

## **HUMAN TEACHERS NECESSARY**

"He gave indeed the Apostles and the Prophets, and the Evangelists, and Shepherds, and Teachers, for the complete qualification of the Saints for the work of service; in order to the building up of the body of the Anointed one; till we all attain to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God to a full grown man (till the body is complete) – to the measure of the full stature of the Anointed one." Eph. 4:11-13.

This teaches us that we may be saints (consecrated ones) before we have come to full harmony with God's plans, or reached our full development in knowledge and faith. It also shows us that it is the will of God that we should not continue babes in Christ but should "grow in grace and knowledge, growing up (as members) into him in all things, who is the head of the body, even Christ; (Eph. 4:15,) striving and aiming continually for the perfection of knowledge and faith-stature of the anointed pattern, our head. This increase and growth must not stop until we ALL (the entire body) have been thus schooled "for the work of service."

To assist us, God has provided helpers – Apostles, Prophets, Evangelists, Pastors, Teachers. Those whom God selected for these positions in the primitive Church, were not selected because of their learning or worldly wisdom, nor because of their natural gifts; but evidently, largely because of their entire consecration to his will and service.

In selecting his ministers, Jesus passed by the "Theological Seminaries" – their "Schools of the Prophets," and their Doctors of Divinity, and their students too, and chose unpretentious "Israelites indeed." Among those chosen, being some rather illiterate fishermen. Thus he has ever chosen the weak things to confound the mighty.

"Even so Father, for so it seemed good in thy sight." It should be remembered too, that God has always provided his church with ministers and helpers. It may help us also, to remember that Jesus always gives his ministers their commission, which may be known and read of all the saints – viz. His spirit of self sacrifice for the sheep, and ability to feed them by expounding to them the Scriptures harmoniously.

That God does set apart or raise up teachers for the Church, is not only evident from the Scripture (1 Cor. 12:27-31 and 2 Tim. 2:2.) but also from his dealings. It is a fact that during this Gospel age, it has pleased God to make use of some men far more than others in the work of teaching and edifying the body of Christ. Jesus was a teacher sent of God. The disciples were sent to preach and teach and baptize. And while we believe that every consecrated member of the body of Christ is a MINISTER in some sense, and all are "anointed to preach the glad tidings," yet there are various members adapted to different parts of the work, just as there are different members and offices in the human body, which Scripturally is used to illustrate the body of Christ – the Church.

The head of the body is gone from earthly to spiritual conditions. In him centres all the knowledge and wisdom which must direct the affairs of (his flesh) the members on the earthly plane. This is accomplished by delegating various qualities of the head to some members of the body. The highest offices entrusted by our head to members of the body for the use of the entire body, are the qualities of the Eye, the Ear and the Mouth. The two former are channels of information, and the latter of expression. These correspond with certain of the chief offices in the church. First the Eye to see: John and Paul were two members of the church, who enjoyed more than any others perhaps, this grand quality of the head. It was a gift in which they greatly rejoiced. Jesus received a wonderful revelation

from the Father relative to coming events (Rev. 1:1.) and true to his body, he sent and signified it to John who thus stood as the eye of the Church and through him we can see as fast as due, the unfoldings of that revelation. Paul too, had this gift or office in a remarkable [R365 : page 7] degree, being in visions and revelations of the Lord more abundant than they all. (2 Cor. 12:2-4. Gal. 1:12; 2:2.)

Paul is the clearest eye the Church has ever had. Though he was not permitted to make known what he so clearly saw, (2 Cor. 12:4) yet it is evident that the things seen, so deepened and widened his own knowledge of God's plan and love as related to the past, present, and "ages to come," that his writings have a rich depth, fullness, and golden coloring, possessed by no other New Testament writer. He seems to come to the very verge of those glorious revelations while explaining Rom. 11:25-33, concerning the plan of God relative to the casting off of fleshly Israel and their future restoration to his favor through the agency of the church – when the church is complete – when they shall obtain mercy through your mercy. How anxious he seems to tell plainly all about those future dealings – what was not due to be clearly known until now. "O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God."

Note again the value of the sights shown to that celebrated eye of the church – concerning the development of the body of Christ and its future work in coming ages – Eph. 2:6,7 and 3:3-6. Yes looking through those Apostolic eyes of the body (church) we can see wonderful things.

But several "gifts" were bestowed upon some of the Apostles: The ear quality was another gift less honorable than the eye, yet very desirable. This gift was possessed to some extent by nearly all the Apostles, and by some of the members of the body throughout this age. It is the gift or quality of understanding and appreciating the Word and plan of God. It was by the exercise of this gift that Paul,

Peter and the others were able to point out the fulfillment of Prophecies, and to have understanding of the deep things of God.

The mouth (utterance) is another quality belonging to the head which is delegated to members, for the benefit of the body. This gift though possessed by perhaps all of the Apostles, was specially notable in Peter and James. Paul, though a great reasoner and possessed of the eye and ear qualities was inferior to Appollos and some others in oratory. (See 1 Cor. 14:3; Acts 18:24; 2 Cor. 11:6.)

These qualities belonging to the head, are still in and with the true members of the true body of Christ. God is still pleased to use some such channels through whom the whole body is to be blessed and edified; yet we should always remember that their honor consists in doing greater service for the body and head than other members. Now, as in Paul's day, "to each is given the manifestation of the Spirit, for the benefit of ALL," (1 Cor. 12:7) and not alone for themselves individually. And, as even Paul, who possessed the chiefest gifts in chief measure, guarded himself, lest after having preached to others, he himself should be a "castaway" from the high calling; so now, it is no positive assurance of our final victory, that we have been used as ministers of the body.

But there are other good positions with honor, in the body of Christ. There are members which belong properly to the body and not to the head, viz: the hands and the feet etc. The feet make progress and represent the mission work of Evangelists. The hands care for, protect, assist, and feed the body, and thus answer to the work of Pastors; then the trunk of a human body represents the mass of the church. The working together of the whole system is to build itself up and to strengthen the laborers – the hands and feet, and to prepare the entire body for the doing of the will of the head. So the entire body of Christ builds itself up and grows strong by the use of the spiritual

food; and it imparts its force and strength to those members which minister to it – viz: Prophets, Teachers, Evangelists, and Pastors.

This Scriptural insight into the proper condition and active office of the various members of the body of Christ, forces the conclusion that the real members of the real body are very few. That it was the design of our Father that the body should be formed of such real members, and that every member should contribute to the upbuilding of all, is very clear. And it is none the less clear, that all the real members are thus performing their part, as fast as they perceive their ability and privilege.

God is not merely expressing how he would like to have the body grow, but how it must grow, and is growing up to the full stature of the anointed one. It behooves us each then, to examine ourselves, and thus see if we are abiding in the anointed body, and as active living members, contributing to the general health and activity of the body.

The great worldly organizations, claiming the name of Christ, yet refusing his headship, leading and control, and the teachings of his word, has nothing in common with the real followers in Jesus' footsteps. They have their heads and prophets and pastors, but not the true (Isa. 9:15; 29:9-13 and Jer. 23:16-32.) They have large flocks but they are not all sheep. They have their teachers, but the time has come when these great flocks of nominal sheep will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own desires, they gather to themselves teachers having itching ears (for the world's applause) and they turn away their ears from the truth, and are turned unto fables. (2 Tim. 4:3-4.) But let us watch that we be not deceived by all their form of Godliness, lacking the power, (2 Tim. 3:5) which if possible would deceive the very elect. But let us faithfully endure afflictions and fully accomplish our service.

The true body of Christ is indeed a mystery from the world's standpoint – a visible company with no visible head; a company bound and cemented to each other by no visible bond or interest, but by the invisible spirit (mind) of their head, which unites them in a labor of self-sacrifice, each member doing according to his ability to bless and benefit the body and honor the invisible head.

In this body are still to be found the representative qualities of the head. They have eyes, for they look through the eyes of the Apostles at the plans and works of God, and have not left these for the traditions of men. The true church has ears; it is still being blessed with members specially used to unfold to it the prophecies and dark-sayings, and to direct it to the "meat in due season." It still has those who esteem it a privilege to serve, and feed, and care for the body as pastors. And it still has faithful ones (and equally members of the body and beloved of the head) who, though not thus special workers, are nevertheless, strengthening the hands and the knees and glorifying the head by supporting these by their means and by their prayers, and by their influence.

Oh that each might fully value his privilege and opportunities as body members. All cannot be the eye, nor all the ear, nor all hands nor feet. Some are honored with one service, and some with another; (1 Cor. 12:14-20.) yet let us each remember to seek earnestly the best gifts, but rather that we may prophecy – expound the Word. (1 Cor. 14:3.)

Let us remember that the basis of all promotion from a lesser to a higher opportunity of work in the body, will be the faithfulness with which we use our present abilities. Again let none despise his office of Steward of this world's goods. If this is your opportunity use well your office, and perhaps you will be promoted by our head and become a dispenser of spiritual things. [We commend the plan suggested by Paul to all, even the very poorest; those who have never

learned to give, have failed to rightly appreciate one of our choice privileges and pleasures. Read 1 Cor. 16:2, and 2 Cor. 8:1-8; and 9:1-9.]

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