



# CHRISTIAN EDUCATION DEPARTMENT

## **A Devotion During This Time of the Coronavirus Pandemic Sixteenth Sunday after Pentecost, September 12, 2021**

### **Teaching as Blessing**

**By Daniel H. Wilcox**

**James 3:1-12**

3:1 Not many of you should become teachers, my brothers and sisters, for you know that we who teach will be judged with greater strictness.

3:2 For all of us make many mistakes. Anyone who makes no mistakes in speaking is perfect, able to keep the whole body in check with a bridle.

3:3 If we put bits into the mouths of horses to make them obey us, we guide their whole bodies.

3:4 Or look at ships: though they are so large that it takes strong winds to drive them, yet they are guided by a very small rudder wherever the will of the pilot directs.

3:5 So also the tongue is a small member, yet it boasts of great exploits. How great a forest is set ablaze by a small fire!

3:6 And the tongue is a fire. The tongue is placed among our members as a world of iniquity; it stains the whole body, sets on fire the cycle of nature, and is itself set on fire by hell.

3:7 For every species of beast and bird, of reptile and sea creature, can be tamed and has been tamed by the human species,

3:8 but no one can tame the tongue--a restless evil, full of deadly poison.

3:9 With it we bless the Lord and Father, and with it we curse those who are made in the likeness of God.

3:10 From the same mouth come blessing and cursing. My brothers and sisters, this ought not to be so.

3:11 Does a spring pour forth from the same opening both fresh and brackish water?

3:12 Can a fig tree, my brothers and sisters, yield olives, or a grapevine figs? No more can salt water yield fresh.

This is Christian Education Sunday in which we celebration the gift of teaching, one of the sevenfold gifts of grace and ministry. We salute innumerable Church School teachers and Christian Education workers laboring without notable praise and appreciation. Teaching supports the other gifts and functions of ministry through imparting instruction and inspiration. Those called to teach are blessed and become a blessing to church, community, and cosmos.

Apostle James encourages the Jerusalem church to be good teachers by appropriately using their conversations for benefiting others in the enterprise of education. These interactive conversations nurture, shape, and form spiritual, emotional, and psychological development in learners, inspiring witness and service to humanity. Teaching blesses learners by offering loving, corrective admonishment and careful encouragement of noble ambition. Teaching invests in learning a commitment to life-long service and growth. At each life stage, equipping and encouraging for service and enhancement is necessary. Therefore, teaching and teachers bless the entire church through properly using their gifts, talents, and conversations for the Glory of God.

Let us teach the Word of God by profession, precept, and practice through blessed conversations.

**TALK:** Take a moment to be silent, reflect, and share (write down)— Reflecting on the scripture, share a time/instance when you have trusted the teaching of another person as a guiding principle? How did this experience make you feel or direct you?

**PRAY:** Almighty God, who did give to your servants, special gifts of grace to understand and teach the truth as it is in Christ Jesus: Grant, we beseech you, that by this teaching, we may know you, the one true God, and Jesus Christ who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Ghost, one God, now and forever. Amen.

*Adaption from The Book of Common Prayer*

**ACT:**

1. During the Kingdومتide season, observe a teaching experience or record one that you provided. Review the conversation for blessings shared and insight. Journal your experience and reflect on your spiritual journey. Do what you can to protect the health of others and yourself by practicing social distancing as much as possible, washing your hands often, wearing face covering to help prevent the spread of COVID-19, and prayerfully considering getting the vaccine when it is available—See: <http://www.amehealth.org>.

2. See also the activity that accompanies this devotion.

**Song:**

Take My Life, and Let It Be  
AMEC Hymnal, #292

1. Take my life, and let it be  
Consecrated, Lord, to Thee.  
Take my hands, and let them move  
At the impulse of Thy Love, At the impulse of Thy Love.
2. Take my feet, and let them be  
Swift and beautiful for Thee;  
Take my voice and let me sing  
Always, only, for my King, Always, only, for my King.
3. Take my lips, and let them be  
Filled with messages for Thee,  
Take my silver and my gold;  
Not a mite would I with-hold, Not a mite would I with-hold.
4. Take my love; my God, I pour  
At Thy feet its treasure store.  
Take myself, and I will be  
Ever, only, all for Thee, Ever only, All for Thee. A-men.

Physical space—You may wish to create a dedicated space for your time of devotion. You may choose to place a candle, bible, and special symbols or material/fabric to help you focus and center during this time of reflection and prayer.

If you use this meditation and exercise in a time of family or group devotion, share in the leadership; allow different persons to read or lead different parts of this meditation.



*The Christian Education Department has developed resources that can be used as times of personal and collective devotion and study during this pandemic to help us all sustain and strengthen our faith and resolve. This is the last such resource but an index of past resources has been created in hopes that these resources can continue to be used in days to come.*