

Christ Christ The Teacher

Introduction

It is irrelevant how much we get to learn we discover that there is a universal need of being taught. When we were little children we were taught and now, for many of us grandparents, we are still learning, but more often now it is from our children and grandchildren about computers, etc. The Psalmist wrote: “O God, thou hast taught me from my youth: and hitherto have I declared thy wondrous works. Now also when I am old and gray headed, O God, forsake me not; until I have shewed thy strength unto this generation, and thy power to every one that is to come” (Psa. 71:17-18)

In the art of teaching there are two aspects:

- a) The ability to teach effectively
- b) The teaching being at the level of the understanding, sometimes called the “teaching moment.”

When we look back at life some can recall a teacher with whom we really connected. Such a one was able to make things understandable to us and we were at a stage in our education where we could understand it. In other words, the instructor taught and we learnt.

Learning is always a personal thing and when we consider God, Christ, or the Holy Spirit as our teachers, they know where we are in the school of God, and the best way to continue with the next step. Each child of God receives private education for we all are at different stages in our spiritual understanding. This being so, we observe that the education of the individual is personal as it was for Peter (Matt. 16:17) and Paul (Gal. 1:16). Just as Israel or David were taught of God (Isa. 54:13); 71:16-18), so can we by the Spirit (Jn. 6:45). When our Lord was here He taught wherever He went (Matt. 5:2; 7:9; Mk. 9:31).

- a) It is the desire of God to instruct us.
 - i) “Out of heaven He made thee to hear his voice, that he might instruct thee: and upon earth He shewed thee his great fire; and thou heardest his words out of the midst of the fire.” (Deut. 4:36)
 - ii) “Thou gavest also thy good spirit to instruct them.” (Neh. 9:20)
- b) God promises to instruct:
 - i) “I will instruct thee and teach thee in the way which thou shalt go: I will guide thee with mine eye.” (Psa. 32:8)

Spiritual instruction is conveyed by a number of terms.

In the scriptures there are two closely related truths regarding being taught. There must be first hearing that which is said, and then hearing with understanding. “The LORD is a God of knowledge” (1 Sam. 2:3); “The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom” (Psa. 111:10); and knowledge (Prov. 1:7). This being so, it is not surprising to find multiple references to teaching in the scriptures as the following table shows:

Word	No. of verses	Word	No. of verses
Teach	109	Instructor	1
Taught	81	Instructors	1
Teacher	6	Instruction	49
Teachers	14	Instruct	10
Teaching	25	Doctrine	51

Christ

Christ The Teacher

Christ the Teacher

Christ is the greatest teacher who ever lived for He is the source, boundary, and cumulation of all knowledge and wisdom. He is the manifestation of the Wisdom of God in creation (Col. 1:13-18) and redemption (1 Cor. 1:30).

- a) As the “Source” He never needed instruction or counseling (Isa. 9:6; Rom. 11:34), and therefore never a need for an instructor.
- b) As the “Boundary” there is no knowledge beyond Him for He is omniscient. (Psa. 139:2-6; Isa. 46:10)
- c) He is the “Cumulation” of all truth. (Col. 2:3)

The Teaching of the Lord

1) The Method of His Teaching

- a) The Lord taught by three methods:
 - i) His preaching was the proclamation of the gospel
 - ii) His teaching was the exposition of the gospel
 - iii) His healings were the authentication and illustration of the power of the gospel.
- b) He taught by parables of which the consensus is that there were 70 of them. They were divided into two groups, those which were enlightening (Matt. 13:10-12) and at the same time they were judgmental (Matt. 13:13-17). A number of them were a revelation of Himself as when He is the Judge (Matt. 5:25); Nobleman (Lk. 19:12); Shepherd (Jn. 10:11); and in others He reveals the character of God as the Father who permits His child to go his own way but welcomes him when he returns (Lk. 15:11-24).

2) The Manner of His Teaching

- a) When our Lord taught the teaching was so very simple and yet there was a profoundness in it. The story of the Shepherd is such a child can understand (Jn. 10:11, 14), or that of the lost sheep (Lk. 15:4-6) and yet the lessons in them are exceedingly complex.
- b) His teaching was always perfectly fitted to the spiritual development of the hearers. To the disciples: “Are ye yet without understanding?” (Matt. 15:16)
- c) He presented the Old Testament and its relevance to:
 - i) The times in which He lived: “This day is this scripture fulfilled in your ears” (Lk. 4:21).
 - ii) The condition of the leaders when He said such words as: “Let them alone: they be blind leaders of the blind. And if the blind lead the blind, both shall fall into the ditch.” (Matt. 15:14)
 - iii) The conditions of the people: “But when he saw the multitudes, he was moved with compassion on them, because they fainted, and were scattered abroad, as sheep having no shepherd.” (Matt. 9:36); “And Jesus, when he came out, saw much people, and was moved with compassion toward them, because they were as sheep not having a shepherd: and he began to teach them many things.” (Mk. 6:34; 1 Kgs. 22:17; 2 Chron. 18:16)

3) The Marvels of That Which He Taught

- a) He taught them of:
 - i) The resurrection when he taught: “Marvel not at this: for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, And shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation.” (Jn. 5:28, 29)
 - ii) His coming in glory when He said: “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” (Matt. 16:27); “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” (Matt. 25:31); “For whosoever shall be ashamed of me and

Christ

Christ The Teacher

of my words, of him shall the Son of man be ashamed, when he shall come in his own glory, and in his Father's, and of the holy angels." (Lk. 9:26)

- iii) His promised rest when He gave the precious invitation: "Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." (Matt. 11:28)
- iv) He as the exclusive way to the Father: "Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me." (Jn. 14:6)
- v) His identicalness to God and the Father when he said: "Jesus saith unto him, Have I been so long time with you, and yet hast thou not known me, Philip? He that hath seen me hath seen the Father; and how sayest thou then, Shew us the Father?" (Jn. 14:9)

4) **The Authority of His Teachings**

- a) It was a recognized fact that the Lord spoke with authority whither during His earthly sojourn (Matt. 7:2) or in a future day (Jn. 5:28). His authority was further manifested when He said to the leper: "I will; be thou clean" (Matt. 8:3); or by the power of His spoken word raised the dead (Mk. 5:41; Lk. 7:14; Jn. 11:43). Because He spoke with divine authority having heard the words of God with unsullied clarity, He never needed to say, "I suggest"; "It seems to me"; or "I think"; therefore, there was never any hint of uncertainty, nor need to act as if He knew when He did not.
- b) He spoke in the power of God and His teachings were more penetrating and powerful than any other teacher. When He challenged the first one among them to cast a stone at the woman, they were convicted and went out: "And they which heard it, being convicted by their own conscience, went out one by one, beginning at the eldest, even unto the last: and Jesus was left alone, and the woman standing in the midst." (Jn. 8:9)

5) **The Graciousness of His Teaching**

- a) "And all bare him witness, and wondered at the gracious words which proceeded out of his mouth. And they said, Is not this Joseph's son?" (Lk. 4:22)

6) **The Scope of His Teachings**

- a) Prophetical:
 - i) Things immediately future: "And when ye shall see Jerusalem compassed with armies, then know that the desolation thereof is nigh. Then let them which are in Judaea flee to the mountains; and let them which are in the midst of it depart out; and let not them that are in the countries enter thereinto. For these be the days of vengeance, that all things which are written may be fulfilled. But woe unto them that are with child, and to them that give suck, in those days! for there shall be great distress in the land, and wrath upon this people. And they shall fall by the edge of the sword, and shall be led away captive into all nations: and Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles, until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled." (Lk. 21:20-24)
 - ii) Things distant future: "Wherefore if they shall say unto you, Behold, he is in the desert; go not forth: behold, he is in the secret chambers; believe it not. For as the lightning cometh out of the East, and shineth even unto the West; so shall also the coming of the Son of man be. For wheresoever the carcass is, there will the eagles be gathered together. Immediately after the tribulation of those days shall the sun be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light, and the stars shall fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens shall be shaken: And then shall appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven: and then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn, and they shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory. And he shall send his angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they shall

Christ Christ The Teacher

gather together his elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other.” (Matt. 24:26-31)

- b) True wealth: “And one of the company said unto him, Master, speak to my brother, that he divide the inheritance with me. And he said unto him, Man, who made me a judge or a divider over you? And he said unto them, Take heed, and beware of covetousness: for a man’s life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth.” (Lk. 12:13-15)
- c) The unseen world: “I say unto you, that likewise joy shall be in heaven over one sinner that repenteth, more than over ninety and nine just persons, which need no repentance” (Lk. 15:7). “And it came to pass, that the beggar died, and was carried by the angels into Abraham’s bosom: the rich man also died, and was buried; 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. But Abraham said, Son, remember that thou in thy lifetime receivedst thy good things, and likewise Lazarus evil things: but now he is comforted, and thou art tormented. And beside all this, between us and you there is a great gulf fixed: so that they which would pass from hence to you cannot; neither can they pass to us, that would come from thence.” (Lk. 16:22-26)

Summary:

As the Teacher unequalled, He perfectly described the attitudes of those who would be part of His Kingdom (Matt. 6:9-13); precisely predicted the characteristics at the end of the age (Matt. 24:27-30). His words were so appreciated in times of adversity (Lk. 22:28-29). His clarity of expressions were fraught with beauty when He prayed (Jn. 11:41-42; 17:1-26).

How blessed to be like Mary and to sit at His feet to be taught (Lk. 10:39). With this passage and Mk. 14:9 we observe Mary loved Him, listened to Him, and learnt from Him. Surely it ought to be the desire of every saint to have a teachable spirit, and in truth sing the words of Benjamin Russell:

“Teach me Thy way O Lord, teach me thy way”.

What a way to meet Him, either when He comes or we are released from this vale of tears.

**May God grant us good understanding as He, by His Holy Spirit, deigns to guide us into all truth.
John 16:13**

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