

There is a serious danger in preaching the Word incorrectly. Scripture warns us to rightly handle the Word of truth (2 Timothy 2:15, ESV: *"Do your best to present yourself to God as one approved, a worker who has no need to be ashamed, rightly handling the word of truth."*). Therefore, it is vital to fully understand the Bible before teaching it to others.

My personal experience illustrates this danger:

When I was new in the faith, I was eager to preach. Seeing others preach inspired me, and I even desired to explain the entire Bible. However, in my excitement, I didn't take the time to meditate deeply on Scripture or seek the guidance of the Holy Spirit properly. Instead, I preached based on my limited understanding, wrongly assuming that everything I said was Spirit-inspired. I was unaware that this was spiritually harmful.

A revealing dream confirmed this danger:

I dreamed that I was sitting at a table, and beneath my feet was boiling water. Although my feet were in the water, I felt no pain. Then, I was served a plate of cooked meat, which I began to eat. When the meat started to run out, I reached under the plate and pulled up more meat. Some people I ministered to arrived, and I gave them some of the meat as well. We shared a joyful meal.

Then I looked down and saw, with shock, that the meat I was eating and giving to others was actually coming from my own legs. The more meat appeared, the more my legs were being consumed. I woke up in fear.

The Holy Spirit spoke clearly to me:

"You are destroying yourself by feeding My people food that comes from your own mind instead of from Me."

This powerful warning echoes what Jesus taught about true discipleship and teaching. The Apostle Paul also cautions teachers to be careful, because "teachers will be judged with greater strictness" (James 3:1, ESV).

From that moment, I stopped rushing into preaching. I learned to wait until I fully understood the Scriptures and had clear confirmation from God's Spirit. If I taught something I did not grasp fully, I risked misleading others and damaging my own soul (Proverbs 4:7).

Theological insights on discipleship and ministry:

Many believers believe that preaching is the most important thing God wants from us. But the Bible shows that God first wants us to be His disciples learners and followers of Jesus.

Jesus invested three years teaching His disciples intensely before sending them out (Matthew 28:19-20, ESV: "Go therefore and make disciples of all nations...").

Moreover, Jesus set a high standard for discipleship: "Whoever does not bear his own cross and come after me cannot be my disciple." (Luke 14:27, ESV).

This means denying self, embracing suffering, and wholeheartedly following Jesus. Without this, we cannot truly understand the Word or teach it rightly.

Paul also warns that to be a good teacher, one must be grounded in the Word and mature in faith, so they don't lead others astray (1 Timothy 3:6).

Practical application:

- Never teach or preach what you do not fully understand. You risk spiritual harm to yourself and others.
- Prioritize being a disciple first—learn, meditate, and seek God's guidance.
- Wait for the Holy Spirit's confirmation before teaching.
- Understand that ministry is a lifelong process of growth, not a race.

Final encouragement:

May God bless you as you seek to grow in His Word and ministry with humility, patience, and faithfulness.

What happens to someone who misinterprets God's Word?

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