
Biblical Watershed Issues: Who Teaches the Believer? #2

Who teaches believers? The family? Anyone? Everyone? Current Issues: Age-integration; gender diffusion; proliferation of teachers; minimization of the pastoral role and local church. This issue creates confusion and division, and leads to departure from Scripture.

1. **Pastors Teach Believers** – Pastors are given to equip the **saints** (Eph 4:12) – all believers, not just the men or the adults. This would include teaching men, women, and children (not exclusively – pastors teach children, but so do their parents & others). Pastors are appointed by God to oversee **local** assemblies and are required to be men.
2. **Believers Teach One Another** (Col 3:16; Heb 5:12) – We are all to teach and admonish one another. This is not limited to the men or adults. I believe that this pertains primarily to passing on what we have been taught by our pastors (cp James 3:1).

Col 3:16 Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom, **teaching and admonishing one another** in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord.

- *In comparison with James 3:1, this would seem to be a more repetitive teaching, repeating what one has been taught.*

Heb 5:12 – 6:2 For though by this time **you ought to be teachers**, you need [someone] to teach you again the first principles of the oracles of God; and you have come to need milk and not solid food. ¹³ For everyone who partakes [only] of milk [is] unskilled in the word of righteousness, for he is a babe. ¹⁴ But solid food belongs to those who are of full age, [that is,] those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil. ^{2:1} Therefore, leaving the discussion of the **elementary [principles] of Christ**, let us go on to perfection, not laying again the foundation of **repentance from dead works** and of **faith toward God**, ^{2:2} of the **doctrine of baptisms**, of **laying on of hands**, of **resurrection of the dead**, and of **eternal judgment**.

- *This pertains to each and every believer. Each is expected to learn, understand, and be able to repeat the first principles – the basic fundamental concepts of the Christian faith.*

With this category of teaching:

- a) There is **no specific qualifications or skills** suggested, other than just first being taught.
- b) There is also **no formal appointment** (Eph 4:12) to this responsibility.
- c) There is **no elevated accountability** (James 3:1; Heb 13:17) that is required for pastoral teaching roles.
- d) There is a suggestion of **informal teaching** (in the process of life while interacting with one another), and no indication of formal teaching.
- e) The content concerns learning and passing on (six) **basic truths**, not developing original studies.

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