

Bedford Street Church of Christ

Why Do Teachers Teach?
2024 Bible Teachers' Workshop

September 20-21, 2024

Speaker: Carlton Freeman



“Why Do Teachers Teach?”

Ephesians 4:13-16

Evangelism brings them in.
Teaching Keeps them in.

The word “teacher” as used in the scriptures.

- 1322 (didache) (from 1321 didasko, “to teach”) established teaching, especially a “summarized” body of respected teaching (viewed as reliable, time honored).
- 2085 (heterodidaskalein) (to teach other doctrines) to teach other things, that is different from the true or necessary teaching. (note: 1 Tim. 1:3)
- 1319 (didaskalia) – properly applied-teachings. Christian doctrine (teaching) as it especially extends to its necessary lifestyle (applications) (note: Paul’s writings).

The word “teacher” as used in the scriptures.

- 3056 (logon) (word) expression of thought. Used preeminently of Christ (John 1:1) ...common term (300x's) ...person sharing a message ...reasoning expressed by words. (note: Heb. 6:1)

What is a teacher?

- The word 'teacher' (Greek *didaskalos*) carries the sense of being an instructor.
- In that sense, a teacher is also a trainer and creates an environment where others learn.
- So a bible teacher, scripturally, is one with a preaching and teaching ministry focusing on '**communicating biblical truth through teaching and training to see transformation**'.

What is a teacher?

- This covers the role of teaching and preaching, both in larger corporate settings and additional classes, courses, and workshops, as well as training that seeks to equip people with practical tools and skills.
- It is focused on creating a culture that ensures people grow in their knowledge, understanding, application and passion for the scriptures, but also the application, implementation and activation so they are able to “do the stuff”.
- **This means that the goal of teaching is not education or information, but illumination, revelation and transformation.**

The role of a teacher of the faith is not just to pass on information or facts. It is to help people to be formed as disciples (learners and followers) of Christ, and transformed into the people God has created them to be.

The teacher exists to ensure the church is spiritually mature, equipped with knowledge and understanding.

Without that mentality, the church will be full of people who are not familiar with the scriptures, and who lack wisdom and insight into the things of God.

Jesus was recognized as a teacher by his disciples.

Six Qualities of a Spirit-filled Teacher are:

- The teacher is the communicator of truth, he must be openly and boldly a Christian.
- Every teacher must know the bible. Because the Word of God is relevant to all subjects.
- The Christian teacher must be committed in every aspect of his life and work, in all his being, to the truth.
- The teacher must seek excellence. This is a seeking after intellectual excellence to the glory of God, and a Christian teacher should be content with nothing less than the best in this area.

Six Qualities of a Spirit-filled Teacher are:

- The Christian teacher must truly love his students, seeking their highest good even when at times the way may be hard. Not only should he love his students, he should try to understand them.
- Finally, the Christian teacher should exercise complete submission to the one great teacher. Every teacher must listen to the Lord, and the Holy Spirit, for his lessons and never should he think that he does not need to be taught of Him.

God's
gift
to the
church

- KJV Ephesians 4:11-12
- 11 And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and **teachers**; 12 For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ:

THE PURPOSE OF THE GIFT “FOR”

For (pros) . . . for (eis) . . . for (eis . . .”

Those gifted offices were given for

1) specific purpose leading toward (towards – lit. moving towards a goal or destination)

2) results (“motion into which” implying penetration “into” “union” to a particular purpose or result)

“Perfecting the saints” is a significant phrase itself. It speaks of bringing believers to maturity

THE PURPOSE OF THE GIFTS “FOR”

"Perfecting the saints" is a significant phrase itself. It speaks of bringing believers to maturity

"Perfecting" - 2 ideas in one word:

1) To repair (like a doctor)

a) Used of repairing broken bones

b) Used of mending broken fishing nets

c) Used of restoring an erring brother (Gal. 6:1)

2) To equip (like a coach) To furnish (II Tim. 3:17) or outfit. To provide what is necessary for the task.

THE PURPOSE OF THE GIFTS “FOR”

"For the work of the ministry" - for the work of serving ("diakonia")

The work of the teacher is to get every believer involved in serving (whether in an official or unofficial capacity)

The goal of teaching is not to simply educate God's people; it's to motivate them to serve! Preaching is to be not only doctrinal but practical.

NOTE: God's progressive plan for His church:

1) Equipping 2) serving 3) building

THE PURPOSE OF THE GIFTS “FOR”

"Edifying" - (i.e. edifice) building up; growth; both spiritual and numerical growth occur when everyone is using his/her gift in a ministry.

"The Body" is built up externally through evangelism and internally through discipleship and training (teaching).

Only the Word *"is able to build you up"*! (Acts 20:32)

A Body that has parts not working is a sick one

Note the words in the context which speak of growth:

- "perfect" (v. 13)
- "fullness" (v. 13)
- "no more children" (v. 14)
- "grow up" (v. 15)
- "increase" (v. 16)
- "edifying" (v. 16)

An admonition for teachers

- We find a warning in James 3:1 that should cause anyone wanting to be a teacher to evaluate the proposition carefully. "*Not many of you should become teachers, my brothers, for you know that we who teach will be judged with greater strictness*" (James 3:1 ESV).
- Those who use the [King James Version of the Bible](#) will notice that it has the word 'masters' instead of the word 'teachers'.
- The Greek word 'didaskalos' is best translated 'teacher'. However, the idea of 'master' is indeed contained within the Greek word 'didaskalos' because one who teaches others is often looked upon as a master, or as one who has more knowledge than someone else. Therefore, both meanings are inherent in the Greek word and both meanings are appropriate.

An admonition for teachers

- In I Timothy 1:5-7, the apostle Paul warns that certain people should stop teaching.
- The doctrines these certain people were teaching were described by Paul as 'different'.
 - These doctrines centered around frivolous and speculative imaginings instead of the true Gospel.
 - The men teaching these false doctrines, wanting the prestige and power that comes with being looked upon as teachers, were actually leading people away from the Truth of God.

An admonition for teachers

- Not only were they teaching false doctrines but also they were doing it for selfish reasons.
 - Instead of being motivated by, "*...a pure heart and a good conscience and a sincere faith*" (I Timothy 1:5), they engaged in 'vain discussions' (ESV) about things they did not understand but about which they still made 'confident assertions' (I Timothy 1:7 ESV).
 - They delivered these false doctrines with an air of authority, as if what they were saying should be accepted without question.

Teaching Biblically

- We must pray without ceasing (I Thessalonians 5:17).
- We must make sure our motives are right. *"Do nothing from selfish ambition or conceit, but in humility count others more significant than yourselves"* (Philippians 2:3 ESV).
- We must make sure our relationship with God is right. *"...but in your hearts honor Christ the Lord as holy, always being prepared to make a defense to anyone who asks you for a reason for the hope that is in you; yet do it with gentleness and respect"* (I Peter 3:15 ESV).

Teaching Biblically

- We should study diligently the topic on which we will teach. "*Do your best to present yourself to God as one approved, a worker who has no need to be ashamed, rightly handling the word of truth*" (II Timothy 2:15 ESV).

Why do teachers teach?
You are the communicators of
the oracles of God.

1 Peter 4:11

Bedford Street Church of Christ

Why Do Teachers Teach?
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Speaker: Carlton Freeman



Subject: Teaching for Doctrine or Faith?

“It is necessary that Christians be taught sound Bible doctrine and that all doctrine be tested by the full content of the infallible Word of God. Doctrine received, believed, and practiced determines a person's character, behavior and destiny.”

The definition of doctrine

- “Doctrine” means “something taught, teachings, instruction; the principles of religion that are taught; or more literally, “to teach the substance.””
- The term “doctrine” refers to the truths of God’s Word that are to be taught.
- The word doctrine is used 56 times in the Authorized Version. One of these is in Acts 2:42 where we find that the early church converts continued steadfastly in the apostles’ doctrine.

The purpose of doctrine

- The beginning of the beginning of Luke's doctrine gospel hints the purpose of doctrine.
- Luke 1:2-4 “...to set forth in order a declaration of those things which are most surely believed among us ... That thou mightest know the certainty of the things wherein thou hast been instructed.”
 - 1. “To set forth” is to draw up a narrative;
 - 2. “in order” means consecutively;
 - 3. “a declaration” means a full declaration a leading and following through;

- 4. “those things which are most surely believed among us” in other words the things pertaining to the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ:
- 5. “instructed” means “orally instructed”.
- It comes from the Greek word “katecheo” which means “to instruct by asking questions and correcting answers”.
 - The word catechism is derived from it.
 - The word “instructed” is used also in Luke 1:4; Acts 18:25; and Romans 2:18.

- The purpose of doctrinal studies is to set forth in a systematic order the things which are most surely believed among true believers.
 - It is to instruct the believer that he may know the certainty of these truths.
 - It is to encourage the believer to contend for “the faith once delivered to the saints. Jude 3

The necessity of doctrine

The apostle Paul prophesied that “the time will come that they will not endure sound doctrine” 2 Timothy 4:3

- Today there's a great attack on sound doctrine.
- There is a turning away from doctrinal matters and turning to the philosophy of men and doctrine of devils.
- Many churches have no time for doctrinal preaching or teaching.
- The following are some of the most common objections being cast about not teaching sound doctrine. They appear to be sound and spiritual statements but when looked at closely they are illogical and dangerous.

The apostle Paul prophesied that “the time will come that they will not endure sound doctrine” 2 Timothy 4:3


- 1. There is no biblical record of Jesus or of any of the apostles formulating or giving any ready-made system of doctrine.
 - The answer to this should be evident Acts 2:42.
- 2. The church does not need doctrine for doctrine has always been divisive and This is why there are so many denominations.
 - The answer to this is seen in the emphasis in scripture on doctrine. Doctrine existed before the church. The church does not originate doctrine, God does.

The apostle Paul prophesied that “the time will come that they will not endure sound doctrine” 2 Timothy 4:3

- 3. It does not matter what you believe it only matters who you believe.
 - The answer to this is that it is possible to really separate Christ from his doctrine.
 - He and his word are one. One cannot accept Christ and reject his teachings. Jesus said, “My doctrine is not Mine, but His that sent Me” John 7:16-17.

The apostle Paul prophesied that “the time will come that they will not endure sound doctrine” 2 Timothy 4:3

- 4. Doctrine is dry, dull and dead and it's useless for us today; we need practical teaching”. Or experience is more important than doctrine”.
 - Again, this statement is only partially true.
 - It is to be admitted that oftentimes the presentation of doctrine may be dull and boring. However, the fault is not always with doctrine, but is with the teacher of it. **The life of the teaching is the life of the teacher.**
 - Paul said to Timothy, “**but thou hast fully known my doctrine, manner of life... 2 Timothy 3:10.**”



“Doctrine should lead to life,
theory to practice,
interpretation to application,
teaching to walking.
This is God’s plan.”

This is a day in which all believers need to know:

- 1. WHO they believe
- 2. WHAT they believe, and
- 3. WHY they believe it.
- These teachings received, believed, obeyed and continually practiced determine:
 - 1. Character ... what we are
 - 2. Behavior ... what we do
 - 3. Destiny ... where we go

Sound Doctrine

Sound teaching's chief emphasis is on a matching godly lifestyle

Verses on Sound doctrine

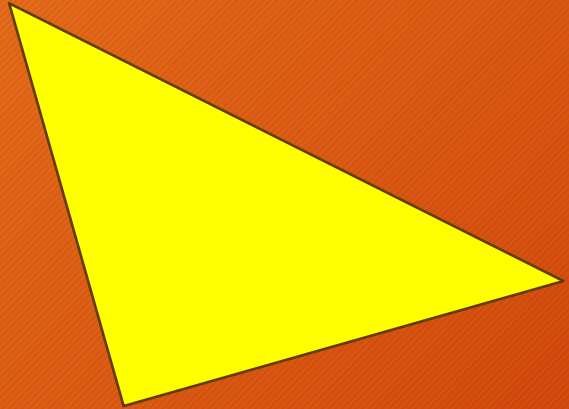
- **1 Timothy 1:10:** "And immoral men and homosexuals and kidnappers and liars and perjurers, and whatever else is contrary to **sound teaching.**" [ὑγιαίνουσα διδασκαλία]
- **1 Timothy 4:6:** "In pointing out these things to the brethren, you will be a good servant of Christ Jesus, constantly nourished on the words of the faith and of the **sound doctrine** which you have been following." [καλῆς διδασκαλίας]
- **1 Timothy 6:3:** "If anyone advocates a different doctrine and does not agree with **sound words**, those of our Lord Jesus Christ, and with the doctrine conforming to godliness." [ὑγιαίνουσιν λόγοις]

Verses on Sound doctrine

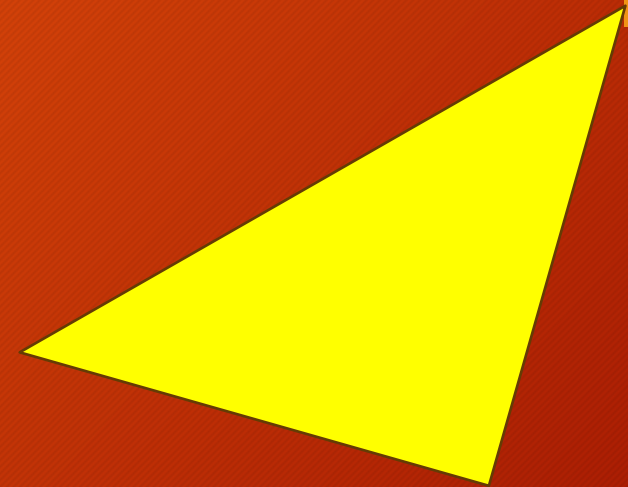
- **2 Timothy 4:3:** "For the time will come when they will not endure **sound doctrine**; but wanting to have their ears tickled, they will accumulate for themselves teachers in accordance to their own desires." [ὑγιαίνουσης διδασκαλίας]
- **Titus 1:9:** "Holding fast the faithful word which is in accordance with the teaching, so that he will be able both to exhort in **sound doctrine** and to refute those who contradict." [διδασκαλία τῆς ὑγιαίνουσης]
- **Titus 2:1** "But as for you, speak the things which are fitting for **sound doctrine**." [τῆς ὑγιαίνουσης διδασκαλίας]

- The pair of words, sound doctrine, is often used to refer to solid biblical teaching, but its actual meaning and usage reflect a broader understanding with greater emphasis on application. Like James, Paul says that without using the teaching in our lives, it does us no good and is dead (Jam 2:17).
- The adjective "sound" (*ὑγιαίνουσα*) or "good" means healthy, sound, and well. Healthy speaks of robust and fullness rather than correctness. (See more.)
- The definitions infer that teachings are considered unsound or unhealthy if not lived out. **Soundness does not emphasize accuracy or correctly stated teaching but is rightly lived out.**

Sound Doctrine



Healthy, well
υγίαινούσή



Teaching
δίδασκαλία

The Context for Sound Doctrine

- Paul wrote to Timothy and Titus to confront a serious deviation among the churches. Teachers with false teaching of strange **doctrines separated holy living from the faith**
- There is much emphasis throughout these epistles on righteous living, hence, the common use of “sound teaching”—not a focus on right doctrine but reasonable doctrine that produces godly lives.
- Those who “rejected and suffered shipwreck in regard to their faith” departed from upright living, not only false teaching (1 Tim 1:19).

The Context for Sound Doctrine

- Paul says, “You will know how one ought to conduct himself in the household of God” (1 Tim 3:15).
- His emphasis on conduct and conscience again points to moral decisions (4:2-3).
- Although the root word ‘healthy’ is associated with the correct teaching, and indeed depends on the main focus of a lifestyle that matches proper teaching.

Sound teaching



Godliness

Immorality



Bad teaching

“Discipline yourself for the purpose of godliness”
1 Timothy 4:6-7

The Importance of Faith

Hebrews 11:1,6

“It is not so much what you believe, but why do you believe it.”

How To Recieve Faith

Galatians 3:2

Romans 10:17

-by- (Ek)

“out from and to”

GOD

IMPACT

US

“out from”

-and-

“to”

(SOURCE)

(OBJECT)

THE BIBLE

SPIRIT OF GOD
INDWELLING IN US

RESULT: “FAITH BUILDING”

principle

- 1. A moral rule or belief that helps you know what is right and wrong and that influences your actions.
- 2. A basic truth or theory: an idea that forms the basis of something.
- 3. A law or fact of nature that explains how something works or why something happens.

Ephesians 3:1-4

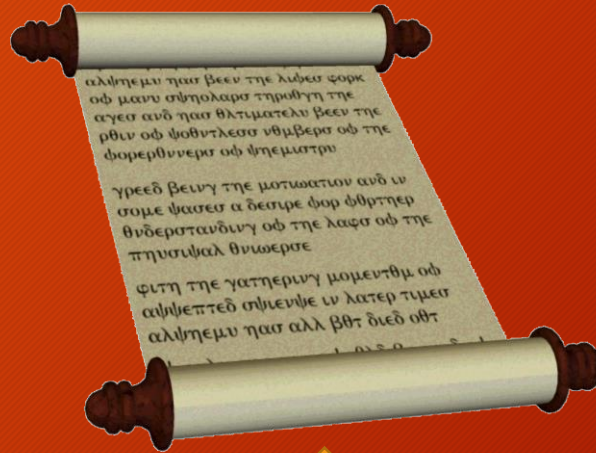
GOD

Understand: (noeo) to perceive, think.
Noieo (from nous, "mind") properly, to
apply mental effort needed to reach
"bottom-line" conclusions.

51

Revelation

Mystery



PURPOSE:

That you might
understand...

1. Knowing facts is
not the same as
understanding.
2. Understanding
is knowing the
why.

Evidence begins here



Evidence ends here

EVIDENCE

FAITH

Conclusion for which there is not adequate evidence

“FAITH”

“LEAP INTO THE DARK”

(that is, beyond the evidence)

True view of Christian faith (Romans 10:17)

False view of Christian faith

Knowledge

(the facts)

Proverbs 9:10, Proverbs 18:15, Colossians 2:8, 1 Timothy 2:4



Understanding

(ability to translate meaning from the facts)

Psa. 119:130, Prov. 3:5-7, 18:2, Philipians 1:9-10



Wisdom

(knowing what to do next, given an understanding of the facts and circumstances)

Ecclesiastes 8:1, James 3:17

It is possible to have knowledge and lack understanding and wisdom. Someone might have the facts but not know what they mean or what to do next.

They see through the facts to the dynamics of what, how and why. Understanding is a lens which brings the facts into crisp focus and produces principles

Those with wisdom know which principle to apply in a given context. Understanding without wisdom can appear contradictory. **Note:** [Hebrews 5:12-14](#)

The type of Faith it
takes to live for God.
(Spiritual Discernment)

1 Corinthians 2

definitions

- **Wisdom** - (*sophía*) is the root of the English terms, "*sophistication*" and "*philosophy*" – literally (respectively), "the art of using wisdom," "affection for wisdom."] Seeing things from God's perspective.
- **Spiritual** - *pneumatikós* (an adjective, derived from 4151 /*pneúma*, "spirit") – *spiritual*; relating to the *realm of spirit*, i.e. the invisible sphere in which the *Holy Spirit* imparts faith, reveals Christ, etc. Being filled with.
- **Natural** - *psyxikós* (an adjective, derived from 5590 /*psyxé*, "soul, natural identity") – properly, *soulish*, i.e. what is natural, as it relates to *physical (tangible)* life alone (i.e. apart from God's inworking of faith). (*psyxikós*) then sometimes stands in contrast to 4152 /*pneumatikós* ("spiritual") – the higher, spiritual aspect of humanity that develops through *faith* (4102 /*pístis*).

definitions

- **Discern** - 350 *anakrínō* (from 303 /*aná*, "up, completing a process," which intensifies 2919 /*krínō*, "to select by separating/judging") – properly, to *distinguish* by vigorously judging "down to up," i.e. *closely examining* (investigating) through "the process of careful study, evaluation and judgment" "to examine, investigate, question.[The prefix /*aná* ("up") shows the process involved that takes *krinō* ("judging/separating") up to its needed conclusion.

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Subject: Teachers, Your Reward is Waiting On You



INTRODUCTION:

- Reward: a thing given in recognition of one's service, effort or achievement.
- Waiting implies:... allowing time to go by ...something that you are expecting, standing by, watchful.
- Overcome: succeed in dealing with a problem or difficulty. God will take us through circumstances and have us come out on the other side as overcomers.
- Note: 2 Timothy 1:12
- A crown of victory...
- 1 John 5:1-5



Teachers, Your Reward Is
Waiting On You

Two Crowns



Diadema



Stephanos

- There are five heavenly crowns mentioned in the New Testament that will be awarded to believers.
- They are the imperishable crown, the crown of rejoicing, the crown of righteousness, the crown of glory, and the crown of life.
- The Greek word translated “crown” is *stephanos* (the source for the name Stephen the martyr) and means “a badge of royalty, a prize in the public games or a symbol of honor generally.”

- Used during the ancient Greek games, it referred to a wreath or garland of leaves placed on a victor's head as a reward for winning an athletic contest.
- As such, this word is used figuratively in the New Testament of the rewards of heaven God promises those who are faithful.
- Paul's passage in 1 Corinthians 9:24-25 best defines for us how these crowns are awarded.

1. THE IMPERISHABLE CROWN

(1 Corinthians 9:24-25) “Do you not know that those who run in a race all run, but one receives the prize? Run in such a way that you may obtain it. And everyone who competes for the prize is temperate [disciplined] in all things. Now they do it to obtain a perishable crown, but we for an imperishable crown” (NKJV)

- All things on this earth are subject to decay and will perish.
- Jesus urges us to not store our treasures on earth “where moth and rust destroy, and where thieves break in and steal” (Matthew 6:19).
- This is equivalent to what Paul was saying about that wreath of leaves that was soon to turn brittle and fall apart.
- But not so the heavenly crown; faithful endurance wins a heavenly reward which is “an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled and that does not fade away, reserved in heaven for you” (1 Peter 1:4).

2. THE CROWN OF REJOICING

(1 Thessalonians 2:19) “For what is our hope, or joy, or crown of rejoicing? Is it not even you in the presence of our Lord Jesus Christ at His coming?”

- The apostle Paul tells us in Philippians 4:4 to “rejoice always in the Lord” for all the bountiful blessings our gracious God has showered upon us.
- As Christians we have more in this life to rejoice about than anyone else.
- The crown of rejoicing will be our reward where “God will wipe away every tear . . . there shall be no more death, nor sorrow, nor crying. There shall be no more pain, for the former things have passed away” (Revelation 21:4).

3. THE CROWN OF GLORY

(1 Peter 5:4) “And when the Chief Shepherd appears, you will receive the crown of glory that does not fade away.”

- Though Peter is addressing the elders, we must also remember that the crown will be awarded to all those who long for or love His appearing.
- This word “glory” is referring to the very nature of God and His actions. It entails His great splendor and brightness.
- Recall Stephen who, while being stoned to death, was able to look into the heavens and see the glory of God (Acts 7:55-56).
- This word also means that the praise and honor we bestow to God alone is due Him because of who He is (Isaiah 42:8, 48:11; Galatians 1:5).

- For as Paul so eloquently put it, “For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us” (Romans 8:18 NKJV).
- Note: 2 Cor. 4:16-18

4. THE CROWN OF LIFE

(Revelation 2:10) “Do not fear any of those things which you are about to suffer. Indeed, the devil is about to throw some of you into prison, that you may be tested, and you will have tribulation ten days. Be faithful until death, and I will give you the crown of life.”

- This crown is for all believers, but is especially dear to those who endure sufferings, who bravely confront persecution for Jesus, even to the point of death.
- In Scripture the word “life” is often used to show a relationship that is right with God.
- It was Jesus who said, “I have come that they may have life and that they may have it more abundantly” (John 10:10)
- We know that our earthly lives will end. But we have the amazing promise that comes only to those who come to God through Jesus: “And this is the promise that He has promised us—eternal life” (1 John 2:25).

5. THE CROWN OF RIGHTEOUSNESS

(2 Timothy 4:8) “Finally, there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will give to me on that Day, and not to me only but also to all who have loved His appearing.”

- We inherit this crown through the righteousness of Christ which is what gives us a right to it, and without which it cannot be obtained.
- Through our enduring discouragements, persecutions, sufferings, or even death, we know assuredly our reward is with Christ in eternity (Philippians 3:20). This crown is not for those who depend upon their own sense of righteousness or of their own works (Philippians 3:7-11).
- Such an attitude breeds only arrogance and pride, not a longing, a fervent desire to be with the Lord.

Revelation 12:10-11
King James Version

¹⁰ And I heard a loud voice saying in heaven, Now is come salvation, and strength, and the kingdom of our God, and the power of his Christ: for the accuser of our brethren is cast down, which accused them before our God day and night.

¹¹ And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony; and they loved not their lives unto the death.

TEACHERS, YOUR REWARD IS WAITING ON YOU

Bedford Street Church of Christ

Be Tolerant And Do Not Sin

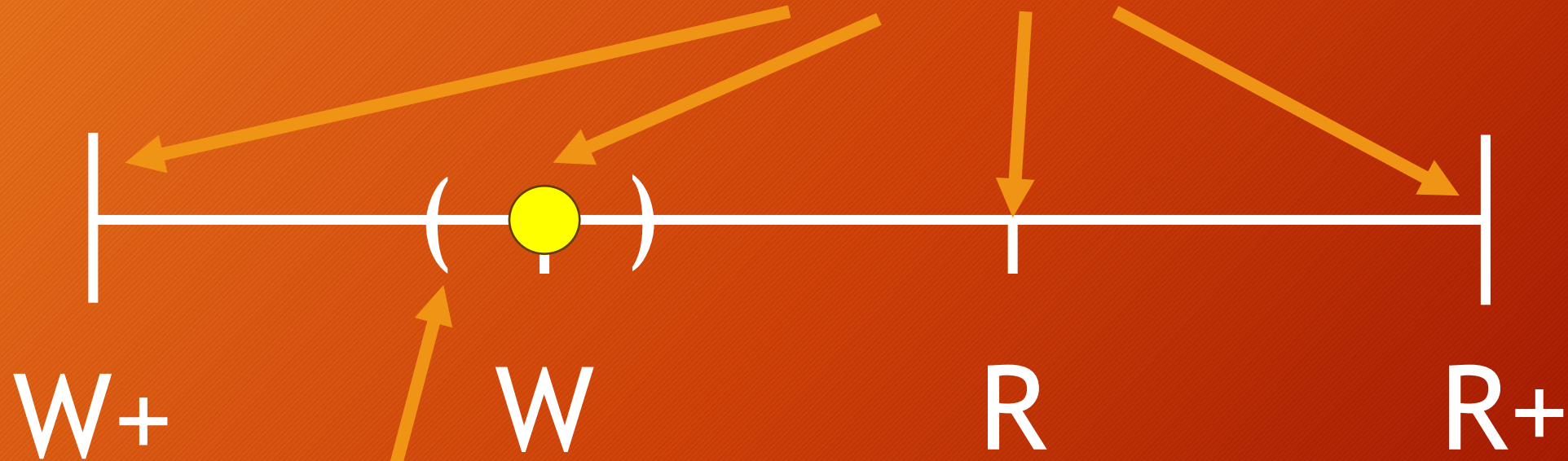
Text: Ephesians 4:32



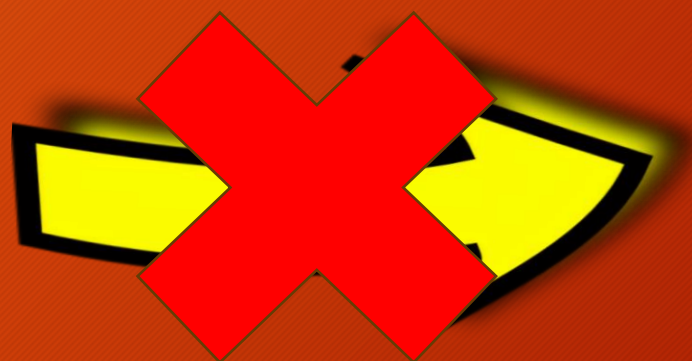
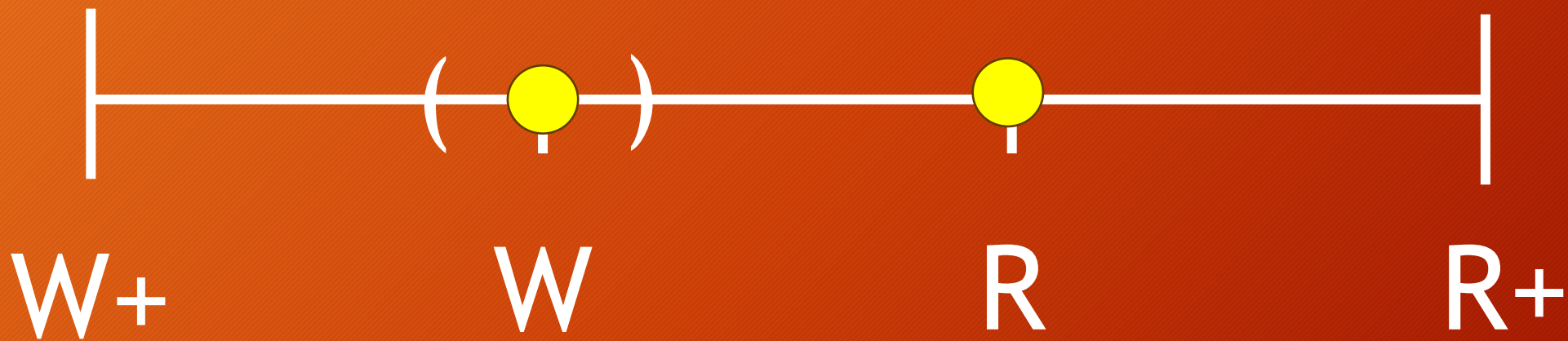


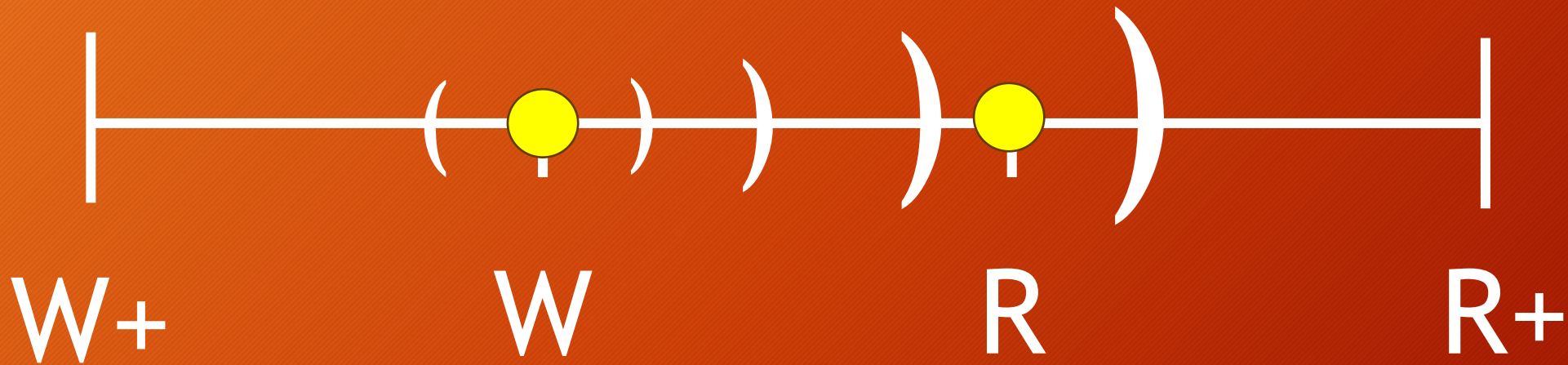
Value system

Anchor points



Lattitude of acceptance





Isaiah 5:20

“Woe unto them that call evil good, and good evil; that put darkness for light, and light for darkness; that put bitter for sweet, and sweet for bitter!”

Bedford Street Church of Christ

“When Will You Bury The Hatchet?”

Text: Matthew 18:21-35



- There are four main words used in the original Greek New Testament in relation to the forgiveness or pardon of our sins or crimes against God. These are the verb “aphiemi”, its associated noun “aphesis”, “charizomai” and “apoluo”. The word “aphiemi” means “to send forth, send away, to remit or forgive debts and sins”.
- 4
- Vine goes on to say that “aphiemi” “like its corresponding noun (aphesis), firstl

- When?
- What is a hatchet?
 - Ax
 - Survival
 - Weapon

Bury the hatchet'?

What's the origin of the phrase

The figurative expression 'burying the hatchet' is different in that it did originate as an American Indian tradition. Hatchets were buried by the chiefs of tribes when they came to a peace agreement.

The phrase is recorded from the 17th century in English but the practice it refers to is much earlier, possibly pre-dating the European settlement of America. A translation of Thwaites' monumental work *Jesuit Relations*, 1644, suggests the practice:

"Proclaim that they wish to unite all the nations of the earth and to hurl the hatchet so far into the depths of the earth that it shall never again be seen in the future."

Bury the hatchet'?

The *New England Historical & Genealogical Register* for 1870 has a record that Samuel Sewall made in 1680, where he recounts the burying of hatchets by Native American tribes:

“Meeting wth ye Sachem [the tribal leaders] the[y] came to an agreemt and buried two Axes in ye Ground; which ceremony to them is more significant & binding than all Articles of Peace the Hatchet being a principal weapon wth ym.”

- Another American tradition came out of this practice, “shaking hands.”
- “The right hand was the ‘hatchet hand,’ so if the right hand was extended toward another person with an open gesture, that symbolized there was no hatchet present – the hatchet was buried.”
- Basically, an empty or open right hand was a symbol of forgetting and forgiving—the person had buried the hatchet.
- Although burying the hatchet is an old Indian tradition, it is a principle that is found throughout the Bible.

- Forgiving someone is easily taught but is much more difficult to practice.
- There are usually **two types of offences**, one is when we are wounded, the other when we are wronged.
- Being “wounded” is accidental. It happens all the time. Someone makes a comment or does something, and unintentionally offends someone.
- When a person is “wronged” it is intentional, and harm and pain was intended. Either way it hurts and God calls us to forgive.

“For if ye **forgive** men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also **forgive** you: But if ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father *forgive* your trespasses.

(Matt.6:14-15)

Aphemi: apo, “away from” hiemi, “send” – properly, send away, release (discharge)

This is a strong statement!

When we choose not to forgive, a couple of things happen.

- First the Bible uses the phrase “a root of bitterness” (**anger and disappointment at being treated unfairly, resentment**) to describe what happens in the heart when we harbor resentment
- The second thing that happens according to a story that Jesus told is that when we refuse to forgive someone **we are not harming them but we are putting ourselves in a self-made prison. (Matt. 18:21-35)**

CONCLUSION:

- The bottom line is we must **learn** how to bury the hatchet.
- The problem is we often bury it but leave the handle sticking out of the ground just in case we want to grab it up again.
- In the Indian tradition it states that they buried it so deep that an underground river miraculously washed the hatchets away.

CONCLUSION:

- Jesus not only taught us to forgive, He demonstrated it under the most extreme circumstances.
 - At the last supper, Jesus knowing that Judas had betrayed him still washed his feet as he did all the other disciples.
 - To take it a step farther, while on the cross Jesus looked at those who had abused him and rejected them and cried out to his heavenly father, praying, “Father forgive them.”
 - It is time to bury the hatchet for you are never more like Christ than when you forgive someone.