

### **James 3:1 (NASB)**

<sup>1</sup>Let not many *of you* become teachers, my brethren, knowing that as such we will incur a stricter judgment.

#### **Not many of you should presume to be teachers.**

James taught that people should not rush to be teachers. I totally agree with him.

Q. What was so attractive about being a teacher?

A. Becoming a rabbi or teacher was the highest calling of a Jewish child. Teachers had great influence and status in the early church (Ephesians 4:11).

- Because teachers were rare, each teacher had much work to do, and teaching was central to the work of the church.
- Because teachers taught primarily through verbal communication, it was vital for them to control what they said. Through their positions, teachers could present wrong doctrine. They could also create divisions in the church by promoting themselves rather than the message of Christ.

#### **We who teach will be judged with greater strictness.**

Teachers will have the greater judgment.

Teaching authority carries with it greater responsibility.

The teacher is held to greater accountability because of his or her key teaching role (Luke 12:42-48).

James is not against teachers; instead, he is alerting us to the great responsibilities that go with teaching and its potential problems.

#### **Teachers' Mistakes**

In New Testament times, many teachers failed and misused their positions of responsibility. Some of the teachers:

1. Introduced Judaism, Mosaic laws, and circumcision (Acts 15:24), weakening the gospel truth that we are saved by grace alone
2. Lived in contradiction to what they taught (Romans 2:17-29)
3. Taught before they knew anything themselves (1 Timothy 1:6-7)
4. Catered to people's "itching ears" (2 Timothy 4:3)

#### **What Are My Motives for Being a Teacher?**

I think those who take on teaching roles should ask themselves the following questions as a way of evaluating their fitness to teach:

- a. Am I teaching as an act of service?
- b. Am I trying to advance my own status or position in the church?
- c. Am I really qualified to teach others?

Christian teachers need to be primarily models of integrity and secondarily instructors of content; therefore, they should submit both their lives and their words to God's scrutiny. Their teaching must not be frivolous or selfish. Teachers should teach God's truth, not merely their own opinions. If we teach others, we must make sure that our lives do not contradict what we teach. My ABC's of teaching:

A = Accuracy – Strive to get it right

B = Balance – don't become close-minded on non-eternal issues

C = Clarity – Keep the message as simple as possible

### **Colossians 1:27 - 29 (KJV)**

<sup>27</sup>To whom God would make known what *is* the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles; which is Christ in you, the hope of glory:

<sup>28</sup>Whom we preach, warning every man, and teaching every man in all wisdom; that we may present every man perfect in Christ Jesus:

<sup>29</sup>Whereunto I also labour, striving according to his working, which worketh in me mightily.

### **Monday Morning: Action Step**

*"Review each sermon and pinpoint one principle that you can put into practice immediately."*

### **Acts 17:11 (KJV)**

<sup>11</sup>These were more noble than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the word with all readiness of mind, and searched the scriptures daily, whether those things were so.