

Ephesians 4:11-16
The Five Faces of Jesus: Teachers
Sunday August 21st, 2016

Schools back in session and it's debatable as to who is more excited; parents, students or teachers. Today we are talking about the 5th gifting or role that God has given his people to build up the Body of Christ and that is "teachers". In this series I am going to take these giftings or roles in reverse order from the scriptures

The 5 faces of Jesus are the 5 ways that we see Jesus expressing his ministry while here on earth. These are also the 5 ways that Jesus continues his ministry here on earth through us, his followers. Each of us is particularly gifted in at least one of these ways of doing ministry in order to continue Jesus' ministry here on earth.

These 5 ways God has gifted his people are 5 ways God has chosen to build up the Body of Christ. These 5 ministries interact with each other to equip each other to do Jesus' ministry. As we stand and do our ministry; we help others to stand and be **'mature in their ministry until we all grow to the full maturity of Christ.'**

As a reminder and for those of you who are new today the five faces of Jesus or giftings from Eph. 4:11 are:

Apostle



Prophet



Evangelist



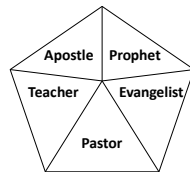
Pastor



Teacher



They are like the 5 facets of the diamond shape on the screen right now. Each facet gives a deeper understanding and brilliance to the whole and each is necessary for the church to shine forth the light of Christ.



The first three (apostles, prophets and evangelists) start things and the other two (pastors and teachers) make sure they survive. **The Pastors and Teachers are given the task of the day-to-day functioning of the Church.**

Now in terms of the 5 giftings that of “teacher” is usually the 2nd most numerous gifting. I want to ask now those who have taken the 5 Fold Ministry test, “How many are Teachers? Pastors? Evangelists? Prophets? Apostles? I would highly encourage you to take this test to help discover your gifting. It will help you in self-understanding and in understanding and working with others in the church. It will help us all work together to build up the Body of Christ.

Again it is found at fivefoldsurvey.com. You can also find a paper copy of the test in the Narthex.

Now within the Body of Christ a teacher usually:

trains
Coaches
Instructs
Changes (those whom they teach)
& enlightens

A teacher within the Body ‘grasps truth, is excited by it, and holds it out for others to receive. Teachers provoke others to explore truth.’ Mike Breen lecture **The Greek word in fact for “teacher” means “the one who holds out”**. Teachers offer or hold out the wisdom of the Word of God for others to receive if their hearts and minds are open.

Teachers enjoy reading and studying the Bible and helping others find the truth that it contains.

The 5th face of Jesus is indeed that of teacher. Those within and outside the Christian faith see the deep wisdom contained in Jesus’ teaching, particularly in his parables. As our Gospel lesson says, *“the crowds were astounded at his teaching, for he taught them as one having authority,..”*

The teacher indeed affirms the wisdom of Jesus’ teaching when he is motivated by Jesus’ words, *“Everyone then who hears these words of mine and acts on them will be like a wise man who built his house on a rock.”*

Indeed teachers teach and hold out the truth from the Scripture and our authority today comes from the Word’s words, not from ourselves. That is why I can’t conceive of preaching from any other source than **the Bible for it is the rock upon which our authority to speak comes**. Jesus’ authority and words came directly from God. Our authority comes from these same words of Jesus.

Mature teachers enjoy reading and studying the Bible and helping others to understand it. **The core question teachers ask is: “Are the people of God immersing themselves in scripture and incarnating it?”** Their drive is to get people to understand what God in Christ is saying in order for the people of God to live that out in their lives.

Another way of saying this is the mature teachers teach to disciple people. In other words they teach to help people grow to be more like Jesus. A disciple of Jesus Christ is a person who strives to model their life after Jesus. Making Disciples of Jesus Christ is the core purpose, the mission of the Church and the teacher is uniquely gifted and called to do that.

Our Ephesians scripture points to the purpose of a teacher. In verse 13 it says, **“Until all of us come to the unity of the faith and of the KNOWLEDGE of the Son of God,...”** We come to a knowledge of the Son of God through sound teaching.

Ephesians 4:14 is a particular burden to the teacher, **“We must no longer be children, tossed to and fro and blown about by every wind of doctrine, by people’s trickery, by their craftiness in deceitful scheming.”** From the very beginning of the Christian Church there have been those who have either deliberately, or out of ignorance lead the church and believers astray. It is a particular burden on the teacher to see that the truth is held out, taught and lived.

In fact Ephesians 4:15 makes this explicitly clear, **“But speaking the truth in love, we must grow up in every way into him who is the head, into Christ,...”** Our faith and knowledge are useless unless they lead us to love, to loving others in word and in deed.

And I need to mention the Holy Spirit in the process of teaching and learning the Christian faith. In John 14:26 Jesus said, **“But the Advocate, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will TEACH you everything, and remind you of all that I have said to you.”**

The Spirit of God is with us when we attempt to bring the truth of the Bible to others. It is the same with sermons. They are meaningless

unless the Holy Spirit works in the process of its creation and presentation. It only becomes the “word of God” when the Spirit helps those who hear respond.

Now all teachers grow in their ability to teach and some of the signs of immature or growing Christian teachers are that they sometimes let the “scripture be the end rather than God. Immature teachers tend to forget that scripture is a thing that brings us to God. **Scripture isn't the point. God is the point.**

They can suffer from Biblioidolatry where they idolize scripture and put it over their relationship with the living and breathing God that we come to know by means of reading and incarnating the scripture.” Immature teachers can fall in love with their knowledge rather than using that knowledge to draw others to Christian discipleship.

Now everyday, or pre-Christian or Christian teachers hold positions like: Lecturers or college professors, trainers, coaches, demonstrators and of course teachers!!

Now I believe teachers do not get the respect they deserve in everyday life. To let you know where I am coming from my wife is an elementary music teacher. My oldest daughter teaches high school English and my middle daughter taught English as a Second Language at the U of A.

A story is told of a high school Math teacher who was late to work and was driving too fast and got pulled over. The trooper noticed her shirt had the name of a local high school on it and discovered she was a Math teacher.

The trooper smiled and said, “Okay, here’s a problem. A teacher is speeding down the highway at 16 m.p.h. over the speed limit. At \$12 for every mile, plus \$40 court costs, plus the rise in her insurance rates, what is her total cost?”

Well, the Math reared back and said, “Taking that total, subtracting the low salary I receive, multiplied by the number of kids who hate math,

then add to that the fact that none of us would be anywhere in life without teachers, I'd say zero!!"

The trooper stood there for a moment, handed her back her license, and admitted, "Math was never my favorite subject" he then said, "Have a good day and please slow down." Mickey's funnies

To do what Jesus Christ calls us to do as a church we must understand and respect one another's giftings. And what does God call us to do with the gifts he has given us? Once again, *"The gifts he gave were ..., to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ,..."*

Our gifting comes from God. That makes ALL the gifts to be important. How important is your gift? Well, it comes to you from God!! And since all GIFTS are for building unity and building up the body of Christ that means that no one's gift is any more important than any other. In arrogance we sometime think all people need to be just like us and if not, then they aren't as good as we are.

A story is told of a *dinner party where one of the guests, a CEO of a big corporation got on the topic of education. He argued: "What's a kid going to learn from someone who decided his best option in life was to become a teacher?" He then said, "It is true what they say about teachers: "Those who can: do. Those who can't: teach."*

In his arrogance he said to one of the guests: "You're a teacher, Susan," he said. "Be honest. What do you make?"

Stifling the urge to strangle him she said, "I will tell you what I make. I make kids work harder than they ever thought they could. I can make a C+ feel like receiving the Congressional Medal of Honor and an A- feel like a slap in the face if the student did not do his or her very best."

"I can make kids sit through 40 minutes of study hall in absolute silence. I can make parents tremble in fear when I call home. You want to know what else I make?"

"I make kids wonder. I make them question. I make them criticize. I make them apologize and mean it. I make them write. I make them read, read, read. I make them spell 'definitely' and 'beautiful' over and over again until they will never misspell either one of those words again.

I make them show all their work in math and hide it all on their final drafts in English. I elevate them to experience music and art and joy in performance, so their lives are rich, full of kindness and culture, and they take pride in themselves and their accomplishments.

I make them understand that if you have the brains, then you can follow your heart...and if someone ever tries to judge you by what you make, you pay them no attention.

"You want to know what I make? I make a difference. And so...what do you make?" Mickey's funnies

We need to respect and celebrate each other's gifts and celebrate the differences between one another. And when you don't understand someone and why they do what they do, we still need to treat them with the utmost respect, tolerance and love.

These 5 ways God has gifted his people are 5 ways God has chosen to build up the Body of Christ. These 5 ministries interact with each other to equip each other to do Jesus' ministry here on earth, to see His kingdom come. As we stand and fulfill our ministry role, we help others to stand and be **'mature in their ministry until we ALL grow to the full maturity of Christ.'**

What is your gifting? How will you use it to bless this world? How will you use it to bless this church? What is God saying to you?

We need some more people to volunteer to be mentors at Coronado school. I believe we need more adult Sunday School classes and week day Bible studies.

Won't you consider putting your gifting as teacher into action? It will be the place where you are most fulfilled. In Jesus' name. Amen.