

**Mark Mikels - November 24, 2019**

**"THE SPIRITUAL 'GIFTING' OF TEACHING"**

(Romans 12:7b; Mark 4:33-34; Mark 8:14-21; Luke 24:13-27; Acts 18:24-26)

**Intro ...** Ready to unwrap another '**Spiritual Gifting**'? Today we have displayed before us the **Third** of **Seven** such '**Giftings**' the Apostle Paul identified in Romans chapter twelve:

**TODAY'S 'GIFTING' IDENTIFIED ...**

*"If a man's gifting is **TEACHING** ('didasko') ..."*  
(Romans 12:7b)

The church of Jesus Christ desperately needs teachers.

God's people desperately need to know the "*ins and outs*" of the Word God and the way that Word applies to their daily lives. People need to know what it means to be a Christian in the midst of our increasingly "*post-Christian*" or even "*anti-Christian*" world.

If there ever was a time when careful Christian teaching was needed, it's today.

And so, the Spirit of God has and does provide for Christ's Church those who are "*imprinted at spiritual birth*" (as it were) with the "*gifting of teaching*."

The Greek word that Paul uses here is pretty much the standard word for teaching or instructing – '*didasko*' – it's used many, many times in the New Testament. Our English word '*Didactic*' has its root in this Greek word.

I want you to take special note this morning of the difference between "**Prophecy**" and "**Teaching**" for they are distinctively different "*giftings*."

So now as we continue, note ...

**TODAY'S 'GIFTING' OF TEACHING DEFINED ...**

**TEACHING: "SEEKING to create UNDERSTANDING"**

**\* The Teacher's Key Phrase ... "Let Me ENLIGHTEN You!"**

The thing that motivates a teacher more than anything else is the thrill of seeing "*the light go on*" in someone's mind and realizing that **enlightenment has come** – realizing that their student is understanding and beginning to master the very thing that is being taught.

**\* The Teacher's Key Questions ...**

Do they **GET** it – Have they **GOTTEN** it?  
Will they be able to **RECALL** it and **APPLY** it?

The teacher is not and will not be satisfied until the answer to each of those questions is a resounding **"YES."**

In this respect, the teacher sees a far different target than the prophet does.

Whereas the Prophet is powerfully motivated to '**Get The Word OUT,**'  
the Teacher is equally motivated to '**Get The Word IN.'**

So, consider now ...

**TODAY'S 'GIFTING' OF TEACHING REFINED ... ('didaskalia')**

***"If a man's gift is teaching, let him teach ..."***

It sounds like Paul is simply repeating himself like he did when he said:

***"If a man's gifting is service, let him serve "but he's not.***

In our passage today, two significantly different Greek words underlie those two very similar English words.

Here they are:

***"If a man's gift is 'didasko' ... let him 'didaskalia'"***

Their difference is in more than their spelling ...

Whereas the word "**didasko**" is translated almost every time by our English word "**teach**," the work "**didaskalia**" is translated almost every time it's found in the New Testament by the word "**Doctrine**" – the core beliefs of the faith.

Let me share with you ...

A more **PRECISE** translation ...

*"If a man's gift is **TEACHING**, let him do his best to create **UNDERSTANDING** – to **INDOCTRINATE** believers in the **FAITH**."*

The teacher is not content until that has happened – until his students are securely grounded in the doctrines of the faith – until they can clearly think themselves through life "**Biblically**."

It's a great and vitally important spiritual '**perspective**' to have!

And now as we continue to '**Unwrap**' this '**Gifting of Teaching**' this morning ... As we seek to come to understand just what it means, let's see ...

**THIS 'GIFTING' OF TEACHING DEMONSTRATED ...**

First of all, let's see it demonstrated ...

\* By Jesus during his **EARTHLY** ministry (Mark 4:33-34)

*"With many ... parables Jesus spoke the word to them ... He did not say anything to them without using a parable. But when he was alone with his own disciples, he **explained** everything."*

It was vitally important to Jesus that his disciples gained a full and complete understanding of the things he was teaching, for they were the ones who would carry on his ministry after he was gone.

In fact, he would send them out two by two on a practice run to do just that.

But understanding does not generally come easily or immediately. Usually a teacher must say something again and again and must always check for understanding and not just assume that the students have, in fact, gotten it.

Checking for understanding can be humbling (and frustrating) for a teacher, but it's the only way to be sure.

Jesus was no exception to the rule.

Check out this scripture ...

**Mark 8:14-21**

*"The disciples had forgotten to bring bread,  
except for one loaf they had with them in the boat.*

*'Be careful,' Jesus warned them.*

*'Watch out for the yeast of the Pharisees and that of Herod.'*

*They discussed this with one another and said,*

*'It is because we have no bread.'*

*Aware of their discussion, Jesus asked them:*

*'Why are you talking about having no bread?*

*Do you still not see or understand? Are your hearts hardened?*

*Do you have eyes but fail to see, and ears but fail to hear?*

*And don't you remember?*

*When I broke the five loaves for the five thousand,  
how many basketfuls of pieces did you pick up?'*

*'Twelve,' they replied.*

*'And when I broke the seven loaves for the four thousand,  
how many basketfuls of pieces did you pick up?'*

*They answered, 'Seven.'*

*He said to them, 'Do you still not understand?'*

Teachers oftentimes lay awake at night questioning to themselves:

*"How can I say it better ... How can I make it plainer?"*

It's encouraging to know that Jesus knew what that was like ... **He** knew the difficulty of bringing '*enlightenment*' and '*understanding*' to those that he would teach. He spent his entire earthly ministry seeking to '*teach*' the truths of God effectively. **He** never gave up the quest to "*create understanding*" in those around him.

Perhaps some of those "all-night prayer meetings with His Heavenly Father" were focused upon that very quest. No doubt, many of his prayers took the form ...

*"Father, help me get through to them."*

We can see this teaching "gifting" demonstrated during his earthly ministry ... a beautiful example for us.

We can also see this "gifting" demonstrated ...

\* By Jesus after his **RESURRECTION** (Luke 24:13-27)

*"Now that same day two of them were going to a village called Emmaus, about seven miles from Jerusalem. They were talking with each other about everything that had happened. As they talked and discussed these things with each other, Jesus himself came up and walked along with them; but they were kept from recognizing him."*

*"He asked them ... 'What are you discussing together as you walk along?'"*

*They stood still; their faces downcast.*

*One of them, named Cleopas, asked him, 'Are you only a visitor to Jerusalem and do not know the things that have happened there in these days?'*

*'What things?' he asked.*

*'About Jesus of Nazareth,' they replied.*

*'He was a prophet, powerful in word and deed before God and all the people. The chief priests and our rulers handed him over to be sentenced to death, and they crucified him; but we had hoped that he was the one who was going to redeem Israel.*

*And what is more, it is the third day since all this took place.*

*In addition, some of our women amazed us. They went to the tomb early this morning but didn't find his body. They came and told us that they had seen a vision of angels, who said he was alive.*

*Then some of our companions went to the tomb and found it just as the women had said, but him they did not see.'*

*He said to them,*

*'How foolish you are, and how slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken! Did not the Christ have to suffer these things and then enter his glory?'*

*And beginning with Moses and all the prophets, he explained to them what was said in all the Scriptures concerning himself."*

***"He explained to them what was said in all the Scripture ... "***

This was a master teacher at work ... Walking at a leisurely pace, his little lesson was probably two hours long and (since I'm sure neither of them were carrying a bag full of Old Testament Scrolls) he walked them (as it were) through the entire Old Testament Scripture by memory!

They were in the presence of the ultimate teacher and it's no wonder that they said later on ... (verse 32)

*"Were not our hearts burning within us while he talked with us on the road and opened the Scriptures to us?"*

They had been **enlightened** and they knew it – their **understanding** of God's Plan was locked in securely!

Time for one more example of this teaching "**gifting**" being demonstrated – this time ...

\* By Priscilla and Aquila with **APOLLOS** (Acts 18:24-26)

*"Meanwhile a Jew named Apollos, a native of Alexandria, came to Ephesus. He was a learned man, with a thorough knowledge of the Scriptures. He had been instructed in the way of the Lord, and he spoke with great fervor and taught about Jesus accurately, though he knew only the baptism of John.*

*He began to speak boldly in the synagogue.*

*When Priscilla and Aquila heard him, they invited him to their home and explained to him the way of God more adequately."*

Here, I believe we see a couple of teachers enhancing the work of one who I would believe had the "**prophetic gifting**" ...

***"He spoke with great fervor"*** (passion) ...  
***though he knew only the baptism of John"*** ...

So basically, his message was a continuation of John's message with an understanding that the chosen one – "**the Messiah**" - had come ...

Here's the gist of John's message ...

***Selections From Matthew Chapter Three***

*"In those days John the Baptist came, preaching in the Desert of Judea and saying, 'Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is near.'*

*People went out to him from Jerusalem and all Judea and the whole region of the Jordan. Confessing their sins, they were baptized by him in the Jordan River.*

*But when he saw many of the Pharisees and Sadducees coming to where he was baptizing, he said to them:*

*'You brood of vipers! Who warned you to flee from the coming wrath? Produce fruit in keeping with repentance. And do not think you can say to yourselves, 'We have Abraham as our father.'*

*I tell you that out of these stones God can raise up children for Abraham. The ax is already at the root of the trees, and every tree that does not produce good fruit will be cut down and thrown into the fire."*

This was a true prophet at work ...

***"Declaring Truth and Denouncing Sin and Demanding Repentance."***

And we could say ...

*"Letting the chips fall where they may ..."*

I would believe that Apollos was in that mold ... He was passionately declaring what he knew to be true – He just didn't know the whole story. And that's where Priscilla and Aquila as gifted "teachers" entered the picture ...

Just imagine what would have happened if they had also been functioning from the "prophetic perspective"!

They probably would have "called him out" right there in public and pointed out his inadequacies and perhaps permanently damaged his reputation and ended his usefulness in the Lord's service.

Instead, being true "teachers," and being motivated to see true understanding come to him, they ...

*"Invited him to their home (a private setting) and explained to him the way of God more adequately."*

And the result of their careful work?

Luke gives us the answer ...

**Acts 18:27-28**

*"When Apollos wanted to go to Achaia, the brothers encouraged him and wrote to the disciples there to welcome him. On arriving, he was a great help to those who by grace had believed. For he vigorously refuted the Jews in public debate, proving from the Scriptures that Jesus was the Christ."*

Priscilla and Aquila must have felt incredibly fulfilled ...

They had perfectly "**demonstrated**" the gifting that we have sought to "**define**" ...

They possessed a captivating and energizing desire to "**create understanding**" in those around them and they had been wonderfully successful with Apollos.

You wonder how many other great '**Public Proclaimers**' have been assisted along the way by some very carefully and sensitively given teaching.

So, we have seen '**Today's Gifting**' ...

**Identified** and **Defined** and **Refined** and **Demonstrated**  
(and hopefully, understood).

Now let's see ...



**\* THE 'GIFTING' OF TEACHING ALIGNED  
WITH THE OTHER "GIFTINGS"**

**Prophecy** – "Let me TELL you!"

**Serving** – "Let me HELP you!"

**Teaching** – "Let Me ENLIGHTEN you!"

Most importantly this morning, I've wanted you to see the alignment and the inter-play of "**Prophecy**" and "**Teaching**" ...

**"Let me enlighten you" vs. "Let me tell you."**

They are quite distinct, aren't they?

Let's examine now ...

**THE GIFTING OF TEACHING ALIGNED  
WITH THE REST OF THE BODY ...**

A church fellowship without the 'teaching-gifting'  
is a **VULNERABLE** body for its members  
are susceptible to **FUZZY THINKING**.

Now that is a situation that we as a church would most certainly want to avoid.  
We want a congregation that thinks clearly and solidly regarding  
the nature and purpose of the Christian Life.

(*'Nudges and Hugs'* properly understood provides a complete discipleship course,  
taking one from Spiritual Birth to Spiritual Maturity. It walks us day by day  
through the most important elements of the Christian Faith.)

Consider now Today's ...

***Final Thot ...***

The **TEACHER** brings **ENLIGHTENMENT** and **UNDERSTANDING**.  
The teaching "gifting" guards against the misconception  
that **TELLING** is all that is needed.