

Anointed Teaching



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Abstract: Anointed teaching is based on a theologically grounded educational construct in which the anointing is not just an optional enrichment, but its defining mark. A literature review and scriptural framework are provided to encourage reflection in this neglected area of Christian Education. Anointed teaching is dependent upon the Holy Spirit's personal work in, upon, and among the participants and the entire educational process. The teacher's spiritual maturity is critical as they invite openness to the Holy Spirit and seek to cultivate the presence and power of His anointing. Practices, dispositions, outcomes that accompany anointed teaching are suggested.

Introduction

The concept of anointed teaching needs more attention in contemporary Christian education texts. The brief references currently available tend to be positive and convey an assumption that a fuller treatment is to be found in other sources. Anointed preaching receives more attention in books on preaching, but generally is presented as an enrichment to preaching and not as essential to the very task of preaching. In an earlier age, Holy Spirit anointing would have been seen as the *sin qua non* of true and effective Christian teaching and preaching (Azurdia, 1998, p. 100).

In this paper, the authors suggest that anointing is not just an optional enrichment to teaching, but its defining mark. The Puritan writer and preacher Richard Baxter (1974) used an apt expression when he spoke of the anointing on Christian communication as "tincture," by which he meant it was like a dye that colored the entire communication (p. 120). Anointing is not merely detected in the passion of the speaker or in an insightful application of the text, but in the very fabric of the message and in the seamless integrity between the life of the speaker and the message.

Initial Theological and Biblical Considerations

The authors have come to understand the phenomenon of anointed teaching as a theologically-grounded educational construct. Our approach is

grounded in our theology of the person and work of the Holy Spirit and shaped by our observations of anointed educational processes. For the purpose of this paper, anointed teaching is conceived as: The Holy Spirit coming upon the teacher in a special manner. It is God giving insight, power, and enabling through the Spirit to the teacher in order that he/she may do this work in a manner that lifts it up beyond simple human efforts and endeavors (Lloyd-Jones, 1972, p. 305; Oden, 1983, p. 139).¹

Old Testament leaders, prophets, and others were anointed for special tasks when God needed a witness to proclaim his word, to show his providential presence, or to lead his people. Examples include: Joshua (Deuteronomy 34:9 [unless otherwise noted all Scripture references are from the NIV]); Bezalel (Exodus 31:1–5); Othniel (Judges 3:10); Gideon (Judges 6:34); Samson (Judges 14:6, 19); Saul (1 Samuel 11:6); David (1 Samuel 16:13); Ezekiel (Ezekiel 3:14); and Daniel (Daniel 5:14). These passages illustrate and emphasize that God is pleased, from time to time, to sovereignly choose to come upon individuals and enable them to carry out their assigned work by the supernatural power of the Holy Spirit.

The New Testament emphasizes the Holy Spirit's enablement of believers to grow spiritually. Consequently, we can understand the interest Christian teachers have had in seeking to teach with the Spirit's enabling. Galatians 5:22 describes the fruit of the Spirit as "love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control," and 2 Corinthians 3 links the Holy Spirit with our transformation. Romans 5–8 teaches that the Holy Spirit pours out the love of God into our heart and bears witness to us of our adoption. In Ephesians 6:17, the Scriptures are called "the sword of the Spirit," and Paul instructs Timothy to guard the good deposit "with the help of the Holy Spirit who lives in us" (2 Timothy 1:14). 1 John 2:20 assures us that "you have an anointing from the Holy One, and all of you know the truth." As the teacher prays over the Scripture lesson, the prayer is that the Holy Spirit would permeate the entire teaching and learning process for the spiritual growth and transformation of both the teacher and learner.

Literature Review

A rich literature related to anointed teaching exists in both historic and contemporary sources. The language for anointing varies over time, with authors employing terms like unction, afflatus, tincture, Spirit-empowered, and spiritual to describe anointed teaching. The choice of language tends to reveal more about the sources the authors relied on and their historical setting than being evidence of true conceptual differences. The sources identified in the literature review are organized into four categories. These must be conceived as clusters, with considerable overlap, and by no means as mutually exclusive

categories. The first category consists primarily of works that seek to construct a grammar of the Spirit (Loder, 1981, p. 115). The second group places an emphasis on the human factors, which are seen to promote the presence of anointed teaching. The third group conceives of anointed teaching and preaching as most notably evidenced by a power from on high. The final cluster of authors are "Pentecostal" in their orientation and examine the concept of anointed teaching as part of the larger rubric of "Spirit anointing," which includes related areas such as signs, wonders, prophecy, and healing.

In our literature review, we have focused on authors who tend to emphasize spirit-anointed teaching; however, some are far more concerned with anointed preaching. The authors readily acknowledge both currently perceived differences and the New Testament distinction between teaching and preaching. Both teaching and preaching use Scripture to promote spiritual transformation. We concur with Smart (1954) that preaching proclaims that sinful persons must repent and receive the good news, and teaching specializes in building up those who have repented (p.19, 20), and with Westerhoff (1994) that "we keep preaching and teaching in conversation with each other" (p.16). While preaching and teaching have different emphases, they are two forms of Christian communication that should depend on the anointing of the Holy Spirit. In this investigation, we believe the similarities between teaching and preaching are so significant that we can make generalizations about anointed Christian communication based on assumptions concerning both anointed teaching and preaching.

The vast majority of the literature consists of biblical and theological reflections of an author's first-hand ministry experience. A clear example is Martyn Lloyd-Jones, whose preaching ministry has independently been described by numerous witnesses as being anointed and whose writings involve a blend of careful biblical study, theological reflection, historical study, and reflection on his experience of preaching in the power of the Spirit. Another writer, E. M. Bounds, argues for the connection between the preacher's prayer life and anointed preaching in his small classic *The Power of Prayer* (2005). A limited number of empirical studies on anointed preaching were found. One example is Don McGregor's *The Anointed Pulpit* (2000), which reports the results of a survey he conducted of pastors and parishioners concerning anointed preaching. Finally, in her dissertation and a later article, Carol Lakey Hess (1990, 1991) uses a construct from the social sciences to help explicate the concept of anointing. She employs the anthropological construct of liminality and theories of cognitive development to help understand the work of the Holy Spirit in teaching.

The first group of books can be seen as a cluster of works that are dependent on the seminal work of James Loder. His books, *The Transforming Moment: Understanding Convictional Experiences* (1981) and *The Logic of the*

Spirit: Human Development in Theological Perspective (1998), explore the role of the Spirit in human growth and transformation. He does not use the language of anointing, but rather speaks of the essential work of the Spirit in formation. He objected to human-centered approaches to Christian education and religious socialization. His perspective is pointedly summarized by Haitch (2004): "A power greater than community is needed, which means that education needs to take place not just in the context of story-telling and vision-sharing, but in the locus of prayer and worship, where the power of the Holy Spirit is consciously invoked" (p. 315). Loder is picking up the argument that was made by Edward Farely in the 1960s. Farley (1965b) contended that for many Christian educators "Christian education plus Holy Spirit equals salvation or sanctification. . . . The Holy Spirit becomes a kind of *explanation* for the X-factor in salvation not covered by human efforts" (p. 430). Farley (1965a) objects to the continuing focus on nurturing language and concepts because "nurturing seems to pass over the distinctive features of educating and suggests causal relationships between human efforts and divine effects" (p. 346). He is equally critical of "mere theological education" (p. 346) that seems unrelated to the church's witness to growth in the grace of the Gospel. The missing crucial element in Christian education is the Holy Spirit.

Two students of Loder carry on the task of exploring the work of the Spirit. First, Rogers continues the discussion with a more imagistic treatment entitled "Dancing with Grace: Toward a Spirit-Centered Education" (1994). Here the Christian life is a dance of human and divine partners empowered by the Holy Spirit. Teaching is the choreography for teachers and learners concerned with dance form and movement with the Holy Spirit that awakens, empowers, and reaches outward. Secondly, Carol Hess, in "Educating in the Spirit" (1991), holds that education "in the Spirit" must strive for openness in the vulnerable areas of uncertainty and limits, while secured by the "centrality of the cross." Learners and teachers participate in a community upheld by grace flowing to the human spirit from the Holy Spirit.

The next category contains books which are dedicated to promoting the practice of anointed preaching/teaching, and their implicit assumption is that anointing is a spiritual good that, in some measure, can be cultivated through certain practices. Through disciplined living, prayer, confession, and the practice of other virtues, these books suggest that one can make anointed communication a mark of one's ministry. Certainly the majority of these writers see anointing as ultimately the result of God's sovereign action and, hence, outside of human manipulation. However, all these writers see human agency as being very important, and a number border on promoting a "technique."

We found that writers set forth one-dimensional and multi-dimensional models concerning how anointed communication may be promoted. E. M. Bounds (2005) identifies prayer, the secret and private intercessory prayer of

the preacher, as the most salient variable in determining whether unction will rest upon the preacher. He argues that God uses people, not methods, to accomplish his work. Consequently, it is pointless for a pastor to focus on getting better skills without also focusing on being a person more deeply yielded to God. Bounds details what pastors ought to do to possess the desired unction.

Roy Zuck's (1998) work on Bible teaching has received a wide and positive reception. He writes about incorporating spiritual power into one's teaching. His approach places an emphasis on "Spirit-filled living" and teaching in a manner that the "Holy Spirit and the written word of God work in conjunction" (p. 7). There is a strong emphasis on theological principles in this work; the subtext suggests that when these principles are put in place and a teacher follows "principles of learning and teaching" (p. 7), then spiritual power will be present. This work suggests a stronger link between correct theology and anointed teaching than most other works.

A number of authors in the Keswick tradition make a connection between being "filled with the Spirit" and effectiveness in teaching. A common source cited by these works is R. A. Torrey's message on "Why God Used D. L. Moody" (1923). In this sermon/publication, he named seven qualities that made Moody's ministry so effective. Torrey firmly believed that Moody was anointed by God, "definitely endued with power from on high," (1923, p. 51) and that anointing came at a specific time after a special time of prayer (1923, p. 52–53). Torrey refers to it as Moody's baptism of the Spirit and uses language more akin to the Pentecostal movement than to his dispensational and Keswick roots. Moody was portrayed as a modestly effective preacher who became a powerfully effective preacher through a crisis experience of the Holy Spirit's filling.

The third group of sources includes books that place an emphasis on anointing as a source of spiritual power for the communicator. The quintessential writer in this area is Martyn Lloyd-Jones. He is one of the few writers on anointing whose own anointed ministry is clearly documented by others, who has a self-understanding that his ministry is anointed, who writes on this subject in *Preaching and Preachers* (1972), and who pleads through his writings that pastors must cultivate and seek the anointing. Sargent (1994) summarizes Lloyd-Jones's theory of anointing: "He believed passionately that Apostolic power for preaching the gospel is still available within God's sovereignty today. The Acts depicts the church with preachers on fire; preachers who are given a great boldness and authority. In a word, they had unction" (p. 77). It is the emphasis on Spirit-given power that marks his view of anointing.

The concept of "anointing as power" is perhaps more common in authors who write with an emphasis on preaching. The following authors see spiritual power, leading to greater effectiveness in communication, as a pri-

mary fruit of anointing. In *The Supremacy of God in Preaching* (1990), John Piper shares his heart's prayer just before he stands to preach. He explains Jonathan Edwards's teaching that preaching that stirs the hearts of the people yields to the power of the Holy Spirit in prayer. Azurdia, in *Spirit Empowered Preaching: Involving the Holy Spirit in Your Ministry* (1998), gives more attention to the Christ-centric content, which the Spirit anoints. He places a great emphasis on the need for the congregation to earnestly intercede "for the effects of the Holy Spirit through the preaching of the word of God" (1998, p. 167). *Power in Preaching* (1958) by Sangster follows in the tradition of E. M. Bounds. Sangster calls for serious sermon preparation that is constantly accompanied by prayer. Unction comes out of deep convictions for the call and work of preaching and a humble life of holiness and prayer that seeks God in all things. Penney, in *Applying a Spiritual Warfare Cosmology to Preaching* (1999), provides a careful theological study of anointing and a suggested curriculum for training pastors. The accomplished preacher and homiletics professor James Forbes, in *The Holy Spirit and Preaching* (1989), explores the power of the Holy Spirit's anointing in the work of Jesus and Ezekiel. He sees the careful, prayerful preaching of God's Word in the power of God's Spirit as the only remedy for the sickness and death of our culture. Thomas Oden provides a very brief, but highly descriptive and persuasive, call for unction in his *Pastoral Theology* (1983).

The final group of writers put the concept of anointing into a broader circle of the Spirit working with power in the ministry of the church. Jack Deere, in *Surprised by the Voice of God: How God Speaks Today Through Prophecies, Dreams, and Visions* (1996), writes that the Holy Spirit uses the Bible, experiences, and supernatural and natural means to speak to those who are humble, receptive, listening, and able to effectively communicate to others. He includes a review of prophetic ministry in the New Testament and church history. The primary aim of the Holy Spirit is our intimate relationship with God. This intimacy leads to prophetic insight and strikingly relevant messages. Gordon Fee provides a more nuanced reflection in his *God's Empowering Presence: The Holy Spirit in the Letters of Paul* (1994). It is a wide-ranging treatment of the Holy Spirit in Paul's letters, where the subject of anointed teaching is presented as a subset of the larger reality of Spirit-empowered ministry. *Receiving the Power: Preparing the Way for the Holy Spirit* (1996) is written by Zeb Bradford Long and Douglas McMurry. These missionary/preachers embrace an understanding of the empowering work of the Holy Spirit as being both within and upon. They include extensive biblical references and a discussion of the role of the Holy Spirit in Jesus' ministry. R. A. Torrey, III, deals directly with ways a view of the Holy Spirit's work in ministry is truncated in "The Holy Spirit and You: On or In?" (1983). He encourages believers to be saturated with the Holy Spirit such that their inner

character is empowered for ministry because it has been transformed and bears fruit. He warns that the controversies surrounding speaking in tongues may distract from a clear understanding of the work of the Holy Spirit.

The most robust multi-factor theory has been advanced by Virkler & Virkler in *How Do You Know?* (2000). Part of the richness of Virkler & Virklers' theory comes from their use of multi-dimensional models of communication, which is a striking contrast to Bounds's simple sender-receiver communication model. Virkler & Virkler have been influenced by educators like Parker Palmer who value the interworking of salient variables such as a teacher's view of knowledge, the educational environment, and a teacher's stance in terms of living out the material. Virkler & Virkler argue that if one is simply about transmitting cognitive knowledge, then one can rely on educational technology; however, if one sees the job as helping students construct a theology to serve as a life map and helping them live this out, then anointing is necessary to carry out that demanding task. They call for a highly relational class environment that is safe, challenging, caring, and life-related. They clearly are indebted to their charismatic heritage as they place anointed teaching in a larger framework, but their approach is far more nuanced than other writers in this category.

Anointed Teaching: Spirit Within, Spirit Upon, Spirit Among

When considering the work of the Spirit in anointing our communication, it is helpful to have some categories for analyzing this phenomenon. In this section, three dimensions are suggested as being helpful for providing a comprehensive way of viewing the Spirit's work in anointing. The dimensions are the Spirit within, the Spirit upon, and the Spirit among. Robust conceptions of anointing expect that all three are present and active in Spirit-empowered anointing and teaching.

The Spirit within is the cornerstone of anointed teaching. This indwelling dimension includes (a) the Spirit's work of transformation, (b) illumination of Scripture, and (c) communication of God's grace. First, the Spirit works to transform teachers as they are regenerate and open to the Spirit's transforming grace. The spiritual maturity of the teacher is not incidental to the teaching-learning process. Teachers can only effectively teach what they deeply understand and have grasped from experience. The spiritual experience and maturity of the teacher affects what material they have mastered, overall judgment, selection of material, and wisdom in handling class situations. Jesus captured this truth so aptly when he said, "A student is not above his teacher, but everyone who is fully trained will be like his teacher" (Luke 6:40). The teacher's spiritual maturity is not a private matter, for it affects one's students.

The teacher must learn truth and experience transformation by the Spirit dwelling within through prayer. E. M. Bounds (1990) makes a strong case for the connection between prayer and preaching and goes so far as to say, "Preaching which kills is prayerless preaching" (p. 453). Bounds argues that unction flows from prayer and is essential to Christian ministry. "This divine unction is the feature which separates and distinguishes true gospel preaching from all other methods of presenting the truth" (p. 478). The ongoing prayer of the teacher is for the Holy Spirit and for his instruction in the study and preparation required for the teaching of Scripture. Prayer is required because of the uniqueness of Scripture and the need for the Holy Spirit in understanding and explaining Scripture (1 Corinthians 1–2). The teacher has the assurance that the Father will repeatedly give the Holy Spirit to those who ask him (Luke 11:13).

Second, in the Upper Room (John 14–16) Jesus taught the disciples concerning the role of the Holy Spirit as counselor and supplier of divine truth. He said, "But the Counselor, the Holy Spirit . . . will teach you all things and will remind you of everything I have said to you" (John 14:26), and "when he, the Spirit of truth, comes, he will guide you into all truth" (John 16:13). These passages speak of the role the Holy Spirit can play in our study and handling of Scripture. Teachers search for assistance to uncover truth and to explain the truth they have found. Their deep concern is to "get it right" and to explain Scripture in a clear and truthful manner. Therefore, study and preparation must be saturated with prayer and a deep dependence on the Holy Spirit because, with his illumination, teachers will be given clarity into the text, which labor alone will never bring.

Third, a proper cultivation of openness to the Holy Spirit brings about a secure centering of our life in the grace-filled way of the cross. Carol Lakey Hess (1991) argues that Christian teaching deeply engages with the work of the Holy Spirit. She writes:

Christian education can pattern itself after the work of the Spirit and provide opportunities for the opening of knowing, the recentring of life and the empowering for suffering. . . . Education in the Spirit: first, fosters encounters with things that are 'other' and people that are 'strangers'; second, proclaims the word of our security in God and the way of the cross, becoming a means of grace for the liberating work of the Spirit in opening us to other things and other people; third, engages the learning community in acts of worship, mercy, justice and suffering for others. (p. 394)

Openness to the Spirit gives our life and teaching a grounding and centeredness that is so often missing when we are lost in our own pursuits. In or-

der for education to contribute to spiritual growth and transformation, seekers must repeatedly open their spirits to the Holy Spirit and, by grace, focus on what Christ has accomplished and promised and then step outward, beyond their limits, to engage others in a life of obedience and ministry.

The Spirit upon, the second dimension of anointed teaching, is perhaps the most common understanding of the Spirit's work in anointing. As at Pentecost, when the Spirit descended on those gathered and they ministered in great power, the Spirit comes upon and brings power and authority, authenticating the message and working miracles that give testimony to God's power. Hinn (1992) speaks of the Spirit within as the presence and of the Spirit upon as the power, and describes the relationship between the two. He explains, "The presence of God is the vehicle that brings the power. Power follows the presence, not the other way around. . . . You must have both to adequately show forth Jesus to the world—to be His witness. It takes the presence to change you, while it takes the [Spirit upon] to communicate the presence out of you" (p.119, 121).

Spirit upon is a supernatural anointing of God's power, enabling ministry and communication. Jesus taught that the purpose of the power is for witnessing. As he ascended he said, "But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses" (Acts 1:8). Peter preached, "God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit and power, and how he went around doing good and healing all who were under the power of the devil, because God was with him" (Acts 10:38). This summary in Peter's sermon is a paraphrase of Jesus' own statement of purpose. When Jesus preached in Nazareth, he applied Isaiah 61:1, 2 to himself and proclaimed that "the Spirit of the Lord is on me, because he has anointed me to preach good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim freedom for the prisoners and recovery of sight for the blind, to release the oppressed, to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor" (Luke 4:18, 19). The ultimate purpose of all anointing and all filling of the Holy Spirit is to proclaim and bear witness that Jesus is indeed who he said he is and that he alone is able to free and transform us. The effect of Peter's anointing is thus recorded: "While Peter was still speaking these words, the Holy Spirit came on all who heard the message" (Acts 10:44). These new believers are to witness to the fact that the year of the Lord's favor will include Gentiles as well as Jews.

Long and McMurry (1996) note that often writers stress either the Spirit within or the Spirit upon. They, like Hinn, encourage both groups to learn from each other and to understand that both elements are necessary. "Those who have matured in the character-building virtues of Christ but lack the power gifts in ministry can learn from those who have developed the power gifts, and vice-versa. . . . God wants us all to grow in both the character of Christ and in power ministry" (p.139). Rather than emphasizing either the

Spirit within or the Spirit upon, anointed teaching must seek to integrate them.

The third dimension of anointed teaching is the work of the Spirit among. Anointing creates a new community where the Spirit is among the participants. The Spirit among is demonstrated as the anointing power and presence of the Holy Spirit becomes evident in the community. The community is transformed into one marked by trust, support, loving challenge, worship, ministry, spiritual risk taking, and transformational learning. The Holy Spirit works to construct the church and classroom into a loving, just, compassionate, and worshipping community that invites openness and dialogue.

Spirit among is based on God's work with His chosen people as a group. His covenant was with a family group and not just with Abraham (Genesis 12:1–3). God tells Haggai, "This is what I covenanted with you when you came out of Egypt. And my Spirit remains among you. Do not fear" (Haggai 2: 5; see also Isaiah 63:11). Paul taught that we have received spiritual gifts "for the common good" (1 Corinthians. 12:7). The fruit of the Spirit (Galatians 5:22) is immediately relevant to instructions such as "honor one another above yourselves" (Romans 12:10), "live in harmony with one another" (Romans 12:16), "be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other" (Ephesians 4:32), and "encourage one another and build each other up, just as in fact you are doing" (1 Thessalonians 5:11). Fee (1994) notes that in the Trinitarian benediction of 2 Corinthians 13:13, 14, Paul selects fellowship to characterize the ministry of the Spirit (p. 872).

The anointing of the Spirit for teaching and learning is a rich and multifaceted experience. When the Spirit comes in sovereign visitation, these dimensions are present, but often the sense of power is what is most observed. As teachers seek to cultivate the anointing of the Spirit through prayer and spiritual openness, they should be aware of the richness of this empowerment and pray with commensurate breath for His presence and power upon the teaching and among the learners.

Content, Method, and Teacher Character

Moving onward from the discussion of the three dimensions of Spirit within, Spirit upon, and Spirit among, care must be taken to explore how these might take shape within the educational process involving teachers, students, subject matter, and environments. Hess (1991) strongly encourages teachers to build educational theories within an established theology of the Holy Spirit and not try to fit theology into preset educational formulas. She says, "The problem before us is not where the Holy Spirit fits into education, or how education is influenced by the Holy Spirit. It is rather how education

can be according to the Spirit” (p. 383). Two obstacles stand in the way. Humans have difficulty understanding the Holy Spirit as a person (Torrey, 1927, p.13), and they have difficulty understanding themselves as spirits made for communion with the Holy Spirit (Hess, 1990, p. 129).

Torrey (1927) notes that as one becomes aware of the Holy Spirit as a person, not an influence, the question changes from “How can I get hold of the Holy Spirit and use it?” [to] . . . “How can the Holy Spirit get hold of me and use me?” (p. 14). This change of perspective opens the human spirit to a willingness to interact with the Holy Spirit and to experience His personality. “The marks of personality are knowledge, feeling and will, and any being who knows, thinks, feels, and wills is a person whether he has a body or not” (p. 16). The Holy Spirit has knowledge (1 Corinthians 2:10–14), will (1 Corinthians 12:11), a mind (Romans 8:27), and personality (John 14). He speaks (Acts 1:16), prays (Romans 8:26–27), teaches (John 14:26), commands (Acts 8:29; 11:12; 13:2), and forbids (Acts 16:6–7). He can be grieved (Ephesians 4:30), quenched (1 Thessalonians 5:19), and resisted (Acts 7:51).

Working from a framework of the Holy Spirit as a person, a teacher, and giver of the teaching gift (Romans 12:7) impacts the description of Christian teachers and teaching. The teaching gift includes spiritual insight (1 Corinthians 12:8, 10), motivation to minister (2 Timothy 1:6–7), and the ability to communicate effectively (2 Timothy 2:24) in order to remake teachers and learners from the inside out (Wilhoit, 1986, p. 53). Additionally, the personality traits of the Holy Spirit are transmitted with the teaching gift and reflect on the giver and the power he provides to use the gift within community.

The Divine Giver’s motivation is to produce love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control (Galatians 5:22–23) in the life of the teachers and learners who depend upon him. Indeed the Holy Spirit’s personality embodies these attributes, which He desires that humans learn through fellowship with Him. If human teachers are to pattern their teaching after that of the Holy Spirit, they must understand that their teaching depends on the Spirit’s work of inner transformation. Dykstra (1981) explains:

The teacher is a person who is intentionally responsible for involving learners in the experience of the repenting, praying, and serving community in such a way that its various aspects might be explored, shared, understood, and participated in. . . . Therefore, when teachers introduce learners to the community’s experience, they, in part, introduce the learners to themselves. Because of this the person and role of the teacher are inextricably intertwined. (p. 124–5)

Hess (1990) agrees when she says before education in the Spirit can promote exploration at one's limits and areas of insecurity, "it must provide a context 'where security in God is both taught and embodied'" (p. 323).

When teachers understand the gravity of embodying or being transformed, in order to teach for transformation, the tendency is to identify this third difficulty as more troubling than the previous two. They are already struggling to recognize the Holy Spirit as a person and themselves as spirits made for communion with the Holy Spirit. As Torrey teaches on the personhood of the Holy Spirit, Hess develops an understanding of the human spirit in relationship with the Holy Spirit working from 1 Corinthians 2:11, 12: "For who among men knows the thoughts of a man except the man's spirit within him? In the same way no one knows the thoughts of God except the Spirit of God. We have not received the spirit of the world but the Spirit who is from God, that we may understand what God has freely given us." The human spirit of teachers and learners must be opened to venture out beyond the fringes of human ideas and seek the Spirit's ways of formulating salvation, education, and life. Hess (1990) says:

The nature of knowledge is transformed by the Spirit. . . . It is not the ones who can rise above life and contemplate the world from a distance who are "wise." It is rather those who can perceive their dependence upon God and appreciate the world as a gift. This kind of knowledge puts people into relationship to God, to one another, and to all of creation. . . . The Spirit does this by recentering the human spirit in the love of God rather than in human wisdom or power. (p. 78)

For Hess, "knowing occurs through the kind of centeredness that leads to openness. We come to know when, in the context of centeredness, we are brought into liminality—an encounter with that which is strange and other" (p. 53).

The tools of the Spirit are the Word of God and the sufferings of life.

The Bible is inseparable from the Spirit. Without the work of the Holy Spirit to illumine the words of Scripture, the Bible is a mere relic of antiquity, words without life. Without the Bible the Holy Spirit is without that means of grace which aids in making God's work in Christ known to humanity" (Hess, 1990, p.37)

"Suffering is basic to learning, for learning involves openness to change and renewal. . . . Dying to the self and suffering for others can become the most intense affirmation of life" (Hess, 1990, p. 258).

Finally, Virkler & Virkler (2000) provide more concrete suggestions for a secure context of centeredness when they place their concept of anointed teaching into a full educational framework. It is like Baxter's tincture that colors who the teacher is, how the teacher prays, how the class is structured, how the students interact with the biblical text, what the teacher is seeking to accomplish, and how the teacher fosters the pursuit and practice of truth. Virkler & Virklers' proposed model is named *Lamad*, from the Hebrew word for teach and learn. Perhaps the most unique aspect of this model is the insistence that a listening component be built into teaching. Virkler & Virkler say that students must hear from God personally in every lesson for the teaching to be biblical and anointed. Therefore, their teaching has a contemplative feel as students are given time to pray, listen, and journal. Virkler & Virklers' identification of anointed teaching with the contemplative stands in contrast to many authors, like Hinn, who see anointing primarily as the Holy Spirit resting on the teacher providing power and charisma.

Unction or anointed teaching is an access to the power of the Holy Spirit that centers the human spirit on God; opens it to learning from strange people, suffering, Scriptures, and difficult ideas; and empowers it for service. It is only the power of the Holy Spirit within, upon, and among that can overcome the sins of pride and prejudice in teachers and learning communities. Hess (1990) holds that "the only center that can sustain the openness of the human spirit is a center that is outside of that spirit—a center in the One who is the Creator of that spirit" (p. 132). Teaching in the Spirit seeks to graciously provide a learning environment secured in God, to prayerfully listen to God, and to willingly encounter the difficult and the strangely "other" for the purpose of growth and service.

Cultivating the Anointing

Anointed teaching is first and foremost an indwelling and empowering of the Holy Spirit. There are no formulas that can guarantee its coming or effectiveness, and yet there are patterns, practices, and dispositions that foster the presence of anointed teaching. It is our responsibility to desire it, pray for it, know our need of it, seek outcomes that require it, build a place for it, and cultivate a community that seeks its truth. Anointed teaching depends on the Holy Spirit as sailing depends on the wind. Every earnest sailor will mend his sail, inspect his rigging, train his crew, and watch the sky. He will be ready when the wind comes. He will take full advantage of even a gentle breeze to move his ship forward.

Teachers and preachers must wholeheartedly desire an anointing. Congregations and students must be open and seeking. They must all proclaim

with Lloyd-Jones (1972), "Seek Him! Seek Him! What can we do without Him? Seek Him! Seek always. . . . This 'unction,' this 'anointing,' is the supreme thing. Seek it until you have it; be content with nothing less" (p. 325).

The desire for an anointing ought to be the strongest in the teacher's prayer closet. The Holy Spirit guides the teacher's prayer life with an eye to the mutual concern that, in all of life, the gospel message is proclaimed and heard, Jesus is glorified, the sinner is freed, the seeker understands Scripture, and the disciple is transformed. When the teacher struggles for words or stamina in prayer, the Spirit "intercedes for us with groans that words cannot express. And he who searches our hearts knows the mind of the Spirit, because the Spirit intercedes for the saints in accordance with God's will" (Romans 8:26, 27). Anointing flows out of the prayer closet, as the teacher's knowledge of God has been expanded and tested. To pray for unction is to pray for a specific endowment of God. Bounds (1990) wrote: "This unction comes to the preacher not in the study but in the closet" (p. 479). Jesus set a high standard for prayer time, but he probably was tempted like we are to subsist on a scanty prayer diet. He sympathizes with our weakness (Hebrews 4:15, 16) and is the high priest who prays for the prayers of teacher and preachers.

"Piper is right when he says that all genuine preaching is rooted in a feeling of desperation. The preacher wakes up on the Lord's Day morning and he can smell the smoke of hell on one side and feel the crisp breezes of heaven on the other. He then looks down at his pitiful notes and he says to himself, 'Who do I think I am kidding? Is this all there is?'" (Azurdia, 2003, p. 92). Those who understand that the outcomes of preaching and teaching have eternal scope know that they definitely need the anointing of the Holy Spirit. They recognize the spiritual powers and appreciate a warfare worldview. "Preaching is an act of spiritual warfare in which the eternal destiny of men and women is at stake" (Penney, 1999, pp. 18–19). All teachers entering this conflict ought to humbly and constantly be seeking the full armor of God and the empowering of the Holy Spirit. Torrey (1927) firmly insists that every worker "definitely receives the Holy Spirit, not merely as a regenerating power and as an indwelling presence, but as a definite endowment with power, before he undertakes service of any kind for God" (p.141).

Convinced of the need for complete reliance on the Holy Spirit's anointing, the teacher would be empowered to seek outcomes that require it. There is a healthy expectation and anticipation of openness, listening, and authentic change for those impacted by anointed teaching. Educational outcomes are usually defined as measurable and reasonable, but "when the preacher proclaims the Word of God something occurs that defies exact definition. Despair gives way to hope, lives are transformed, and changes take place that

have the power to reshape history” (McGregor, 2000, p. 17). Anointed outcomes assume that the teacher has asked the hard questions. “Are you expecting it to be the turning point in someone’s life? Are you expecting anyone to have a climactic experience?” (Lloyd-Jones, 1972, p. 325) Anointed teaching needs a home, a truthful and holy place within the teacher’s character and the classroom. Sangster (1958) goes so far as to tie both prayer and holiness to his definition of unction. “Prayer is the secret of a holy life . . . Holiness is the secret of unction” (p. 109).

Furthermore, the confidence that the Holy Spirit is the principle teacher and primary mover of truth must be a collective belief held by a community in order for anointed teaching to be recognized and valued in that community. Here teaching and learning is relational, and “the moment of anointed preaching is a corporate reality” (Forbes, 1989, p. 86). It is expected that learners can learn from each other and from the teacher. The teacher is humble and teachable as well as courageous, willing to listen and venture into the unknown and untried. Teachers and learners pray and seek truth together in a loving community, upheld by the strength and courage of the Holy Spirit (Acts 9:31).

The Fruit of Anointing

In a word, the fruit of anointed teaching is love! “The goal of our instruction is love from a pure heart” (1 Timothy 1:5, NASB). People are secure in the love of God and open to growth and care for others. “For you did not receive a spirit that makes you a slave again to fear, but you received the Spirit of sonship and by him we cry, ‘Abba, Father.’ The Spirit himself testifies with our spirit that we are God’s children” (Romans 8:15, 16).

There is no room for pride or abuse in anointed teaching.² Pride is the opposite of humility and seeks security in self rather than in the grace of God. Deere (1996) warns, “Of all people, the proud have the most difficulty hearing God’s voice. They seldom seriously ask God’s opinion because they are convinced they already know what God thinks” (p. 243). In contrast, “humble people put their confidence in the Holy Spirit’s ability to speak, not in their ability to hear, and in Christ’s ability to lead, not in their ability to follow” (p. 319). Humility, especially in our study and seeking after truth, provides the opening for the Spirit to do his work.

In the introduction the authors observed that anointed teaching does not seem to have gotten its due in Christian education literature. Christian education has suffered in the past quarter-century from attempts to reduce it to a natural process. We suggest that including the construct of anointed teaching in our conceptualizing represents a step toward regaining rightful focus on the Spirit in Christian nurture. Such a focus is greatly aided by (a)

historical studies of anointed teachers and ministries, (b) theoretic proposals of curriculum that support and create a space for anointed teaching, (c) examinations of the classroom dynamics present when anointed teaching occurs, and (d) studies in educational leadership which contribute to the presence of anointed teaching. Many perceive that Bounds's maxim, "prayerless preaching kills," is little more than preacherly hyperbole. We now disagree, for Christian education only deserves that name when it is saturated by a grace received through prayer, humble study, and awareness that we cannot achieve what we seek in our own power.

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¹A area related to anointed teaching is the gift of teaching (1 Corinthians 12:28, Romans 12:7, Ephesians 4:11). In some circles the gift of teaching is perceived to be a gloss for anointing. However, the authors see spiritual gifts and anointing as related topics but sufficiently unique to warrant separate treatments.

²See Charles H. Kraft, *I Give You Authority*, and David Johnson & Jeff Van Vonderen, *The Subtle Power of Spiritual Abuse*, for a full discussion of spiritual abuse [works not in reference list].

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