

by Linda Defew

# A Call for Teachers

## LESSON 1

### GROWING IN CHRIST

HEBREWS 5:12-14; 1 CORINTHIANS 3:2

Babies are a gift from God. The minute they are born, we count their little fingers and toes; and the next minute the weight of responsibility begins to settle on our shoulders. Teaching them to know the Lord and providing all their physical needs are awesome tasks. And God has entrusted that role to parents.

From the day of their birth, babies depend on others for everything. We see them transition from bottles to sippy cups, baby food to table food, diapers to potty chairs, and everything in between. We watch the years fly by, praying that with God's continual help and guidance they will grow into healthy adults in body and in spirit.

In the church, a similar pattern occurs when we are baptized into Christ. As children of God, we begin to grow spiritually when we devote time to reading the Scriptures at home, participating in Bible classes, and hearing the truth taught from the pulpit. Serious study and prayer should then result in spiritually healthy adult Christians who are fully prepared to teach others the plan of salvation.

Unfortunately, that is not always the case. Sometimes, the cares of life can crowd a Christian's schedule. Jobs and family activities are allowed to compete with Bible school and worship, and these distractions may leave little time for real spiritual growth. One may rationalize that there is plenty of time to get involved; but before long, well-intentioned Christians are no longer moving forward.

In Hebrews 5:12-14, the writer confronted the Hebrews with a similar problem. He realized that some needed to go back and be taught the first principles all over again. Addressing them like children, he wrote: "For when for the time ye ought to be teachers, ye have need that one teach you again" (KJV). They were spiritual infants, drinking milk when they should have graduated to meat. Given their length of experience in the church, they were immature and unable to distinguish right from wrong. This was not a new problem. When writing to the church at Corinth, Paul referred to them as babes in Christ, not yet mature enough to move on to the meatier teachings of Christianity (1 Corinthians 3:2).

Every Christian should be eager to share the Word of God with others. The great commission to "preach the gospel to every creature" (Mark 16:16) is the responsibility of all believers, both men and women. Although women have not been given an authoritative position over men in the worship services, there are plenty of ways we can

carry out this task. The church needs Christian women in all of life's stages who are willing to put their knowledge to work (Hebrews 5:14). But even though we may have adequate teaching skills, many of us have a tendency to stay in our comfort zone. We may be reluctant to move on to a stage of maturity that involves more intense study. As we think together in this study, let us open our hearts and minds to some of the many teaching opportunities around us and step up to the challenge.

## QUESTIONS

1. Read Hebrews 5:12. To what does milk and meat refer?
2. How did the writer differentiate between babes in Christ and adults in Christ in Hebrews 5:13-14?
3. How does one progress from a liquid diet to solid food physically? Spiritually?
4. How do you determine when a person is ready to teach?
5. Suggest some of the many ways Christian women can go about teaching.
6. In what ways are you personally sharing the gospel with others?
7. How have you stepped out of your comfort zone to do this?
8. What three things does Paul tell us to be as we labor for the Lord (1 Corinthians 15:58)?
9. What does it mean to "abound" in the work of the Lord?
10. Name some things that can interfere with our Christian growth. Which of these is the greatest challenge to you?

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