

**CLASS 13**

# Becoming Teachable Teachers

**CLASS OVERVIEW**

In this class we will review:

- How everyone is a teacher.
- The need for teachers to remain teachable and continue learning.
- The importance of constantly striving to become a better teacher.
- How being teachable affects our overall outlook and our ability to follow.

**Opening Group Questions:**

- Why must teachers be teachable?
- Are all leaders teachers?
- Do we teach solely during a sermon or sermonette, during Church services?

"Not until we have become humble and teachable, standing in awe of God's holiness and sovereignty... acknowledging our own littleness, distrusting our own thoughts, and willing to have our minds turned upside down, can divine wisdom become ours."

—James I. Packer

**I. Introduction**

Although not all of us are called to be "teachers" who serve God's people in a ministerial capacity in this life, *all of us DO teach, all the time.*

Example 1: Think for a moment, about what new people do when they first come to Church. They "watch" all of God's people to see what they are like, and from their observations begin to develop an understanding and definition of what "true Christians" are really like. Issues like how alcohol is used at Church activities (moderation or excess), how difficult situations are handled, how "unique doctrinal ideas" are handled, whether or not brethren are hospitable, all leave lasting impressions.

Example 2: Think about a teenager or young adult. If you are older and/or married, think of how you are teaching them about how a husband and wife should or should not relate to each other. Additionally, if you have children or grandchildren, you are also teaching young people about how to relate to and "train up" these young ones. Finally, you are also teaching them how a "leader" in God's Church should treat new people and young people.

Example 3: If you are a parent, you are primarily responsible for the spiritual training of a potential future member of the God family. The spiritual education of a future god lies on your shoulders.

The reality is that **we ALL teach, all the time!**

Although some of us have more "formal" teaching responsibilities than others, particularly at Sabbath services, we all teach through *informal* means. Whether it is a woman setting the example of "how to organize a meal" at a Church social, or a man setting an example of how to prepare the physical hall and materials for the Passover, we constantly teach those who follow us—**whether we want to or not.**

## II. Biblical Examples—Teachers of the Past, Present and Future:

### The Future:

In Revelation 5:10 God informs us that we will be His kings and priests and will reign with Jesus Christ on earth in His Kingdom. But what will we do as priests on the earth? What did the priests of ancient Israel do? To learn what priests will do in God's Kingdom, we must look at what they did in the past. Priests were servants of God, but they were also teachers of God's way of life—of His laws! Priests taught the people *how* to live God's way of life—and this will be our role during the Millennium. Priests taught by word (by speaking) and by example (what they did and how they lived), as will we in Tomorrow's World.

Ezk 44:10-31—Laws governing the priests

v. 23—They shall teach the difference between right and wrong.

Neh 8:2,3,7, 8—Ezra read from the Law and the priests were responsible for teaching and helping the people to understand and apply what they had heard.

Isaiah 30:20—In God's kingdom, people will see their teachers (plural)—*The Great Teacher* will be Christ, who will no longer hide Himself away. They (Israel) will see *us* as their teachers too.

Micah 4:1-5—People will come to the Mountain of the LORD's house and He will teach them His ways—and we, as the saints ruling with Him, will assist Him in this monumental task.

### Moses' Example

Ex 24:12—God commanded Moses to *teach* the Law.

Deut 4:9, 11:19-21—Parents are commanded to *teach* God's way to their children and grandchildren—all day long.

Ex 6:6-7—God commanded Moses to remind Israel of His power and that He is God.

Ex 18:20—Moses was commanded to teach Israel laws and statutes and to show them the way to walk.

### Christ's Example

John 3:2—Jesus Christ was called a "*teacher* come from God."

Mark 4:1—Christ *taught* semi-formally by the seaside.

Mark 6:2—He *taught* formally in the synagogue.

Luke 11:1—Christ, more informally, was asked to *teach* His disciples how to pray.

**Note:** The gospel accounts highlight that Jesus Christ taught the Gospel of the Kingdom of God—what God's Kingdom will be like, the way of life that will be lived in God's Kingdom, the laws and principles that will govern God's Kingdom.

### Paul's Example

Acts 18:11—Paul *taught* in Corinth for 18 months.

1 Tim 2:7—Paul was a *teacher* of the Gentiles.

1 Cor 11:1—We are instructed to imitate Paul as he imitated Christ—both were *teachers* of the Way.

### Other Examples

1 Cor 12:28—*Teaching* is a "gift of the holy spirit."

Titus 2:3—Older women are to be *teachers* of good things.

Matt 28:20—The Church is charged with *teaching* all nations to observe all things Christ commanded.

"Experience teaches only the teachable."

—Aldous Huxley

### III. Leaders Must Be Teachable

**Leaders ARE teachers** whether or not they are ordained and whether or not they speak at services.

Effective leaders should also be always willing and wanting to learn.

Effective leaders should be teachable and looking for opportunities to be taught.

Prov 1:5—"A wise man will hear and increase learning, and a man of understanding will attain/acquire wise counsel."

Prov 4:13—Take firm hold of instruction, do not let go; keep her, for she is your life.

Prov 6:23—The commandment is a lamp and the law a light; reproofs of instruction are the way of life.

Prov 8:33—Hear instruction and be wise, and do not disdain or refuse it.

Prov 9:9—Give instruction to a wise man and he will be still wiser; teach a just man and he will increase in learning.

Prov 13:18—Poverty and shame shall be to him who refuses instruction (KJV).

Prov 15:32—He who disdains instruction despises his own soul.

Prov 19:20—Listen to counsel and receive instruction, that you may be wise in your latter days.

Jer 17:23; 32:33; 35:13—God clearly condemns Israel because they do not heed His instruction and teaching.

2 Peter 3:18—We are to grow in grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ—to continue learning.

**Learning does not always require formal education. Effective leaders learn how to learn in any situation.**

Wisdom is everywhere, if we will just listen and look for it—if we are willing to be taught.

Prov 1:21—Wisdom calls aloud outside/ in the street; She raises her voice in the open squares. She cries out in the chief concourses, at the openings of the gates in the city.

Prov 6:6-11—God, through wise king Solomon, advised us to watch and be taught by one of the smallest creatures, the ant.

### IV. How To Remain Teachable

**Group Question:** How can leaders help insure that they remain teachable?

1. **Ask God for a Teachable Attitude and Heart—Remember King David's Desire to Learn!**
2. **Continually Seek to Improve Yourself and Grow Your "Talents"**
  - a. Study God's word for examples of teachable servants of God.
  - b. Never make the mistake of assuming that you have "mastered" something or have all of the answers—the best leaders continually seek to improve themselves, their skills, their talents, and they know their own limitations.
  - c. Read books on leadership and building the talents of a leader.
  - d. Identify role models (in the Bible and in "real life") that you would like to emulate, with regard to leadership and teachability, and push yourself to become more like them. Learn from them. This will also frequently remind us that we have much overcoming and growth to accomplish.

- e. Learn for the future—One important way to learn is to focus on learning how to perform your current job and responsibilities better, NOW (even if you are not in your *ideal* or *dream* job). A visionary way to learn is to gain knowledge and skills that will help propel you and your followers *successfully* into the future.

**3. Fast Regularly**

Fasting is a tool that God gave us to automatically humble us. Regular fasting will, in part, help us remain humble and "little in our own eyes," and remind us that we are called only because of God's grace, and not because we were "something special."

**Managers are those who learn for the present, while leaders are those who learn for the future!**

## **V. Conclusion**

Teachers must know the subject they are trying to teach. They must learn how to teach others and understand the needs of their audience. Being teachable is also a key character trait of effective leaders. Highly effective, godly leaders are always looking for ways to improve and build on the talents that God has granted them (Matt 25:14-30). By doing this, they hope to become more effective *instruments* in God's spiritual arsenal (Rom 6:12-14) and better ambassadors for Christ (2 Cor 5:20).

Remaining teachable requires humility and constant self-examination in the light of the "mirror" of the Bible. It requires looking at ourselves objectively and it requires an earnest desire to improve.

Effective, godly leaders must *remain* teachable and avoid, at all costs, developing the attitude of vanity and arrogance that Satan so craftily broadcasts.

### **Optional Homework Discussion Questions for Next Class:**

(Discuss with your spouse or another Church member—this is **not** to be a written assignment!)

- Why is communication so important to people and especially Christians?
- Why *must* a godly leader be an effective communicator?
- What are keys to effective communication?