

When individuals have asked me that question I have usually said, You would be much wiser in graduating from seminary to try to become a pastor in a church somewhere in the neighborhood of a Bible school or Christian college. If you do with your training you can be quite sure that with your training it will not be long before you have the opportunity to give a course. Then you will find out whether you have ability to teach. I have known individuals who have seemed most promising as a teacher, who have begun and have seemed wonderful for a ~~week~~ week or two, and by the end of the third month everybody in the school knew they were misfits. in that activity.

I've known others who at the start did not seem to have much ability, but who after a certain amount of time have brought to the top hidden resources as teachers. I know of no way to decide whether one has a gift for teaching except to try it for at least a semester. So if a person has an opportunity that way of teaching a course or two and he finds that what he does is very well accepted, then for him to take the time to go and take advanced training might well be worth his while. But to take it just for the interest of it, or just for the prestige of it or he hopes to be a theological professor when he does not know whether he has teaching ability, have wasted years of the lives of many people whom I know.

About 20 or 30 years ago, anybody who had a Ph.D., just about anybody with such a degree could find a teaching position because at that time that degree was rather rare. At that time any small college that added a Ph.D. or two to the schedulings if they made them mostly give little courses to two or three people, found that it helped their prestige tremendously to have all those degrees in their catalog. But in recent years so many people have received degrees from so many sources and now they are always inventing new types of doctor's degrees that were never heard of before, that today you find a Ph.D. pumping gasoline at gas stations. One wonders whether in another 20 years everybody practically will have either an earned or an honorary doctor's degree! One wonders.

Things change from time to time, and we do not know but God is not going to ask us, What degrees have you got? As a matter of fact most churches don't ask, What degrees have you got. They ask, What can you do? What have you learned? A very strange thing is that in most seminaries that I have had much contact with homiletics is given a minimal amount of attention. We do not believe that we can give everything that a person needs. I wish we had 4 years for exegesis of the Scriptures because I think one would be better prepared with 4 years than with 3 in studying exegesis of the Scriptures. That's our main emphasis here, but we place I believe more emphasis on learning to be good preachers than almost any seminary that I know of. And I have known many people who have graduated from a seminary--not one with which I was connected--but who have graduated with much knowledge, but little ability to get across.