

Are You Morphing Into A Teacher?



Romans 12:7

Word association games can be a lot of fun depending on the group you are with. People who edit what they say before they speak can kill the game but people who just blurt out whatever is the first word that pops into their mind can be hilarious. A few years ago I was playing the game with friends and my time came to speak and they deliberately gave me the word sermon. Can you imagine the results? Tedious, boring, pedantic, pompous, and monotonous were all shouted out. We all had a good laugh (at my expense!) and the game continued.

I am not easily offended and can definitely take a joke but I have often thought about that humorous encounter. Why is it that preaching is so often viewed with disdain when the Bible and the history of the church so clearly reveal its value?

In the same way, consider teaching. Teachers at one time were highly valued for their abilities to instruct and pass on necessary knowledge and skill yet increasingly teaching is now often viewed as a necessary but tedious boredom to be endured. If you think I overstate the point, simply observe closely as both students and parents post comments on Facebook. Clearly in some circles teaching is no longer highly valued in our culture.

Yet God highly values it. The word is used almost 100 times in the N.T. in various forms. Jesus commissioned us to teach new followers, parents are specifically charged to teach their children, and Elders are called to teach the church family. On top of all that, the gift of teaching is specifically mentioned three times in all of the gift lists, one of only two gifts that get that designation! Clearly teaching matters to God; so much so that he expects some of us to morph into teachers.

Are you one of them?

Group Discussion:

- In your estimation, does our current Canadian culture value teaching?
- Have you ever had a teacher that really impacted your life in some way? Can you share the story with your group?
- Do you believe that the gift of teaching is evident in our church family? If so, where do you see it?

Study Time:

Read and compare these three passages: Romans 12:6-7; I Corinthians 12:28-31; Ephesians 4:11-12

- What do we learn about teaching from these verses?
- How important is teaching to the Church?
- Have you seen evidence of the gift of teaching at work in someone's life?
- Have you ever affirmed someone that has the gift of teaching?
- What do you personally most value about teaching?
- If the gift of teaching was absent, what do you think would happen to the Church?

Read II Timothy 2:15

- Based on the sermon, what does it mean to "correctly handle the word of truth"?
- How important is this skill to you personally?
- How do you feel when teaching is not clear?

Please read the following passages and take note of some of the insights into teaching:

I Timothy 3:2; Titus 2:1-4; James 3:1; Acts 2:42; I Timothy 1:3-4; I Timothy 5:17

- What are some insights you have gained or been reminded of from these verses?
- How important is teaching to the functioning of the church family?
- Have you seen these truths lived out in SBC?
- Are you living any of these truths in your own life?
- Are there any truths from these verses you need to start living out?

Read Colossians 3:16

Our Deacons have asked us to prayerfully reflect on this verse as a church family this week.

- What would it look like to have the word dwell among us richly?
- How do you feel about the word "admonish" being attached to teaching?
- How are we supposed to approach one another as we live out this verse?
- If SBC began to really live out this verse, what would change in our Church family?

Signs of the gift of teaching breaking forth in your life:

Just as people who love butterflies can tell by the size, shape and location of the cocoon what butterfly will come out before it breaks forth, so the gifts of the spirit reveal their presence. If the gift of teaching is stirring inside of you:

1. You love clear communication. When it is clear, consistent and simple, it makes your heart sing. If it is confusing, unclear and incomplete in any way, you are disappointed.
2. False Teaching frustrates, annoys and angers you. You have little patience for it and you are more than willing to confront anything that you feel is false.
3. When you are teaching and one of your students “gets it” you feel more alive than ever before.

Group Discussion:

- Have you ever felt any of these signs in your life?
- Have you seen them in anyone else’s life?
- Does it help you to know that these are in fact signs of a spiritual gift at work?
- Are there other signs of the gift of teaching breaking out of someone’s life that you have observed?
- Of these three signs, is there one that means more to you than the others? Can you share what it is with the group?

Responding To The Truth:

- ***“Therefore everyone who hears these words of mine and puts them into practice is like a wise man who built his house on the rock.”*** Matthew 7: 24

Jesus expects us to put his words into practice. What do you think he means by that and why is it so important?

Prayer Time:

Pray together as a group that we would embrace a new way of thinking, a new sense of belonging and a new purpose to fulfill. Also pray that God would reveal the gift of teaching in our church family and that those with the gift of teaching would faithfully teach.