

Ministry of the Teacher - Overview

(Notes and References taken from the publication – Ministry of the Teacher; Price Publishing)

There is a uniqueness to the office of Teacher, in that it receives little mention in either the Bible or Book of Mormon, and only some discussion in the Doctrine and Covenants. Yet, when we consider the specific functions given to the office in Section 17: 11, we see a very vibrant and dynamic ministry, free from the ordinances and standing ministry. We see a ministry focused on the heart of the members, their families, and their Christian conduct. We see the Teacher bringing healing, wholeness, and preparation among the members.

Giving space to the well-written “Ministry of the Teacher” published by Price Publishing, we wish to provide a study class with that material in mind, while also expanding on the functions of the office.

- Unit 1 – References to the office of Teacher in Scripture
- Unit 2 – Sanctification and Preparation of the priesthood for service
- Unit 3 – A detailed review of the specific functions listed in Section 17:11
- Unit 4 – Counsel to those ordained to this office

Unit 1 - References to the office of Teacher in Scripture:

Holy Scriptures:

- Acts 13:1

“Now there were in the church that was at Antioch certain prophets and teachers; as Barnabas, and Simeon that was called Niger, and Lucious of Cyrene, and Manaen, which had been brought up with Herod the tetrarch, and Saul.”

- 1 Corinthians 12:28

“And God hath set some in the church, first apostles, secondarily prophets, thirdly teachers, after that miracles, then gifts of healings, helps, governments, diversities of tongues.”

- Ephesians 4:11-12

“And He gave some, apostles; and some prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers;

For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ;”

Book of Mormon:

- 2 Nephi 4:42

“And it came to pass that I, Nephi, did consecrate Jacob and Joseph, that they should be priests and teachers over the land of my people.”

- Jarom 1:24

“Wherefore, the prophets and the priests and the teachers did labor diligently, exhorting with all longsuffering the people to diligence, teaching the law of Moses and the intent for which it was given.”

- Alma 10:103

“And Alma established a church in the Land of Sidom, and consecrated priests and teachers in the land to baptize unto the Lord whosoever were desirous to be baptized.”

- Alma 14:7-8

“And now it came to pass that when the king had sent forth this proclamation, that Aaron and his brethren went forth from city to city and from one house of worship to another,

establishing churches and consecrating priests and teachers throughout the land among the Lamanites, to preach and to teach the word of God among them.”

– Alma 21:25-26

“Therefore, Helaman and his brethren went forth to establish the church again in all the land, yea, in every city throughout all the land which was possessed by the people of Nephi.

And it came to pass that they did appoint priests and teachers throughout all the land, over all the churches.”

– Moroni 3:3

“The manner which the disciples, who were called the elders of the church, ordained priests and teachers.

After they had prayed unto the Father in the name of Christ, they laid their hands upon them, and said, In the name of Jesus Christ I ordain you to be a priest; (or if he be a teacher;) I ordain you to be a teacher, to preach repentance and remission of sins through Jesus Christ, by the endurance of faith on His name to the end. Amen.

And after this manner did they ordain priests and teachers, according to the gifts and callings of God unto men; and they ordained them by the power of the Holy Ghost, which was in them.”

Doctrine and Covenants:

– Section 17:11(a-f)

“The Teacher's duty is to watch over the church always, and be with, and strengthen them, and see that there is no iniquity in the church, neither hardness with each other; neither lying, backbiting, nor evil speaking;

and see that the church meet together often, and also see that all the members to their duty, and he is to take the lead of meetings in the absence of the elder or priest,

and is to be assisted always, in all his duties in the church, by the deacons, if occasion requires; but neither teachers nor deacons have authority to baptize, administer the sacrament, or lay on hands;

they are, however, to warn, expound, exhort, and teach, and invite all to come unto Christ.”

– Section 42:5(a-b)

“And again, the elders, priests, and teachers of this church shall teach the principles of my gospel which are in the Bible and the Book of Mormon, in which is the fullness of the gospel;

and they shall observe the covenants and church articles to do them, and these shall be their teachings, as they shall be directed by the Spirit; and the Spirit shall be given unto you by the prayer of faith, and if ye receive not the Spirit ye shall not teach.”

Unit 2 - A detailed review of the specific functions of the office of Teacher:

1. Watch over the church always
 1. This implies that the Teacher is engaged with and aware of the goings on of the saints in their local congregation
 2. To watch over also indicates that the Teacher is present at the various worship services offered

2. Be with and strengthen them (the church)
 1. To accomplish this, the Teacher, again, must be engaged with the saints in their local congregation
 2. This is not a superficial engagement, but one that builds deep relationships in the body, and fosters a sense of trust between the body and the ministry of the Teacher
 3. Encourage and edify the saints, calling them to repentance and to come up higher

3. See that there is no iniquity in the church
 1. Again, the implication of being active in the local body of saints, being engaged in their lives on a deeper level than just Sunday mornings
 2. Home ministry is of highest value for the Teacher, as they build relationships with the families in their congregation
 3. Much prayer and fasting is recommended for the Teacher, as the Spirit will open the doors of even the hardest of hearts for home ministry, and the special and unique ministry the Teacher can offer

4. Neither hardness with each other
 1. Quiet observation and listening to the hearts of the saints will alert the Teacher to any hardness within the body
 2. Special meetings with those affected, sooner rather than later, can mend the hardness and bring a softness once again between those involved

5. Neither lying, backbiting, nor evil speaking
 1. In much the same way as item 4, above, the quiet observation and participation in the multiple worship services will allow the Teacher ample opportunity to determine how the body is behaving
 2. Some of the strongest, healthiest congregations have an engaged, prayerful, loving Teacher in their midst, bringing their unique ministry
 3. When given the opportunity to speak from the pulpit, the Teacher can lovingly council the body towards growth in holiness, calling them to repentance

6. See that the church meet together often
 1. This cannot be accomplished unless the Teacher is also meeting with the church often
 2. Any attempts to encourage the body to meet together more frequently, particularly towards members who only come on Sundays, will be met with resistance if the Teacher rarely frequents their own congregation and keeps to themselves
 3. Active participation by the Teacher will quietly encourage many others to do likewise

7. See that the members do their duty
 1. When teaching moments arise, the Teacher can encourage the body in those spiritual disciplines of prayer, study, fasting, worship, and service
 2. Home ministry is a vital aspect of the Teacher's work in this regard, for that is where they can go deeper with the families, and help them grow in the spiritual disciplines

8. Warn, expound, exhort, and teach:
 1. As the Teacher engages the saints on a regular basis, the underlying ministry is one of love, while pointing all to Christ
 2. At times, the Teacher will need to warn the body, expound upon the scriptures, exhort the saints to holiness, and to teach them how to do their duties. This requires that the Teacher hold themselves to strict accountability, that their lives will match their ministry.

9. Invite all to come unto Christ
 1. Above all, and in all, the ministry of the Teacher, the work is to invite all to come unto Christ.
 2. The ministry is to point the saints to Him who is mighty to save, helping each to come up higher in their walk with their Savior.