



LIFE APPLICATIONS "1 CORINTHIANS"

Chapter 14

TEACH OTHERS

Teachers perform a valuable function in the community because, as Joseph Addison states, "Education is a companion which no misfortune can depress, no crime can destroy, no enemy can alienate, no despotism can enslave. At home, a friend, abroad, an introduction, in solitude a solace and in society an ornament. It chastens vice, it guides virtue, it gives at once grace and government to genius."

It is certainly true that being a successful schoolteacher - or even a volunteer CPR teacher - requires special skill, and even gifting from God. The word used in Romans 12:7, *didasko* (to teach) and *didaskalia* (instruction) - while certainly applicable to secular education - refers in a biblical context to teaching people the Christian Faith.

One of the clearest statements in Scripture about teaching the Faith can be found in 2 Timothy 2:2: "The things you have heard me say in the presence of many witnesses entrust to reliable men who will also be qualified to teach others." St. John Chrysostom explains this statement:

'Commit,' as a treasure committed is deposited in safety. Again he alarms his disciple, both from things above and things below. But he says not only 'commit to faithful men'; for of what advantage is it that one is faithful, if he is not able to convey his doctrine to others? when he does not indeed betray the faith; but does not render others faithful? The teacher therefore ought to have two qualities, to be both faithful, and apt to teach; wherefore he says, 'who shall be able to teach others also.'

Faithful teaching is so important to the Church that St. Paul describes it as one of the greater gifts that should be desired by all (1 Corinthians 12:28, 31). If Christians are to worship "in Spirit and truth" (John 4:24), and are to pray and sing with the mind as well as the heart (1 Corinthians 14:15), then we will need gifted teachers to instruct us in the Faith.