



## **Teachers, a Standing Ovation for You!**

By Wes Eby, Global Representative

Has anyone recognized you as a teacher? Has anyone emblazoned your name in a headline in *Time* magazine? Has CBS or Fox or any major TV network chronicled your work in the classroom? Is your name etched on a monument erected to your accomplishments? In my three-decade career as an educator, it certainly never happened to me!

### **Teachers Should Be Recognized**

Recently I read something on Facebook that caught my attention and forced me to read it again. “In the Old Testament, there were multiple minor prophets for every major prophet. The same is true today. For every MLKJ, Desmond Tutu, Mother Teresa, and in my tradition Mildred Wynkoop, there are dozens of minor prophetic voices who faithfully call the church to seek justice, love mercy, walk humbly, and reflect the full likeness of Christ.”

This attention-getting post by Florida District Superintendent Dale Schaeffer jogged my thinking. You see, his wise words can apply to teachers as well as the “prophetic voices” in our churches today.

Sure, I know educators who have gained attention for their outstanding contributions to our profession. I think of the dedication of Anne Sullivan and Maria Montessori and Emma Willard. The contributions of William McGuffey and John Dewey. The brilliance of Albert Einstein. The courage of Randy Pausch. The godliness of William Greathouse.

As my district superintendent reminded me, for every one of these memorable educators, there are

dozens—no, thousands—of other teachers who faithfully serve in classrooms year after year, influencing the present as well as future generations. Their names, though so important, may never make the news nor find their way into history books.

Teachers deserve every bit of recognition they receive. And, for most of them at every level, preschool through higher education, it is sorely lacking. To me, the challenges today are overwhelming—the pandemic, changing technology, dramatic cultural shifts, lack of parental involvement, limited funds, debates on curriculum, unreasonable administrative expectations, pressure of standardized testing, etc. Every teacher deals with one or more of these challenges—and manages to survive

### Encouragement

Please take a moment and reflect on these few memes circulating on the internet recently:

- “I’m indebted to my father for living, but to my teacher for living well.” (Alexander the Great)
- “Your value does not decrease because of someone’s inability to see your worth.” (The girl of Christ blogspot.com)
- “People may not reward you or thank you for what you do, but when God is your reason for loving and giving, you will receive a greater blessing in return.”
- “I admire people who still choose to shine after all the storms (challenges) they’ve been through.”
- “If you feel like you are losing everything, remember that trees lose everything each year, but they still stand tall and wait for better days to come.”
- “By faith, Father, I accept all that You allow. Your view of what is best is better than mine.”
- “God didn’t remove the Red Sea. He parted it. Sometimes God doesn’t remove your problems (challenges), He makes a way through them.”

### Encouragement from God’s Word

Here are a few pertinent scriptures—just four of the many found in God’s Holy Word:

- “In his grace, God has given us different gifts for doing certain things well. . . . ***If you are a teacher, teach well***” (Romans 12:6a-7b, NLT, emphasis added).
- “Teach a child to choose the right path, and when he is older, he will remain on it” (Proverbs 22:6, TLB).
- “And you yourself must be an example to them by doing good works of every kind. Let everything you do reflect the integrity and seriousness of your teaching. Teach the truth so that your teaching cannot be criticized. Then those who oppose us will be ashamed and have nothing bad to say about us” (Titus 2:7-8, NLT).
- “And let us not get tired of doing what is right, for after a while we will reap a harvest of blessing if we don’t get discouraged and give up” (Galatians 6:9, TLB).

## **Stand up and Cheer!**

Please know there is a great “crowd of witnesses” (Hebrews 12:1) observing you as you teach—as you leave your godly impact on the minds and hearts of your learners. As Rev. Schaeffer wrote, you in a school setting are endeavoring to call your students to “seek justice, love mercy, walk humbly, and reflect the full likeness of Christ.” Finish well, my friends. We, who have been where you are but no longer active in a classroom, join with a myriad of others in every profession and occupation to give you the standing ovation you rightly deserve!

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