

DON'T PLAY IN CLASS!

May 16, 2022

EPHESIANS 4:10-12 NKJV – (10) He who descended is also the One who ascended far above all the heavens, that He might fill all things. (11) And He Himself gave some *to be* apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers, (12) for the equipping of the saints for the work of ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ,

My focus today is on **verse 11** and specifically the gift of “Teaching.” Pastors and teachers focused on leading a particular congregation or possibly groups of local house churches. The structure of the original Greek seems to link “shepherds” and “teachers” as a single office. Teachers are those with the ability to effectively communicate God's Word to others. All pastors must have the ability to teach (**1 Timothy 3:2**), but some people may be gifted as teachers while not called to be pastors (**Romans 12:7**).

Nevertheless, I am discovering how this gift is becoming very unpopular to many, including those who say they were called to do it. The focus seems to be on the first four gifts. Therefore, many are striving for titles and positions of authority but are not teaching by application or example. Do we recognize who the teacher is? We who have been called to teach are in the class room as well!

Through time I've watched an unintentional doctrinal inaccuracy on the part of many pastors become intentional. In other words, I have witnessed a new “standard wisdom” emerge. Simply stated it is the “wisdom” of attempting to circle in more people for our churches by unashamedly minimizing, or perhaps nearly removing, the restricting influences of doctrine. What pastors used to do (because of being poorly taught perhaps), they now do by intent, all for church and financial growth.

Paul makes my idea clear when he says that we must “strive together for the faith of the gospel” (**Philippians 1:27**). He trains leaders with the words, “But as for you, speak the things which are fitting for sound doctrine” (**Titus 2:1**), and “The things which you have heard from me in the presence of many witnesses, entrust these to faithful men who will be able to teach others also” (**2 Timothy 2:2**). He worries, “For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine” (**2 Timothy 4:3**).

John rejoices to find “some of your children walking in the truth, just as we have received commandment to do from the Father,” but warns, “Anyone who goes too far and does not abide in the teaching of Christ, does not have God. If anyone comes to you and does not bring this teaching, do not receive him. For the one who gives him a greeting participates in his evil deeds” (**2 John 4:9-11**). To all of us who are in class, **“Stop playing!”**

SCRIPTURE READING: LUKE 6:40

THOUGHT FOR THE WEEK: When no one else seems to notice, He sees. When no one else seems to care, He cares. When our words seem to be falling flat, He sees our effort and is pleased with our faithfulness.

“A JOURNEY OF THE HEART”