

Training Young Men for Ministry (Midwest Center for Theological Studies)

by Paul Washer

Paul Washer emphasizes the critical role of the church in training young men for ministry, focusing on character and reliance on God's providence.

Duration: 1:14:04

Scripture: Matthew 6:33, Mark 16:15, 2 Timothy 2:2, 2 Timothy 3:16, James 1:22, 1 Peter 3:15, Revelation 5:8

Topics: "Training"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker begins by referencing 2 Timothy 3:16, which states that all scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, reproof, correction, and training in righteousness. He compares this to a full course meal, explaining that just as a meal requires multiple dishes, a full course ministry of the Word of God requires teaching, reproof, correction, and training in righteousness. The speaker then shares a personal anecdote about staying up all night with his son and emphasizes the importance of individualized ministry. He concludes by mentioning 2 Timothy 2:2, which encourages believers to pass on what they have learned to faithful individuals who can teach others. The sermon ultimately focuses on the benefits of a church-based theological education.

Transcript

For more media content from Grace Community Church in San Antonio, Texas, go to GCCSATX.com. Media used by permission of HeartCry Missionary Society. Visit us online at HeartCryMissionary.com ...times use the weakest among men. We should not boast in not having the keenest intellect or the deepest powers of thought.

But we do not need the keenest intellect or the deepest powers of thought to be used of God. God will oftentimes take the runt of the litter. He'll take a Gideon hiding in a wine vat.

Oftentimes when men see another man that has some sort of apparent usefulness to God, they look at that man trying to determine from where does that usefulness come. That is a foolish endeavor. You should always look toward the providence of God.

Also realize this, that the man speaking is not always, is often not, the most noblest among those who are sitting in the audience. I remember one time speaking to a very large crowd and I had taken a text in

Ezekiel 36. To my terror, I looked over to my right and there sat Dr. Mugliar.

How many of you know him? Oh, he's not on the internet, he's not on YouTube. He's a Hebrew scholar from India. And he has forgotten more about Ezekiel 36 than I have ever learned.

And so the one thing that we ought to always realize is that the fact that you're brought before other men does not make you the most noble man in the bunch. God will oftentimes exalt the weakest so that those who boast, boast in the Lord. Oftentimes young men also, they look for, they think, well there's a certain spiritual level out there and if I reach that level, then I will be mightily used of God.

Well, I suppose that may be true, but I'm not really sure what that level is and if there is one out there, I'm sure I haven't reached it. It is all the grace of God. It is all the providence of God.

Here's something else. Do you think that all being able to stand before you puts my worries to ease with regard to the Day of Judgment? Do you think just because a man is known, it makes him right with God? Don't think so much about being judged for your usefulness or the greatness of your ministry. Think more about being judged for your Christ-likeness.

The character of Jesus Christ that you do or do not display. Now, I'm speaking to ministerial students. I have been in the ministry.

It is a good thing you desire, but it is also a terrible thing that you desire. And I want to read something. I've brought so many books up here, I guess, in case I run out of things to say.

But I want to read something to you from the Reformed pastor. The first time I read it, it just absolutely grabbed a hold of me with regard to what the ministry really is. You see, the world looks at you as nothing more than a buffoon on a sitcom.

Any time any minister who believes the Bible is portrayed by media, he is always portrayed as a buffoon or an immoral man or some sort of social prehistoric animal. But the fact is, we're the ministers of the gospel. That's who we are.

And our work is greater than any president, any king, any surgeon on this earth. It is a great work, but it is a terrible work. It is a frightening work.

Listen to what Richard Baxter says. The ministerial work must be carried on diligently and laboriously as being of such unspeakable consequence to ourselves and others. Men don't speak that way anymore.

You see, today the minister is told, your ministry is of unspeakable consequence to others, but rarely, as he told, and to yourself. And yet Paul told Timothy, save yourself and others too. And he goes on, he says, we are seeking to uphold the world, to save it from the curse of God, to perfect the creation, to attain the ends of Christ's death, to save ourselves and others from damnation, to overcome the devil and demolish his kingdom, to set up the kingdom of Christ and to attain and help others to the kingdom of glory.

Now that is a task. Furthermore, it is a task that cannot be carried out by carnal means. We are to be spiritual men.

We are to think spiritual thoughts. We are to use spiritual tools. And we should sooner desire to cut off our arm than to depend upon it.

If there is a malady that strikes the church of Jesus Christ today, it is trusting in the arm of the flesh. Instead of abandoning ourselves to the things that God has given us. His word, His gospel, His good spirit, His providence to uphold us.

Now, I made up a lot of notes, things that I want to share about training, about training men. Now, I have never been a seminary professor and would never even claim to qualify to be one. But I have trained men.

Most of them in cane huts or adobe-mutt houses, out in the middle of the jungle or in the back of a boat. But you see, it is all the same. Men are men.

The ministry is the ministry. And it is always to be done the same way. And that is the biblical way.

The way God had intended. Now, just as by way of introduction, I want us to go to 2 Timothy 2. And forgive me, not only did I not sleep last night, I didn't bring my reading glasses. So if I come up with something rather creative, just stand up and tell me.

2 Timothy 2. But let's begin in verse 1. You then, my child, be strengthened by the grace that is in Christ Jesus. And what you have learned from me in the presence of many witnesses. Entrust to faithful men who will be able to teach others.

Now, before we start, I have been given the assignment of teaching the benefits of a church-based theological education. And I believe in that. But I want to put something of a disclaimer out there that I know my hosts would agree with.

And it is this. I am not here to speak poorly. To come against any Bible institute or seminary that is devoted to the Word of God and to the God of the Word.

As a matter of fact, I applaud many of the Bible institutes and the seminaries and Bible colleges around this country. I'll give you an example, Southern or Boyce or Covenant. And if my sons, when they get older, feel led of the Lord to attend one of those institutions, if they're still walking with God as they are now, I will applaud it.

What I am here to say is this. The church of Jesus Christ and her ministers must take up, once again, a duty that has been given to them and that they have no right to delegate to others. And that is the training of ministers.

The training of ministers. And also, I would say this. That those churches that are around seminaries, such as Southern and other useful seminaries throughout this country, they need to become directly involved with the training of the young men.

Not just in word, but in deed. They must realize the inherent limitations of all seminary training. The seminary, as good as it can be, as helpful and useful as it can be to the Kingdom of Heaven, it is not a church and it is not a training ground for God's men.

And I think most seminary professors and leaders would stand here today and say, that's true. Now, I want us to look for a moment at 2 Timothy 2. First of all, if you look at this passage, you find something very, very unique. Not about the passage itself, but the way it is used today.

Primarily, and for the greater part of my life, I only heard this passage quoted within the context of one-on-one discipleship of one Christian to another, and particularly on campuses with campus student

outreach groups. All about discipleship. All about discipleship.

We need to disciple people. We need to find faithful men and we need to pour our lives and our knowledge into those men. Well, that is very, very true and I applaud all those campus groups that are doing that, but that's not what this text means.

This text is in the context of Paul teaching Timothy what to do with the church. And he's not saying that we should start a student group in which we're trying to do one-on-one discipleship with new converts. What he is saying is, Timothy, it is the job of the church and the ministers of the church to pray about, to seek out faithful men with special callings on their life and pour their lives into them.

It is all about the church and it's all about church leadership. It seems to me today that the church can just be cast aside. It's almost as if God, your plan with regard to reaching the peoples and edifying your own has failed.

And so we must go outside the church and do all these other ministries. That's not true. That's not true.

First of all, let me just mention, just speak for a moment on this. We hear so much about the failure of the church today. It's not true.

The church hasn't failed. We hear so much about the sin, the ungodliness of the church today. That's not true.

The church is not ungodly. The problem is this. We're calling things church that are not church.

We are calling people Christian who are not Christian. There is a sense in which the evangelical community has done the same thing that the Catholic community has done for centuries. And it is this.

You try to witness to somebody and they bring up the Inquisition. I'm not going to hear you because look what the church did. It wasn't the church who did that.

Because the Catholic church, if you can call it such a thing, was killing the church. In the same way today you try to witness to someone and it's all about, well you evangelicals. The term evangelical can no longer be used in my opinion.

It means absolutely nothing. I want you to know that you should stop looking at everything that's called Christian and stop considering it to be Christian and then blaming God for something He's never done. God has a church.

It is His bride. His providence created her. His providence sustains her.

And although she is weak, although she is battling, she is beautiful. And she is advancing and she does know to whom she belongs. And she acts like it.

The church has not failed. We've just changed all the definitions. The foundations are completely gone and it is our task as ministers of Christ to reestablish those foundations.

To rise up with a clarion call, a clear voice, and explain to men who God really is. Explain to men what salvation is really about. What the gospel really means.

What happens when someone really gets saved. And what is the church biblically. And bring all this stuff that's done outside the church back in.

Not re-baptizing it, but making it what it's supposed to be. Now, He says, You then, My child, be strengthened by the grace that is in Christ Jesus. Here's the first thing that I want you to see.

Notice how Paul the Apostle addresses young Timothy. He's not addressing him as some nameless face in a lecture hall. Or some attendee to a certain conference.

He is addressing him as his child. That is one of the aspects of training ministers in the church. That a group of elders come together and they decide that they're called not only to care for the flock, but to train the ministers who will eventually take over their place.

And they recognize these young men and they treat them as sons, as children. Not as numbers. Not as a great many graduates.

But as individuals that they have given their heart to them. Let me give you an example. You've all heard that I didn't sleep last night.

And I'm really feeling the effects. And you sit there and you think, well, what was he doing? I was talking to my son because he couldn't sleep. I was reading to my son, the Hardy Boys.

I wish it had been the Scriptures, but it was the Hardy Boys. Till three in the morning. And then when he was asleep, I sat there and watched him.

Because you're always afraid, is he going to stop breathing? And then the sun comes up and you realize, I've got to take a shower and go to Owensboro. And you say, that's what a father does. I just gave you, God just gave you, a magnificent illustration of what it means to take a young man under your wing and train him for the ministry.

As a child. As a son. So he says, you then, my son, be strengthened by the grace that is in Christ Jesus.

And what you have heard from me in the presence of many witnesses, entrust to faithful men. Now here's something that I want you to see. Paul, boldly and publicly, before many witnesses, he taught Timothy.

He wasn't ashamed. He didn't backpedal when someone contradicted him. But he taught what he knew from Scripture.

Boldly and publicly. Now, in this center for training, you must be humble. You must recognize that wisdom was not born with you, wisdom will not die with you.

But at the same time, those who are professors here, they must stand up and they must teach young men boldly and publicly. God has not called you to teach these young men a gospel. He has not even called you to teach them a reformed gospel.

He has called you to teach them THE gospel. He has not called you to give this group of young men a certain view of God. He has called you to give these young men THE view of God.

The teacher, the pastor, the one who trains future generations must realize that he is always taking a risk. You are not men who simply teach a whole bunch of different views so that possibly one of them is right

and you're not blamed for the outcome. No.

You who are teachers must dive into the Word of God with all your heart, all your soul, all your mind and all your strength and you must come up with real answers backed by real conviction and you must proclaim those convictions to these students so help you God knowing that on the day of judgment you will be held accountable for what you teach. But knowing that you taught exactly what you saw in Scripture and exactly what you believed and exactly what you lived by. It's extremely important.

Now, I want you to look. He says, My child, be strengthened by grace that is in Christ Jesus. As we're going to see in a moment, any sort of theological learning is more than the intellect.

It involves the intellect, but it is much more than the intellect. It is a supernatural work of God and it is dependent upon the grace of God. You as a student will always be at the mercy of God.

You will always be in need of prayer. You will always be dependent upon Him. Some of you, I am sure, have fantastic minds, but your mind is not good enough.

You need the grace of God strengthening you, teaching you, sustaining you, and applying what you learn in your head to your heart and to your hands and to your feet. This is not an intellectual endeavor. It is primarily a work of the grace of Almighty God.

Now, he goes on and he says, What you have heard from me in the presence of many witnesses, entrust to faithful men who will be able to teach others as well. In the Reform Movement, I noticed something that I don't like. Learning for the sake of learning.

Learning for the sake of learning. You see, here's something. You go to a charismatic meeting, and what's the big boast there? Power.

White coats, beautiful music, and power. Blow on people, knock them down, do all sorts of things. I can do miracles.

You go to the Southern Baptist Convention. What is it all about? It's all about buildings and budgets and the number of people that you have baptized, whether they're converted or not. We scoff at all of that, but realize also that we as Reformed people, oftentimes we boast about what we know, and the guys who know the most, we put them in front of everyone else.

Do you realize that there is a celebrityism that is being created that it stinks in the nostrils of God among Reformed people? Every conference, the same people, to be like them, to touch them, to get close to them, it all stinks. This is not about just learning. This is you learning the gospel that you might love God, and not only that you might love God, but that you might love men, that you might go out from this cloistered place, that you might go out from an ivory tower, and you might go down the mountain where the demon-possessed boy is and bring some deliverance through the preaching of the gospel.

I meet so many young Reformed guys that honestly I think they would dress like Puritans if someone would let them do it. And they love old books, and they fight over them in libraries, but they won't witness to a prostitute. They won't talk to anybody about Christ.

They're all about what they know. But look what he says. He says, Entrust to faithful men who will be able to teach others also.

Not only are they able, but they're willing. Listen to me. This world is filled with people who are dying and going to hell.

Just this very night, countless children will be abused. This very night, countless drug addicts and prostitutes and drunks will die and split hell wide open. Now we know it's their own fault, but it was our fault too, and it is the grace of God manifested toward us that causes us to want to learn, not for learning's sake, but that we might glorify God with everything that we have and then go out and reach men.

I want to reach men. I want to win men. I want to preach to men.

And I don't have to apologize for that kind of language. I'm as Calvinistic as anyone else, but I try to win men and reach men. And so what is training here? It's a group of men, elders.

They've studied well. They have fought many battles. They carry scars.

This is not their first rodeo. Not only do they pastor God's people, but they are constantly on the lookout for young men whom they can train, that when they go the way of all flesh, those young men can take their place. And not just take their place in the study, and not just take their place in the pulpit, and not just take their place in the conferences, but take their place on the streets.

Now let's go on. I want us to go for a moment to 2 Timothy 3, verse 16. He says, All Scripture is breathed out by God, and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, that the man of God may be competent, equipped for every good work.

Now, I'm a Midwest farm boy, and I don't have a lot of culture. But I married a woman that, praise God, has some culture about her. She loves to cook, and she is a very, very good cook.

She tells me that a full course meal, a full course meal requires at a minimum four dishes. It requires a soup. It requires a salad.

It requires a meat, whether that be beef, chicken, or fish. And it requires a dessert. And she is quick to tell me that if one of those are missing, you no longer have a full course meal.

Now, I want you to see something here in this text. In verse 16. All Scripture is breathed out by God, and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness.

A full course ministry of the Word of God, at least in this text, requires four things. Teaching, reproof, correction, and training in righteousness. Yet, I submit to you that in most ministerial educational models, these four things are not found.

Only one of them. We teach men. We bring them together.

We put them in seminaries. We bring them into Bible institutes. And we teach them, and teach them, and teach them, and we do not realize that we are only doing one of the four things we ought to be doing to them.

When you bring men into a large classroom setting, and all the training they ever get is lecture after lecture after lecture, they are not getting the full strength of a true ministry of the Word of God. It requires that they be taught. But a personal relationship is required so that they might be examined and reproofed.

And they are not left there just reproofed, but lovingly corrected. And not just taught, not just reproofed, and not just corrected, but trained over and over and over and over again, so that when they leave the folds, the battle they will face will not be a surprise to them. They will be trained.

Now, I want to stop here, and I want you to recognize what I'm saying. Think about it. Even in church, the ministry of the Word.

What is it? Preaching, preaching, preaching, preaching. And in that preaching, yes, there is reproof, but we are missing something. The personal relationships that are required to really allow the Word of God to run and be effective.

When I trained men in Peru, I would bring them around me. They walked with me. They did everything with me.

Some of them lived with me. We were in such a relationship that when I taught them and they went counter to the Scriptures, I could reprove them. And not only reprove them, leave them dangling and hopeless, but grab them and teach them the right way to go.

And not just teach them, but teach them over and over and over again until it became a habit in their life. That is impossible. Impossible.

Outside of a church-based training of ministers. It is absolutely impossible. So one of the reasons why our ministers are so anemic is they are not getting a full course meal.

They are only getting one platter. Only one platter. We say, well, that is supposed to be taken up in relationships.

What kind of relationship? Young men. Young men. A lot of you run in bachelor groups.

You are always hanging out together, studying together, talking together. Do you examine one another's life? Do you lovingly reprove one another? Do you look for correction? Do you ask for it? And what about training? Have we thrown that out the window altogether? There is so much more than just learning in your head. You must walk with older men.

And those older men must take it upon themselves in that relationship to not only teach you in the lecture hall, although the lecture hall is important, but also to reprove you when they see you are not walking according to what is right. And not only to reprove you, but to correct you and to set you back up on your feet so that you might walk as you ought to walk. And not only do that, but do it so many times that eventually you become trained.

And that right there, if I were to stop and go home right now, is the great advantage to training a small group of men in the context of a local church. But now here is something that I am going to challenge you on. If you do that, and you get good at it, more young men are going to come.

And then more young men are going to come. And then you know what is going to happen? You are going to become exactly what you have run away from. So what is the key? It is not to set up here in this city a theological center of the universe.

It is not just to train young men. Let me give you a hint. Start bringing in some pastors.

Have a pastor's conference and start teaching pastors to do what you are doing. Because eventually, the young men coming to you, it is going to get so big that you are no longer going to be able to do anything right anymore. Now, he says here, we have four things.

We have teaching, reproof, correction, and training. Tonight I just want to talk about teaching for a moment. About teaching.

I want to read some things that I have written down here. First of all, teaching here refers to teaching, doctrine, doctrinal truths. And the one thing that you ought to come away with in this is that the Bible is the ultimate source for all spiritual truth, for every truth concerning the Christian life.

And that the exposition of Scripture is the means of communicating that truth. Now, I want to say this. First of all, that the commandment to teach people, the commandment to teach young ministers is not fulfilled, has not been fulfilled when the following occurs.

When the teacher has only instructed the mind or intellect of the student in matters pertaining to theology, ethics, devotion, or ministry. When that has occurred, teaching has not been accomplished. It has not been accomplished where the teacher has only instructed and admonished the student in the disciplines of experimental religion.

When that has occurred, teaching in its fullness has not been accomplished. It has not been accomplished where the teacher has only instructed the student in the practice of ministry, especially when the methodologies are founded upon carnal leadership models and Madison Avenue marketing strategies. Now, this is where we need to stop.

I don't know how aware the rest of you are of what's going on in the world, but the greater part of all theological education in the world today has absolutely nothing to do with theology, has absolutely nothing to do with doctrine or true biblical ministry. We have been invaded by Wall Street, by Madison Avenue. Many young men go off to schools and the only thing that they are going to be taught is how to do something.

And not even how to do it according to the Scriptures, but simply how to get it done no matter what it takes. Churches today are being built all over this country, and I use the word church loosely, are being built today all over this country based upon models that have more to do with Walt Disney than they do the Apostle Paul. And we have turned the church into a Six Flags over Jesus.

If you are here, you are not here to learn how to go out and do something big. You are here to learn about God from His Word, to find out what He desires and to learn His way in applying that. Another thing I want to say, teaching has not been done, and listen to me carefully, because this is happening all over the place and it's happening in our convention.

It's happening everywhere. Teaching has not been accomplished where the teacher has instructed the student in the fine art of making the church more relevant or palatable to carnal men. The men who do this should know what they are doing.

You go on the Internet, you go into Christian bookstores, you go into church growth seminars, and you go into many, many seminaries and Bible institutes, and what are you going to find? How to make the church relevant or how to make the church attractive to the lost community outside its doors. Am I right? Well, let me tell you in very harsh words exactly what that is. It is this.

Men who do that are taking the bride of Christ and painting her up like a whore in order to attract as many lewd and carnal men as possible and sell her to them. That is what's going on in this world today. Now, you're here to study.

But I hope you're here to study so that you will become men of God. And if you are men of God, you will love the bride of God and you will do anything necessary in your power to protect her, to honor her, and to honor her husband. Look at what we're doing.

Pastors go out today. And what do they do? They send out inquiries, questionnaires into the community to find out what kind of church the community wants. And then they change her.

I want you to think for a moment. I have a little daughter, two years old, what Pastor Waldron was saying about his daughter earlier. I mean, I love my boys.

But that little girl, I mean... Now, just imagine this little girl. She grows up and she's protected by her mother and her father. Eighteen years old.

Innocent. Doesn't know even much of what's going on in the world. And then some men come by.

And they take her. And they strip her of her simple clothing that her father and mother gave her. And they clothe her with the most gaudy, sensual rags.

And they paint her eyes. And they redo her hair. And then they march her in front of carnal, wicked men in order to attract them.

That is what the pastors in this country are doing to the church of Jesus Christ. When the judgment of God comes down upon this nation, Hillary Clinton will not be first in line, nor will Barack Obama, but most of the evangelical pastors in America will be first in line. And I want you to know something.

If my wife were to go to Walmart one night about 11 o'clock to buy something she had forgotten, and some men grabbed her and tried to rape her in a car, and you walked by, and you saw it happening, but you were so afraid of your reputation or so afraid of your place in the denomination or so afraid of men that you just kept walking by because you didn't want to cause trouble because you wanted unity. And you let my wife be mauled by those men and after I find those men and deal with them, I'm coming after you. You see, I've gone from reading notes to preaching.

This is what it's about. You are men of God. You're young, yes.

You must be trained. Not so you can go out there and have some kind of wonderful ministry and everybody invites you to their conference. You must be trained because there is a bride to love.

There is a bride to serve. There is a bride to protect at all costs. At all costs.

At all costs. And yet instead of teaching men to be men and to love God and to love His bride, we do just the opposite. We send men to be trained on how to make this homely girl that belongs to Christ.

Teaching has not gone on. When you go to a seminary or a Bible institute it simply teaches you how to strip the bride of Christ of the beautiful, simple garments He has given her and replace them with the gaudy attractions of this world. Remember this, young men.

If you are going to use carnal means to attract people into your church one day, you'll have to use greater and greater carnal means to keep them. The commandment to teach has been fulfilled when the full counsel of Scripture has been communicated in matters pertaining to doctrine, ethics, devotion, and ministry, leading to the student's progress in sanctification and usefulness in the ministry. I want to learn.

I got here early today and found myself in the library, so I was looking at some of the books. I want to learn. But I don't want to learn for learning's sake.

I want to learn about Him so that I can love Him more. I want to learn about Him so that through the knowledge of Him, I might grow in sanctification and be more pleasing to Him. I want to learn about Him that I might serve Him.

It is not merely about knowledge. Knowledge has an end. And that end is this, a love for God, a love for God's people, and a likeness to God, being conformed to the image of Christ.

Now, I want to read again. The commandment to teach has been fulfilled when the full counsel of Scripture has been communicated in matters pertaining to doctrine, ethics, devotion, and ministry, leading to the student's progress in sanctification and usefulness in ministry, and setting the course for the student's future personal progress in the faith. Now, listen to me, young men.

Here's what happens to most people, most men, who go to any sort of Bible school. They study for three years, and when they've got their studying done, they go out and minister, and they hardly ever return to the study again. Now, they may go to the study to prepare sermons, but not to prepare themselves.

They may go to the study because they have to preach somewhere or answer someone's questions, but they don't live there just to know God and to know more of His Word. When you graduate from any institute or center, you have not finished your studies. You have only learned a few tools and guidelines so that you may now begin to study.

It is a lifetime thing. Bill McCloud is one of the godliest men I have ever met. To pray with him is a school.

It is fearful. He's the only man alive today that's been in a sustained national revival. He's an old, old man.

To hear him pray is to tremble. I believe that one of the secrets to his life is now in his 90s. It's from his conversion.

Back in, I think, somewhere around 20 years old, he has read through the Bible at a minimum of three hours a day for now on 70 years. I think he has read through the Bible 400 times with the purpose of growing in grace, with the purpose of being a more useful minister. I should spend more time in preparing sermons.

I really should. But I don't regret that I have spent the greater part of my life preparing me. I would beg you, young students, and I'm going to talk about this later.

Oh, I beg you to learn Greek. I beg you to learn Hebrew. I beg you to learn it all.

But I beg you to spend hours a day alone with God in His Word on your knees. Let Him teach you. Now, I want to look at the goal of teaching for a moment.

First of all, turn with me just for a moment to Galatians 4. Verse 19. One of the goals of instruction, of teaching. My little children, for whom I am again in anguish of childbirth until Christ is formed in you.

One of the things a professor in a seminary or Bible institute must come to grips with is this. Not all the young men that come under his tutelage will actually be truly Christian. We take for granted that men are Christian, and because of that, our pulpits are filled with lost men.

And our churches are filled with lost people. And that is particularly a problem in the Southern Baptist Convention because there we have created a subculture, a Christian subculture, in which someone is born Southern Baptist and so they go to Southern Baptist preschool on Sunday. Southern Baptist activity.

Southern Baptist Sunday school. They go to church. They go to the youth.

Their whole life revolves around the church, but they never have an intimate relationship with Jesus Christ. They are never truly regenerate. And being so in love with all the activities they've been in all their life, they naturally flow straight into the ministry, but they do not know God.

When a man works with another man, I want you to look at this. First of all, he says, anguish of childbirth. Now whether the young man is already converted or not converted, I want you to see something about what it means to truly train men of God.

Barnes says this about Paul. His anxiety for them he compares to the deepest sufferings which human nature endures. And his language here is a striking illustration of what ministers of the Gospel should feel and do feel sometimes in regard to their people.

What is he saying? I remember first starting out training a group of men in Peru. And they weren't men who came to me from other churches. They were men who, under the preaching, standing up on a park bench and crying out about Christ.

They came to be converted. They counted the cost when their families turned their back on them. And then they begin to sense the call into the ministry.

This is not some disconnected relationship in a lecture hall. If you're going to bring men into this place in Owensboro, you must knit your heart with them. And it is a thing of giving birth to ministers.

The whole thing with Christianity, one of the greatest problems is we forget that it is not organizational. It is organic. It is not a machine with clogs and wheels.

It is not a factory that produces things. There is an element of the supernatural here. There is an element of the Spirit of God as in the day of creation that's hovering, brooding, creating.

And that's the way we must be as men of God. We take men under our wing. We weep over them.

We pray for them. We teach them. We nurture them.

And yes, if necessary, we stay up all night for them. Because they are our children. And we do so until Christ is formed in them.

Men, what you're seeking to take on is so costly. It's going to cost you everything. You're going to go to the grave quicker because you decided to do this if you do it correctly.

And those of you who are a part of this church, you need to realize that. That if you are going to train ministers, then you must join in with the cost of training ministers. You must do everything in your power to live for Christ.

To set the men that are here free. Not to worry about the insignificant details of carnal little church members, but to pour their lives into some young men who must be trained. And they must be trained the right way.

It goes on. I want you to look for a moment that the goal of teaching, as I said, is that Christ be formed in a person. But I want you to see something also in Colossians 1.28 that is very akin to this.

This is what Paul said. We proclaim Him, warning everyone and teaching everyone with all wisdom that we may present everyone mature in Christ. Here there is not only the idea of instruction, but there is a pastoral element here.

It's as though Paul sees this flock of people and he is doing absolutely everything in his power to present them complete, making sure that not one of them is lost. In the same way, these young men who come in here, they are undone. Young man, if you are here, you are undone.

You are not complete. You are not fully mature. You are not ready to go.

And you must be willing to submit to teaching, to reproof, to correction, to training. And the men here must be willing to pour out their lives into you through teaching and reproof and correction and training until one day you stand there fully mature. I want to read something for just a moment.

It's of all the things that Spurgeon said in morning and evening, this is my favorite. And young man, I want you to listen to me because this speaks to you. I know it does because it speaks to me.

And I've been in the ministry much longer than you. It's from Hosea 7-8. Ephraim is a cake not turned.

I want you to listen to this. A cake not turned is uncooked on one side. And so Ephraim was in many respects untouched by divine grace.

Though there was some partial obedience, there was very much rebellion left. My soul, I charge thee, see whether this be thy case. Are thou thorough in the things of God? Has grace gone through the very center of thy being so as to be felt in its divine operations, in all thy powers, thy actions, thy words, and thy thoughts? To be sanctified spirit, soul, and body should be thine aim and prayer.

And although sanctification may not be perfect anywhere in degree, yet it must be universal in its action. There must not be the appearance of holiness in one place and reigning sin in another, else thou too wilt be a cake not turned. So many people are like a cake not turned.

So many young ministers are like a cake not turned. They're completely done on one side. Oh, they've got so much right about them.

And they harp on all the things they've got right. And they judge others for not being as right as them on that one side where they are thoroughly cooked through. But you turn them over and they're raw on the other side.

And therefore, as young men, you must realize this. You are not fully mature. And you must submit to teaching.

Submit to instruction. Humble yourself and God will give you grace. And those of you who are teaching, you must observe these young men.

You must watch them. You must care for them. You must look at every area of their life.

Yes, he's got a mighty intellect over here, but the boy knows nothing about carrying with God in prayer. Yes, he has great powers in the pulpit, but he seems to only want to preach in the pulpit and never on the street. One of the things that I learned in training men was to observe them, observe them, observe them.

Not just teach them something and say, I've done my job, but teach them something and then wait and watch to see if it's taken root. To judge the personalities of men, realizing that men all flow in different directions. Some grasp teaching and they love teaching, and all they want to do is study and teach.

But there are so many other aspects of the Christian life. Others aren't much on teaching and such, but they want to just go out and serve, serve, serve. But soon their well runs dry.

They're a cake not done on both sides. When you're training young men, that's what you have to look for. That they be thoroughly complete in Christ.

Here's another thing that you need to look at. You might graduate with flying colors, pass through all your classes quickly, but the elder has to look at you and say, you're not ready to take a church. You're not ready to take a step up.

You've grasped all the things with pen and paper, but your heart is still not right. There is no solidity in you. And so you wait.

You wait and you wait. You see, if you take this center that you have and make it just a bunch of lectures, you've done nothing. But if you bring in young men and you lecture them, and you watch them, and you care for them, and you bring them into your home, and you take them with you to witness and to visit the dying and to disciple the flock, then you begin to see exactly where their need truly is.

Now, another thing that is very important in Matthew 28, 19 and 20, it says, Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I commanded you. Now, look at this for a moment. The Great Commission deals in this.

That I am required to teach what has been commanded to me. That means that I may have authority, but I am a man under authority. And I may have to teach you to obey certain things, but they are the very things that I myself have to obey.

One of the things that I learned is preaching in a pulpit doesn't really demand much from me. You see, none of you really know me. At a church one time, after I got through preaching, the pulpit committee ran up and they said, We want you to be our pastor.

And I looked at them, I said, Are you crazy? And they said, Why did you say that? I said, You don't know if I love my wife. How can you ask me to be your pastor? You don't know if I love my wife. You see, up here I can be anything.

Take you home with me. I might be another. Teaching men is not just filling their heads with knowledge.

It is walking with them and allowing them to see your obedience. And not only your obedience, but when you are not obedient, they see you humble yourself before God and ask for forgiveness. They see you go to others and ask for forgiveness.

They watch your life. They watch your life. When you get out and you pay your gas at the gas station, they watch you, Pastor.

Did he witness to that person? Did he give them a track? Did he invite them to church? When they see that you are very busy one day and your wife all of a sudden shows up with some problem that really isn't all that great of a problem, was the pastor short with her? Or was he like Christ with his bride? And if he was short with her, did he ask for forgiveness when the Spirit convicted him like a hammer? Training men has to do with bringing those men into your life. One of the men that I respect more than anybody on this planet is a young man by the name of Brian Dye. He is about 30 years old, red-headed and kind of chubby.

And even when he's dressed up as best as he can be, like he was at Moody a few weeks ago where we had some meetings at the university, all he has on is a pair of cut-off shorts, sandals, white socks up to right here, and a shirt that says, these are my church clothes. Why do I love him so much? Because he lives under a blue light in Chicago. Now, what does that mean? When a lot of people get killed in a certain neighborhood, they have a kind of a blue light that kicks on to let you know, get out of there.

If you're in there and it's not your neighborhood, don't park your car. He lives under that blue light. No, he's not African American.

He looks like a white farm boy from Iowa. And he lives there in the hood with his wife. And I showed up, took my two boys, and I said, you've got to meet this man.

No, he wasn't John Piper. No one knows him. No, he wasn't R.C. Sproul.

He was Brian Dye with white socks pulled up to his knees. And we get out at like 8, and I said, boys, the blue light's on, so as soon as I stop the car, I'm going to grab you and we're running for the house. So we go in there and my little boys are like, here's one that's 5 and one that's 8. There's this house in the middle of the hood and there are people in there, I mean, ex-gangbangers, ex-prostitutes, drug addicts, corn rolls down to the floor.

I mean, you name it. And they're all staying there in that house. I talked to this one guy, big African American guy, muscles as scary as I'll get out.

And I said, hey, what's the deal with you? And he said, man, I came to know Christ last year. And I said, how? He said, well, you know, I was just trashing. I was hanging out.

I was just coming down. He was on crack and all sorts of stuff. And he said, all of a sudden, this white dude walks up to me and says, man, you look like you're hungry.

I am hungry. And he said, well, look, I got to go down here and get something and I don't have time to take you back to my house, but here's the keys to my house. It's four doors down.

Just go in there, get out of the refrigerator, get whatever you want. I'll be back later. He said, a white guy is going to tell me that? Now, I don't want to sit here and debate on whether or not that was foolish or this or that, but you see, he's got a group of guys that live with him in a house and they watch him.

And what's so amazing is he's not a great, he's like me, he's not a great Bible teacher, but they just watch him. They watch him love people. They watch him care for people.

They watch him with his wife. They see what he is. And by that, they're changed.

Now, we're not all called to be like that, but the point that I'm trying to make is look what we've done to the Great Commission. Get them in a lecture hall. It's not what he said.

He said, teach them to observe the things I have commanded you. Teach them to observe the things I have commanded you. It's obedience.

Now, I know our time is short, but there's another thing that I just want to share with you just really quickly, and it's in Deuteronomy 6. Verse 4, Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God, the Lord is one. You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your might. These words which I command you today shall be on your heart, and you shall teach them diligently to your children and shall talk of them when you sit in your house and when you walk by the way and when you lie down and when you rise.

You shall bind them as a sign on your hand, and they shall be as frontlets between your eyes. You shall write them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates. This whole thing is not wrapped around just ten commandments.

This is not just about putting the ten commandments on your head or binding them to your arm. There's even something further. Even the commandments have an end to them, a greater purpose.

And it is to love the Lord your God with all your heart, all your soul, all your mind, all your strength. What is the greatest task of a teacher? To burn out of love for Christ. To teach men to cultivate a love relationship with God.

It is amazing that He starts off by saying, and you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, soul, mind, and strength. And then He goes on talking about teaching your children. What are they to teach their children? Not just ten commands.

Not just some four spiritual laws. But to teach them that there is one Lord and one God, and to Him they owe allegiance. To teach them to love the Lord their God with all their heart, their soul, their mind, and their strength.

You can't teach that unless you do that. Lou Priolo says something in his book on training children that I just love. He calls it the number one rule you must remember whenever you're going to train a parakeet to speak.

The number one rule is you must have a larger vocabulary than the parakeet. If you are going to teach men to be a man of God, you must be a man of God. If you are going to teach men to love God, you must love Him.

You must love Him. Now people always ask me a question. They go, Brother Paul, you're always talking about how we ought to love more.

How do we do that? That's one of the ways you can really ruin a preacher's sermon. Ask him what he's commanding everybody to do. Here's what I have figured out.

I think it's true. We tell men you ought to love God more. We tell ourselves we ought to love God more, but how do we do that just as Pastor Waldron did today? You see, how am I to make myself love God more? I mean, I can't pull myself up by my own bootstraps.

I can't wrench out my heart and tweak it a certain way so that it might love to a greater degree. How can I love God more? How can I do that? Well, my wife is a great illustration. A limited illustration, but a great one.

I've been married for 16 years. I love my wife now more than when I married her. I do.

Why? Because I know more about her. I know more about her virtue, her merit. I have seen her faithfulness over the years.

Things, hidden things, that the first glimpse could not catch that now I see and I admire. Now she's a fallible person, and yet the more I know her, the more I love her. I want you to realize something.

That that's your great quest. I always tell people, you know, when Jesus comes back, you're going to understand everything there is to understand about the second coming. Everybody's always talking about the second coming.

I'm in agreement on one thing. Most people are wrong about the second coming. That's the thing I've come to conclusions about.

But the moment Jesus Christ comes back, you're going to know absolutely everything there is to know about the second coming. But you're going to be in eternity in heaven, and you're not even going to begin to grasp who God is or what He has done for you in the person of Jesus Christ. Do you realize what you're going to be doing throughout all of heaven, throughout all of eternity? You're going to be tracking down the glories of God.

And the more you know about this God, the greater will your love be promoted toward Him. That's why eternal life starts now. It starts when you believe.

Because the moment you believe, you begin that journey of doing what? To know Him. And the more you know about Him, the more that you will love Him. Now, just like always, I don't know what it is.

When I preach in Reformed churches, I just don't function well. I feel like I'm preaching to the choir. I had all kinds of notes this evening that I wanted to share with you, and I didn't get through any of them.

But in your studies, I have a whole list of things you ought to study at this school. And the biggest one is this. The attributes and works of God, particularly manifested in the person and work of Jesus Christ.

The more you know Him, the more you know Him, the more you will love Him. And the more you love Him, the more useful a minister you will be, and the better wife you will be, and the better husband you will be, and the better teacher you will be. I teach my boys the Bible.

We memorize Scripture. And we go through the little children's catechism. And all of that I will continue to do.

But a few nights ago, I was late at night and everyone was asleep. And I was rejoicing in my God. And my little boy walked in the room because he was thirsty.

Because he wanted to know what was going on. And what does he see? That, my friend, is worth a thousand books. That is worth a thousand books.

I would that you would be saturated in the things of God. That you would be so mesmerized by Him that you would get tongue-tied. That you would feel like you were always bursting.

And always, never being able to explain Him as He ought to be explained because He is so wonderful. Now students, realize this. There are things that your professor here and your elder here can't give you.

He cannot. He can't. He can lead a horse to water.

You can't make him drink. You guys should see this as an incubator. Your time here, you should see it as an incubator.

I plead with you, go hard after God. Go hard after God. To know Him.

To be caught up by Him. Do you know that prayer can actually become a delight? Did you know that? It doesn't have to be a burden where you have, you always feel like, don't you? You always feel like there's an iron, you know, ceiling over your head. Do you know why? Because you haven't learned the thing that the old guys always taught me, and it's this.

Do you know how you pray? You pray until you can pray. And then you pray until you have prayed. Those are the types of things you need to learn.

You look at a text. You don't get it. So you run to a commentary to find it from somebody who got it the hard way.

Now you need to go to commentaries, but go find it the hard way first and let the commentary be a confirmation. Go after God with all your heart. That there's a reality when you talk about Him.

It's not an intellectual discourse. You don't just get up and... I heard a young minister a few nights ago preaching, and he said this. Wonderful young minister.

He is so far beyond me it's unbelievable, but he said this. You know, here this text is telling us to pray, and I sure hope you guys have a better prayer life than I do, because my prayer life is just not... I just don't pray like I ought to. And he kind of... And I thought, young man, do you realize what you just told the congregation? You flippantly said, I just don't pray like I ought to.

He needed someone to go to him and say, young man, you said something terrible. You should weep when you say that. You see, you can just start flippantly saying all kinds of things, but they really don't matter.

That's why you as students and you guys at this center of rehabilitation or whatever it is, you go for God. Do you realize that a lot of you guys are going to fall away and go to hell? Do you realize that? I lived with

street people. I worked in street centers.

Some of you are going to fall away. It will happen. Which one will it be? You see, this is life and death.

You need to go after God. You've been brought to a place, brought to a place where you have found a man who loves you and wants to teach you the Word, but you have to go after God on your own or you will be consumed. You have to know Him.

You have to stand firm. And no one else can take you there. Do you hear what I'm telling you? And that's the way it is for all of us here.

Every one of you. It is life and death. Life and death.

Life and death. Let's pray. Father, You know, O Lord.

You know. You know. Father, strange things of providence.

O Lord, so much weakness tonight. So little of You. But O God, You can.

You can make a way, Lord, with the smallest pebble. Father, work in the hearts of men. In Jesus' name, Amen.

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