

Quick...who's the best, most equipping, most fabulous teacher you've ever had? Think on that for a minute or two—and revel in the memories! As for me, one of the top influencers in my life was Mrs. Bryner, my fourth-grade teacher, who was the complete package in helping to steer the lives of thirty rambunctious nine-year-olds in small-town Colorado—and, for decades, she did that so very well over and over again!

Then there was Dr. Mike Crooch, a flamboyant university business professor who ultimately served on the highest rule-making, standards-setting body in America for the field of accounting, the Financial Accounting Standards Board; Dr. Crooch made every class session deep, memorable, useful, and very engaging...then sometimes followed up with discussion during a cutthroat pool game at the Gray Fox Inn down the street. Yeah, so many memories from these superb teachers...and some other very special folks, too. And, let me declare my abounding gratitude for them! Great teachers are worth their weight in gold!

But teaching comes in many forms of delivery: apprenticeships, internships, seminars, supervisors, parenting, coworkers, mentors, pastors...you name it! For the alert, always-absorbing lifelong student, every day is an opportunity for learning from others! And when it comes to learning about God-stuff and getting fantastic direction there...lots of it is local, like the person volunteering for kid's choir and filling your kids chock-full of good learning, well beyond the music...or like the plumber you see every week on Sunday with a wise word from the Lord. But not everybody is great at teaching...or even good. The truth is, more than half the battle of learning is *knowing who to learn from*...and knowing who *not* to learn from!

I think of C.S. Lewis, who never claimed to be a theologian but, through his books like *Mere Christianity* and *Miracles*, nailed an essential core of important theology. But that's not to take one bit away from superb theologians like John M.G. Barclay and Gordon Fee. Or the great writings of pastor A. W. Tozer!

Whoa, then there's the Apostle Paul, that enemy and persecutor of the earliest Christians who later believed in Christ and was then used by God for disseminating a depth and relevance of revelation given to no other person. Yes, countless believers have fallen in love with the timeless truths that Paul brought to the table in his epistles, especially those invaluable, easily understood, powerful words that folks have to work pretty hard to misunderstand or ignore. This nugget that Paul wrote to Timothy comes to mind: "God our Savior desires all people to be saved." That's a straightforward truth...and a call to action undergirding the command of Jesus to proclaim the gospel to the uttermost parts of the earth! Yes, Paul was a uniquely appointed and anointed teacher...Apostle...missionary!

But let's go back to the opening sentence of this podcast. "Quick, who's the best, most equipping, most fabulous teacher you've ever had?"—going back to that because I imagine many of us were inclined to have the same answer to that. Yes, even though Jesus is glorified as the Christ and our Lord—His utterly unique roles of unparalleled importance for eternity—well, He is often called the greatest teacher, too!

Foundationally, we have Jesus's Great Commission and His two greatest commandments—but the Gospels also include many of His stories, His parables. *Stop for a minute: can you recall a couple of your favorite Jesus-parables?* I personally recall life-changing stories such as the Parable of the Lost Sheep, the Parable of the Talents, and the Parable of the Prodigal Son. Surely, we easily say to ourselves, the greatest teacher in all history was the Son of God Himself! ...But hold your horses! Is that unequivocally true?

Yeah, that's what I just asked: "is it unequivocally true that the greatest teacher in all history was Jesus Himself?" Well, that may seem like a silly question to believers. After all, Jesus was *the* Teacher, *the* Rabbi, *the* Perfect One! But what about God the Father? As Jesus said, "the Son can do nothing of his own accord, only what he sees the Father doing." (John 5:19 ESV) And what about the Holy Spirit? Should Father, Son, and the Holy Spirit be considered the greatest teachers in history?

Do you remember the time that Jesus promised the giving of the Holy Spirit to His disciples. "...I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Helper, to be with you forever, even the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees him nor knows him. You know him, for he dwells with you

and will be in you.” (John 14:16-17 ESV) Yes, the Holy Spirit has been given to every born-again believer, and He dwells “with you and will be in you.” That’s key—the Holy Spirit is in every believer! OK, but to what purpose? Well, here’s Jesus again, this time just a few verses later in John 14:21-26...

“Whoever has my commandments and keeps them, he it is who loves me. And he who loves me will be loved by my Father, and I will love him and manifest myself to him.’ Judas (not Iscariot) said to him, ‘Lord, how is it that you will manifest yourself to us, and not to the world?’ Jesus answered him, ‘If anyone loves me, he will keep my word, and my Father will love him, and we will come to him and make our home with him. Whoever does not love me does not keep my words. And the word that you hear is not mine but the Father’s who sent me. These things I have spoken to you while I am still with you. But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, he will teach you all things and bring to your remembrance all that I have said to you.’” Wow, let’s explore those verses for several sweeping truths about teaching.

First, Jesus has given us commandments...and “whoever keeps them, he loves Jesus.” (John 14) Also, whoever doesn’t love Jesus does not keep His words. So, the teacher Jesus, the giver of the words, is only honored when the hearer “keeps the words.” You know, like “love your neighbor as yourself.” And there’s this: the word that we hear from Jesus is “not his but the Father’s who sent me.” So, Jesus the Son and His Father are in joint custody of the words Jesus taught—yeah, Father and Son *co-teachers*, if you will!

‘Course, Jesus spoke those truths while He was with His disciples, and He was soon destined for the Cross. “But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, he will teach you all things and brings to your remembrance all that I have said to you.” Now wait just a minute! This Scripture says that those parables that I asked you to recall a few moments ago in this podcast were *specifically brought to your remembrance by the Holy Spirit Who is in you!* The truth is, the Holy Spirit has been actively bringing Jesus’s words back to remembrance to many hundreds of millions of believers that last two millennia!

But that isn’t all! Did you hear those six key words Jesus said about the Spirit in verse 26? “He will teach you all things.” So, the Holy Spirit has at least two key roles in teaching: He brings remembrance of the words of Jesus to us...*and* He will teach us all things! Hey, does that mean that the Spirit will *actually, truly teach believers things from all areas of life?* Yes! But the Holy Spirit, like any other teacher, is only as effective as far as the student is willing to engage fully with the teacher and the material being taught!

So, as the saying goes, I have good news and bad news. First, the bad news. *Even Jesus, His Father, and the Holy Spirit working in perfect harmony* cannot effectively teach people who decide that Jesus is not really a great teacher or decide that the Holy Spirit is not to be active in their lives, whether for teaching or anything else. So, the bad news for those folks is that they settle for fallible, merely human, teaching!

But the good news is this: the Holy Spirit indwells *in you* to help you learn all types of things, not just spiritual things! As a university professor, am I convinced that *the Spirit—in all reality—works to guide students to a godly, deeper understanding and application* of business principles? Yes! Of key technology issues? Yes! Of the full use of Scripture to enable a life well-lived for Jesus? Yes! How about you? Do you want to join me in this deliciously fun, lifelong learning spree, this deep discipleship that is continuously developing by the perfect actions of the Holy Spirit...*and only hampered by poor receptivity?*

Sadly, many folks have been taught to just stick with “Father-and-Son-stuff”—they avoid the Holy Spirit like the plague! But whether this is a whole new ball game you’re prompted to engage in...or you personally are seasoned in Holy Spirit guidance...would you join me in a prayer that invokes God’s truths? “Father, we know that Your Spirit teaches all things and brings remembrance of the words of Jesus. We want those two truths to be continuously active in our lives. So, we ask for that Holy Spirit teaching and our receptivity to it. And we ask for a sharp awareness of that every time we experience it—so that we can give You the glory. In Jesus’s name...amen!” ...Hey, did you just learn a key bit about the reality of Holy Spirit teaching? Yeah? *Well, that itself is a fulfillment of the Spirit Himself teaching you from within! So, give God the glory!*

A&A: Application & Action

1. As per the opening of this podcast: “Quick, who’s the best, most equipping, most fabulous teacher you’ve ever had?” Answer and discuss.
2. Does it seem a bit of a stumbling block for you to believe that the Holy Spirit teaches *all* things to believers in Christ instead of just being limited to “spiritual” things? Why or why not?
3. So, do you fully believe and work to act upon the teaching of Jesus as well as the teachings of the Holy Spirit? Discuss your processes and experiences in consistently learning in these ways.