

PREACHING AND TEACHING — WHAT THE DIFFERENCE?

By Dave Weeks

TEACHING

Teaching means to train. Its goal is to reach the mind with retention of skills (the permanent memory). It has more to do with organizing activity aimed at imparting knowledge and/or instructions to improve the recipient's performance or to help him or her attain a required level of knowledge and skill.

PREACHING

Preaching means to herald. Heraldry is different from teaching, though it may have teaching in it. The exposition of God's Word is the main function of preaching. Its aim is to reach the heart and soul with conviction.

Matt 9:35 is a fine example of where Scripture mentions that Christ was both teaching and preaching. “And Jesus went about all the cities and villages, teaching in their synagogues, and preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and healing every sickness and every disease among the people.”

Preaching and teaching are two different things and have two different goals. If an auto mechanic is being taught, it's not just the idea of knowing, it also includes training to develop the skills to apply the knowledge. Through continuous repetition and application, the knowledge is developed into skills and enables one to perform certain acts. This is equipping.

A soldier's training in boot camp is also a good example of the difference between preaching and teaching. He begins with basic training. At its completion, he will know every part of his weapon and will be able to take it apart and put it back together blindfolded. This is the knowledge part. Next, he will be able to go to the rifle range and put every round in the bull's-eye. This is the skill part. This is what equipping the Saints for the work of the ministry involves. Preaching alone will never complete this circle and that's why people in our churches are unequipped and unskilled in the work of the ministry.

There are some people everywhere who are longing to be equipped for the work of the ministry. God help us, if we fail to train them.