



## **A Teacher's Relationship with an Administrator**

By Mark Taylor, College/University and Christian School Representative \*

During my career in teacher education, I have served as a teacher and an administrator. Sometimes, the presence of an adverse relationship toward one's boss – in the case of education, one's principal – occupies the minds of teachers. I often share with future teachers that the administration should not be considered “your enemy.” We should support one another and work for each other's success. Your success is dependent on the administrator, and the principal's success is dependent upon your success. Administrators have invested in you and want you to excel.

In *Those Who Can, Teach* (2016), Ryan, Cooper, and Bolick have included some of the many responsibilities and roles of school principals:

- Principals are the official leaders in the school.
- Principals are policy makers.
- Principals are crisis managers.
- Principals are facilitators.
- Principals are reward dispensers.
- Principals are judges.
- Principals function as buffers.

- Principals are sacrificial lambs.

These authors also state: “Today’s school principal has a most difficult job, and doing the job well requires the strength of a field general, a philosopher, a psychiatrist, and a saint” (425). Too often, we are quick to be critical and do not try to understand the challenges of administration.

Dr. Roy Lowrie says in his book *To Those Who Teach in Christian Schools*:

“Occasionally teachers misunderstand Christian school administration and feel that everyone should have an equal say in the operation of the school. Good administrators value the opinions of teachers and do not act like lords over God’s heritage, but the principal is the chief administrative officer of the school and bears the final responsibility for the school’s daily and yearly operations” (74).

### **Ways educators can support and have a positive relationship with school principals**

1. Seek to understand their challenging roles and responsibilities.
2. Pray for them daily.
3. Look for ways to encourage the principals.
4. Do not complain about administrators and cause dissension.
5. Do not pout if principals do not follow your advice.
6. Be teachable and accept their counsel and assistance.

### **God’s Word tells us how to respond to leaders**

Here are some scriptures to keep in mind:

“Whatever you do, work at it with all of your heart, as working for the Lord, not for human masters” (Colossians 3:23, NIV).

“And let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds, not giving up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but encouraging one another--and all the more as you see the Day approaching” (Hebrews 10:24-25, NIV).

“Be completely humble and gentle; be patient, bearing with one another in love. Make every effort to keep the unity of the Spirit through the bond of peace” (Ephesians 4:2-3, NIV).

“Let everyone be subject to the governing authorities, for there is no authority except that which God has established. The authorities that exist have been instituted by God” (Romans 13:1, ESV).

“First of all, then, I urge that supplications, prayers, intercessions, and thanksgivings be made for all people, for kings and all who are in high positions, that we may lead a peaceful and quiet life, godly and dignified in every way. This is good, and it is pleasing in the sight of God our Savior, who desires all people to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth” (1 Timothy 2:1-4, ESV).

“Obey your leaders and submit to them, for they are keeping watch over your souls, as those who will have to give an account. Let them do this with joy and not with groaning, for that would be of no advantage to you” (Hebrews 13:17, ESV).

Dr. Lowrie also says:

“When the teachers and administrators are functioning well by understanding their roles and by applying Christian body-life principles in their daily relationships, the administration of the school is wondrous, a beautiful thing, an evidence of God’s leadership and control of the school. Each teacher is fulfilled, each administrator is fulfilled, and the ministry moves forward because the Holy Spirit has freedom. If the Spirit is grieved, these things will not be true, and the ministry is hindered” (73-74).

Take care that you are never the cause of hindrance in the school where you are serving God.

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#### References

Lowrie, Roy, Jr. *To Those Who Teach in Christian Schools*. ACSI, 1988.

Ryan, Kevin, James M. Cooper, and Cheryl Bolick. *Those Who Can, Teach* (14<sup>th</sup> ed.). Cengage Learning, 2016.

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