

*In search of...*

# Truth & Right

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## The Ideal Bible Teacher

Jesus was born to die, but He lived to teach. I know that we have all heard that, but there are some statements that we hear over and over again that never get old. We have also heard that Christianity is "caught" as well as taught. That is so very true. I like that statement that says teaching God's Word should be the magnificent obsession of every Christian. The Bible states, "*For Ezra had set his heart to seek the law of Jehovah, and to do it, and to teach in Israel statutes and ordinances*" (Ezra 7:10).

### Teaching Is A Great Responsibility

We are warned, "*Be not many of you teachers, my brethren, knowing that we shall receive heavier judgment*" (James 3:1). Yet, in Hebrews 5:12, another admonition is given: "*For when by reason of*

*the time ye ought to be teachers ...*" These two passages blend and simply mean that it is a serious responsibility to teach the Word of God, but one that must be taken up. Yet, teaching is both a joy and a privilege. John wrote, "*And I took the little book out of the angel's hand, and ate it up; and it was in my mouth sweet as honey: and when I had eaten it, my belly was made bitter*" (Revelation 10:10). It was a sweet thing to be entrusted by God with that Word of God, and yet, as John realized the portents of God's wrath upon the ungodly, it became a bitter thing. It was a serious responsibility.

The prophet wrote, "*My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge*" (Hosea 4:6). But sometimes we fail to continue to read in that same book: "*O Israel, thou hast destroyed thyself*" (Hosea 13:9). God says that Israel went into bondage because of their ignorance

(Isaiah 5:13). America is in the throes of the all-time worst spiritual bondage in our history because so many people are ignorant of God's Word. Jesus said, "*Ye shall know the truth and the truth shall make you free*" (John 8:32).

## **Christians Are Compelled To Teach**

One of the greatest teaching verses of the Bible is II Corinthians 4:13, "*I believed, therefore I speak*." If we really believe the truths of the Bible, we will have to tell others about it. Perhaps one of the greatest qualifications of the ideal Bible teacher is to have his or her head and heart so full of the Word of God that he or she cannot keep from teaching. Look at Jeremiah, "*And if I say, I will not make mention of Him, nor speak any more in His name, then there is in my heart as it were a burning fire shut up in my bones, and I am weary with forbearing, and I cannot contain*" (Jeremiah 20:9). The great evangelistic refrain of Jeremiah 22:29 should fill the heart of every Bible teacher, "*O earth, earth, earth hear the Word of the Lord!*" And again he wrote, "*Is not My Word like fire? saith Jehovah; and like a hammer that breaketh the rock in pieces?*" (Jeremiah 23:29).

We have a powerful weapon, "*the sword of the Spirit, the Word of God*" that we must wield properly

(Ephesians 6:17). That Word is "quick and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword" (Hebrews 4:12). There is an urgency about this teaching. "*Oh remember how short my time is*" (Psalms 89:47). Paul beseeches us to "*buy up the time, because the days are evil*" (Ephesians 5:16).

## **The Bible Teacher's Qualifications**

Have profound respect for God's Word. "*O how love I Thy law! It is my meditation all the day...The entrance of Thy Words giveth light*" (Psalms 119:97,130). Unless we have a deep respect for the Word of God, and believe with all of our hearts that "*holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Spirit*" (I Peter 1:21), and that it is the truth "*not the word of men but the Word of God*" (I Thessalonians 2:13), then we are not fit subjects to be teachers of God's Word. As Jesus said, "*Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word which proceedeth out of the mouth of God*" (Matthew 4:4).

The ideal Bible teacher must have a deep regard for God's Word because he has a deep regard for God. So we equip ourselves to be "*ready always to give an answer to any man that asketh a reason for the hope that is in you, with meekness and fear*" (I Peter 3:15), as we "*handle aright the Word of truth*" (I Timothy 2:15). I agree with

Sir Walter Scott, who said of men and the Bible: "Better had he ne'er been born who reads to doubt or reads to scorn."

## Live Consistent With God's Word

We must not only affirm our belief in the Bible, but we must live in harmony with it. *"Only let your manner of life be worthy of the gospel of Christ"* (Philippians 1:27). We are to "practice what we preach." Christians are to be *"the salt of the earth"* and *"the light of the world"* (Matthew 5:13-16). It is still true that a person cannot teach what he does not know. You cannot lead where you do not go. We must be happy, optimistic children of God. Many act like it is just killing them to live the Christian life -- then they wonder why they can't win anyone to Christ! Not only must we know the Word of God, but the Christian teacher must share that Word -- willingly, lovingly and longingly. We have, like the apostle Paul, been put in trust with the gospel (1 Thessalonians 2:4), and say with him, *"Woe is unto me if I preach not the gospel"* (1 Corinthians 9:16).

Are we Christians? Then, *"Having the same spirit of faith, according to that which is written, I believed, and therefore did I speak; we also believe, and therefore also we speak"* (11 Corinthians 4:13). Let us be teachers.

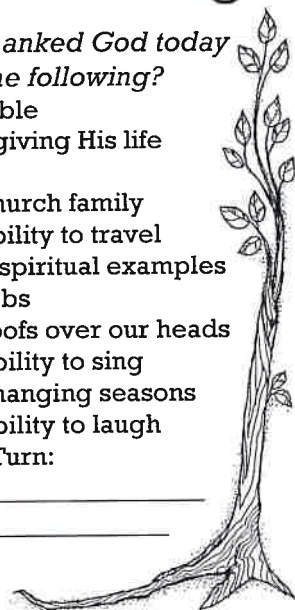
Johnny Ramsey

dear God,  
thanks for this  
beautiful life  
and forgive me if  
i dont love it  
enough.

*Have you thanked God today for any of the following?*

- The Bible
- Jesus giving His life for us
- Our church family
- The ability to travel
- Good spiritual examples
- Our jobs
- The roofs over our heads
- The ability to sing
- The changing seasons
- The ability to laugh
- Your Turn:

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# Christian Q&A

*Continued from last month...*

At Winding Road, I got to worship with not only my mom and dad, sisters, and Grandma, but I was also fortunate enough to worship with my cousins and my aunt and uncle, which I thought was so great. To this day, I can see why it is hard for people who were not raised in the church to leave their family's belief, even when the scriptures clearly state a practice contrary to God's will that their family's congregation is practicing. I am not saying that it is right. I am just saying it is harder than people give it credit for. I could see that if I attended a church surrounded with a large part of my family for my entire life why it would be so difficult to see an error if they taught it, because as children, we don't think our families can do wrong, and sadly, that sometimes bleeds into adulthood. The examples I got from my limited time spent at Winding Road weren't innumerable, because they were things and people I had been learning from my whole life. It is easy to take advantage of something you have always had in your life and you believe you will always have. The lessons I learned there I am still learning as I grow older. Never take people for granted, and never take the time you have with them for granted either. One thing you can't replicate in life is moments, so why throw them away so carelessly?

We moved shortly after we started attending the Winding Road church of Christ, an hour up the river to Sistersville, WV. While we were there, I remember I tried to be baptized once when I was in the sixth grade. I say tried because it didn't really work out. We were attending the Elk Fork church of Christ at that time, and I remember I would sit-up at night in a cold sweat fearing that I might die and be found less than favorable to God.



Some people might have you believe that it isn't healthy for little children to sit-up at night in their beds and fear for the afterlife. Contrary to what their 21st century Americana brainwashed minds might tell them, a healthy fear is a good thing to have. I have learned more from moments when I have been afraid than moments where I coast through things. Just like a child shouldn't rule their parents, a person shouldn't attempt to rule God. I only feared God because I loved Him and respected Him enough to not want to let Him down, and truthfully, that mindset has been one of the greatest blessings of my entire life. This is what I believe is meant by the term reaching the age of accountability. I had reached it because I knew what was right, but for any young person, doing what is right is sometimes way more difficult than it should be. The night I "attempted" to be baptized was one of moments where it was difficult.