of God in this matter of overcoming the wiles of the adversary in the area of sexual impurity. Paul says to his beloved son in the faith, *“Flee also youthful lusts,”* as indeed did Joseph when tempted by Potiphar’s wife (2 Tim. 2:22, Gen. 39:12).

Solomon, who had received so many warnings himself but did not follow them, wrote: *“And I find more bitter than death the woman, whose heart is snares and nets, and her hands as bands: whoso pleaseth God shall escape from her; but the sinner shall be taken by her”* (Eccl. 7:26).

Remember, the key to pleasing God is to order one’s conversation aright, saying and doing those things that are true and upright in His sight. In this way, we will be kept from falling into the snares of sexual impurity.

Paul himself gave thanks to the Lord, acknowledging the keeping power of God in this area of sexual purity, *“Now concerning virgins I have no commandment of the Lord: yet I give my judgment, as one that hath obtained mercy of the Lord to be faithful”* (1 Cor. 7:25).

Let us ever remember to cry unto God in times of temptation to be kept by His power (Jude 1:24). As teachers, we must emphasise the keeping power of God, through His grace and mercy, to our students.

6. Perfection in the sight of God — toward God — These and similar phrases are used to describe the lives of the kings of Israel and Judah. It is almost a report card upon their reigns and could be a facsimile of that which will appear in the books in which our deeds on earth are recorded. Let us examine some of these (which we have not taken in chronological order) for the purposes of illustrating certain truths.

There were 20 kings in each line (of Judah and Israel) of the divided kingdom. The thirteenth in the line of David and one of the greatest was Hezekiah. His report card reads as such, *“He trusted in the LORD God of Israel; so that after him was none like him among all the kings of Judah, nor any that were before him. For he clave to the LORD, and departed not from following him, but kept his commandments, which the LORD commanded Moses”* (2 Ki. 18:5-6).

The Book of Chronicles also records the summation of the lives of the kings of Judah. Ezra, the priest, wrote this book with his love of holiness. As such, it tends to be more circumspect in the appraisal of the character of the kings. Therefore his reading of Hezekiah’s life is, *“And he did that which was right in the sight of the LORD, according to all that David his father had done”* (2 Chr. 29:2).

Ezra also records concerning the visit of the ambassadors of the princes of Babylon, who were sent to enquire of the wonder that was done in the land (meaning the destruction of the army of the Assyrians by an angel), *“Howbeit in the business of the ambassadors of the princes of Babylon, who sent unto him to inquire of the wonder that was done in the land, God left him, to try him, that he might know all that was in his heart”* (2 Chr. 32:31). I must confess that this verse filled our hearts with terror when we, ourselves, were students. We fervently asked the Lord not to leave us, for we could not trust our own hearts.

We read on concerning Hezekiah’s being renowned for his goodness (2 Chr. 32:27-32), but nonetheless, there is this terrible blot upon his report card, *“But Hezekiah rendered not again according to the benefit done unto him; for his heart was lifted up: therefore there was wrath upon him, and upon Judah and Jerusalem. Notwithstanding Hezekiah humbled himself for the pride of his heart, both he and the inhabitants of Jerusalem, so that the wrath of the LORD came not upon them in the days of Hezekiah”* (2 Chr. 32:25-26).

During this time when his heart was lifted up with pride, Manasseh (his son and heir to the throne) was born. Manasseh did wickedly and led Judah into great sinfulness, so much so that the Lord determined to send Judah into Babylonian captivity. Therefore the legacy that Hezekiah left was not one of enduring blessing, but one which led to deep sorrow for the godly as they saw the evil that followed his reign.

May we, as teachers, ever warn our students not to let down their guard. It is well worth quoting Solomon, who said in Ecclesiastes 10:1, *“Dead flies cause the ointment of the apothecary to send forth a stinking savour: so doth a little folly him that is in reputation for wisdom and honour.”*

**As teachers,
we must ever
warn our
students not
to let down
their guard.**

The fourth king of Judah, Jehoshaphat, had this spoken of him in 1 Kings 22:43, *“And he walked in all the ways of Asa his father; he turned not aside from it, doing that which was right in the eyes of the LORD: nevertheless the high places were not taken away; for the people offered and burnt incense yet in the high places.”*

Another account of Jehoshaphat is given to us in 2 Chronicles 17:3-6, *“And the LORD was with Jehoshaphat, because he walked in the first ways of his father David, and sought not unto Baalim; But sought to the LORD God of his father, and walked in his commandments, and not after the doings of Israel. And his heart was lifted up in the ways of the LORD: moreover he took away the high places and groves out of Judah.”*

Nevertheless, Jehoshaphat made an affinity with Ahab, one of the wickedest kings of Israel. For this he was rebuked in the following manner: *“And Jehu the son of Hanani the seer went out to meet him, and said to king Jehoshaphat, Shouldest thou help the ungodly, and love them that hate the LORD?”*

therefore is wrath upon thee from before the LORD. Nevertheless there are good things found in thee, in that thou hast taken away the groves out of the land, and hast prepared thine heart to seek God” (2 Chr. 19:2-3).

Regretfully, his son did not walk in his godly ways, as we read in 2 Chronicles 21:1, 4-6, “*Now Jehoshaphat slept with his fathers, and was buried with his fathers in the city of David. And Jehoram his son reigned in his stead... Now when Jehoram was risen up to the kingdom of his father; he strengthened himself, and slew all his brethren with the sword, and divers also of the princes of Israel. And he walked in the way of the kings of Israel, like as did the house of Ahab: for he had the daughter of Ahab to wife: and he wrought that which was evil in the eyes of the LORD.*”

Thus, because of the affinity he had made with Ahab, Jehoshaphat well nigh destroyed the godly seed. Jehoshaphat’s son, Jehoram married Athaliah and did evil because of the wicked influence of his wife (who was a daughter of Ahab and Jezebel). After the deaths of Jehoram and his son Ahaziah, Athaliah destroyed the royal seed of Judah except Joash who had been hidden by his aunt (2 Ki. 11:1-3). This illustrates how the folly of the righteous can destroy the good that they have done in their lifetime and cause them to have no enduring inheritance.

I would like to include these comments made concerning Solomon in 1 Kings 11:4-6 to conclude this section on perfection as it relates to being perfect in the sight of the

Lord. *“For it came to pass, when Solomon was old, that his wives turned away his heart after other gods: and his heart was not perfect with the LORD his God, as was the heart of David his father. For Solomon went after Ashtoreth the goddess of the Zidonians, and after Milcom the abomination of the Ammonites. And Solomon did evil in the sight of the LORD, and went not fully after the LORD, as did David his father.”*

Oh may we continually warn our students, that our report cards might not just depict a good beginning as did Solomon’s, but that we might also have a good finish without blot or blemish. After all, how we finish the race of life is the most important comment that will be made about our life here upon earth.

7. Perfection of Heart — Although we have spoken much concerning the heart when we were considering purity with respect to sexual purity, nonetheless, there are other aspects of the heart that we must consider in the realm of perfection. These relate principally to our motives and our desires. Perfection in this case may be summed up with those words: *“Godliness with contentment is great gain”* (1 Tim. 6:6). In Holy Scriptures, we see many who did not possess this aspect of perfection. Let us examine a few of them to understand the errors of ungodly desires and their outcomes.

Cain is an excellent example, he became angry with the admonition that he received from the Lord, and as a result slew his brother Abel (Gen. 4:1-12). This brings up a truth

that the teacher must not fail to bring constantly before his students. When a person has been rejected by God, then that person will become the antagonist of those who have been accepted by God. Thus the rejected ones became known as the vessels of wrath, as opposed to being vessels of mercy.

Many scriptural illustrations are available to us to substantiate this truth. We have the sad situation of Saul. Rejected by God because of his disobedience, he sought to kill the anointed one, David, and pursued him relentlessly for years with his army.

Ahab, king of Israel was another man who presents a warning of uncontrolled lusts. He desired the vineyard of Naboth the Jezreelite. Because it was his father's inheritance, Naboth would not sell it to the king. The result was that Naboth was falsely accused and was killed on the orders of Queen Jezebel, after which Ahab took possession of the vineyard (1 Ki. 21:1-19). In 1 Kings 21:17-20, 25, we read of the outcome: *“And the word of the LORD came to Elijah the Tishbite, saying, Arise, go down to meet Ahab king of Israel, which is in Samaria: behold, he is in the vineyard of Naboth, whither he is gone down to possess it. And thou shalt speak unto him, saying, Thus saith the LORD, Hast thou killed, and also taken possession? And thou shalt speak unto him, saying, Thus saith the LORD, In the place where dogs licked the blood of Naboth shall dogs lick thy blood, even thine. And Ahab said to Elijah, Hast thou found me, O mine enemy? And he answered, I have found thee: because thou hast sold thyself to work evil in the sight of the LORD... But there was*

none like unto Ahab, which did sell himself to work wickedness in the sight of the LORD, whom Jezebel his wife stirred up.”

Returning to the thought of heart perfection, we note the many cases of kings of whom it is recorded that they did not serve God with a perfect heart as did David their father. Amongst these who did not qualify were Amaziah, king of Judah, son of Joash, “*And he did that which was right in the sight of the LORD, but not with a perfect heart*” (2 Chr. 25:2). Also, King Abijam: “*Now in the eighteenth year of king Jeroboam the son of Nebat reigned Abijam over Judah... And he walked in all the sins of his father, which he had done before him: and his heart was not perfect with the LORD his God, as the heart of David his father*” (1 Ki. 15:1-3).

Even King Solomon who was admonished by David in the following manner in 1 Chronicles 28:9, “*And thou, Solomon my son, know thou the God of thy father, and serve him with a perfect heart and with a willing mind: for the LORD searcheth all hearts, and understandeth all the imaginations of the thoughts: if thou seek him, he will be found of thee; but if thou forsake him, he will cast thee off for ever.*” Sadly, in 1 Kings 11:4 we read, “*For it came to pass, when Solomon was old, that his wives turned away his heart after other gods: and his heart was not perfect with the LORD his God, as was the heart of David his father.*”

In 2 Kings 20:3 we read of Hezekiah’s prayer, “*I beseech thee, O LORD, remember now how I have walked before thee*

in truth and with a perfect heart, and have done that which is good in thy sight. And Hezekiah wept sore.” We see that Hezekiah certainly thought he had qualified during this time when the Lord had left him to try him.

We may define a perfect heart as the heart of one who has a willing mind and desire to please the Lord in all aspects of life. One who has a perfect heart also has a rejoicing heart, is fully dedicated to the Lord, and says as David said, *“I delight to do thy will, O my God...”* (Ps. 40:8). Those that came to make David king had these same qualities. 1 Chronicles 12:38 says, *“All these men of war, that could keep rank, came with a perfect heart to Hebron, to make David king over all Israel: and all the rest also of Israel were of one heart to make David king.”*

At the end of David’s reign, there were those who came with their offerings for the service of the house of the Lord — of them it is written, *“Then the people rejoiced, for that they offered willingly, because with perfect heart they offered willingly to the LORD: and David the king also rejoiced with great joy”* (1 Chr. 29:9). King Jehoshaphat gave this admonishment to his judges: *“And he charged them, saying, Thus shall ye do in the fear of the LORD, faithfully, and with a perfect heart”* (2 Chr. 19:9).

The teacher, in the pursuit of leading his students to perfection, must consider motive and the broad scope of life. The *reason* we do things is just as important as doing them. A perfect heart has perfect motives to do all for the glory of God and not for the praise of men.

Chapter Six

Teaching Methods (I.R.A.)

An accepted method of teaching is by the acronym I.R.A., which stands for Impression, Repetition, and Association. We will examine this method in some detail section by section.

Impression

One aspect of being a good teacher is to be respected by your students for your values. This is accomplished by allowing the Holy Spirit to make a godly “object lesson” of your life so that the truths you teach might cause your students to desire to appropriate and manifest the same truths in their own lives. The key is to make a good impression.

We quote oft this dictum, “First impressions are important.” Royalty are taught that people will perhaps only be able to see them once in a lifetime so they must make the right impression. That fleeting glimpse will form a lasting image of the character of the king or queen, and will remain in their memory and be recounted over and over again for the rest of their lives.

Obviously we want to be known for our Christ-likeness. This could be broadly interpreted in the words of Luke when, speaking of Jesus, he said that all who heard Jesus in the Temple were astonished at His understanding and answers (Lk. 2:47). Luke 4:22 states: “*So all bore witness to Him, and marveled at the gracious words which proceeded out of*

His mouth...” A teacher therefore should seek to, like the Rabbi of rabbis, be the Teacher of teachers, who was known for the profundity of His knowledge of the Scriptures, and for the gracious manner and wisdom with which He lovingly disseminated that truth.

The Apostle Paul, writing to the Thessalonians, reminds them of his attitude when he was with them, “*But we were gentle among you, even as a nurse cherisheth her children: So being affectionately desirous of you, we were willing to have imparted unto you, not only the gospel of God, but also our own souls, because ye were dear unto us*” (1 Th. 2:7-8).

Here we note the following points that help us in our quest to be good teachers who leave a good impression upon our hearers.

1. Paul mentions the fruit of gentleness, which is so important for those who impart truth to others. Greatness and gentleness are associated in Psalm 18:35, when David says, “*...thy gentleness hath made me great.*” Since we want to be teachers of renown, let us major in this fruit of the Spirit.

2. Paul had a deep and genuine love and affection for his students. This is an essentiality. We cannot put up a facade, as people know when you truly love them. Then Paul speaks of an impartation that he wanted to give to his students, namely that of the Gospel. He boldly states in Acts 20:27, “*For I have not shunned to declare unto you all the counsel of God*” when addressing the elders of the Ephesian Church for the last time. Thus let us make sure that we present a very balanced teaching

to our students, composed of the fullness of the truth, which is in Christ.

3. Paul declares that he and his fellow teachers would have imparted their own souls, signifying that they desired to wholly give of themselves, so that all they possessed in the way of spiritual and natural gifts would be given to their students.

This passion that Paul had in giving his life for others may be further understood by his comments in Romans 9:1-3, *“I say the truth in Christ, I lie not, my conscience also bearing me witness in the Holy Ghost, That I have great heaviness and continual sorrow in my heart. For I could wish that myself were accursed from Christ for my brethren, my kinsmen according to the flesh.”*

4. Paul mentions that his students are very dear to him. There should be a bond between student and teacher that becomes, in a sense, eternal, because we have made them our sons in the faith by imparting something of our own lives to them.

After contemplating these truths, do we begin to have a fresh realisation of the gravity of this high and holy calling — to have been ordained by the Father to be a teacher in His vineyard?

Now another aspect of Impression in teaching is that the particular truth that we are seeking to impart to our students is impressed indelibly upon their minds and hearts. This is best done by illustrations. The Master Teacher taught much through stories. How we can remember His wonderful parables that

are so dear to us and have the effect of writing their truths upon the fleshly tables of our hearts!

One dear lady in her late 90s, who had not been to church during the last 60 years of her life, recounted to me that as she was preparing very belatedly for eternity, Scripture stories that she had learnt as a girl in Sunday School and that she herself had taught as a Sunday School teacher were coming alive to her now. Yes, stories have a habit of remaining with us for a lifetime.

Understanding then that stories do make lasting impressions upon the mind, let us, as teachers, seek to concentrate on illustrations that will not be forgotten by our hearers. Illustrations that will reinforce the truth which, at that particular time, we are seeking to expound.

Truly, a good and effective teacher is a good storyteller like his Master. Where do we get our illustrations? Well, they can come from the Bible, both in the Old and the New Testament. In fact, with a few extra words from us, they will greatly enhance our teachings as we exegete and explain them.

Then reading anecdotes of great men and women of history from the fields of literature, politics, and even business can prove to be a treasure trove from which we may make many a truth come alive. Autobiographies and biographies of the notable men and women of God who have preceded us are invaluable; they can encourage the weary soul, and inspire the ardent to even greater heights in God.

Repetition

Hearing a truth once does not make it ours. How often the Master repeated His messages! The Decalogue, or the Ten Commandments, was first written in Exodus when Moses went up Mount Sinai to receive them from God (Ex. 34:1-4). Then on the Plains of Moab some 40 years later, he rehearsed them before the children of Israel and they were again recorded in the book of Deuteronomy (Deut. 10:4).

In your study on the prophets, you will find constant repetition, one declaring similar prophecies as others. Why? Because we are so created that we are unable to retain most facts after hearing or seeing them only once. Repetition is essential to engrave these truths in our hearts and in our minds.

It is estimated in learning another language that we have to use a new word some 35 times before it truly becomes ours and we can use it correctly for appropriate occasions. There is an art in repetition, and I would like to bring up a valid point given by one of my favourite spiritual writers to illustrate this. Archbishop Francois Fenelon (1651-1715), tutor of Saint Louis of France, wrote a book for the instruction of the young prince called *Telemaque*.

In this book he too emphasises the need to repeat truths. However, in so doing he admonishes teachers not to be repeating truths verbatim but to use other illustrations that will bring forth the same truth. Variety in the presentation of truths is very profitable and fruitful. The danger in repeating

something that a person has already heard is that you lose their attention and they stop listening to what you are saying. A fresh story with the same meaning can grip the minds and hearts of your hearers and drive the truth like a nail deep into their beings so that the truth enters into their inward parts (Ps. 51:6).

When presenting factual truths, it is also an excellent time to encourage the memorisation of verses or passages of Scripture that relate to the truths being presented. When young, the mind is very adept at remembering things. Regretfully, as one becomes older this facility diminishes. Therefore, the old adage of the Catholics, “Give us a child until he is seven and we will have him for life,” has merit.

We should examine carefully our teaching curriculum and seek to instil in the very young sound biblical truths that will form a foundation upon which others may lay further building blocks of learning in later years. Thus, the truths are repeated from year to year and become firmly embedded in the minds of the students.

We pause here to emphasise once again that “... *the letter killeth, but the spirit giveth life*” (2 Cor. 3:6). Mere repetitive recitation of truths will not produce the desired result, which is to produce godliness in our students.

Therefore, in the realm of repetition we must seek a refreshing experience of those truths that we want to inculcate into the lives of our students. After all, they are to become living

epistles (2 Cor. 3:2). They are to experience those truths when they are repeated. Let me give a series of examples.

When we are teaching on the wonders of salvation in Christ, let us bring before our students the prayer of David: “*Restore unto me the joy of thy salvation; and uphold me with thy free spirit*” (Ps. 51:12). Thus, in the repetition of the truths of salvation there should also be the corresponding experience of a fresh joy bubbling up within our hearts. Repetition without experience is without value.

Similarly, when recounting the blessed truths of the initial infilling of the Holy Spirit, let us encourage our students to speak fluently and frequently with other tongues. In so doing, repetitive truth brings an ever-deepening experience of this blessed truth. Teaching in this manner, on the Second Coming, for example, will produce a greater hope of His blessed coming again within our hearts and breasts.

Repetition should produce clarity of mind, deeper truth within, and our spirits should burn more brightly and warmly with each fresh exposition of those truths once learnt in years gone by.

Association

In all teaching, truths that we have learnt are recalled more easily when we are able to associate them with events or situations that are familiar to us. Thus as we study the teachings of the Great Master, we find that His lessons are

very easy to recall because they are associated with common day to day occurrences or events. King Solomon wrote and taught prolifically using illustrations with which his hearers could easily associate. *“And he spake three thousand proverbs: and his songs were a thousand and five. And he spake of trees, from the cedar tree that is in Lebanon even unto the hyssop that springeth out of the wall: he spake also of beasts, and of fowl, and of creeping things, and of fishes. And there came of all people to hear the wisdom of Solomon, from all kings of the earth, which had heard of his wisdom”* (1 Ki. 4:32-34).

The people came because they could readily understand the truths, which related to their everyday experiences. As teachers, we should carefully study our students to determine their backgrounds and social standings.

Chief Executive Officers think quite differently from the average worker in the workplace. They have mindsets and problems that the average worker would never be able to understand or comprehend — burdens, deadlines, and globalisation situations that are mind-boggling and beyond the sphere of thought of the majority of those in his employ.

I well remember long before I had the privilege of writing that I could understand neither the concerns nor the “lingo” of writers. They spoke of editing, proofreading, printing, publishing, and circulation — terms that I thought I understood but did not fully comprehend at that time. In a similar way, before I was responsible for managing a hotel, Bible school,

and convention centre, I had no idea of the tasks of those who had such duties to fulfil.

On certain occasions I am called upon to teach such high calibre people, and I must speak their language so that they can associate with the spiritual truths that I, by the grace of God, seek to impart to them. After speaking to and mixing with these people of upper management and higher financial responsibility in a certain country, I had to quickly change my illustrations, for I was then taken to congregations that were filled with the poorest of the poor.

The Lord once gave me this illustration of the necessity of being adaptable to the audience that I was to address. Wine is kept in bottles in a room that is generally at 40 degrees Fahrenheit, but before it is served it must be brought into the dining room and allowed to remain there approximately two hours so that it is served to the guests at room temperature. This process illustrates a very important spiritual truth.

Truth, like wine, is best assimilated at the room temperature of those who are to receive it. Thus we are to test the spiritual, mental, and moral temperature of the congregation so that we know what truths they will more readily accept and appreciate.

My first time going to a very primitive tribe in a third world country, I was nonplussed in trying to determine what and how I should teach them. I felt as though I could only give them the most elementary truths of the Gospel.

However, the Lord spoke to me that I should teach the very same truths that I do in the Western world, for He wanted kings and priests from every tribe, tongue, and nation to sit upon the throne with Him. Therefore, in order that they might qualify, they had to be taught the same truths that would bring them to perfection and maturity.

At this time, He told me to simplify the truths so that these primitive people could easily assimilate them. To help me, I had a continuous vision of the Meal Offering (that speaks, in one sense, of the Word of God as fine flour) before my eyes. Thus, the truths had to be so broken down and simplified that these dear ones could understand and receive them.

It is how we feed babies, but we give them the same essential nutrients in an easily assimilated form that we as adults consume in larger portions. Therefore, these primitive people were being fed the same truths as their western counterparts, and were qualifying to become kings and priests, too.

The greatest teachers are those who can simplify the most profound of truths. I well remember when in research science myself that those who taught us the most were the scientists who possessed their Doctorates in Science. They had the ability to make us young trainees comprehend the most abstruse subjects, whilst those teachers lower down the totem pole confounded us with their theories, as they seemingly had not fully grasped them themselves.

Remembering that Israel was essentially an agricultural nation, we find that many of the parables and teachings revolved around farm life; so we have parables like that of the Sower (Mt. 13). The farmer could well understand how the seed would fall on different kinds of ground that would bring forth different kinds of crops, depending upon the condition of the soil. The parables of our Blessed Lord are sprinkled with illustrations that apply to men and women, to the poor and rich. Consider the parable of the woman who hid leaven in three measures of meal until the whole was leavened (Mt. 13:33). Every woman in the nation would have understood that parable. Likewise, every shepherd would have understood the parable of the 99 sheep that were safe, while the shepherd was searching for the lost sheep (Lk. 15:4-7). The rich would have appreciated the merchant who was seeking for goodly pearls and selling all for the pearl of great price (Mt. 13:45-46).

The fisherman was an integral part of the economic life of the nation; so we have the parable of the net bringing in the catch to illustrate the Last Day ingathering of souls (Mt. 13:47-50). Then all those who had vineyards would understand the parable of the True Vine and the necessity of removing the branches that bore no fruit (Jn. 15:1-8).

Those who had responsibility for managing the affairs of the rich landowners would have understood the parable of the unjust steward (Lk. 16:1-12), and the need for accountability in the parables of the pounds and the talents (Mt. 25:14-29). Moreover, the dangers of travel in those days were used to

illustrate the story of the Good Samaritan (Lk. 10:30-37). Yes, our Lord connected with all the different levels of society as well as with virtually all the trades and professions in the land during the period in which He ministered upon earth.

Thus as teachers we should seek to make the truths that we are propounding to our students relevant to all the diverse backgrounds that we may have in our student bodies. We also have to consider and cater to cultural differences besides the different trades, professions, and levels in society that our classes may contain. I remember, too, the difficulty that one teacher had when explaining to a class in a very remote village in the third world what a glass window pane was and, in despair, having to retreat from that illustration which would have been readily understood in most other societies. Or, when teaching in the tropics, who has not had the problem of explaining snow to those who have known no temperature that has fallen below 70 degrees Fahrenheit?

We must have adaptability in our illustrations so that the students can associate with the truths that we are seeking to impart to them. We should continually ask ourselves if we are connecting with the students in our classes. Let us not forget that even when we remain in one college for a considerable period of time, the classes do vary considerably, both spiritually as well as in their ethnic and social standings. This is why most teachers find that, as the Holy Spirit leads them, they present subjects in a different manner from year to year.

Chapter Seven

Proliferation of Our Teachings

An eminent artist told me that one of the greatest joys of an artist is when his paintings have wide distribution. Thus those who design covers for books gain much satisfaction when the books have global distribution. In fact, we may say that all professionals gain much satisfaction when their works have widespread acceptance. Likewise, on one of my visits to the country of New Zealand, a noted composer of hymns and choruses was delighted when I told him that we were singing his choruses in the churches of our Fellowship in other lands.

In order for this to be fully appreciated, the Lord Himself has declared that from the rising of the sun even unto the going down of the same, His Name (and therefore His Word) shall be great among the Gentiles (Mal. 1:11).

Furthermore, one of the great blessings that the Lord promises to the righteous, “... *My spirit that is upon thee, and my words which I have put in thy mouth, shall not depart out of thy mouth, nor out of the mouth of thy seed, nor out of the mouth of thy seed’s seed, saith the LORD, from henceforth and for ever*” (Isa. 59:21).

Now with respect to the proliferation of our teachings, there are a number of factors to consider. This brings us to the consideration of the kind of media that we would wish to use for the dissemination of our material.

Today we are not confined, as in the days of yore, to the spoken and written word. Before the days of Moses, the great scriptural teachings were solely dependent upon the repetition of truth from neighbour to neighbour, father to son, teacher to student. The latter was the favourite method of the Rabbis, who indeed taught their students when walking about the market places during the time of Jesus.

Jesus Himself used this method as He taught His disciples while walking along the roads. On rare occasions, when truths of great importance were to be communicated, He would sit down with them, taking time to ensure that they understood (Mt. 13:1; 15:29). Also, the synagogues were places where the learned taught the common people.

In some cases there were rabbinical schools, as was the case in Ephesus at the school of one called Tyrranus. It was not until well after His death that the Gospel writers recorded the teachings of Jesus. The prophets had scribes who took down their prophecies, as in the case of Jeremiah, who was blessed to have the faithful Baruch (see Jeremiah 45).

Today we have several avenues of media communication available to us as teachers. Radio and audiocassettes have been a popular means of gospel teaching and preaching for many years. There is also television, whereby our teachings can be taped and shown in many places simultaneously.

This greatly aids coverage and the ability to address large audiences, an impossibility a few decades ago. These

television tapes, due to the means of VCRs have the possibility of being shown also in churches and home Bible Study groups, greatly enhancing the proliferation of our teachings, and they may be viewed over and over — and even passed along to friends. Then having our messages recorded upon CDs enables people to play them in their homes and even in their cars when doing the daily commute.

However, the method that is still the most profitable, from the view of retentivity of our teachings, is surely the written word. For the purpose of study, nothing can really supplant books in either the perfect bound format or the ring binder. These books can be referred to time and time again. Considering that good teaching is based on the acronym of I.R.A. (as we have already discussed), books remain the foundational method of proliferating our lessons for those who are unable to attend our classes.

The ideal is to have our books in addition to the classroom. I, therefore, would commend the idea of putting your teachings in print after you have some years of teaching experience behind you. Only time can produce the experience that is needed for one's views to become mellow and well rounded.

How then to proliferate your teachings through the printed page? After all, it is one thing to write a book, and another to get it published and then distributed in acceptable numbers. Sometimes in publishing one's first book one can resort to friends for the financial help that is usually beyond the pocket of the average teacher. Bookstores are not necessarily the best

channels of proliferation unless one is very well known, which is generally not the case with one's first endeavours. We have found two sources that we think are very fruitful — the Internet, and above all, contacts with pastors, who

(having read the book themselves) recommend them to their congregations. The pastors will sometimes use them in their own Bible Study groups. As the pastor guides his flock through a book, those truths that you have committed to the printed page will then become indelibly written upon the fleshly tables of the hearts of the congregations who study your book. We must, however, always remember the admonition of the Apostle Paul — that it is God who gives the increase (1 Cor. 3:6).

**Use all
means available
to proliferate
your**

Another point that we need to consider is how to write. All teachers are not gifted writers, and perhaps do not have the time. One method that writers in the past have used is to have their teachings recorded and then edited. In such manner were some of the teachings of the saintly Campbell Morgan made available to the Church. (Campbell Morgan was a noted teacher of holiness in the early 20th century.)

In the words of Isaiah, “*Blessed are ye that sow beside all waters...*” (Isa. 32:20), we may conclude this section by recommending that the teacher use all means available to proliferate his teachings. As King Solomon wrote in Ecclesiastes 11:1, “*Cast thy bread upon the waters: for thou*

shalt find it after many days.” By so committing our teachings to all channels available to us, we shall receive fruit in due time.

Certainly, as we propagate the message of the Lord we have this promise in Isaiah 55:10-11, “*For as the rain cometh down, and the snow from heaven, and returneth not thither, but watereth the earth, and maketh it bring forth and bud, that it may give seed to the sower, and bread to the eater: So shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth: it shall not return unto me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it.*” May the dear Lord bless your efforts in the teaching of His Word.

Chapter Eight

Researching Materials

At the onset may we say that truth does not come by study alone. Clearly, King Solomon stated: “*Buy the truth, and sell it not; also wisdom, and instruction, and understanding*” (Prov. 23:23). Thus the teacher has to pay a price for truth. This may take many forms.

For example, I have known of salesmen who have willingly paid over 1,000 dollars to attend a sales seminar and are very content if they have gleaned one new truth that would enhance their sales presentation.

Likewise, many teachers will travel literally hundreds, if not thousands, of miles to acquire fresh truths at a convention where some noted teacher is speaking. This is an entirely authentic scriptural principle, since Paul wrote in Ephesians 4:15-16, “*But speaking the truth in love, may grow up into him in all things, which is the head, even Christ: From whom the whole body fitly joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love.*”

Thus, teachers do receive from one another — and not only from noted teachers, but also from day to day experiences that involve less noted members of the body of Christ. In

humility we need to be open to instruction that the Lord may wish to give us from the most junior member of His body, for we are fed by *“that which every joint supplieth.”* Then, too, I have been much indebted to the writers of yesteryear who gave no seminars, but entrusted to the written page truths that they had gleaned during their lifetimes.

There is a saying of the ancients that “the soil that has passed through the worm is the most rich.” Certainly that is an apt dictum for the teacher. Those truths that the writers of old experienced emanate life, and from their pages of print we may receive not just truth, but we may enter into the same experiences that released that life to them.

I note with interest that business people who succeed often are prolific readers. Some will cheerfully spend up to three hours every day devouring business and financial magazines, articles, and press reports to keep them abreast of current events in their sphere of interest.

This is the case with Donald Trump, the billionaire real estate mogul, as he relates in his book “How To Be Rich.” Those who do not keep up with world markets, new techniques, technologies, and the latest business trends often are those who fall behind and peak at early ages.

The majority of successful people do not retire — at least at the conventional age, in their 60s. They are hard workers and work far more than the normal workweek of 40 hours. They are nearly always early risers, or if not, work until the early

hours of the morning. It is noteworthy that Abraham and Joshua were mentioned as those who rose up early in the morning. We, as teachers of His Word, must indeed feast on fresh truths from His Word; and as we have said before, our lessons should be spiced with illustrations that we can get from the biographies and autobiographies of famous men and women who have succeeded in their particular field in life.

One lesson that I have learnt from such study is that they are ever working to attain higher goals of perfection. They do not simply coast along, but are always giving their maximum effort to improve their skills.

Concert pianists spend an incredible number of hours each day in practising their pieces, ensuring that their fingers remain agile and gain in dexterity to perform even the most demanding of compositions of the masters.

Sometimes this can be pushed to ruinous extremes, as was the case with Ludwig van Beethoven, who suspended himself with strings round his fingers, seeking thereby to elongate them in order to achieve a greater hand span for more demanding chords. He, however, ruined those fingers. Thus from this we should learn that all work ethics should be tempered with prudence.

Athletes also will constantly exercise, pushing their bodies to the extreme in order to achieve greater strength and endurance. In so doing, they are hoping to break more records. As the Apostle Paul states, *“Now they do it to obtain a corruptible*

crown...” (1 Cor. 9:25), but we should so discipline ourselves to obtain the heavenly rewards of crowns of righteousness. The teacher receives truth by revelation (Eccl. 2:26, Dan. 1:17, cf. Paul in the Arabian Desert where he was taught by Christ — Gal. 1:17).

In the study of such literature as Shakespeare, scholars seek to find hidden meanings. They regard the immense vocabulary of Shakespeare, some 30,000 words, including some that he created, as being worth a lifetime of endeavour to muse over. Shakespearean scholars seek to determine his views on contemporary events and marvel at his immense knowledge of such diverse social activities as court life with all its intrigues.

Moreover, the scholars cannot agree amongst themselves with any degree of certainty as to the meaning of many of his writings. In fact, as quoted by Professor Sylvan Barnet of Tufts University, two editors of Shakespeare’s works wrote (and I paraphrase in modern English) that they wished the author had lived long enough to set in order his own writings.

Incidentally, Shakespeare relied upon a book written in 1587 by the noted historian Raphael Holinshed for at least 13 of his historical plays (Honan, 1999, p.138). However, he took much license in his interpretation and certainly fictionalised historical events for the purpose of making them more agreeable and interesting to his audience. I have included these observations in order to show that we do need the author to set at rest what he really meant by his writings.

Also, to spend a lifetime studying the writings of a man is so unfruitful. We have a higher and eternal calling to study the writings of our Creator. As students of the Holy Scriptures, we have the privilege and blessing of being able to consult the Author, none other than the Blessed Holy Spirit, who is very much alive, available, and willing to help us unravel the mysteries of Holy Writ.

The Apostle Peter, in fact, makes a very important point when he writes, *“We have also a more sure word of prophecy; whereunto ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place, until the day dawn, and the day star arise in your hearts: Knowing this first, that no prophecy of the scripture is of any private interpretation. For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost”* (2 Pet. 1:19-21).

The great teacher of the Church, the Apostle Paul, spent three years in the Arabian Desert receiving the correct interpretation of the Holy Scriptures as he tells us in Galatians 1:14-17, *“And profited in the Jews’ religion above many my equals in mine own nation, being more exceedingly zealous of the traditions of my fathers. But when it pleased God, who separated me from my mother’s womb, and called me by his grace, To reveal his Son in me, that I might preach him among the heathen; immediately I conferred not with flesh and blood: Neither went I up to Jerusalem to them which were apostles before me; but I went into Arabia, and returned again unto Damascus.”*

Here in the above passage we note that Paul was very well versed in the traditions of the Jews, but when he was converted, he needed divine revelation to rightly discern the Word of God. We must have the humility to seek to have His mind and His interpretation of Holy Scripture, comparing Scripture with Scripture, rather than to trust our own human wisdom. Then shall all the Church speak the same word from the pulpits of the congregations of God's people throughout the world. In the words of Isaiah, "...for they shall see eye to eye, when the LORD shall bring again Zion" (Isa. 52:8).

We, as teachers, should realise that the Divine Writer alone knows the interpretation of the Word of God, and it is to Him that we must go when we study the Word. Human intellect has been the downfall of the Church throughout the ages. From the time of the Early Church, errors and misinterpretation of Scripture came in. We even have the New Testament authors inveighing against pernicious doctrines that had corrupted the pure milk of the Word. Paul had to fight against legalism of the judaising parties. John spoke against Gnosticism, and Peter spoke of those who bring in damnable heresies, even denying the Lord that bought them (2 Pet. 2:1).

Paul, however, presents a positive side to this, when in writing to the Corinthians, he says, "*For there must be also heresies among you, that they which are approved may be made manifest among you*" (1 Cor. 11:19). Thus we, as teachers, should appreciate and muse on this verse, realising that these heresies are permitted by God to purify the Church, as they

draw away the unrighteous. Nonetheless, they must be countered by the truth. In the last days, heresies will come to their head when, as the Apostle Paul tells us, the Man of Sin shall be revealed, *“Even him, whose coming is after the working of Satan with all power and signs and lying wonders, And with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish; because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved. And for this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie: That they all might be damned who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness”* (2 Th. 2:9-12).

In this matter of heresy, we as teachers should have the understanding that heresies are permitted and indeed are sent by God to try His people and bring separation between the sheep and the goats. Teachers have “to possess their spirits,” which means “to have reign over their spirits,” when countering these heresies.

A very good Scripture for us to meditate upon and practice is found in 2 Timothy 2:24-26, *“And the servant of the Lord must not strive; but be gentle unto all men, apt to teach, patient, In meekness instructing those that oppose themselves; if God peradventure will give them repentance to the acknowledging of the truth; And that they may recover themselves out of the snare of the devil, who are taken captive by him at his will.”*

The teacher should seek to have this mellowness of character, which is of great price in the sight of God, and also to portray it

in our dealings with the errant. Our demeanour is important, as King Solomon states in Proverbs 25:15, *“By long forbearing is a prince persuaded, and a soft tongue breaketh the bone.”*

The quiet, calm attitude of a teacher in confronting those that are obsessed with some doctrinal error is very persuasive and speaks volumes, often being of more influence than all their doctrinal arguments. This mellowness of character holds an additional benefit to our own well being. So many teachers have become bitter, angry, and hard in contending for the faith through a wrong spirit, and in so doing they have thrown acid into their systems, causing illnesses such as heart attacks and stomach ulcers through unnecessary stress. However, a mellow, loving, pleading manner sends the oil into our own being, bringing a healing balm to all our organs.

Sowing and Reaping

This glorious promise in the Song of Degrees, as recorded in Psalm 126:5-6 says, *“They that sow in tears shall reap in joy. He that goeth forth and weepeth, bearing precious seed, shall doubtless come again with rejoicing, bringing his sheaves with him.”* This undoubtedly sums up the life and ministry of the teacher.

The teacher is one who weeps and travails before the Lord for fresh truth, with sighs and groanings that cannot be uttered. Truth has to be bought with the price of experience, and with much labour of love. We must have a deep love for truth and the desire to impart it to our students whom we love.

We often shed tears over our students when they seem to resist truth or do not have the ability to learn and comprehend the lessons that we seek to give them. Tears, often accompanied with deep yearning, are the manner of life of a godly teacher, as we seek to sow precious seeds of scriptural truths

**The teacher is
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fresh truth.**

in the hearts and minds of our listeners. However, there is a recompense that sometimes after years of toil those seemingly hopeless students blossom forth into Teachers of Righteousness. Those late-blooming students become a cause of rejoicing, along with the others who have displayed more evidence of promise, and potential from the beginning.

There is a principle in nature clearly stated in Genesis 1:24: *“And God said, Let the earth bring forth the living creature after his kind, cattle, and creeping thing, and beast of the earth after his kind: and it was so.”* Therefore, all of nature brings forth after its kind — and that holds true in the spiritual as well. We reproduce who we are. We teachers will reproduce teachers.

Laura Bush, wife of George W. Bush, forty-third President of the United States of America so adored Charlene Gnagy, her second grade teacher that she determined to be a teacher. In fact, she became a very able and devoted one through Charlene Gnagy’s influence. In one sense Charlene Gnagy reproduced herself through Laura Bush, her pupil.

Likewise, our students will reproduce our teachings, so that through our seed we will inherit the promises that the Lord has made to Abraham, *“That in blessing I will bless thee, and in multiplying I will multiply thy seed as the stars of the heaven, and as the sand which is upon the sea shore; and thy seed shall possess the gate of his enemies”* (Gen. 22:17). There is a beautiful promise made to Israel in Isaiah 27:6, *“He shall cause them that come of Jacob to take root: Israel shall blossom and bud, and fill the face of the world with fruit.”*

To the patriarch Job a very blessed promise was made, *“Thou shalt know also that thy seed shall be great, and thine offspring as the grass of the earth”* (Job 5:25). Furthermore, in Isaiah 51:16 we have a beautiful example of a teacher who sows and reaps eternally: *“And I have put my words in thy mouth, and I have covered thee in the shadow of mine hand, that I may plant the heavens, and lay the foundations of the earth, and say unto Zion, Thou art my people.”*

Thus we have the privilege of populating eternity with heavenly flowers — the students whom we have sought to instruct here below. We will raise up the foundations of many generations (Isa. 58:12). What a privilege to have been chosen by the Lord to be a teacher in His Church! We, therefore, should seek to render ourselves worthy of such a high and holy calling so that we might bring forth the fruits of righteousness in our own lives as well as in the lives of those whom we influence.

Chapter Nine

How to Compose and Present Lessons

Before considering the preparation of a lesson, it is of the utmost importance that you have an overall view of the subject that you are going to teach. Rarely does a lesson evolve by itself. Therefore, one should know the scope of the subject that one is prepared to teach and then break the teaching down into lesson size. There are three primary methods of the presentation of Biblical subjects.

1. One method is to exegete the life of a well-known Bible figure, which we are going to illustrate from a study on the life of Joseph.
2. The exegesis of a Bible book, which we will illustrate with the book of Genesis.
3. A doctrinal or topical study, which we will illustrate with the topic of eternal judgment.

Study on the Life of a Bible Character

One must know the length of time that has been allotted for the complete course. Let us assume that it is one month, composed in this case of four weeks, in which one is teaching one lesson per week, thus making four lessons. Each part should have a title and a clearly defined purpose. Having now determined the subject — Joseph — and the weekly divisions

listed below, we have to look at the outline content of each lesson.

The Life of Joseph

- 1. The Early Life of Joseph**
- 2. Potiphar's House**
- 3. Prison Experience and Elevation to become Governor of Egypt**
- 4. Latter Years**

1. The Early Life of Joseph

- a. His genealogy — we can develop his descent from Abraham through his grandfather, Isaac, the son of promise, and then his father Jacob and his mother Rachel.

Also, we could expand upon the thought of the promise of God to Abraham in Genesis 15:13-14, *“And he said unto Abram, Know of a surety that thy seed shall be a stranger in a land that is not theirs, and shall serve them; and they shall afflict them four hundred years; And also that nation, whom they shall serve, will I judge: and afterward shall they come out with great substance.”* It then follows that Joseph was to be the preserver of his brethren during their sojourn in Egypt.

- b. His dreams — Explain these and the fact that his father Jacob had acknowledged Joseph's ascendancy over his brethren by the coat of many colours denoting that he was the acknowledged heir.

- c. His brothers' hatred and betrayal — Stress the different attitudes of Reuben and Simeon, and the selling of Joseph into the hands of the Ishmaelites.

Generally speaking, for a midweek teaching lesson, the actual time allotted to a speaker is rarely more than 45 minutes.

Thus, the above outline's three divisions could be easily divided into three segments of 15 minutes each.

2. Potiphar's House

- a. The life of a slave — Describe the fact that he was sold by the Ishmaelites to Potiphar.

- b. His rise to pre-eminence and his faithfulness to his master — Stress the theme and virtue of faithfulness in the work place, making allusion to the admonition of Paul in Ephesians 6:5-8, "*Servants, be obedient to them that are your masters according to the flesh, with fear and trembling, in singleness of your heart, as unto Christ; Not with eyeservice, as menpleasers; but as the servants of Christ, doing the will of God from the heart; With good will doing service, as to the Lord, and not to men: Knowing that whatsoever good thing any man doeth, the same shall he receive of the Lord, whether he be bond or free.*"

- c. The false accusations of Potiphar's wife and the purity of the heart of Joseph in refusing her advances — Much should be made at this point concerning heart purity as

you conclude with a very challenging message to your students that they need to cry out to God for a pure heart.

3. Prison experience and elevation to become governor of Egypt

a. Psalm 105:19 states, *“Until the time that his word came: the word of the LORD tried him.”* — Expound on thought of when we are in adverse circumstances, even having the promises of the Lord, we must remain steadfast, for His Word will surely come to pass in our lives.

b. In prison Joseph was faithful and was placed in charge of all the other prisoners — The butler and baker were given dreams that Joseph interpreted. When the butler appeared before Pharaoh, he forgot Joseph, causing him to endure another two years of imprisonment. Stress the need for longsuffering with joyfulness in trials.

c. Pharaoh had dreams and the butler remembered Joseph — Joseph was summoned hurriedly into the presence of Pharaoh. Upon giving the interpretation of the dreams, Joseph was elevated to the second position in the land and made responsible for the feeding and preservation of the population in the time of famine.

4. Latter Years

a. The restoration and reconciliation of the family after they came down to Egypt for food because of the famine — This event is recounted in Genesis chapters 42-45 and involves the testing of the brothers to prove their

repentance for the way they had treated Joseph many years before.

b. The last prophecies over the tribes and especially that of Joseph — These show forth God's specific purposes for each of the twelve tribes.

c. The great prominence and honour that Joseph had in the land and the consequent greatness and multiplication of Israel in the land of Goshen — Stress in conclusion the benefits in old age of those who have lived a godly life and the blessings that they leave to following generations.

We have given an illustration of how to prepare a course on the life of Joseph which can be adapted for any of the lives of God's saints depicted in Holy Scriptures.

Exegesis of a Book of the Bible

Another course that is very instructive and profitable for Bible classes is to exegete the books of the Bible.

Genesis

An overall outline should be made of the book to be taught and the teacher should prepare an Introduction that gives the attendees a quick understanding of the main themes of the book. This is particularly easy with Genesis — the Book of Beginnings.

Written by Moses, Genesis is the first book in the Bible and one that should be taught early in any series of courses on the Bible. In this book we have not only a record of the beginning of our creation but virtually the beginning of all the important Biblical doctrines of Holy Scripture. Thus, the introduction could comprise the following outline.

Introduction

This book is a book of beginnings and in it we find:

- a. The beginning of heaven and earth
- b. The beginning of all animate and inanimate life (animals and vegetation, etc.)
- c. The beginning of man, woman, and marriage
- d. The beginning of sin in man
- e. The beginning of redemption by the shedding of blood and the promise of a coming Redeemer
- f. The beginning of murder and wars
- g. The beginning again of man after the flood that destroyed the earth
- h. The beginning of races, nations, and diversity of languages
- i. The beginning of the holy nation through Abraham
- j. The beginning of the twelve tribes of Israel through Jacob

After this introduction, the book can be easily divided into the following parts. We should note that the time required for these parts is not equal; therefore, the time required for each part will depend upon the material you have amassed through your own research. Another factor to consider is the length of time allotted to the teacher to complete the study of the book of Genesis.

PART	CHAPTER	SUBJECT
1	1-2	The Creation
2	3:1-14	The Fall
3	3:15-24	The Plan Of Redemption
4	4-5	The Lines of Good and Evil
5	6-9	The Flood
6	10-11	Dispersion of the Nations
7	12-25	The Life of Abraham
8	17-35	The Life of Isaac
9	25-50	The Life of Jacob
10	37-50	The Life of Joseph

(This material has been taken from the introduction to Zion Christian Publishers' *Book of Genesis* which was ably edited by Dr Paul Caram. This book will be of great assistance to you in teaching this subject.)

A Doctrinal or Topical Study

Other subjects that a teacher may well be called upon to expound are repentance, faith, healing, the four baptisms, laying on of hands, and eternal judgment. Taking "eternal judgment" as an example, I would like to give some suggestions that will provide guides whereby one may teach what we term these topical or doctrinal subjects.

Eternal Judgment

In introducing this subject, the teacher should seek to emphasise the shortness of our time here upon earth compared

to the length of eternity. At the end of life we will be weighed in the balances of God, for a determination of our final abode. Then every man will be rewarded according to his works. Let us now seek to develop this lesson, for these themes provide excellent divisions whereby we might develop this subject.

1. The shortness of life here upon earth

a. The Words of Moses — Psalm 90:10 states: *“And they that know thy name will put their trust in thee: for thou, LORD, hast not forsaken them that seek thee.”* Then in Psalm 90:4-6, *“For a thousand years in thy sight are but as yesterday when it is past, and as a watch in the night. Thou carriest them away as with a flood; they are as a sleep: in the morning they are like grass which groweth up. In the morning it flourisheth, and groweth up; in the evening it is cut down, and withereth.”*

b. The prayer of Moses — In view of the shortness of man’s life upon this earth, Moses prayed the prayer that all saints should pray: *“So teach us to number our days, that we may apply our hearts unto wisdom”* (Ps. 90:12).

c. Emphasise the importance of counting well our days — These words of the Apostle Paul will be of great help: *“Redeeming the time, because the days are evil”* (Eph. 5:16).

d. The message of John the Baptist — As prophesied by Isaiah, this message (Jn. 1:19-34) follows a similar vein in Isaiah 40:6-8, *“The voice said, Cry. And he said, What shall I cry? All flesh is grass, and all the goodness thereof is as the*

flower of the field: The grass withereth, the flower fadeth: because the spirit of the LORD bloweth upon it: surely the people is grass. The grass withereth, the flower fadeth: but the word of our God shall stand for ever.” Thus, let us encourage our students to consider how quickly the grass grows, then fades, and disappears. So, too, our life is a fleeting shadow across life’s book of pages.

e. The fact that we know not the time of our death — In the words of the Lord Himself, *“And he spake a parable unto them, saying, The ground of a certain rich man brought forth plentifully: And he thought within himself, saying, What shall I do, because I have no room where to bestow my fruits? And he said, This will I do: I will pull down my barns, and build greater; and there will I bestow all my fruits and my goods. And I will say to my soul, Soul, thou hast much goods laid up for many years; take thine ease, eat, drink, and be merry. But God said unto him, Thou fool, this night thy soul shall be required of thee: then whose shall those things be, which thou hast provided?”* (Lk. 12:16-20).

2. Weighed in the balances and found wanting

Such was the judgment pronounced by the Prophet Daniel upon Belshazzar, King of the Chaldeans, the very night he was slain by the Medes and Persians. Here the teacher should dwell much upon the fact that, as Paul warns, we must all appear before the Judgment Seat of Christ (Rom. 14:10). To be found wanting will bring eternal condemnation. Again, we have further understanding of the judgment of all as we

read in Daniel 12:2, *“And many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt.”*

We should also make it clear that there is the judgment of the nations at the coming of Christ. Matthew 25:31-34, 41 states: *“When the Son of man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him, then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory: And before him shall be gathered all nations: and he shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats: And he shall set the sheep on his right hand, but the goats on the left. Then shall the King say unto them on his right hand, Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world... Then shall he say also unto them on the left hand, Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels.”*

Our Lord spoke much concerning the terrors of hell, and so should we warn our students. Such Scriptures as the following could well be used to reinforce the truth.

Consider Luke 16:19-31, where the Lord spoke of the rich man who went to hell and the poor man Lazarus who went to heaven. The state of the rich man is highlighted by verses 23-24, *“And in hell he lift up his eyes, being in torments, and seeth Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom. And he cried and said, Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus, that he may dip the tip of his finger in water, and cool my tongue; for I am tormented in this flame.”*

We would do well to warn against the perils of backsliding by such Scriptures as Matthew 8:12, “*But the children of the kingdom shall be cast out into outer darkness: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.*” Also, Matthew 25:30, “*And cast ye the unprofitable servant into outer darkness: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.*”

It is noteworthy that communism was propounded firstly by Karl Marx, who was in his late teens a born-again, passionate, baptised Christian. A later proponent of Communism was Joseph Stalin, who had once been a seminary student. The account of his death by his daughter makes sombre reading.

“In March 1953, a gasping Joseph Stalin lay on his deathbed in unbearable pain, after a severe stroke that had left his right side paralysed. His final hours were a slow strangulation: his daughter Svetlana later reported that he choked to death as they watched. In those final hellish moments, Stalin appeared to be fighting not only death but the God he denied. Though apparently semiconscious at best, he suddenly opened his eyes and cast a quick, terrified glance upon everyone in the room. Then as his daughter put it, something incomprehensible and awesome happened, that to this day I cannot forget and don’t understand. The Soviet leader suddenly lifted himself halfway up in bed, clenched his fist toward the heavens, shook it in defiance as if at the God he had forsaken, and with one unintelligible murmur dropped motionless on his pillow.” His daughter continued by saying, “My father died a difficult and terrible death.” (Excerpt from *God and Ronald Reagan* by Paul Kengor. p.53.)

God grants an easy death only to the just. Both Karl Marx and Joseph Stalin were among those who had once been on the pathway of life but left to walk on the path that leads to death and hell.

3. All shall be rewarded according to their works

In Matthew 16:27, *“For the Son of man shall come in the glory of his Father with his angels; and then he shall reward every man according to his works.”* This Paul repeats in 1 Corinthians 3:8, *“Now he that planteth and he that watereth are one: and every man shall receive his own reward according to his own labour.”* Paul prays against one man concerning judgment when he writes, *“Alexander the coppersmith did me much evil: the Lord reward him according to his works”* (2 Tim. 4:14).

Concerning the state of the righteous in eternity, Paul says in 1 Corinthians 15:41-42, *“There is one glory of the sun, and another glory of the moon, and another glory of the stars: for one star differeth from another star in glory. So also is the resurrection of the dead.”*

King Solomon writes on this matter in Ecclesiastes 11:3, *“...if the tree fall toward the south, or toward the north, in the place where the tree falleth, there it shall be,”* meaning that as we die so we shall be in eternity. The prophet Daniel states it this way, *“And they that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament; and they that turn many to righteousness as the stars for ever and ever”* (Dan. 12:3). The teacher should show that there is a difference between the righteous and the wicked at their death and in their eternal state.

The following story might help to illustrate this point. Voltaire, the French writer, was an inveterate liar — so much so that towards the end of his life even his friends tended to avoid his company because his lies were so obnoxious. Well, on his deathbed, his torments were so great his cries (as he was enduring something of the eternal punishment that was awaiting him) were so blasphemous that the nurse who was detailed to care for him ran from his bedroom unable to support and listen to those horrendous curses.

Pope Pius XII, likewise, had such a terrible ending. He was literally tossed up and down upon his bed as he began to endure the terrible torments of hell that awaited him. His torments were documented and photographed by his doctor by the means of a small camera whose lens replaced one of the buttons in his waistcoat. So there is a hell, just as there is a heaven.

It is for the teacher to admonish his hearers to live the good life and be full of good works, some of which will precede them and others that will follow them (1 Tim. 5:25). Let them be ever mindful of remaining on the pathway of righteousness.

Therefore, a teacher should be one who sets before his students the two ways, *“Enter ye in at the strait gate: for wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat: Because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it”* (Mt. 7:13-14).

Chapter Ten

Lessons in Hermeneutics (Practical Guide for Teaching the Books of the Bible)

The Scriptures are filled with symbolism and are enriched with illustrations that make the truth come alive to the teacher and student alike when correctly interpreted. We, as teachers, must (as Paul says) rightly divide the Word of God (2 Tim. 2:15). We are now going to give examples of scriptural symbolism and interpretation known as Hermeneutics — the art of scriptural interpretation.

For the purpose of helping teachers, we are looking at illustrations in the Scriptures book by book. This, we hasten to add, is not an exhaustive study but simply a guide for teachers in this very necessary aspect of their work.

THE OLD TESTAMENT

THE PENTATEUCH

Genesis

The Book of Beginnings contains keys whereby we can understand creation and the principle of propagation. We are told that everything brings forth after its kind. Therefore, this is true in the spiritual realm that a teacher will reproduce his teachings and life in his students. They will be images of the teacher, even to the copying of his mannerisms.

I well remember, when in Switzerland, the little son of a pastor friend who (at 4 years of age) was parading up and down in his

father's living room with his hands behind his back. His mother, observing this performance, asked him what he was doing. His response was, "I'm being like Pastor Bailey." I never realized that when walking and teaching I would have my hands clasped behind my back. After learning this I worked on correcting this habit.

There is, however, a truth that we should mention with respect to reproduction. We cannot merely copy another but we must have their life transmitted too. I would like to illustrate this by speaking of a notable English evangelist, George Jeffries, in England in the mid 1900's. He had a habit of raising his right hand at a given point when preaching, and at that time the power of God would fall. His students duly noted this and copied it. However, no matter how many times they did so the power of God did not fall. They wrongly associated the power with the movement of the hand and not the relationship that George Jeffries had with God.

Returning to Genesis we see that out of Adam came forth two lines, the righteous from Abel and then Seth, and the wicked from Cain. They formed two lines; and when these lines intermarried, violence covered the earth. Here is a very solemn lesson that God taught later in Leviticus: there had to be a separation between good and evil. This principle is demonstrated again in the lives of Isaac and Ishmael, and later in the lives of Jacob and Esau.

The Flood is a type of the judgment of the Last Days that will come upon the earth because of the wickedness of the

inhabitants. The Lord, when speaking of His Second Coming, likened it unto the days of Noah. Abraham is a type of our loving Heavenly Father; Isaac a type of the Son of God; whilst Eliezar is a type of the Holy Spirit sent out by the Father to find the Bride for the Son. This book concludes with Jacob blessing his sons in the land of Egypt from whence they wait for their deliverance.

Exodus

Here Moses is the promised Saviour, and is of course a type of Christ, in that Christ is a prophet like unto Moses. He is the lawgiver, and (as we have already mentioned) our Lord made it clear that He came to fulfil the Law. Moses is the eternal companion of the Lord. He is one of the two anointed ones who stand by the Lord of the whole earth, Elijah being the other. Therefore, a study of the life of Moses will give many insights into the life of Christ Himself.

The pattern of the Tabernacle was given to Moses. This Tabernacle (divided into three parts), illustrates the three principal classes of Christians: Little Children, (Outer Court Christians), Young Men (those in the Holy Place), and Fathers (those who have entered within the Veil and dwell in Holy of Holies). This is reemphasised in 1 John 2:12-14.

The Tabernacle has seven pieces of furniture, each corresponding to spiritual experiences, and the Lord fulfilled each of them. The Altar symbolises salvation obtained through the shed blood of Christ. The Laver of Water symbolises water baptism. In the Holy Place the Candlestick

with the seven lamps speaks of the Seven Spirits of the Lord (whose names are given in Isaiah 11:1-3). The Table of Shewbread speaks of Christ as the Bread of Life (Jn. 6:35). The Altar of Incense speaks of prayer. The Ark of the Covenant represents the Body of Christ and the believer. The Mercy Seat symbolises the purpose of the redeeming work of God in Christ, to be able to manifest His mercy. (The Tabernacle has been more thoroughly treated in our book entitled *The Tabernacle of Moses.*)

The Journey of Israel, in which Moses led the children of Israel from Egypt to the Promised Land, is full of spiritual truths (as Paul states in 1 Corinthians 10:1-11). It lays out for us the spiritual journey of a soul from earth to heaven, from one's sinful unsaved status to that of the spirits of just men made perfect.

The varying stages of the journey reveal aspects of our Christian walk. Egypt represents this world. In order to start our journey we have to experience salvation through the blood of the Passover Lamb, which was sprinkled over the lintels and doorposts of their houses. This Lamb symbolises Christ (1 Cor. 5:7). The crossing of the Red Sea is analogous to water baptism. The account of the bitter waters of Marah (and turning the water sweet by throwing in a tree, which is symbolic of the cross) shows the way to overcome bitterness in a believer's life through looking to Jesus.

Mount Sinai, where they arrived during the Feast of Pentecost, speaks of the experience of the baptism of the Holy Spirit. The

wilderness experience portrays the trials in the Christian life that are necessary to show what is in our hearts. The ten trials are symbolic of the tests that we have to overcome in one form or another to move on. Then we come to the River Jordan, which represents the crucified life — coming through the waters and being able to exclaim (as Paul writes in Galatians 2:20), “*I am crucified with Christ...*”

Gilgal signifies heart circumcision, when the Lord cuts away those things in our lives that we inherited from our ancestors.

Leviticus

This book, called the Handbook of the Priests, contains precise instructions concerning the ceremonial law that was to be observed in the Old Testament. These ceremonial observances and customs, however, have rich spiritual significance for the Church Age, and give insight into the New Testament priesthood after the order of Melchizedek. (They are treated in detail in our book entitled *Feasts and Offerings*, which we highly recommend for those who aspire to be New Testament king-priests.)

Numbers

This book covers the wilderness journey of the children of Israel with all the difficulties of those who travelled the land of deserts, of pits, of drought, of the shadow of death. This journey led through a land that no man passed through and where no man dwelt (Jer. 2:6). It will greatly aid us in the spiritual wilderness sojourn that every Christian has to pass through.

Deuteronomy

This means a second reading of the Law. It contains a historical perspective of the children of Israel's Journey from Egypt to the plains of Moab on the eastern side of the River Jordan. Also, it gives the prophecies concerning the Babylonian siege and consequent dispersion of Israel.

THE HISTORICAL BOOKS

Joshua

Joshua is the leader who took Israel into the Promised Land. His book is full of battles against enemies who have spiritual significances for Christians. (This is dealt with in greater detail in our book entitled *The Journey of Israel*. Each of the 31 kings that were defeated has relevance in the life of the individual believer.)

Judges

Judges gives the accounts of the 13 Judges who governed Israel. Their lives contain encouragements and warnings for the believers. Especially true is the aspect that being used of God is not necessarily indicative that one's life is holy.

Ruth

Ruth provides many wonderful illustrations on the rewards of devotion to relatives, and above all devotion to God. She is a wonderful example of the Gentiles being grafted into the lineage and blessings of Christ. This thought is developed by Paul in Romans 11:16–24, where he uses the symbolism of the Gentiles being like a wild olive tree that is grafted into the true olive tree (which is Israel).

These books are generally accepted as being those dealing with the lives of David and his heirs, namely 1 and 2 Samuel, 1 and 2 Kings, and 1 and 2 Chronicles.

1 and 2 Samuel

These two books cover the accounts of the lives of three notable men of God: Samuel, Saul, and David. These books also tell us of the movement of the (religious and secular) capitals of the nation of Israel from Shiloh to Hebron, and then on to Zion. These three cities represent three stages in the life of the Christian. Shiloh, the first capital, represents a place of decision. It was an easy dwelling place, but here the Israelites became lethargic, immoral, and unfaithful.

Hebron, where David dwelt for seven years, was originally the inheritance of Caleb. It also spoke of friendship, as it was the burial place of Abraham, who was known as a friend of God (Jas. 2:23). Moreover, David received his second and third anointings here. His first anointing was as a young man when Samuel anointed him to be king after Saul had forfeited his kingship through disobedience (1 Sam. 16:12-13). These three anointings correspond to the three stages known as: Called, Chosen, and Faithful (Rev. 17:14).

It should be noted that of the three kings of the United Kingdom of Israel, only David received the three anointings whilst the other two (Saul and Solomon) received but two. Both Saul and Solomon were called and chosen, but not found faithful.

Zion, which David took, is eulogised as being God's dwelling place. It is spoken of as being the "Rest of God," and the place of His glory. The Apostle Paul writes in Hebrews 12 that it is the spiritual mountain to which we as Christians are called. The qualifications for individuals to ascend unto this spiritual Mount Zion are given in Psalms 15 and 24. The promises to congregations that dwell on Mount Zion are given in Isaiah chapter 4.

1 & 2 Kings and 1 & 2 Chronicles

The lives and reigns of the 20 kings of both Israel and Judah in the divided kingdom provide excellent character studies that are extremely beneficial to all students.

There were a few who were good, many who were bad, and some who were exceedingly evil. This fact can be linked to the Lord's warning, "*Enter ye in at the strait gate: for wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat: Because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it*" (Mt. 7:13-14).

It is important to note that the Lord spoke more of the torments of hell than the pleasures of heaven. John Wesley made the observation that leaders should not underestimate sin in the Church. Therefore, the teacher who is wise will constantly give appropriate warnings throughout his lessons. (A good source of material for lessons can be found in our books entitled *The Kings of Israel* and *The Kings of Judah*.)

As we mentioned earlier, Solomon, David's anointed heir, was given an awesome warning by his father, which we now quote as being applicable to all of God's children, "*And thou, Solomon my son, know thou the God of thy father, and serve him with a perfect heart and with a willing mind: for the LORD searcheth all hearts, and understandeth all the imaginations of the thoughts: if thou seek him, he will be found of thee; but if thou forsake him, he will cast thee off for ever*" (1 Chr. 28:9).

Although renowned as the wisest man who ever lived, Solomon did not serve God with a perfect heart, as did his father David. He taught others to keep their hearts with all diligence but he withheld not his own heart from any joy (Eccl. 2:10). Moreover, he taught that one should "*Live joyfully with the wife whom thou lovest all the days of the life...*" yet he himself had 1,000 women (Eccl. 9:9, 1 Ki. 11:3).

In his own words, the result was that he became an "old and foolish king." The teacher must bring out this lesson — that Solomon is an example of one who taught wise precepts but did not follow them. Therefore, one's teaching cannot save, without a life that exemplifies these counsels. Hence, his inheritance was taken from him through the division of the kingdom.

THE RESTORATION BOOKS

These books were written after the Fall of Babylon, namely Ezra, Esther, and Nehemiah. They are books of triumph, showing how the prophecies of Isaiah, Jeremiah, Daniel, and Ezekiel are fulfilled.

The teacher should make this connection so that students appreciate the prophetic flow and fulfilment of the Word of God. Two prophecies in particular — the 70 years of Babylonian captivity through Cyrus (Isa. 44:28), and the rebuilding of the Temple and the city of Jerusalem. The emphasis should be on the goodness of God to His people. Although He smites, He also heals and rebuilds that which He tears down. The sterling character of Ezra, the great teacher; Esther, the chosen one (a type of the Bride of Christ); and Nehemiah, the faithful administrator, should be highlighted.

Ezra

He was the notable teacher of Israel living in the Time of the Restoration of the Temple. From him we can learn many valuable lessons. He was revered by Israel as the Second Moses and was renowned as a Teacher of Righteousness.

Moreover, Ezra was known for his piety (revealed in his penitential prayer recorded in Ezra chapter 9), and his priestly zeal for holiness. He was responsible for setting in order true worship in the Rebuilt Temple.

In Ezra 7:10, “*For Ezra had prepared his heart to seek the law of the LORD, and to do it, and to teach in Israel statutes and judgments,*” we are given essential keys in the formation of the life of a Teacher of Righteousness.

I. Ezra prepared his heart — It all starts with the heart, and our heart must be disposed, eagerly and joyfully, to undertake the ministry that has been ordained for us by God. Obviously

Ezra was a chosen vessel who responded to the call of God. How many (in the words of our Lord) have been called and have not qualified or been chosen (Mt. 22:14), simply because they have not appreciated the privilege of being considered for this high and holy calling.

We should, therefore, consider David who said, “*I delight to do Thy will*” (Ps. 40:8). David too was a teacher, as he declares in Psalm 51:13, “*Then will I teach transgressors thy ways; and sinners shall be converted unto thee.*” His teaching ministry is evidenced in many of his didactic psalms such as Psalms 32, 42, and 44. David made the prayer that all, especially teachers, should make, “*Create in me a clean heart, O God*” (Ps. 51:10).

King Solomon states: “*the knowledge of the holy is understanding*” (Prov. 9:10). The thought of this statement is that all men might have knowledge, but to understand that knowledge is only available to those who have a pure heart.

II. Ezra sought the law of God — The teacher has to seek out truths (cf. Eccl. 12:9) by diligent study, comparing Scripture with Scripture, since it is to the glory of God to hide a matter and to the glory of kings to search out a matter (Prov. 25:2). Moreover, some truth is called Hidden Manna, and thus, not obvious to those who make but a cursory reading of God’s Word.

Truth comes to light also by revelation hence the cry of the Psalms, such as Psalm 119:18, “*Open thou mine eyes, that I*

may behold wondrous things out of thy law.” Paul likewise prayed for his beloved Ephesian Church in Ephesians 1:18, *“The eyes of your understanding being enlightened”* that they would know what were the riches of the glory of God’s inheritance in the saints.

III. Ezra taught God’s statutes and judgments in Israel — The New Testament says that we are the Israel of God (cf. Gal. 6:16). The precepts and commandments of God will provide a guide to us. Psalm 119:105 states; *“Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path.”* It is through His Word that we may walk circumspectly, avoiding the pitfalls and the potholes of sin along life’s pathway.

His Light unto our path reveals to us a vision of the ultimate call upon our lives that brings us into our haven of rest: our heavenly home. All this Ezra, the model for all Teachers of Righteousness, provided for his generation and those that followed. He surely turned many to righteousness and now shines as the stars in heaven forever and ever (Dan. 12:3).

Esther

This book finds its place historically between chapters 6 and 7 of the book of Ezra. The essence of the book of Esther is that a little Jewish girl became queen to the greatest of all the Persian emperors. Esther is at once a heroine, for she was God’s instrument to preserve His people from destruction. Also, she is a type of the Bride of Christ. In particular, she is a role model for any young girl or woman in piety, virtue, and true courage.

Nehemiah

This book, which is really a continuation of the book of Ezra, deals with the third return of the children of Israel to Judah. Whereas the book of Ezra dealt with the building of the temple, Nehemiah was concerned with the building of the walls of the city of Jerusalem. He was the king's cupbearer, and, as such, was the confidant of the king. Having been very sorrowful upon learning of the state of the city of Jerusalem and its walls, Nehemiah received permission from King Artaxerxes to rebuild them (Neh. 2:2-6).

Nehemiah was a man of fearless courage. He also was one of deep generosity and kindness, feeding many at his own table and not accepting the normal dues to which a governor was entitled (Neh. 5). Let him be one whom we emulate when we are given authority and responsibility in the Kingdom.

Job

One of the three most righteous men (along with Noah and Daniel), Job was chosen by God to manifest the glories of sufferings with patience. *“Behold, we count them happy which endure. Ye have heard of the patience of Job, and have seen the end of the Lord; that the Lord is very pitiful, and of tender mercy”* (Jas. 5:11).

THE POETICAL BOOKS

Psalms

Often called the Hymnal of Israel, this delightful and meaningful collection of 150 odes are for instruction and devotion, enhancing the spiritual life of those who meditate therein. They

provide comfort, consolation, and hope to the weary during their earthly sojourn, and also provide a very easy way to express love and appreciation to our Creator for His love, care, and watchful eye over us. Reading in the Psalms daily will promote our spiritual growth and prophetic flow.

Proverbs

This book provides instruction in wisdom for daily living. A chapter a day is recommended for the wise to protect them from the snares of the evil one, as well as for the development of a discerning mind.

Ecclesiastes

Written by Solomon in his old age, this book is a reflection upon his own personal mistakes in life, and therefore is a warning to us. Bearing in mind that Solomon was the preacher and teacher in Jerusalem, we can take heed lest we also fall by failing to obey the admonitions of Scripture, and perhaps even our own sermons and counsel to others. Let us, unlike Solomon, be doers of the Word and not just readers and teachers.

Song of Solomon

This book is a compilation of five of the 1,005 songs that Solomon wrote (1 Ki. 4:32). They are keys to a progressive love relationship between the Bride and Christ, her Heavenly Bridegroom.

THE PROPHETICAL BOOKS

There are 16 prophetic books, which are divided into two sections and termed the Major (4 books) and Minor Prophets (12 books).

There are also other prophets termed the Non-Writing Prophets. Amongst the greatest of these are Elijah and Elisha, whose ministries and lives are recounted in 1 and 2 Kings. These two prophets are types of Christ and the Church respectively. In interpreting this relationship, it is important to develop the truths that Elisha performed twice as many miracles as did Elijah.

Elisha is a type of the fulfilment of John 14:12, where Jesus states that the works He did will the Church do also and greater works because He has gone to the Father.

In so drawing the students' attention to this, the teacher will be able to give a burning hope that in the Last Days these students will seek the Lord that His miraculous power might be manifested through their ministries. This precept must be linked with Daniel 11:32-33, "*And such as do wickedly against the covenant shall he corrupt by flatteries: but the people that do know their God shall be strong, and do exploits. And they that understand among the people shall instruct many...*" This thought brings to mind two aspects of the Last Day ministries: the power and knowledge of God that will flow together in that glorious End Time Church.

The Major Prophets

Isaiah

The Book of Isaiah is the most beloved of all the writing prophets, and along with Genesis, Deuteronomy, and the

Psalms, is one of the books most quoted by the Lord. The teacher should ensure that his students have a good working knowledge of this book, which contains remarkable prophecies of the life of Christ fulfilled by Jesus to the minutest detail.

There are prophecies concerning the Assyrian siege of Jerusalem that were fulfilled in the lifetime of the prophet during the reign of Hezekiah, King of Judah. The rise and fall of Babylon is declared, as well as the decree of Cyrus the Persian King who freed the Jews to return to their own land. This prophecy, given approximately 150 years before the birth of Cyrus, reveals the extraordinary accuracy of the book, as it is impossible to foretell who is going to be king or president of a country a few decades into the future.

Jeremiah

This book is filled with beautiful and meaningful illustrations that are applicable to the lives of Christians throughout all ages. Some of the best are concerning the Potter's House and Broken Cisterns. These types are both delightful and awesome.

One, depicting a marred vessel that was made over again, speaks of the ruined life of a Christian who, in the hands of the Master Potter, is made into another vessel as seemeth good in His eyes. This is a wonderful message of hope to the prodigals. The other, "Broken Cisterns," is a terrible warning against going to any source for solace and happiness other than Christ Himself.

This book foretells the siege and fall of Jerusalem to the Babylonians, which was fulfilled in the lifetime of the prophet. Also, Jeremiah declares the restoration of Israel after 70 years of captivity, and the final restoration during the Millennial Reign of Christ upon earth.

Jeremiah even prophesies the return of the Jews in our time (30:3-9), the consequent time of Jacob's trouble (or the Great Tribulation), and then the resurrection of David to be Israel's prince in the Millennium. All these prophecies will bring great trust and hope to your students, as they will come to understand that the Lord has a perfect plan for man upon earth and that He is in complete control.

Lamentations

This book follows the book of Jeremiah and was written by that prophet after the Fall of Jerusalem in 586 B.C. It is a book of five laments portraying the sorrow of those who disobeyed God.

Ezekiel

There are certain truths in this book that are of primordial importance to teachers and students alike. They contrast the priesthood of Levi (who went astray, following the desires of the people when they departed from the purity of God's standards) with those priests of the family of Zadok, who remained faithful.

Although the Lord promised to restore the erring Levites, He made it clear that they would minister to the people, whilst

the faithful sons of Zadok would be allowed to minister unto the Lord at His table.

Thus the teacher himself should aim to be faithful in all aspects of the Christian life, in seeking to please the Lord. In so doing he will inspire his students to do likewise. He will be permitted eternally to look upon the beautiful face of our Lord and to behold Him as He is. Another principal teaching of this book is the revelation of the Temple that will be constructed in the Millennial Period.

The dimensions should be carefully studied, as they (when correctly interpreted) reveal priceless truths. However, the key teaching is contained in Ezekiel 43:12, *“This is the law of the house; Upon the top of the mountain the whole limit thereof round about shall be most holy. Behold, this is the law of the house.”* The word “holy” occurs 49 times in the book, showing the nature of a true priest and his passion for the holiness of God to be guarded and exalted by His people. We should also remember the title of the Father, that He is the “Thrice Holy God” (cf. Isa. 6:1-4).

Daniel

One of the three most righteous men (along with Noah and Job), Daniel was beloved of God (Ezek. 14:14, Dan. 9:23). An excellent spirit was in him; neither was any error or fault found in him. He is the epitome of a faithful servant and is best remembered for his unswerving piety and devotion to God at the risk of his own life — and by being preserved even in the den of lions, which afterwards devoured his

accusers. The role model for a Teacher of Righteousness, he was also a prophet of distinction, whose prophecies reveal events that are beginning to come upon the earth even in our days.

The Minor Prophets

These are so designated as their content is smaller, not because their prophecies are less important.

Hosea

This book depicts Hosea as a long-suffering husband who sees his unfaithful wife restored to him after many years. He is a type of the Lord as the husband of Israel, who waits with much long-suffering for the return of Israel to the pathways of righteousness and reunion with Himself.

A key passage which shows the all-compassionate heart of Christ is, *“How shall I give thee up, Ephraim? how shall I deliver thee, Israel? how shall I make thee as Admah? how shall I set thee as Zeboim? mine heart is turned within me, my repentings are kindled together. I will not execute the fierceness of mine anger, I will not return to destroy Ephraim: for I am God, and not man; the Holy One in the midst of thee: and I will not enter into the city”* (Hos. 11:8-9).

Another important passage for us who are Teachers of Righteousness is the following, which delineates the steps for the backslider to return to the Lord, *“O Israel, return unto the LORD thy God; for thou hast fallen by thine iniquity. Take with you words, and turn to the LORD: say unto him, Take away all*

*iniquity, and receive us graciously: so will we render the calves of our lips. Asshur shall not save us; we will not ride upon horses: neither will we say any more to the work of our hands, Ye are our gods: for in thee the fatherless findeth mercy. I will heal their backsliding, I will love them freely: for mine anger is turned away from him... Ephraim shall say, What have I to do any more with idols? I have heard him, and observed him: I am like a green fir tree. From me is thy fruit found. Who is wise, and he shall understand these things? prudent, and he shall know them? for the ways of the LORD are right, and the just shall walk in them: but the transgressors shall fall therein” (Hos. 14:1-4, 8-9). The last verse is a very sound reason for studying this very important book, as it portrays the backslidings of Ephraim, the tribe that represents the other nine that formed the northern nation of Israel. (In fact, we have entitled our commentary upon this book as *The Restoration of the Backslider.*)*

Joel

Joel prophesies concerning the outpouring of the Holy Spirit on the day of Pentecost and is quoted by the Apostle Peter on the occasion of the first outpouring to justify the actions of those in the Upper Room after they had been filled with the Holy Spirit.

This book also speaks of the last siege of Jerusalem before the coming of the Lord, thus adding justification to the view that there will be no more peace for Israel until the Lord Himself comes to the embattled defenders of Zion and His feet land upon the Mount of Olives.

Amos

Amos, one of the least educated of the Lord's servants, was probably one of His most devout followers. Whilst full of historical insights concerning the times in which he prophesied, his book also contains some very quotable verses. These include—*“Can two walk together, except they be agreed?”* (3:3). This verse was made very real to me when I was pastoring an evangelical church. A deacon refused to agree to the manifestations of the Holy Spirit in speaking in other tongues. The Lord said, “Can I walk with him except he agree with Me?” Another important quote is in verse 7 of that same chapter, *“Surely the Lord GOD will do nothing, but he revealeth his secret unto his servants the prophets.”* When we are in tune with the Lord, we shall know what He is doing.

A solemn warning to churches that do not walk in the light as He is in the light is found in Amos 8:11, *“Behold, the days come, saith the Lord GOD, that I will send a famine in the land, not a famine of bread, nor a thirst for water, but of hearing the words of the LORD.”*

This book was written at a time of economic blessing when there were those who had two houses, a winter one and a summer one. They were rich and unrighteous, oppressing the poor. Therefore God decreed judgment and gave this terrible warning: *“...Prepare to meet thy God, O Israel”* (4:12). This is an excellent Scripture for evangelists, pastors, and teachers to use. It can be coupled with Amos 5:4, *“For thus saith the LORD unto the house of Israel, Seek ye me, and ye shall live.”*

Amos 9:11 mentions that the Lord will raise up the Tabernacle of David that is fallen. This is quoted by the Apostle James to justify the inclusion of the Gentiles into the Church (Acts 15:14-16).

Then Amos promises a mighty harvest in the End Days (9:13) for which we need untold numbers of Teachers of Righteousness to instruct the new believers. Let us not be negligent in our high and solemn calling to reproduce ourselves in countless others that the harvest may be brought into the barns. May God prepare us to feed the new believers with the finest of the wheat that they might grow up like calves in the stall (Mal. 4:2b).

Obadiah

The Book of Obadiah, although small, should not be neglected. It depicts Esau, the one who rejected his birthright, being made small. It also portrays how God pours out His blessings upon all those who press on unto spiritual Mount Zion. These dear ones who press on will then possess the dwelling places of their brethren who have despised and turned against them.

The Lord comforts the faithful who have had to bear the slander of those who once walked with them and then turned from the path of complete obedience to the Lord, and became their spiritual enemies.

Jonah

This book is well known for its account of the prophet Jonah's being in the belly of the whale. This account should be taken

literally as it is confirmed and used by Christ when He explained that He would be in the bowels of the earth for three days and three nights.

This book can also be used to instruct those who are called to the ministry but are reluctant. The Lord in His infinite mercy does persevere, sometimes using extraordinary means to bring His ministers into the pathway of His choice for their lives. Jonah's prophecies are also mentioned in 2 Kings 14:25.

Micah

This prophet ministered during the time of Isaiah. His prophecies confirmed those of Isaiah. For example, Isaiah 2:2-3 in particular is confirmed by Micah 4:2 which says, "*And many nations shall come, and say, Come, and let us go up to the mountain of the LORD, and to the house of the God of Jacob; and he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths: for the law shall go forth of Zion, and the word of the LORD from Jerusalem.*"

This prophecy, whilst referring to Israel in the Millennial Period, should also be understood to refer to the Church in the Last Days, when people will be looking for sound teaching. Let us encourage our students to be a part of this fulfilment, in declaring the ways of God and His law, making His Word clear to those they will teach.

Micah predicts the birthplace of Christ to be Bethlehem. Micah 5:2 was referred to when Herod asked to know where the Messiah would be born (Mt. 2:6). (Bethlehem, by translation

is “the House of Bread,” for He was the Bread of Life that came from heaven.)

Nahum

The meaning of Nahum is “comforter or consoler.” This book prophesies the fall of Nineveh, the capital of the Assyrian Empire that had afflicted Israel over a period of many years. Jonah brought the message of repentance to Nineveh, but 100 years later Nahum decreed her fall (which occurred in 612 B.C.).

One of the important exhortations of this book is found in 1:15, “*Behold upon the mountains the feet of him that bringeth good tidings, that publisheth peace! O Judah, keep thy solemn feasts, perform thy vows: for the wicked shall no more pass through thee; he is utterly cut off.*” The key phrase here for us, as teachers, is: “*O Judah keep thy solemn feasts.*” These refer to the Seven Feasts of the Lord enumerated in Leviticus 23. The feasts are important because they reveal spiritual truths essential to the life of each believer. Teachers must walk in these truths as well as teach them in order to keep the feasts.

The Seven Feasts of the Lord

1. The Feast of Passover
2. The Feast of Unleavened Bread
3. The Feast of First Fruits
4. The Feast of Pentecost
5. The Feast of Trumpets
6. The Day of Atonement
7. The Feast of Tabernacles

We will look at the underlying spiritual truths of each feast later when we cover the “seven parables” in Matthew’s gospel. (A more detailed study of these Feasts is found in our book entitled *Feasts and Offerings*.)

There is another truth that we would do well to mention. Nahum declares that in the day Babylon overthrows Nineveh, the inhabitants of Nineveh shall be drunk with wine. This is the case when Jerusalem (and later Babylon) falls. The Lord sends a spirit of drunkenness upon the defenders. One should warn, therefore, the servants of the Lord against taking strong drink.

Habakkuk

In the interpretation of Scripture, as we have mentioned before, Israel is a type of the Church. One of the prime concerns of the prophet is lawlessness. One could link this time in the history of Israel with the time of the Judges, characterised by the phrase, “*Every man did that which was right in his own eyes*” (Jdg. 17:6). This certainly categorises the Church in the days before world revival. A lack of godliness and holiness pervades congregation after congregation.

The prophet then develops a very important fact of life. Basically, one must have a vision of those things that are afar off in time and eternity in order to triumph in the life here below (Hab. 2:1-3). The teacher needs to stress to the students the importance of waiting upon the Lord for a personal vision of the Lord’s purposes for their lives, as well as His purpose for the Church.

Thus Habbakuk, speaking of the Church, states: *“For the earth shall be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the LORD, as the waters cover the sea”* (Hab. 2:14). May we encourage ourselves and others to lift our vision higher that we might see the glory of the Lord. Another prime truth in this prophetic book is that *“the just shall live by his faith”* (Hab. 2:4). This truth, expounded by the Apostle Paul in Romans and Galatians, forms the basis for the life of every believer in Christ.

Zephaniah

This book contains an awesome warning. The nation of Israel, once desired by all because it was enhanced by the beauty of the presence of the Lord, would now be despised because of her sinfulness. It would be a nation that would receive the judgments of the Lord. Then follows a solemn admonition that applies to us all in these last days, *“Before the decree bring forth, before the day pass as the chaff, before the fierce anger of the LORD come upon you, before the day of the LORD’S anger come upon you. Seek ye the LORD, all ye meek of the earth, which have wrought his judgment; seek righteousness, seek meekness: it may be ye shall be hid in the day of the LORD’S anger”* (2:2-3).

The warning is not to be as Jerusalem, which is here called a *“city that dwelt carelessly,”* but rather to be as the *“remnant”* in the city (2:15). The Lord said, *“I will also leave in the midst of thee an afflicted and poor people, and they shall trust in the name of the LORD. The remnant of Israel shall not do iniquity, nor speak lies; neither shall a deceitful tongue be found in their*

mouth: for they shall feed and lie down, and none shall make them afraid... In that day it shall be said to Jerusalem, Fear thou not: and to Zion, Let not thine hands be slack. The LORD thy God in the midst of thee is mighty; he will save, he will rejoice over thee with joy; he will rest in his love, he will joy over thee with singing” (3:12-13, 16-17). This is, of course, the goal of the Christian life — to be well pleasing in the sight of the Lord, causing Him to rejoice over us with joy.

Haggai

Haggai details some of the steps of the rebuilding of the Temple and (along with Zechariah, Malachi, Ezra, Esther, and Nehemiah) covers the Period known as the Restoration Era. Some notable verses in this book are Haggai 1:4-5, *“Is it time for you, O ye, to dwell in your ceiled houses, and this house lie waste? Now therefore thus saith the LORD of hosts; Consider your ways.”* Here the rebuke of the Lord is given concerning the fact that the people are building well-apportioned houses for themselves, but are neglecting the House of the Lord. Because of this the Lord had sent them economic leanness. Due to this admonition, the original builders, Zerubbabel the governor and Joshua the High Priest, then resumed building.

There is a very encouraging reward promised for Zerubbabel — that he would be as a signet, for the Lord had chosen him. What a reward for faithfulness to place before our students!

Then there is another promise that applies to the Church in the Last Days in 2:9, *“The glory of this latter house shall be greater*

than of the former, saith the LORD of hosts: and in this place will I give peace, saith the LORD of hosts.” The Last Day Church will know a greater power and glory than did the Early Church on the Day of Pentecost and during the times of the Acts of the Apostles. This glorious promise will give great hope to the generations that our students will raise up.

Zechariah

As the companion prophet of Haggai, this book is filled with hope for the Church and Israel. The love of God for His people is shown so beautifully by the phrase in 2:8, “...*for he that toucheth you toucheth the apple of his eye.*” In addition, there is encouragement for the builder of a church or fellowship, “*The hands of Zerubbabel have laid the foundation of this house; his hands shall also finish it; and thou shalt know that the LORD of hosts hath sent me unto you. For who hath despised the day of small things? for they shall rejoice, and shall see the plummet in the hand of Zerubbabel with those seven; they are the eyes of the LORD, which run to and fro through the whole earth*” (Zech. 4:9-10).

Thus the builder receives strength to believe that the Lord (Who gave him the work to do in the first place) will indeed enable him to finish the work. Although the beginnings are small, they will be like the proverbial tiny mustard seed, which in the end becomes a mighty tree, or the tiny acorn that becomes, in time, a mighty oak.

In 10:1, there is a very important theological truism — namely, that the Lord has His timetable and that we need to be aware of

it, as Jesus said to Jerusalem in the day of her visitation. When God is going to move in revival, it is the time to pray specifically for the outpouring of the Latter Rain of His Spirit (which is seven times as great as the former rain outpouring on the day of Pentecost). Therefore let us encourage teachers everywhere to prepare students for this awesome manifestation of His power and glory.

Zechariah contains many references to Christ's Second Coming and the events that will occur at that Blessed Time.

Malachi

This is the last book in the Old Testament and points to both the First and Second Coming of our Lord. It also declares clearly that the Church will be expanding throughout the world and proclaiming the glory of His Name (1:11). Speaking of Levi, it also depicts the qualities of a true Teacher of Righteousness, *“And ye shall know that I have sent this commandment unto you, that my covenant might be with Levi, saith the LORD of hosts. My covenant was with him of life and peace; and I gave them to him for the fear wherewith he feared me, and was afraid before my name. The law of truth was in his mouth, and iniquity was not found in his lips: he walked with me in peace and equity, and did turn many away from iniquity. For the priest's lips should keep knowledge, and they should seek the law at his mouth: for he is the messenger of the LORD of hosts”* (2:4-7).

The priest was in covenant relationship with the Lord for life and peace because of his reverential fear of the Lord. The law

of truth was in his mouth and no iniquity was found in his lips. He walked with God and turned many away from their iniquity. The teacher or priest is the messenger of the Lord and should keep knowledge as we see in Proverbs 23:23, *“Buy the truth, and sell it not; also wisdom, and instruction, and understanding.”*

The people who fear the Lord and speak often one to another shall be the Lord’s special treasure when the Books of Remembrance are opened before Him (3:16). These verses should be used to encourage teachers and students alike to share and talk over experiences and Scripture texts with one another in a reverential and joyful manner.

Then in 4:2 there is a positive promise that the Lord, as the Sun of Righteousness, will arise over congregations with healing in His wings. It is a promise that we must press into and receive so that we shall see the healing power of the Lord in our ministries.

The book ends with the mention of the two major prophets, Moses and Elijah, who are referred to as the Anointed Ones who stand before the Lord of the whole earth in Zechariah 4:11-14 and again in Revelation 11:3-4 (cf. Mt. 17). Moses was the Lawgiver and Elijah, the one who preached repentance.

These messages and teachings are essential in the Last Days. The message of John the Baptist and Jesus was repentance. The New Covenant is to have the Law of God written upon the fleshly tables of our hearts. The last verse in Malachi

speaks of the need for families to be reunited to receive God’s blessing. Thus, marriage and the family are an essential teaching for all peoples in the Church. There is no finer teaching than to ensure that Teachers of Righteousness teach by example in their own families.

THE NEW TESTAMENT

The New Testament, consisting of 27 books, may be divided into the following sections: the Gospels, the Historical book of Acts, the Epistles, and the book of Revelation.

The Four Gospels

The Gospels are composed of four books written by Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John. These Gospels can be aligned with the four heads of the living creatures of Ezekiel chapter 1, which are:

<i>Gospel</i>	<i>Creature</i>	<i>Symbolizes</i>
Matthew	lion	Christ as king
Mark	ox	Christ as servant and sacrifice
Luke	man	Christ as the Son of Man
John	eagle	Christ as the Son of God

The Gospel of Matthew

Matthew, who was the accountant, arranges his gospel under headings; therefore, this book is admirably suited for teaching purposes. An outline of Matthew could look like this:

I. Christ’s genealogy, birth, flight into Egypt, and return to Nazareth (1:1-2:23).

II. The beginning of the ministry of Jesus and the Sermon on the Mount (3:1-7:29). The Sermon on the Mount should be treated in great detail, as it is comparable to the Law given to Israel on Mount Sinai. Here Jesus, the prophet like unto Moses, lays out the standard by which His Church must live.

III. The working of ten miracles followed by a charge to His disciples that they do likewise sending them out two by two (8:1-11:1). Thus, as teachers, we should emphasise not only the teachings of Jesus but also His miracles. He said, “Believe Me for My works’ sake.” We should encourage our students to seek the Lord for a “signs-following” ministry that will give a completeness and wholeness to their witness.

IV. Christ’s eulogy of John the Baptist (His cousin) — He proclaims that there has not been any greater than he born of women, and that, in fact, John is a type of Elijah. The teacher could profitably spend time comparing the two. However, Elijah will still come before Christ’s Second Coming.

Jesus declares that in the Judgment, Tyre and Sodom will be judged more favourably than Capernaum, a city that did not repent even after they had seen the miracles that Jesus performed in their midst.

V. The discourse with the Pharisees on doing good on the Sabbath Day — The Lord declared that it is out of the abundance of the heart that a man speaks, signifying that the arguments of the Pharisees in opposing His healing the sick and afflicted on the Sabbath was, in effect, the result of their evil heart.

In chapter 12, the Lord declared that He is the Lord of the Sabbath, and greater than Solomon, but they did not understand. In teaching this chapter, great emphasis should be placed on the priority of mercy rather than sacrifices. Christianity is a religion of the heart, and not of outward observances. Also, point out that in response to the ones who gave Him notice that His mother and brothers were outside, He declares that whosoever shall do the will of God is His mother, sister, and brother.

VI. The Seven Parables of the Kingdom — These parables have far-reaching interpretation and applicability, portraying the progressive work of grace in the life of a believer. Moreover, they foretell the development of the Church throughout the ages until the time of harvest at the Second Coming of our Lord. They can be clearly united with the Seven Feasts of the Lord (Lev. 23) as well as the Seven Churches in Revelation chapters 2 and 3. Thus we could interpret their message in the following manner:

1. The Feast of Passover — *The Parable of the Sower* — This parable speaks of sowing the Gospel message of Salvation.
2. The Feast of Unleavened Bread — *The Parable of the Tares* — This parable deals with guarding against false doctrine and the works of the children of this world.
3. The Feast of First Fruits — *The Parable of the Mustard Seed* — The mustard seed, though a tiny seed, becomes a

mighty tree, giving shade and succour to many. Jesus taught that “*except a corn of wheat*” fall into the ground and die, it abides alone — yet if it dies, it bringeth forth much fruit (Jn. 12:24). A seed must die to bring forth fruit.

Water Baptism is also linked with the Feast of First Fruits, since Christ is the First Fruits from the dead, and we are baptised in water to arise with Him in newness of life (Rom. 6:4). Thus water baptism is being buried with Christ and rising with Him to walk with Him in newness of life — that we might bring forth much fruit.

Also, 1 Corinthians 15:20 speaks of Christ’s being offered to the Lord, even as the first fruits were waved before the Lord as a wave offering unto Him.

4. The Feast of Pentecost — *The Parable of the Woman Leavening the Three Measures of Meal* — This parable could be interpreted as the Word and Spirit of God entering our spirit, soul, and body until all our being is permeated with His Spirit. The disciples were filled with the Holy Spirit when He was poured out on the Day of Pentecost. It is noteworthy that the offering to be made on the Day of Pentecost was loaves baked with leaven, according to Leviticus 23:17.

5. The Feast of Trumpets — *The Parable of Hid Treasure* — This parable speaks of a new beginning, fresh truth, and the hidden manna of His Word. The Feast of Trumpets signifies the call of God to arise now to new heights and experiences in Him.

6. The Day of Atonement — *The Pearl of Great Price* —

This parable speaks of selling all to win Him. On the Day of Atonement there comes a fresh and deeper cleansing, with the realisation that we must forsake all to win Christ (Phil. 3:8).

7. The Feast of Tabernacles — *The Parable of the Net* —

Finally, this last parable speaks about bringing in the harvest of the Last Days, just as the Feast of Tabernacles is the celebration of Israel's harvest.

A little verse that is so precious for Teachers of Righteousness is Matthew 13:52, "*Then said he unto them, Therefore every scribe which is instructed unto the kingdom of heaven is like unto a man that is an householder, which bringeth forth out of his treasure things new and old.*" Is this not what we want to be? May we be those who bring forth old truths, along with fresh truths that we have received by the grace of God, and take our students ever onward and upward in our spiritual journey from earth to heaven.

VII. Various accounts in Matthew chapters 14-17 —

This section includes the account of the martyrdom of John the Baptist and the story about Peter valiantly walking upon the water at the command of Jesus. Jesus rebukes the Pharisees, calling them "blind leaders of the blind" because their hearts were far from the Lord. May we always cry out to the Lord that our eyes be anointed with eye salve that we can see the blessed treasures hidden in His Word.

Then Jesus commends the woman of Canaan for her great faith. After this comes the miracle of provision, feeding the 4,000. Upon the declaration of Peter that Jesus is the Christ the Son of God, Peter is given the keys of the kingdom.

This is a privilege that we believe Jesus will willingly give to others to manifest His power upon earth and shew forth His glory. For did He not say, *“If two of you shall agree on earth as touching any thing that they shall ask, it shall be done for them of my Father which is in heaven. For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them”* (Mt. 18:19-20).

The Mount of Transfiguration experience, when Moses and Elijah appeared and spoke of His decease, was also the occasion when the Father said, *“This is My beloved Son. Hear Ye Him.”* May it be so with us, that we might hear Him. Moses and Elijah are the two anointed ones that stand before the Lord of the whole earth. (See Zechariah 4 and Revelation 11.)

VIII. Discourse on the greatest in the kingdom of heaven — Jesus declared, *“Whosoever therefore shall humble himself as this little child, the same is greatest in the kingdom of heaven”* (Mt. 18:4). This should be related to the first Beatitude which states: *“Blessed are the poor in spirit: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven”* (Mt. 5:3).

Then follows the teaching on forgiveness. In reality, Jesus declared that we must always forgive those who ask it of us.

There is a solemn warning that we shall be thrown to the tormentors if we do not.

IX. Christ's final journey to Jerusalem and various discourses (chapters 21-23) — We need to point out the nobility of character that set His face like a flint to go to the cross. It is essential that we shew forth His manliness, dedication, and pious devotion to fulfil the holy will of His Father in heaven. It was not Christ's teachings and miracles that represented the biggest threat to Satan and his kingdom. It was the cross (as Satan knew full well) that would destroy his power and bring him down to the pit and finally to the eternal torments of the Lake of Fire.

Then follows the awesome warning that those who marry the divorced commit adultery (19:9), and another warning about how hard it is for a rich man to enter the Kingdom of Heaven (19:24).

Matthew 20:15 introduces a parable of the eleventh hour worker who is paid the same as those who have toiled for all their lives in the vineyard of the Master. Again Jesus gives a discourse on greatness, saying that the one who waits upon others shall have the first place (20:27). In verse 34 of this same chapter, we have the healing of the blind men at Jericho.

In chapter 21 we have the Lord's triumphant entrance into the city of Jerusalem riding upon the foal of an ass to fulfil Zechariah 9:9, "*Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion; shout, O daughter of Jerusalem: behold, thy King cometh unto thee:*

he is just, and having salvation; lowly, and riding upon an ass, and upon a colt the foal of an ass.” The teacher should stress the fact that Jesus continuously fulfilled Old Testament prophecy. Also, He rode into Jerusalem on a foal, in a spirit of meekness, but when He comes again it will be on a horse, to vanquish and conquer His foes (Rev. 19:11).

In Jerusalem we have the cleansing of the Temple from all merchandise. We must see to it that our churches do not partake of this sin of merchandising of spiritual things. Next comes the cursing of the fig tree (symbolic of Israel) that was not bringing forth fruit. In connection with this, we need to look at the warning in the parable of the vine (Jn. 15:1-8).

Then the Lord in a parable shows that the Pharisees are responsible for the slaying of the prophets, and that they will treat the Son of God in the same manner. Jesus is the stone that the builders will reject, fulfilling Psalm 118:22, *“The stone which the builders refused is become the head stone of the corner.”*

In Matthew 22, we have the parable of the marriage supper when those who were bidden (meaning Israel) made light of their opportunity even to the slaying of the messengers of the Lord.

Thus, the Lord gave opportunity to the poor; but the one who did not have a wedding garment was cast into outer darkness, signifying that we must be (as the Bride in Revelation 19)

clothed with fine linen, the righteousness of the saints. There follows the discourse on the two great commandments of the Law: “*Jesus said unto him, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets*” (22:37-40). May we practice and teach these wonderful commandments.

In Chapter 23, Christ pronounces eight woes upon the religious leaders of His day. He ends with a cry for the destruction that was going to come upon Jerusalem because they would not receive Him now, nor had they ever before received Him in the person of the prophets.

X. Chapters 24-25 clearly define the Lord’s teachings on eschatology. They commence with this sombre warning, “*Let no man deceive you.*” Chapter 24 should be used as a framework upon which all other Scripture dealing with the End Times (leading to the Second Coming) are hung. Basically, He relates the great tragedies that will overtake the world.

Sequentially the following events will take place:

1. The love of many shall wax cold (24:12, cf. Isa. 60:2; 2 Th. 2:3).
2. There is worldwide revival (24:14).
3. The Abomination of Desolation will be set up in the Holy Place (24:15, cf. Dan. 9:27; 11:31; 12:11).

4. Then shall be the Great Tribulation, also called Jacob's Trouble (24:21, Jer. 30:1-7).
5. Immediately after the tribulation, the sun shall be darkened before the Terrible Day of the Lord (24:29, Joel 2:31).
6. Then shall appear the sign of the Son of Man in heaven, coming in clouds of great glory (24:30).
7. No man knoweth the day, only the Heavenly Father (24:36).
A firm warning not to speculate the time of His Second Coming should be instilled in all students.
8. The judgment of the nations shall take place, with the division of the sheep and goat nations (25:31-33).

In these chapters there are strong warnings regarding faithfulness (as well as being productive) because every man will have to give an account to the Lord for His work here upon earth. (The parable of the talents should be compared to the parable of the pounds in Luke 19.)

XI. Chapters 26-27 present the crucifixion of the Lord and the events leading to the cross. These events have to be taught in conjunction with the account in the other Gospels so that a complete picture of this week of extreme pathos in the history of mankind can be completely appreciated and understood.

XII. Chapter 28 deals with the blessed resurrection of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. Again, a complete account can only be taught by reference to the other Gospel stories. (We recommend our book entitled *The Cross and Resurrection* for further studies.)

The Gospel of Mark

This is the first and most chronological of the Gospels. In effect, it was given by Peter to Mark, his spiritual son (1 Pet. 5:13). It was written for the Romans and is a very fast moving account of the life, ministry, death, and resurrection of our Lord. Because we have dealt with Matthew in much detail, we will simply give an overview of Mark. It can be divided into three parts:

- I. The miracles of Jesus
- II. The parables of Jesus
- III. The discourses of Jesus

Each part has 18 sections (the number 18 symbolising strength)

I. The 18 Recorded Miracles of Jesus

- | | |
|---|---------|
| 1. Demoniac at Capernaum | 1:23-28 |
| 2. Healing of Peter's mother-in-law | 1:29-31 |
| 3. Healing of a leper | 1:40-45 |
| 4. Healing of a paralytic | 2:3-12 |
| 5. Healing of a withered hand | 3:1-5 |
| 6. Stilling of a storm | 4:35-41 |
| 7. Healing of Gergasene demoniac | 5:1-20 |
| 8. Raising of Jairus' daughter | 5:22-43 |
| 9. Healing of a woman with an issue of blood | 5:25-34 |
| 10. Feeding of the 5,000 | 6:35-44 |
| 11. Walking on the sea | 6:45-52 |
| 12. Healing of the Syrophenician woman's daughter | 7:24-30 |
| 13. Healing of the deaf and dumb man | 7:31-37 |

14. Feeding of the 4,000	8:1-9
15. Healing of the blind man at Bethsaida	8:22-26
16. Deliverance of the lunatic boy	9:14-29
17. Healing of blind Bartimaeus	10:46-52
18. Cursing of the fig tree	11:12-14
II. The 18 Recorded Parables of Jesus	
1. Fishers of men	1:16-17
2. The sick and the physician	2:17
3. The bridegroom	2:19-20
4. New cloth and old garment	2:21
5. New wine and old wineskins	2:22
6. The divided kingdom	3:24
7. The divided house	3:25
8. Overcoming the strongman	3:27
9. The sower	4:2-8
10. The lamp	4:21-22
11. The seed that grows secretly	4:26-29
12. The grain of mustard seed	4:30-32
13. Inward defilement	7:14-23
14. Offending members	9:43-47
15. Wicked husbandmen	12:1-9
16. The rejected stone	12:10-11
17. The fig tree	13:28-29
18. The porter	13:34-37
III. The 18 Recorded Discourses of Jesus	
1. The Sabbath day	2:23-28
2. The unforgivable sin	3:28-29
3. Christ's mother and brother	3:33-35
4. Ceremonial worship	7:1-23
5. Cross bearing	8:34-9:1

6. Humility, tolerance, and offences	9:33-50
7. Divorce	10:1-12
8. Riches, self-sacrifice, and rewards	10:17-31
9. True greatness	10:13-16
10. Faith and prayer	11:23-26
11. Rendering unto Caesar	12:13-17
12. The resurrection	12:18-27
13. The great commandments	12:28-36
14. Beware of the scribes	12:34-40
15. Giving	12:41-44
16. The Second Coming	13:1-27
17. The institution of the Last Supper	14:22-25
18. The Great Commission	16:15-18

The Gospel of Luke

The Apostle Luke, the beloved physician of the Early Church, is credited by the French scholar and philosopher Ernest Renans as having written the best book in the world. Certainly within the pages of this gospel are accounts of the life of Christ that are not found in the other gospels. These (such as the parables of the Lost Sheep, Lost Coin, and the Prodigal Son) have inspired countless evangelists over the centuries to appeal to this lost and dying world.

Although not a painter himself, Luke has inspired great works of art such as Michaelangelo's *Conversion of Saint Paul*, Raphael's *Deliverance of Saint Peter*, as well as the painting of the two on the road to Emmaus, which hangs in so many homes today. In fact, the Apostle Luke became known in the 13th century as the patron saint of painters.

He was called the hymnologist of the church in that his gospel records the Ave Maria (1:28-31), The Magnificat (1:46-55), The Benedictus (1:68-79), The Gloria in Excelsis (2:14), and the Nunc Dimittis (2:29-32). Not only does Luke fill this Gospel with joy and rejoicing, but he also emphasises persistent prayer as illustrated by the Persistent Friend (11:5-10), the Persistent Widow (18:1-8), as well as the Pharisee and the Tax Collector (18:9-14).

In fact, there are more passages in Luke on prayer than in the other Gospels, especially the prayer life of the Lord. (See 3:21; 5:16; 6:12; 9:18-29; 11:1-4; 23:34-46.) These aspects of Luke help us, as teachers, to be more definitive when contrasting the Gospels, and enable us to concentrate on specific subjects not mentioned in other Gospels.

We now provide a general overview of the Gospel of Luke for the purpose of surveying it. This breaks down the life of Christ into segments so that it can be studied chronologically.

I. Prologue	1:1-4
II. Birth & early years of Jesus	1:5-2:52
III. Beginning of Christ's public ministry	3:1-4:13
IV. Galilean ministry	4:14-9:50
V. From Galilee to Jerusalem	9:51-19:27
VI. Jesus' last days in Jerusalem and crucifixion	19:28-23:56
VII. His resurrection and ascension	24:1-53

The Gospel of John

The Early Church Fathers called this the spiritual gospel. It was written to complete the revelation of Jesus Christ by the other three

authors. It is written in very simple language (the vocabulary being a mere 1,500 words) and can be easily read by a child. However, this simplicity contains hidden treasures and depths of spiritual truths. Even the most erudite theologian would confess that a lifetime is not sufficient to be able to comprehend the truths contained therein.

For our study, we have presented the following guide to this Gospel that reveals its uniqueness. It may be divided into a series of three sets of sevens, as we illustrate now by the chart below.

I. The Seven *I Am*'s of Christ

- | | |
|------------------------------------|-----------|
| 1. The Bread of Life | 6:35-48 |
| 2. The Light of the World | 8:12; 9:5 |
| 3. The Door | 10:7-9 |
| 4. The Good Shepherd | 10:11-14 |
| 5. The Resurrection and the Life | 11:25 |
| 6. The Way, the Truth and the Life | 14:6 |
| 7. The True Vine | 15:1 |

II. The Seven Pre-Resurrection Signs of Christ

There are seven pre-resurrection signs in John's Gospel, and one post-resurrection sign. These are not just miracles but are signs followed by a spiritual truth.

- | | |
|--|---------|
| 1. Christ turns the water into wine | 2:1-11 |
| 2. Christ heals the nobleman's son | 4:46-54 |
| 3. Christ heals the paralytic man | 5:1-9 |
| 4. Christ feeds the 5,000 | 6:1-4 |
| 5. Christ walks on water | 6:15-21 |
| 6. Christ heals the man born blind | 9:1-41 |
| 7. Christ raises Lazarus from the dead | 11:1-44 |

III. The Seven Major Discourses of Christ in John

1. The New Birth	3:1-36
2. The Water of Life	4:1-42
3. The Divine Son	5:19-47
4. The Bread of Life	6:22-66
5. The Life-giving Spirit	7:1-52
6. The Light of the World	8:12-59
7. The Good Shepherd	10:1-42

The Acts of the Apostles

This book recounts the foundation of the Church on the Day of Pentecost through the outpouring of the Holy Spirit upon the 120 in the Upper Room. The consequence of this outpouring was that the disciples were baptised with the Holy Spirit, with the initial evidence of speaking in other tongues. After this they fulfilled the commandment of the Lord and became witnesses in Jerusalem, Judea, Samaria, and to the uttermost parts of the earth (1:8).

This book is an account of the ministry of Peter, and then the ministry of Paul, as recorded by the Early Church historian — the Apostle Luke. It was through Peter that the Gentiles first heard the Gospel (in the house of Cornelius) and then were baptised in the Holy Spirit whilst Peter was preaching.

After that they were baptised in water. Paul (originally Saul, the persecutor of the Church) became the Apostle to the Gentiles, whilst Peter returned to his original calling of ministering to the Jews. From Chapter 13 onwards, we are given the accounts of the three missionary journeys of the Apostle

Paul, followed by his appearance before Felix, the Roman governor at Caesarea. From there, he was sent to Rome, where he was permitted to dwell in his own hired house for two years. At that point the book closes.

However, the message of this book clearly teaches us that the apostles performed the same miracles that the Lord performed, and more so. They taught the truths concerning the Lord Jesus Christ. In addition, we can understand from the ministry of Paul how our missionary endeavours should be conducted. He went to main centres in a province, and from there others took the message all over that area.

We may cite a case in particular to substantiate this method. Paul was at Ephesus, teaching in the school of Tyrannus, as we read in 19:10, *“And this continued by the space of two years; so that all they which dwelt in Asia heard the word of the Lord Jesus, both Jews and Greeks.”*

The first Council in Jerusalem decreed the doctrine that they were to preach; thus, the message was unified (15:13; 16:4). We hope that in the Last Days this will again be the case, when universal revival comes to the Church and the following scripture will be fulfilled, *“Thy watchmen shall lift up the voice; with the voice together shall they sing: for they shall see eye to eye, when the LORD shall bring again Zion”* (Isa. 52:8).

We commend that the Acts be taught in an encouraging manner, emphasising that the Holy Spirit will accomplish more in the Last Day revival than He did in the Early Church,

even as the best wine came last at the wedding feast in Cana (Jn. 2:1-10). We commend to teachers that in teaching this book, they show forth the dynamism of the Early Church, as the disciples were filled with the Holy Spirit, putting emphasis on their message, and their suffering (especially Peter and Paul, and the martyrdom of Stephen). Then, as we have mentioned, the key to propagating the message was through strategic cities of the nations and provinces. May the Last Day Church have the same zeal and commitment.

The Book of Romans

Called the “Masterpiece of the New Testament,” the book of Romans contains all the essential doctrines of the Church. We will give these in a detailed outline form and will thus divide the book into eight principal parts:

- I. The purpose of the ministry 1:1-17
 1. To bring men to the obedience of the faith (1:5)
 2. To impart some spiritual truth (1:11)
 3. To have fruit that abides (1:13, cf. Jn. 15:16)
 4. To preach in an attitude of a debtor repaying a debt (1:14)
 5. To preach as one who is not ashamed of the Gospel (1:16a)
 6. To preach in God’s power to save those who believe (1:16b)
 7. To emphasise “The just shall live by His faith” (1:17; Hab. 2:4)

- II. The wrath of God 1:18-3:20
 1. The wrath of God upon a pagan world (1:18-32)
 2. The wrath of God upon the Jew (2:1-3:8)
 3. The wrath of God upon the whole world (3:9-20)

III. The righteousness of God 3:21-5:21

1. Our need for justification (3:21-31)
2. God's provision for our need (4:1-5:21)

IV. The life of God 6:1-8:39

1. A life of holiness – governed by three words: knowing; reckoning; yielding (6:1-19)
2. Freedom from the law (7:1-25)
3. Walking in the Spirit (8:1-39)

V. The election of God 9:1-11:36

VI. The service of God 12:1-21

VII. The kingdom of God 13:1-14:23

VII. The patience, hope, and power of God 15:1-16:27

The Corinthian Epistles

Corinth was a city infamous for its prostitution and paganism. This letter is a pastoral response to 10 major problems of the Church, most of which our students will face to one degree or another in their ministry. They must have the right answers!

The First Epistle to the Corinthians

- I. A sectarian spirit
- II. Incest
- III. Lawsuits
- IV. Fornication
- V. Marriage and divorce
- VI. Eating food offered to idols
- VII. Wearing of the veil

- VIII. The Lord's Supper
- IX. Spiritual gifts
- X. Bodily resurrection

The Second Epistle to the Corinthians

The First Epistle had not settled all the numerous problems that this young church was experiencing; thus Paul was obliged to write again some five years later (circa 55 A.D.). He had experienced personal attacks and had to defend his authority. This situation should be carefully studied, since it will encourage students who later in life may face opposition to their teaching in some places. The book may be broadly divided into three parts:

- I. A defense of his conduct and ministry (ch. 1-7)
- II. The offering being raised for the poor saints of Judea (ch. 8-9)
- III. A rebuke to his opponents and defense of his apostolic authority (ch. 10-13)

The Epistle to the Galatians

Galatia, a region in what is now termed Turkey, derives its name from a tribe of Gauls who immigrated there in the third century B.C. The region contained the towns of Antioch, Iconium, Lystra, and Derbe — cities in which Paul had ministered during his First Missionary Journey (Acts 14:1-28) and again on his Second Journey (Acts 16:1-6). There arose a serious problem in this area, because the believers had been perverted from the Gospel of grace. Therefore, the epistle is divided into three parts:

- I. Paul's defense of his apostolic authority and therefore the genuineness of his Gospel (ch. 1-2)
- II. A masterful exposition of the triumph of grace over the law (ch. 3-4)
- III. An exhortation to walk in the Spirit and a comparison between 17 works of the flesh and the nine fruits of the Spirit with a solemn warning that whatsoever a man soweth that shall he reap (ch. 5-6)

The Epistle to the Ephesians

Ephesus was one of the principal centres of the Early Church, and from Ephesus the Gospel went into all the province of Asia Minor. Paul raised up this Church and spent much time teaching there. The theme of this epistle may be said to be spiritual perfection — which is love. It was on this very point that the Ephesian Church was rebuked in Revelation 2, as they had left the Lord Jesus Christ, their first love.

It is noteworthy that in life we are so often tested not on our weakest point but in that for which we are well known. We have examples like Moses (the meekest man) who was provoked in his spirit to strike the rock twice, whilst Peter (one of the most courageous men) denied the Lord in the presence of a maid. As Paul says, "*Wherefore let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall*" (1 Cor. 10:12). The outline could be as follows:

- I. The inner life of the believer (ch. 1-3)
 - 1. Being blessed with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places
 - 2. The need to receive the Spirit of wisdom and revelation

3. Being made His workmanship
 4. A habitation of God through His Spirit, rooted and grounded in love
- II. The practical life of the believer (ch. 4-6)
1. Qualities of leadership
 2. Gifts of leadership
 3. Goals of leadership
 4. Walking in love, walking in light, and walking circumspectly
 5. Family life
 6. Secular life
 7. Prayer life
 8. Being a soldier of Christ

The Epistle to the Philippians

This church was founded by the Apostle Paul (Acts 16:12-40). The main theme of the epistle is to hit the mark of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus. We want to fulfil the plan of God that He had ordained for us before the foundation of the world. Another notable feature of this epistle is its emphasis on joy, all the more remarkable considering this was written whilst Paul was imprisoned in Rome. An outline of this epistle could be as follows:

- I. The rejoicing prisoner (1:1-2:2)
- II. The mind of Christ (2:3 -11)
- III. The working out of our salvation (2:12-18)
- IV. Timothy, the spiritual son (2:19-24)
- V. Epaphroditus, the patient, suffering servant (2:25-30)
- VI. The First Resurrection (3:1-15)
- VII. Paul, the example (3:16-21)

- VIII. The peace of God (4:1-9)
- IX. Holy contentment (4:10-13)
- X. The gift of love (4:14-20)

The Epistle to the Colossians

The Colossian Church, which Paul had never visited, was about 100 miles east of Ephesus. Paul wrote this letter when he was alerted to their doctrinal problems. These included ceremonialism, rigid self-denial, angel worship, depreciation of Christ, and worldly philosophies. This book (as well as being amongst the highest forms of lauding the exalted Christ) shows the way to personal holiness.

- I. Greetings
- II. Thanksgivings (1:3-8,12-14)
- III. Prayers (1:9- 11)
- IV. The magnificent Christ (1:15-22)
- V. The ministry (1:23-2:5)
- VI. False teaching and corrective doctrine (2:6-23)
- VII. The way to holiness (3:1-17)
- VIII. Family and social life (3:18-4:6)
- IX. Personal news (4:7-18)

The Epistle to Philemon

In Paul's epistle to Philemon, we see more than a personal word to the Bishop of the Colossian Church, we see an important message for the whole Church.

The letter to Philemon, written on behalf of his runaway slave Onesimus, is a story of restoration. As a slave becomes a brother

in Christ, we are brought to a fresh awareness of the social implications of the Gospel. May these truths become a source of encouragement to all who are praying for their wayward loved ones, or are interceding for the spiritual sons in the faith!

The Epistles to the Thessalonians

Paul established this church on three successive Sabbath days, by preaching that Christ had to suffer and rise from the dead and that Jesus is the Christ (Acts 17:2). Furthermore, we know from the first epistle (1:9-10) that the Thessalonians turned from idols to serve the true and living God. Then he taught them about the Second Coming of Christ, the One who was raised from the dead, and who delivers us from the wrath to come. These fundamental doctrines should be emphasised to students so that they may know the foundation that they have to lay in order to produce a church that will stand. The following outline of this first epistle will help us understand the structure:

The First Epistle to the Thessalonians

- I. Thanksgiving for the Thessalonians (ch. 1)
- II. His assurance of his deep love for them, his own blameless life in their midst, and the declaration that they are his crown of rejoicing in the presence of the Lord Jesus (ch. 2)
- III. His deep desire to see them again and perfect that which is lacking in their faith (ch. 3)
- IV. The will of God, to possess our vessels in sanctification — God has called us unto holiness. We are, therefore, to prepare and be ready when He comes in the clouds (ch. 4)

V. The Day of the Lord will come as a thief, therefore watch and be sober. A closing prayer that the God of Peace might sanctify us wholly body, soul and spirit (ch. 5)

The Second Epistle to the Thessalonians

This epistle was primarily written to clarify his previous teachings (that they had misunderstood) concerning the Second Coming, as they thought that Jesus could come at any time. This is a useful outline:

I. A promise that the Lord would avenge all who were suffering for Him (ch. 1)

II. A clear-cut statement that the Lord will not come until the Antichrist is first revealed

1. When the Antichrist does come, he will sit in the temple and proclaim that he is God.

2. He will deceive many with signs and wonders, and those who love unrighteousness will perish. This is most important to stress to students so that they do not teach that Jesus can come at any time, since there are definite signs that must take place prior to His return in the skies (ch. 2).

III. A warning against those amongst them who are disorderly and do not work — It is well to warn students from 3:10 that those who do not work should not eat. Scripture never condones laziness.

The Pastoral Epistles

First and Second Timothy, along with Titus, are called the Pastoral Epistles because they give instruction to Timothy and Titus on how to care for the churches for

which they were responsible. Paul emphasises sound doctrine, faith, teaching, godliness, and instruction on how to deal with controversies.

These epistles provide an excellent foundation for teachers, as Paul deals with the training of church leaders showing them how to behave themselves in the Church of the Living God. Furthermore, he gives instruction about bringing order into the congregations. In these epistles, the Apostle Paul instructs pastors on how to deal with problems that arise in their churches. In addition, he gives the necessary qualifications for members to attain in order to be appointed to various offices and positions within the Church.

The First Epistle to Timothy

This was written to Timothy, who was now the first Bishop of Ephesus, in order to correct heresies that had entered into the church since the departure of Paul several years before. Paul left him in Ephesus to help in that church, while he himself continued on into Macedonia.

- I. Greetings (1:1-2)
- II. Warnings against false teachers (1:3-11)
 - 1. Those who teach fables, etc. (1:3-7)
 - 2. The true purpose of the law (1:8-11)
- III. The Lord's kindness to Paul and purpose for his life (1:12-17).

(Note that God's purpose involves aspects of character that He wishes to reveal through our lives as well as a particular ministry.)

- IV. Paul's charge to Timothy (1:18-20)
- V. Church administration (ch. 2-3)
 - 1. On prayers (2:1-8)
 - 2. On women (2:9-15)
 - 3. On qualifications of elders (3:1-7)
 - 4. On qualifications of deacons (3:8-16)
- VI. False teaching and how to combat it (4:1-16)
- VII. Different church groups and how to deal with them – young and older women, widows, elders, and servants (5:1-6:2)
- VIII. Diverse warnings
 - 1. Against false teachers (6:3-5)
 - 2. Against the love of money (6:6-10)
 - 3. That the man of God should flee such things (6:11)
 - 4. To fight the good fight (6:12-16)
 - 5. Against uncertain riches (6:17-19)
 - 6. Against profane and vain babblings (6:20-21)

The Second Epistle to Timothy

At this time, Paul is enduring his second imprisonment and knows that martyrdom is near. Many have turned away from Paul and he desires to see Timothy for the last time. He is also concerned with the state of the churches under the persecution of Nero. Here is a possible outline:

- I. Paul's expression of his desire to see Timothy (1:1-4)
- II. His concern for Timothy (1:5-14)
- III. Paul's plight (1:15-18)
- IV. Paul's exhortation to Timothy (ch. 2)
 - 1. Call to endure (2:1-13)
 - 2. False doctrines which are overcome through the study of God's Word (2:14-26)

- V. The errors of the Last Days (3:1-17)
 - 1. Perilous times (3:1-5)
 - 2. Lust and resistance of the truth (3:6-9)
 - 3. The key to overcoming and sound doctrine that brings one to perfection (3:10-17)
- VI. Paul's closing words of counsel and farewell (4:1-22)
 - 1. Charge to preach the word (4:1-5)
 - 2. Paul's crown of righteousness (4:6-8)
 - 3. Forsaken but the Lord stood by Paul (4:9-18)
 - 4. Closing salutations (4:19-22)

The Epistle to Titus

Titus was a close collaborator of Paul, and although not mentioned in Acts, he is named 13 other times in the New Testament. The last mention of Titus was in 2 Timothy 4:10, when he was sent by Paul to Dalmatia.

In this epistle, he is in Crete. Paul had placed him in charge of the churches on that island. He was a young convert of Paul's and was very dear to him. Paul, when writing, was concerned for his welfare, as he had not heard from him for some time (2 Cor. 2:13). This is how we have divided the epistle:

- I. The charge to Titus to ordain elders in every city (1:1-5)
- II. The qualifications for elders (1:6-9)
- III. False teachers (1:10-16)
- IV. Specific instructions on conduct (2:1-3:15)
 - 1. Aged men — sound in faith (2:2)
 - 2. Aged women — teachers of good things (2:3)

3. Young women — keepers at home, chaste, obedient to their own husbands (2:5)
4. Young men — sober minded, discreet (2:6)
5. Titus as an example – a pattern of good works (2:7)
6. Servants — obedient to masters (2:9)
7. Exhortation to enforce these instructions (2:15)
8. Exhortation to all believers to respect authority (3:1)
9. Exhortation to speak evil of no man, and to be gentle and meek to all men (3:2)
10. Church discipline — relative to foolish questions and heretics (3:9)
11. Closing remarks concerning disposition of fellow helpers (3:12-15)

The Epistle to the Hebrews

The key theme, and in fact the thrust of this epistle, is to bring the believing reader within the veil. This is so precious, since it means that Paul is seeking to show that in the Old Testament the veil barred the way into the Holy of Holies, but the veil of the Temple was rent through the death of Christ! Praise the Lord! This book also contains five specific warnings to the believers not to backslide or grow weary in well doing. An overview of the book is now presented:

- I. Christ — Superior to the prophets and the angels (1:1-15)
- II. First warning — “Take heed to what God is saying” (2:1-4)
- III. Christ Jesus — Behold the Man (2:5-18)
- IV. Christ — Greater than Moses (3:1-6)

- V. Second warning — “Do not come short of God’s rest” (3:7-4:33)
- VI. Christ — so much greater than Aaron (4:14-5:10)
- VII. Third warning — “Beware of slothfulness and apostasy” (5:11-6:20)
- VIII. The priesthood after the order of Melchizedek (7:1-28)
- IX. A new sanctuary and a new covenant (8:1-13)
- X. The blood of Christ – superior to the blood of animals (9:1-28)
- XI. The new and living way (10:1-20)
- XII. Life in the Holy of Holies (10:21-25)
- XIII. Fourth warning — “Beware of wilful sin and drawing back” (10:28-39)
- XIV. The heroes of faith (11:1-40)
- XV. The patience of hope (12:1-13)
- XVI. Fifth warning — “Do not refuse Him that speaketh from heaven” (12:14-29)
- XVII. Love and good works (13:1-25)

The Epistle of James

This apostle, who was the half brother of our Lord, became known as “Camel Knees” amongst the Early Church brethren because of his devotion to prayer. He also became the senior pastor of the Church in Jerusalem. We see him presiding at the first Church Council as recorded in the Acts of the Apostles (Acts 15). Paul called him one of the pillars of the Church (Gal. 2:9). His manner of writing displays many characteristics of our Lord in its directness and forthrightness. The principal themes in this epistle are: the necessity for wisdom; the hallmark of the perfect man — the control of the tongue; faith

without works is dead; a warning against partiality; and the importance of prayer. An overview of the epistle could be presented as follows:

- I. The purpose of trials (1:2-12)
- II. The source of temptation (1:13-18)
- III. Faith and good works (1:19-27)
- IV. The impartiality of faith (2:1-13)
- V. Faith without works is dead (2:14-26)
- VI. The perfect man (3:1-12)
- VII. The two wisdoms: earthly and heavenly (3:13-18)
- VIII. Humility — the key to receiving God’s grace (4:1-12)
- IX. Holy dependence upon God (4:13-17)
- X. The miseries of the rich (5:1-6)
- XI. The patience of the saints (5:7-12)
- XII. The prayer of faith (5:13-18)
- XIII. Conversion of those who err (5:19-20)

The Epistles of Peter

It has been the opinion throughout the ages (of the majority of commentators and church fathers) that this epistle was written from Rome, the city that was termed “spiritual Babylon.” The themes are numerous, but essentially Peter teaches that a good testimony will win over the unbeliever and put to shame our critics.

Christians everywhere were experiencing suffering due to the persecutions under Nero. (Incidentally, persecution of Christians continued for a long time through the reigns of many Roman Emperors.) Because

of this, much encouragement is given in this epistle to those who were suffering unjustly. Here is a suggested overview of this epistle:

The First Epistle of Peter

- I. Opening greetings (1:1-2)
- II. Heartfelt thankfulness to God for His salvation and His keeping power (1:3-12)
- III. Exhortation to holiness, to fulfil the command, “Be Ye Holy for I AM Holy” (1:13 -5:11)
 1. Holiness — expressed by purifying our souls through obeying the truth (1:14-22)
 2. As living stones, offering spiritual sacrifices unto God (2:2-10)
 3. Abstaining from fleshly lusts and practicing good works (2:11-12)
 4. Obedience to authorities (2:13-17)
 5. Servants — being obedient to masters (2:18)
 6. Christ — the example to those who suffer wrongfully (2:19-25)
 7. Wives — practicing holiness through obedience to husbands and having a meek spirit (3:1-6)
 8. Husbands — dwelling with their wives as with a weaker vessel (3:7-9)
 9. Keeping one’s tongue from evil (3:10-12)
 10. The rewards of those who suffer for righteousness’ sake (3:13-18)
 11. Christ’s descent into hell and His ascent into heaven (3:19-22)
 12. Blessings of suffering (4:1-11)

- 13. Exhortation to rejoice — inasmuch that we are partakers of the suffering of Christ (4:12-19)
 - 14. Elders — being examples to the flock (5:1-4)
 - 15. The young — being clothed with humility (5:5-11)
- IV. Closing greetings (5:12-14)

The Second Epistle of Peter

The difference between these two epistles may be stated in this manner. The First Epistle sought to strengthen the saints from persecutions from without, whilst the Second seeks to protect them from the false teachers from within. An overview may be as follows:

- I. Opening greetings (1:1-2)
- II. Eight steps to Christian perfection and an abundant entrance into heaven (1:3-15)
- III. An eyewitness of the transfiguration of Christ (1:16-18)
- IV. A sure word of prophecy to guide us (1:19-21)
- V. False teachers who have forsaken the right way (2:1-22)
- VI. Preparation for the day of the Lord — so that we are found of Him in peace, without spot and blameless (3:1-14)
- VII. Warning - “Be not drawn away into the error of the wicked” (3:15-17)
- VIII. Exhortation to grow in grace and in the knowledge of the Lord (3:18)

The Epistles of John

The two principle themes of these epistles are: firstly, that God is Love; and secondly, the necessity of having fellowship with the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. One stands in awe of

the intimate relationship that the beloved apostle had with His Lord.

The First Epistle of John

Here is a suggested overview of the First Epistle:

- I. Fellowship with the Father and His Son (1:1-4)
- II. Walking in the light (1:5-10)
- III. Our advocate before the Father (2:1-2)
- IV. Exhortation — “Love one another” (2:3-11)
- V. Levels of spiritual maturity (2:12-14)
- VI. Exhortation — “Love not the world” (2:15-17)
- VII. Warning against antichrists (2:18-19)
- VIII. The abiding anointing (2:20-27)
- IX. The likeness of Christ (2:28-3:3)
- X. The sinless nature of God (3:4-10)
- XI. Brotherly love (3:11-14)
- XII. Exhortation — “Try the spirits” (4:1-6)
- XIII. Perfect love (4:7-5:3)
- XIV. Overcomers (5:4-6)
- XV. The three witnesses (5:7-13)
- XVI. Confidence in prayer (5:14-16)
- XVII. Freedom from sin and idolatry (5:17-21)

The Second Epistle of John

In this letter the Apostle calls himself “the Elder,” which in the Early Church was a title not only for the aged but for leaders of congregations and for those of great stature. The custom in the first two centuries was for the gospels to be carried by itinerant teachers who relied upon the hospitality of others to house them. This elect lady to whom the epistle is written may well have

been one who opened her house to such teachers. However, since teachers of heresy relied upon such hospitality, John also warns that they should exercise discernment so that they do not unwittingly help the spread of error by receiving these false teachers. A suggested overview is as follows:

- I. Greetings (1:1-3)
- II. Walk in truth and in love (1:4-6)
- III. False teachers and false doctrines (1:7-11)
- IV. Benediction (1:12-14)

The Third Epistle of John

As we have already mentioned, the habit of the Early Church was to give hospitality to itinerant preachers and teachers. Here we find the Apostle John mentioning three men — Gaius, who was very hospitable; Diotrophes, who refused to receive John; and Demetrius, who was a man of good report. An overview is as follows:

- I. The commendation of Gaius (1:1-4)
- II. The virtue of hospitality (1:5-8)
- III. The condemnation of Diotrophes (1:9-11)
- IV. Demetrius – the man of good report (1:12)
- V. Conclusion (1:13-14)

The Epistle of Jude

Written by the half brother of our Lord and the brother of the author of the Epistle of James, this epistle warns of false teachers. These are sensual people, who pervert the truth, and are thus destined for the blackness of darkness forever, as were

the inhabitants of Sodom and Gomorrha. Teachers of Righteousness should note that New Testament writers are consistent in their warnings against false teachers. It behoves us to ensure that we lay sound foundations in the lives of our students. Jude may be presented as follows:

- I. Greetings (1:1-2)
- II. Exhortation to contend earnestly for the faith (1:3)
- III. False teachers and their characteristics (1:4-19)
- IV. Exhortation to build oneself up in the most holy faith and love (1:20-21)
 1. Having compassion on some who have erred (1:22-23)
 2. The triumphant exaltation of the power of God to keep us (1:24-25)

The Book of Revelation

Perhaps the most hotly debated book of the Bible, Revelation nonetheless contains many very precious truths that enable us to understand the need for personal purity on the part of the believer. It is divided into certain clear-cut and specific happenings.

The real problems of understanding Revelation in our generation seem to concern time periods rather than actual interpretation of the events. This book should be studied in the context of the great exposition of our Lord in Matthew 24 when He was seated upon the Mount of Olives. In this passage He was responding to His disciples' questions concerning His Second Coming.

The chronological timetable that He gave in Matthew is as follows: firstly, there would be great revival, followed by the

Abomination of Desolation, then the Great Tribulation, after which He would come in the clouds for His saints. Secondly, there would be judgment. This book presents those same events in much greater detail:

- I. The Introduction (ch. 1)
- II. The Seven Churches (ch. 2-3)
- III. A door opened in heaven (ch. 4)
- IV. The book with the Seven Seals (ch. 5)
- V. The opening of six of the Seven Seals (ch. 6)
- VI. The sealing of the 144,000 Israelites (7:1-8)
- VII. The great multitude in heaven (7:9-17)
- VIII. The seventh seal opens, beginning the Seven Trumpets (ch. 8-9)
- IX. The Seven Thunders and the Little Book (ch. 10)
- X. The measuring of the Temple (11:1-2)
- XI. The Two Witnesses: Moses and Elijah (11:3-12)
- XII. A Great Earthquake (11:13-14)
- XIII. The sounding of the seventh trumpet (11:15-19)
- XIV. The Church of Jesus Christ (ch. 12)
- XV. The Unholy Trinity (ch. 13)
- XVI. The Seven Visions (Oracles of the Last Days) (ch. 14)
- XVII. The Seven Angels with the Seven Last Plagues (ch. 15-16)
- XVIII. The judgment of the Great Whore (ch. 17)
- XIX. The fall of Babylon (ch. 18)
- XX. The Marriage Supper of the Lamb (ch. 19)
- XXI. The Millennium (ch. 20)
- XXII. The New Heavens, the New Earth, and the New Jerusalem (ch. 21-22)

Included in the Book of Revelation are Seven Beatitudes:

1. “Blessed is he that readeth and keepeth those things which are written therein” (1:3)
2. “Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord” (14:13)
3. “Blessed is he that keepeth his garments” (16:15)
4. “Blessed are they that are called to the Marriage Supper” (19:9)
5. “Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the First Resurrection” (20:6)
6. “Blessed is he that keepeth the sayings of this prophecy” (22:7)
7. “Blessed are they that do His commandments” (22:14)

How important it is for us, as Teachers of Righteousness, to seek to ensure that our students will enter into this state of complete blessedness.

Chapter Eleven

Practical Notes

A Child's Heroes — Winston Churchill, one of the bravest men of western civilisation, grew up reading the biographies of courageous heroes (such as his ancestor, the Duke of Marlborough) and memorising heroic poetry. A half century later, when civilisation hung in the breach and the resolve of many people of entire nations flagged and failed, Churchill did not lose his courage. Terrence Moore stated, "Courage allows us to defend civilisation." Thus, the random readings of the boy can inspire the philosophic fortitude of the man.

We can see by this illustration from the life of one of the most important men of the past century, that his character was moulded and formed at an early age, maturing and blossoming, and ripening at the moment of need. Is it too much to believe that, as Teachers of Righteousness, we through our expositions of the Scriptures, can mould many a young life in the ways of God? Thus, at the time of their testing they will stand true and courageous, and will contend for the faith, being like a flag bearer in battle who encourages all those around him to act with courage and fortitude.

Would not the stirring story of Daniel in the lions' den, followed by

**Through our
expositions of
the Scriptures,
we can mould
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life in the
ways of God!**

the strident challenge flowing from the teacher's lips, "Dare to be a Daniel; dare to stand alone!" cause the Spirit of Christ within our breasts to rise to the challenge of boldly proclaiming the Gospel and standing alone at the workplace or in the schoolyard? Similarly, would not the cry of Joshua, "Choose you this day whom ye shall serve; but as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord!" strike a chord in even the most timid of his servants? These great challenges, followed by a declaration of the Teacher of Righteousness, "I too have made that decision to follow the Lord!" would surely sow a seed that will germinate and bring forth steadfastness of purpose in those whom he is teaching.

Former President Bill Clinton of the USA made the statement that he could remember nearly everything that his teachers taught him, even going back to an early age. This is quite exceptional, and there are few who could say the same. We do, however, tend to remember the character of our teachers, as well as their traits and lifestyle.

It was said of former President Ronald Reagan that his staff and even members of Congress simply desired to please him, because he so endeared himself to them. In the same way, those teachers whose personalities and characters caused us to desire to be like them and to please them were the ones who made us want to be teachers and to instruct others in the ways of righteousness. This is only possible as we seek to let the truths that we teach become part of us, and when we allow Christ, the Teacher of teachers to shine forth through our lives.

Another practical aspect of teaching is to pay attention to little things. I was introduced to a senior vice-president of a national airline who had been the commander-in-chief of his nation. He was, therefore, a person of distinction. I talked to him about his job, and then I asked him what seemed a very banal question: “Why are there not toothbrushes in the business class kit that a passenger is given?” Little things are so important. This airline executive explained in detail, that placing the toothbrushes in the bathroom instead of in every complimentary kit probably meant that over half the passengers would not use them, and the airline might save some 40 dollars a flight. Multiply that by some 10 flights a day — and in a year they might save as much as 100,000 dollars per year. Multiply that with a few other extras and the saving becomes significant.

Benjamin Franklin would often say, “Beware of little expenses. A small leak will sink a great ship” (1758, *Poor Richard’s Almanac*). King Solomon stated that a little folly could send forth a stinking savour of one held in reputation for wisdom and honour (Eccl. 10:1). Again he warns that it is the “*little foxes, that spoil the vines*” (Song 2:15).

Remember the account that we shared earlier, that in Athens, Greece, we were shown a pillar that had been brought down after 2,000 years by a blade of grass that had split the foundation. Teachers should warn of little traits or works of the flesh that can ruin a minister’s reputation, effectiveness, and character.

Chapter Twelve

Classroom Tips

The measure of the success of a teacher is the degree to which the students grasp and understand the lesson (and are transformed by it). Therefore, one should not endeavour to teach until the lesson has been soaked in prayer so that the teacher and students alike might experience the anointing in the classroom.

One of the keys to teaching is to involve the students in the subject. I personally have found that to be a very effective way of teaching. For example, when I was teaching the book of Daniel, I finished early and then assigned selected students to summarise truths that they had learnt from these twelve chapters, giving each one a particular chapter. It soon showed me where I needed to strengthen certain points that obviously had not been fully grasped by those students.

When teaching this book, for example, to a Sunday School class, I have to ensure that it is well broken down and simplified. I have to remember too, that the notes that they take might well be the basis for a Sunday School class they might teach themselves later on in life. It is therefore, very important when teaching, to often ask questions to make sure the important points have been understood by your students.

In teaching, a time-honoured method is to take one truth and break it into sufficiently small portions so that it is easily

One of the keys to teaching is to involve the students in the subject.

digested and assimilated by the mind of the hearers. People, generally speaking, can only receive one truth or thought at a time. Moreover, the manner of teaching is very important. If one does not teach the truth in a serious manner, then the students will not treat it seriously. Whilst humour is acceptable in its place, and may even be used to drive home a point, it can be distracting and can risk the loss of the anointing.

An attitude of humility must be maintained at all times, and we should avoid “attention seeking.” Let us make sure that the thoughts of the class are focused upon the Lord, not on His servant. A sobering thought is that some of those whom we have the privilege to teach might well surpass us in learning and abilities and become more fruitful than we ourselves. The goal and success of the teacher is, after all, that the students might attain a higher level and surpass them.

Atmosphere is important in teaching, and one must seek to make sure that it is conducive to listening. Creating a learning environment is essential if the students are to maximise their retention of the facts that you are giving them.

The lack of distracting elements, including the temperature in your classroom, is very important. If it is too hot, the class becomes drowsy; babies cry, and can cause one to lose perhaps a very important point. It is wise to remember that whereas

the teacher has probably been able to wait on the Lord in the quiet of his own room, the students may well have arrived from the pressure of other duties. It is important to quiet their spirits and their minds and prepare them for the truths that you have for them by a period of worship. This is often achieved by beginning with lively songs, hymns, or choruses and then moving to a more worshipful and devotional mode of music and song theme. In this way, their spirits and minds will become refreshed, and thus become more receptive to listening and concentrating upon the subject matter that you wish to teach them.

Since there is a difference between preaching (which is to stir up) and teaching (which is to build up) we could consider that a few minutes of preaching would not hurt if it flows with the lesson to be given. Getting students stirred to listen and receive is quite valuable because the class becomes eager to learn.

One of the means of knowing that a class has profited from the lessons is, of course, the assignment. Now this must be productive, with an end in mind that after having completed the assignment, the students will have seen their own strengths and weaknesses and also will have received satisfaction from completing it. Therefore assignments must be very carefully composed with that goal in mind. Meaningless, repetitive work just for the sake of developing a workload should be avoided.

The grading of the assignments is important, and a note of praise will mean a lot where merited. This will help to motivate

students to achieve higher goals, and even those whose papers have not perhaps achieved those higher goals can surely be encouraged by a kind word or two. This will show them that you appreciate their effort, and you can even give a suggestion or two as to how they can improve.

Chapter Thirteen

The Rewards of a Good Teacher

There are all levels of teachers in public schools. Such is also the case in the Church. Those of you who have read this book may think that what I have written only apply to teachers who have one of the ministry gifts of Christ, as indicated in Ephesians 4:11, but they apply to all.

You may ask, “Can a Sunday School teacher make a difference to a child?” Let me tell you of a Sunday School teacher and mother who, because of her faithfulness and steadfast witness for Christ, had a part in bringing down the evil empire of Communism. Let us consider the power of this political system. It was like no other the world has ever known. It was cruelty personified in a manner that this book can barely describe.

Having known some who have suffered for Christ under its terrifying brutality, I hesitate to list it as a mere political party, for its goal was nothing less than the complete annihilation of Christianity. Karl Marx, its founder, was a born again believer who in his teens could say, “How sweet the name of Jesus is.” He then became one of Christ’s greatest persecutors through his attacks on the Church. Remember from our section on judgments, that Stalin, likewise, was a backslidden seminarian.

There are none so cruel and vehement against God as those who once were acquainted with the truth and have turned aside. Saul, Judas, and the descendants of Esau and Ishmael

are other examples. Now this very powerful empire was brought to its knees in part through a godly Sunday School teacher named Nelle Reagan. Her name might not be well known, but surely all have heard of her son Ronald Reagan, the fortieth president of the United States and one of the most dynamic of all American presidents.

Because of the teachings of his mother, Ronald Reagan came to Christ at the age of eleven. It was his firm belief in Christ that gave him the confidence and faith to believe that communism could be defeated. Thus, communism was defeated through the boldness of a righteous, God-fearing man who, in his youth, had followed his mother in becoming a Sunday School teacher as well. So well known was his faith in Christ by the adversary that in a formal statement from TASS, the official Soviet News Agency, they stated President Reagan had used religion with particular zeal to back his anti-Soviet policy.

Yes, teachers do have formidable influence when they boldly proclaim the Gospel of God as it is in Christ. Their pupils remember their words long after they have gone to their eternal reward. Their words live on in their hearers' lives and sometimes produce fruit for many generations to come. If we are faithful to study, pray, and live our teachings, God will ensure that, like Jesus, we shall see our seed and be satisfied (Isa. 53:10-11).

We have said much concerning the life, ministry, and influence of godly teachers. However, I wish to add some words of

counsel to the foregoing chapters. The greatest influence that a teacher has upon his pupils is through *his personality*. What we are speaks volumes more than our written word. We leave an indelible impression upon the lives, minds, and hearts of those who meet us.

The teacher should seek to connect with his students, and in some cases, to bond with them. These bonds will produce an endearment between student and teacher that will often last a lifetime and beyond, as the student will fondly muse on the impression that his godly teacher has made upon him.

One of the great promises of God for the Last Days is that He will give to His Church Teachers of Righteousness. This promise is contained in Joel 2:23, *“Be glad then, ye children of Zion, and rejoice in the LORD your God: for he hath given you the former rain moderately, and he will cause to come down for you the rain, the former rain, and the latter rain in the first month.”* The “latter rain” may be translated “Teacher of Righteousness,” and as such, the Hebrews considered their teachers as rain from heaven, refreshing and bringing life to their souls — for in the way of righteousness is life. (See Strong’s H4456 for further detail.)

Now teachers do have particular honours, not only here upon earth but also in heaven above. This is brought out by the Lord Himself in

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His teaching upon the Mount — for He warned His hearers, *“Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil. For verily I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled. Whosoever therefore shall break one of these least commandments, and shall teach men so, he shall be called the least in the kingdom of heaven: but whosoever shall do and teach them, the same shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven. For I say unto you, That except your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no case enter into the kingdom of heaven”* (Mt. 5:17-20).

In the above passage we have the rewards of a Teacher of Righteousness as well as a definition of this most important ministry gift. It is clear that the rewards are given to the ones who faithfully keep and practice the commandments of God, and teach others to do so. These shall be termed *“great in the kingdom of heaven.”*

The definition of a Teacher of Righteousness is one who upholds the law and the prophets — one who (as Paul states) declares the whole counsel of God and does not compromise the message of holiness and perfection. True holiness is to have the Laws of God, the Ten Commandments, written upon the fleshly tables of one’s heart. This means entering within the Veil into the Holy of Holies with God. In the Tabernacle of Moses, the Ark of the Covenant contained the two tablets upon which were written the Ten Commandments, signifying that the Teacher of Righteousness must minister from within

the Veil and seek to bring his students therein as well. He will also seek to give his students a hunger and thirst for righteousness that they might be filled with the righteousness of God (Mt. 5:6).

In the conclusion of this chapter, I want to dwell again upon the character of the teacher. His life must reflect the sweet humility of Jesus as well as the warmth of His love. Truth should be in his inward parts (Ps. 51:6), and from the inner recesses of his heart the law of kindness should flow from his mouth (Prov. 31:26).

Epilogue

Teachers of Righteousness — what a high and holy calling! It demands our complete dedication and “our utmost for His highest.”

This calling requires time spent in the presence of the Lord Jesus: the Teacher of teachers, to hone our skills and grow in the knowledge of Him whom we teach, for He is the Word made flesh. His mantle must cover us so that, with humility and honesty, we can manifest Him who is abundant in goodness and truth (Ex. 34:6).

These are the days when, because sin will abound, the love of many shall wax cold. Yet the Spirit of God will be poured out in revival power, and multitudes shall be found in the “valley of decision.” Teachers of Righteousness are given by God to nourish the newborn and establish the mature so that they will not leave the paths of righteousness, as so many have done. For this reason is this book written — that it may inspire those who are called to greater heights of dedication, who desire to be true teachers, and who will bring many sons to perfection and glory.

Dear ones, may it so be said of us, as King Solomon said, “*for the lips of the righteous feedeth many*” (Prov. 10:21).

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