

The True Teacher

by Ron Cobb

Human teachers often confirm what our inner teacher has already taught us. Teaching is largely an *awakening process*. Because Christians who believe in Jesus as Lord already have the Holy Spirit within them, a human teacher (Eph. 4:11) only awakens their conscious minds to what is already true in their own spirits. The teaching role of a pastor or minister is more to confirm what is being revealed than to impart.

God is already working in our heart. We simply need to see more clearly how He is working, so that we can tune our lives more fully to His leading. God will never override our own wills. The nuclear technicians at Three-Mile Island manually overrode the automatic computer safeguards of the reactor and almost caused a tremendous tragedy. A similar tragedy would happen to human beings if God overrode our personalities. We would become robots instead of people; trained animals instead of persons. God will never override our will. He will only teach us as much as we want to learn.

Jesus teaches us in Matthew 13:11 that *"the knowledge about the secrets of the kingdom of heaven has been given to you."* If we are followers of Jesus Christ we have the spirit of the kingdom of heaven within us, but we additionally need to desire to understand the "knowledge" of the kingdom of heaven. A lot of people have a blind faith in Jesus when they really should be able to see their Teacher face to face with the eyes of their understanding. How wonderful it is to be able to see what Jesus is doing in our lives and to be able to speak with Him face to face, as a person talks to a friend (see Deut. 34:10).

One of the strange results of the Christian life is that when we begin to know Jesus, we begin to know ourselves. When we begin to have faith in God, we begin to have faith in ourselves. When we reach out to our true Teacher in heaven, we begin to see God working on earth.

There are many teachers today, and 1 John tells us to weigh them according to the true Teacher, the Holy Spirit, who always glorifies Jesus Christ. One of the signs of the last days according to 2 Timothy 4:3,4 is that there will be people who *"will not listen to sound doctrine but will follow their own desires and will collect for themselves more and more teachers who will tell them what they are itching to hear. They will turn away from listening to the truth and give their attention to legends."* We certainly see this happening today, so we must be all the more attentive to our true Teacher, God's Holy Spirit.

I have a friend who got straight A's all through college. His secret was to place himself in union with his teachers. He had the uncanny ability to reason as his professors reasoned and to think as they thought. He would answer the test questions using the same logic which his teachers used to write them. He could suspend his own thoughts and think according to the value systems of his professors.

This is what 1 John 2:27 tells us to do. *"Remain in union with Christ."* This is the secret of the Christian life. St. John, the disciple *"whom Jesus loved,"* was aware of his union with the Lord. This union goes much deeper than the union of husband and wife. It is a union not of body to body and soul to soul as in marriage, but a union of spirit to Spirit. John not only knew what Jesus said, but he knew why He said it. John knew that the center of Jesus' life was *love*. So we have nothing to fear from being in union with Jesus, as love is the focus of His entire existence.

Have you ever tried to memorize something you didn't like? It seems impossible, doesn't it? A History of Philosophy class really bothered me and I detested it as a waste of time, yet to graduate I had to take it. It was hard to study for the tests because I did not like

the subject. On the other hand, a class on the History of the Middle East was a joy for me to study. The facts and figures didn't even take work to be memorized.

The things you love to learn come naturally. An auto mechanic who loves his work on a certain make of car soon becomes an expert on it. A surgeon who loves to repair broken bodies and help people will become very skilled in his specialty. A person who enjoys raising plants becomes a prolific gardener, flooding his family and friends with vegetables and fruit, because he reads garden magazines and asks questions at nurseries.

The best teacher is one who loves what he teaches and the people he teaches it to. The ideal teacher utilizes our love for him as a channel through which to teach us. If you love someone, you will obey him or her because they have your best interests at heart. In an ideal marriage, the husband and wife obey each other. No one is "the boss"; they both cooperate.

The same is true in our relationship with God, the true Teacher, and the way in which He teaches us through the gentle Holy Spirit. When we recognize that we are in union with Christ, our wants will automatically be fulfilled because we want what He wants for us. We will be living as we were meant to live. We will be doing what we were created to do. Human beings are the masterpieces of God's creation, and never is this more evident than when they are living in an awareness of their union with Him. The true Teacher demands a total way of life—not only knowing about Jesus, but living in union with Him. The result will be union life—unity, one heart, one soul, one mind, one strength, one purpose.