

of time that they should be teachers rather than immature babes in Christ who lacked discernment:

"For when for the time ye ought to be teachers, ye have need that one teach you again which be the first principles of the oracles of God; and are become such as have need of milk and not of strong meat."

He definitely implies that the ability to teach depends upon spiritual maturity or knowledge regarding the faith, and that this takes some period of time to acquire. Of course, no matter how much ability someone may have as a teacher, he must have a certain amount of knowledge in order to teach. James 3:1 states, "Do not become many teachers, my brethren" indicating that there is a voluntary aspect to teaching. All teachers are not necessarily spiritually gifted to that end, and this passage is warning believers to be very careful about assuming such a responsibility.

A teacher, in the sense of Ephesians 4:11, is a Christian leader who instructs or trains believers in doctrine (knowledge of Biblical truth) and the spiritual life (how to apply the knowledge) in order to help bring believers to maturity and stability in Christ.

T. Word of Wisdom

1 Corinthians 12:8 -- "To one there is given through the Spirit the message of wisdom"

Michael Green (pp. 187-188) writes:

This seem to be the nature of the wisdom to which Paul is inviting the Corinthians once they have renounced their claim to man-made wisdom and the arrogance to which it gives rise.

There seem to be little to justify the . . . claim that the wisdom to which Paul refers in his list of spiritual gifts is "the sudden and miraculous giving of wisdom to meet a particular situation, answer a particular question, or utilize a particular piece of knowledge, natural or supernatural" . . . In the first place, there is no suggestion in I Corinthians that this word of wisdom is supernatural and miraculous. Paul was not dogged by any division between natural and supernatural: he saw God as the author of both. All true wisdom comes from him. Second, there is little enough in the New Testament usage to suggest that the gift is sudden. The one verse that could properly be adduced to the contrary is Luke 21:15. Here Jesus promises to give his followers a "mouth and wisdom" when they have to bear testimony for him in unexpected circumstances. But rather than suppose that this is a sudden gift of wisdom, in contrast to the normal usage of the New Testament, it is surely more likely to mean that our Lord will give us when a crisis is upon us, the ability to enunciate the broadly based understanding of his salvation which has been growing in us for years. Certainly other references in Luke do not suggest that wisdom is a sudden gift. On the contrary, Jesus