

SCHOOL LIGHT LINES



CHRISTIAN LIGHT
EDUCATION



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Inspiration for Teachers From Bible Characters

Just Ask | Two Blind Men | Deana Swanson

“And, behold, two blind men sitting by the way side, when they heard that Jesus passed by, cried out, saying, Have mercy on us, O Lord, thou Son of David. And Jesus stood still, and called them, and said, What will ye that I shall do unto you? They say unto him, Lord, that our eyes may be opened” (Matthew 20:30, 32,33).

Jesus knew exactly what the blind men wanted. It was incredibly obvious. The whole crowd knew. He simply wanted the blind men to ask.

When we ask God for something, we are presenting our requests to an all-knowing Father. He not only already knows what our requests are, but also knows if it is in our best interests to grant them.

As teachers, we spend our days dealing with challenges such as learning difficulties, wrong attitudes, behavioral issues, and more. Situations arise every day in which we should ask God for wisdom and discernment to deal graciously with our students—and, at times, their parents—in a way that pleases God.

When we face challenging situations or even minor mishaps,

it helps to remember that our goal is that the students grow in academic skills and character. The latter is the tougher work, but that is God’s goal for them as well. It pleases Him when we ask for His help in accomplishing this significant task.

The two blind men humbly asked. Their requests were granted, as will many of ours if we will just ask. What would our

Jesus knew exactly what the blind men wanted. He simply wanted the blind men to ask.

classrooms be like if every time something irritated us even in the slightest way, we quickly asked God for wisdom in handling it?

Praying on behalf of our students is an incredible way to tangibly invest in their lives. Besides praying in our prayer closets, we can offer “popcorn” prayers as the need arises. We also have the opportunity to lead out in prayer with our students every morning, thanking God, making requests, and committing the



Handpicked
God chooses fallible human teachers for His purposes.
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day and our safety to Him. We can share with our students when prayers have been answered. This will hopefully encourage them to get into the habit of asking God for help as well.

Asking seems so simple, yet it is so Biblical. God wants us to ask Him for what we need to do our jobs effectively, just as He expected the blind men to ask to see.

“If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him” (James 1:5). [u](#)

Deana lives in Terre Hill, Pennsylvania, with her husband Jeff (a teacher) and three of her five children (one of whom is a teacher also). She taught in classrooms for fourteen years and homeschooled her children for eleven years. She is currently teaching at Maple Grove Mennonite Academy. Her favorite leisure activities are reading, writing, and playing board games with her family.

Handpicked

“Everyone who is fully trained will be like his teacher.” Luke 6:40 . . . Does that principle in Luke 6:40 represent an exciting prospect to you—or a frightening one?

No matter how it makes you feel, if you want to minister to others, ask God first of all, to minister to you. He wants to work through you, but He can't until He works *in* you. He'll use you as His instrument, but He wants to sharpen and cleanse that instrument so it becomes a more effective tool in His hands.

All this is true because *human personality* is the vehicle of effective teaching.

Don't ask me to explain that. I'm just thankful to God I can experience it. I've long been convinced God could have used far more efficient instruments than you or me to get

His job done; nevertheless, He's chosen to work through us. Most of us can accept that only by faith. But it's true. The miracle of the ministry is that God handpicked us to be His

representatives to this generation. He wants to bring about change, and in doing it, *you* will be one of His critical instruments. How does that grab you? [u](#)

– Howard Hendricks, *Teaching to Change Lives*

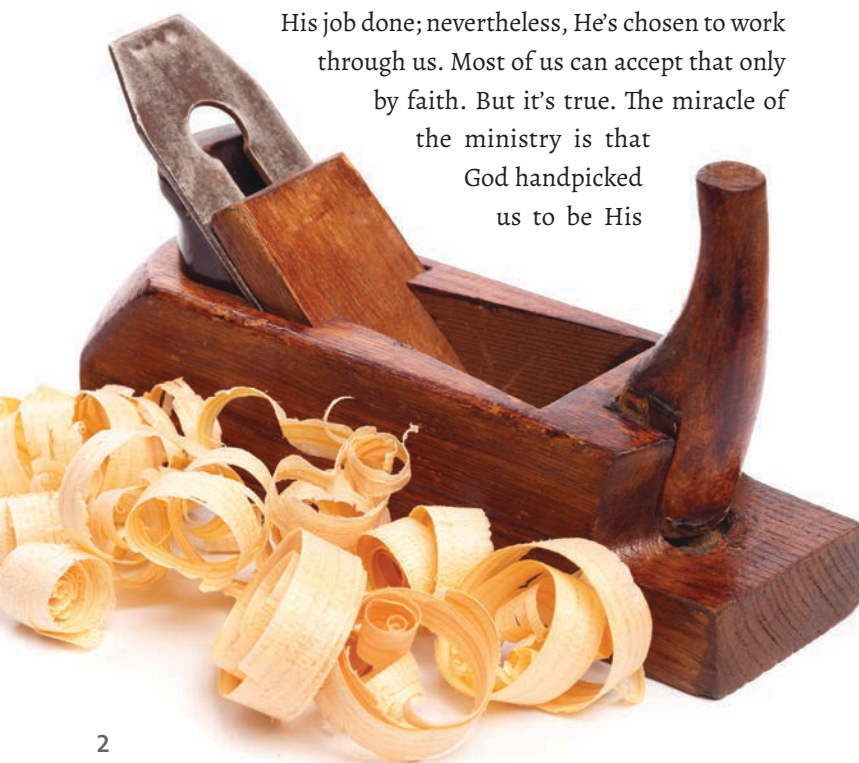
Indwelt | Beatrice Cleland

Not merely in the words addressed,
Not merely in the deeds confessed,
But in the most unconscious way
Is Christ expressed.

Was it a beatific smile,
A holy light upon your brow?
Oh no! I felt His presence
When you laughed just now!

To me, 'twas not the truth you taught,
To you so clear, to me still dim,
But when you came to me, you brought
A sense of Him.

And from your eyes He beckons me,
And from your lips His love is read,
Till I lose sight of you and see
The Christ instead. [u](#)



Spicing It Up



Imagine spice cookies without the spices. Flour munchies. They'd hold the same nutritional value but there would be no taste appeal. The goal of "Spicing It Up" is to offer ideas for spicing up your classroom and teaching so your students don't have to munch on bland "flour munchies." School may not always be fun, but shouldn't it be tasteful? Interesting? Engaging? In this space we offer tips, ideas, and techniques to counter bland, lackluster, and dull teaching.

Riki

Learning is an adventure, so make it adventuresome. To spice up your classroom, make events out of incidents. Spy the teachable moments and take advantage of them.

Among the things I used to "spice up" my classroom was an aquarium. It could be used some years as a terrarium. Other years it housed fascinating fish or other aquatic creatures. But the most memorable use of the aquarium was the year it was used to house critters—like frogs, insects, and snakes. And Riki.

Riki was a lively field mouse that came to school one morning with one of the students. The student requested to house him in the recently emptied aquarium. (The snake had escaped.) It was a perfect fit for a lively little field mouse. The students chose the name "Riki" (from the mongoose of Rudyard Kipling's "Rikki-Tikki-Tavi"). He was a very special mouse. The students watched his antics and took turns tending to him every morning. Riki made school interesting. His glass castle was the first place they'd go when they came into my classroom. "Good morning, Riki" became a more common refrain than "Good morning, teacher."

One morning I arrived at school and as I was doing my usual get-ready-for-the-day routine I glanced at Riki's tank. Alas! Riki was dead. I pondered a bit how I should break the tragic news to the students. I considered taking him out to the hedgerow and dumping him out of site before the students arrived. But no, that was too normal an interment for such a special mouse. I decided he needed a proper burial and yes, a funeral.

I met the students at the school entrance and sadly informed them that Riki had died during the night. Unfortunately, we would need to postpone school to give Riki a funeral and a proper burial. I informed the students that they would need to plan and conduct a funeral. They bought into the idea with vigor and imagination. *Of course, we can do this for Riki.*

Two students were appointed to make a casket. (A matchbox lined with toilet paper served quite well.) Several students dug a grave at the edge of the ball field. During the viewings, students shared tributes to Riki and shared memories. Philip (sixth grade) preached the funeral message. Powerful. Spellbinding. Insightful.

After the sermon, the mourners filed by his casket and gave their last respects to their dear friend and classmate. Then the pallbearers tenderly carried him out to the cemetery. Another minister committed the body to the dust and then the pallbearers used their shovels (spoons) to bury him. Quiet muffled lamentations and an occasional sob rose over the hushed crowd. The last act of love was when two students laboriously placed the gravestone. "Here lies Riki . . ."

Then we all smiled and laughed and rejoiced. It was a memorable event and well worth the effort and a little loss of class time. Who would've ever thought that the death of a field mouse, some creative planning, and a bit of imagination could yield an interesting classroom experience that would be remembered and talked about for years to come? 🐭

– Submitted by editor

Have a Recipe?

Please send us the "recipe" for your favorite "spice cookies," that is—your tips, ideas, and techniques for Spicing It Up. What has spiced up your classroom and teaching? Send to lightlines@christianlight.org or mail to LightLines, P.O. Box 1212, Harrisonburg, VA 22803-1312.

Dedicated Teaching Without Burnout | Part Two

Steps Toward Sustainability | Davin Martin

What is a dedicated teacher? Too often we answer that question with a list of practices that lead directly to burnout. We have to get beyond this. We need a definition of success in the classroom that emphasizes sustainability as much as it emphasizes dedication.

One cause of burnout is the sense that there is always more that should be done. Wise managers know the importance of their employees knowing when they have achieved success. A definition of success could include these four characteristics of a dedicated *and* sustainable teacher.

1. Knows what success in the kingdom of God is and understands how what he is doing in the classroom is connected to that.

Success in the kingdom of God might mean an Isaiah experience. After Isaiah received his commission from God, he asked, “Lord, how long? And [God] answered, Until the cities be wasted without inhabitant, and the houses without man, and the land be utterly desolate” (Isaiah 6:11). Not very encouraging, is it? Success means faithfulness to God’s calling, not necessarily Ivy-League prep school academics or a Teacher of the Year award. (Wow! I needed to hear myself say that.)

2. Gives school an honest day’s work and knows when to stop.

Yes, we want hardworking teachers, but many tasks at school expand to fill up more than the time allotted for them. Early in my teaching career, I stopped taking much work home in the evenings or going to school on Saturdays. I hardly got anything done anyway, and my horrible inefficiency left me frustrated.

3. Sometimes sacrifices the perfect lesson plan for the sake of rest and recreation.

A way to think about recreation is *re-creation*. Hiking, swimming, wood-chopping, cross-stitching—you name it—can reset our minds and reenergize our bodies. In *re-creation* our subconscious minds are often effortlessly working out solutions to problems without us knowing it. (A side note—recreation is often confused with wreck-creation. This alternative often wrecks us, leaving us exhausted and with fewer mental resources than when we started. (Think roller-coasters and Sudoku!))

4. Becomes a “jack-of-all-trades” when needed, but plays to strengths whenever possible.

Invariably, a teacher needs to teach a course he’s not so familiar with, like the years I thrashed through “art” classes.

A dedicated teacher will give these a good shot if he must. However, when there is someone who will do better, he hands those responsibilities over. My students’ engagement with art multiplied when a competent assistant began teaching art.

Now, let’s zoom out and consider four burnout prevention strategies for teachers.

1. Time management.

Touch something once and either dump it, file it, or deal with it. Suppose you are sorting through a day’s lessons. Mr. Inefficient reads a few compositions, looks over some tests, and returns the stack to his desk. Mr. One Touch (Mr. Efficient) sorts the work into stacks, places a star on the assignments he’s just checking for completion, files the essays he can’t grade until tomorrow, and grades the rest.

Closely tied to time management is closet, desk, and filing cabinet organization. Mr. Inefficient has clutter. When trying to find something, he sorts, digs, scours, asks for help, and maybe buys a new one even though he knows *it’s there somewhere*. Mr. Efficient walks to the organized closet, retrieves the item, and gets back to work. Time spent looking for lost items is a punishment you impose on yourself for not being organized.

2. Annual Strategic Planning.

This concept originates in the business world. Once a year, sit down and list all your commitments. Then realistically ask yourself if you can excel if you have your energy divided into so many directions. If you are overcommitted, reduce commitments as possible and refuse new ones unless you can cut an equivalent commitment. Along with this plan, list good, valid, godly commitments that you will refuse to become involved in. I admire a person who says “no” to a third and fourth committee so they can say “yes” to the first two they are already on. Too often, family and other close relationships pay the price for a person’s inability to say no. Define your personal mission and reject whatever does not contribute to it. Of course, we hold all our plans with an open hand before God.

3. List “leading stress indicators.”

Leading stress indicators are flashing lights that warn of impending burnout. Is my desk organized? Did I meaningfully experience God in my prayer and Bible reading? Am I getting to bed and waking up on time? Is my checkbook up to date? A “no” to any of these questions indicates that I may be heading toward burnout. It’s time to cancel two nonessential events, catch up, and

Continued on page 8.

Teacher Elizabeth, an experienced teacher, writes letters to Julia, who is not so experienced...

Should I Teach Again? | Elizabeth Riall

Dear Julia,

Should you teach again, you ask? What if *I* don't know? Signs rarely appear in the heavens, but one consistently appears on earth: the school board asks. They want me back? Wonder of wonders! This is no small sign. Still, there are other things to consider.

Am I physically able? Will I function as well in April as in August? Do I believe teaching is worth the work? Am I willing to keep order? Can I take criticism? Or failure? If I don't know, am I ready to find out?

What if I don't want to teach? Life at home looks so safe. I'd like to fry doughnuts in the haven of my kitchen or quilt cozily by the fire those chilly winter days. They talk of the sacrifice of teaching. Should I yield my desires, and accept the martyrdom of a schoolmarm? I don't want to resist God's plan for me. . .

Last evening, I had the option of heating leftover chili or serving cheese sandwiches for supper. Both were equally good; neither opposed God's will. I chose the sandwiches because they appealed to me.

This is how I see teaching. It is one of many God-pleasing options. Frying doughnuts is equally virtuous . . . or, no, let's put it this way. I can *be* virtuous, and it would make me a better doughnut fryer or a better teacher. The job itself is a skill.

So, the school board asked you back? Wow! You know what the job takes? Good! You want to keep on? Hooray! I have found, over the years, that though no sign is posted in the clouds, God has a way of guiding. Put your hand in His, use the discernment He has already given you, and you will find that you know. [u](#)

Best wishes,
Teacher Elizabeth



Experience the Eclipse

Where will you be on April 8, 2024? Are you one of the 31.6 million people in the United States that live inside the 100-mile-wide path of the total solar eclipse, most of whom will be watching it? Or are you one of the 189 million people who are within 300 miles of its path, many of whom will travel to see it? We believe at least 60 percent of our readers live within the path of this total solar eclipse or are within six hours driving time of its path. However, many who cannot drive to the location can still enjoy a partial view of the eclipse. Almost all of North America and all of Central America will be able to see 10 percent to 90 percent of the moon “taking a bite out of the sun.” Now is the time to make preparations for an amazing and memorable field trip!

Predictability

The precise predictability that surrounds this event is awe-inspiring. The elliptical path of the earth around the sun and the slightly elliptical path of the moon around the earth, coupled with other exact astronomical measurements enable forecasters to state exactly where and when the eclipse will occur and its duration. God created and sustains the solar system with divine precision and has enabled humans to figure it out and predict its events. Give Him glory! He is “upholding all things by the word of his power.”

You can see on the map the time, route, and duration of the total eclipse at each location. (The farther south, the longer it lasts.) Of course, the one thing man cannot predict months in advance is the weather. Pray for clear skies and be prepared to change plans if there is a heavy cloud cover.

Eclipse Basics

What causes a solar eclipse? The first fact to understand about solar eclipses is that they occur because of a remarkable cosmic “coincidence:” the sun appears the same

size in our sky as the moon. This is because the sun is actually about 400 times larger in diameter than the moon, and the moon is about 400 times closer to us than the sun.

This single fact explains why we see total solar eclipses; the moon just barely covers our view of the sun, but does not block our view of the sun’s atmosphere, its coronal. We occupy a celestial sweet spot to witness this sight. We are the beneficiaries of a wonderful cosmic coincidence, lined up perfectly for our viewing pleasure.

Solar Eclipse Types



Partial



Annular



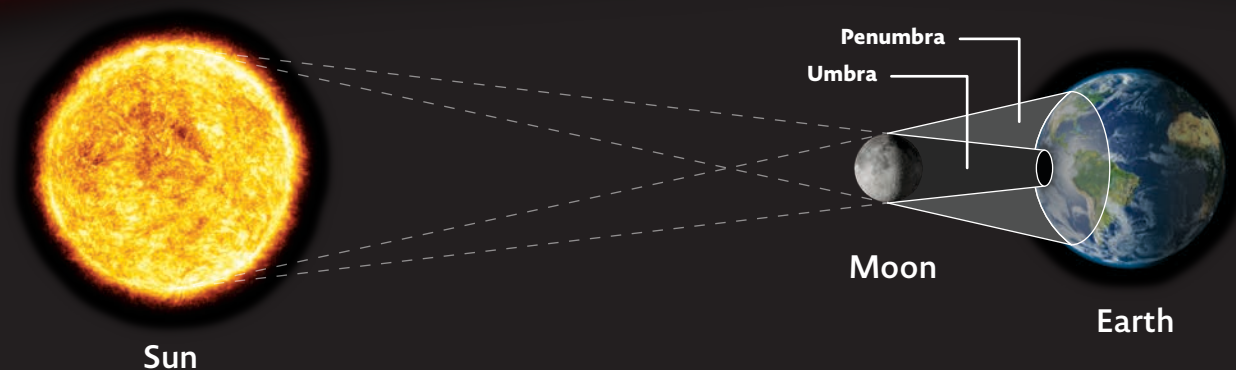
Total

What are the types of solar eclipses?

We just described how **total solar eclipses** happen. While the moon and sun appear nearly the same size in the sky, their apparent sizes do vary slightly because of two factors; the moon is in a slightly elliptical orbit around the earth and the earth also revolves in a slightly elliptical orbit around the sun. Because of these variations the moon’s disk sometimes does not completely cover the sun’s disk during eclipse. These are **annular solar eclipses**.

While an annular eclipse is a striking sight, it does not command the same overwhelming sense of wonder that a total solar eclipse does. Daylight becomes dimmer but does not become twilight. Because some of the sun itself is visible, it is much too bright for the sun’s corona to become visible. It is never safe to look directly at an annular solar eclipse, even at its maximum phase. Always use certified safe solar eclipse glasses.

If the moon’s shadow is not centered on the earth, then



another common type of solar eclipse occurs: the **partial solar eclipse**. During a partial solar eclipse, the umbra misses the earth, and from everywhere the eclipse is visible, you will only see part of the sun eclipsed. Again, at no time during a partial solar eclipse should you look directly at the sun without certified safe eclipse glasses or other safe solar viewers. It is safe to use a pinhole projection.

Awesome

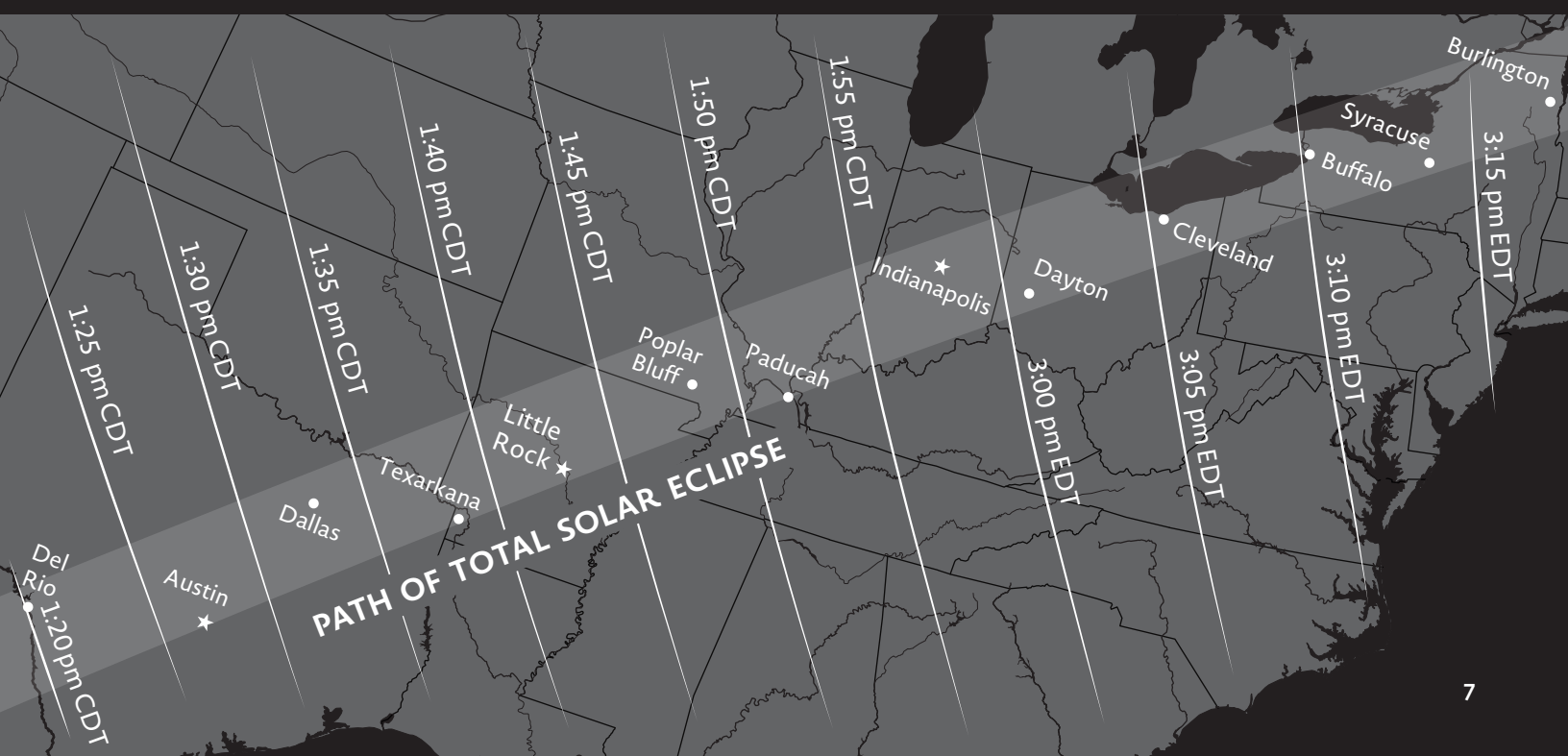
People who experience a total solar eclipse describe it as *awesome, enchanting, amazing, once-in-a-lifetime, eerie, overwhelming*, and other intense adjectives. The April 8, 2024, eclipse will be particularly remarkable because of its path and accessibility to millions of Americans. Will you be there? It will probably give you (and your students) something to talk about for a long time. ■

— Ken Kauffman, editor

Sources: Primarily from greatamaericanclipse.com. Text and media used by permission.

Prepare for the Eclipse

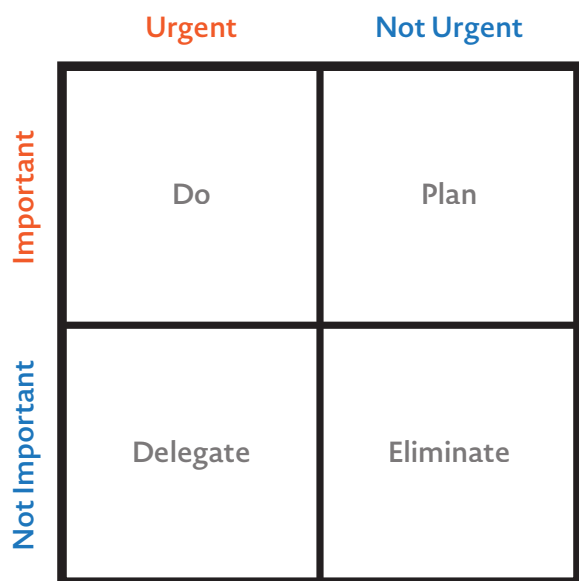
1. Decide where to go. Remember there might be lots of people going the same direction or to the same location.
2. Pray for clear skies. Be prepared to change locations depending on weather forecasts a few days in advance.
3. Get an adequate supply of certified safe eclipse viewing glasses or handheld solar viewers.
4. Learn how to prepare pinhole eclipse projections. (Many instructions are online or in the library.)
5. Cameras should have solar safe filters installed.
6. Discuss the umbra and penumbra; terms we haven't discussed in the article.
7. Have students ready to describe their feelings and observations as twilight envelopes them during totality. Take off their viewing glasses and look around.
8. In preparation—and to build enthusiasm—research and tell about other eclipses in history and how people reacted.



listen for God's voice. Write down your list of leading stress indicators and what you will do when the stress alarm starts ringing.

4. Prioritize tasks on the Eisenhower Matrix.

President Eisenhower sorted his unending work as Supreme Commander of the Allied Forces in Europe and President with this quadrant. He would consider the tasks before him. *What was both urgent and important, he would do.* For a teacher this could be preparing tomorrow's lesson or responding to a student's medical emergency. *What was important but not urgent he would*




Eisenhower Matrix

plan to do when he had more time. For teachers this might include re-scoping lesson plans, reading good books, and planning a future school event.

The urgent but not important things, he might delegate. Not all teachers have this luxury, but could a few students change the bulletin board or check the school mailbox?

The not urgent and not important tasks he would eliminate. Many emails, social media, Internet shopping, excessively detailed grading, and grand schemes for next year may fall into this category.

What happens if we don't prioritize tasks? We live so much of our lives in the urgent that we never get around to the important. We are so busy mopping up water that we don't turn the faucet off.

Now for an important, urgent task! Spend ten minutes listing two or three ideas from this article that you need to implement. Unless, of course, you'd prefer to mop up water for the rest of your life. 

In addition to his full-time job as a father to five sons, Davin runs a small farm to support his teaching habit that he has engaged in over the last fourteen years. He and his wife Katelyn live in Ephrata, Pennsylvania, on a farm that was first bought by his ancestors in 1866. When he doesn't know what else to do, he writes. He recently authored a personal finance course for Christian Light.



Staring Speaks

One day, one of my first graders was trying to decide if he wanted to pick chain tag or tree base for the activity at break time. Some of his classmates were telling him tree base would be best. I noticed one boy staring hard at him while he thought. When he announced that the game would be tree base, the boy who had been staring popped his hand up and said "Miss Vicky, I hypnotized him!"

"Oh really?" I asked.

"Yes!" he replied. "I just staaarred at him and thought in my head, 'pick tree base, pick tree base,' and he did! It works!"

Vicky Schrock, Riverview Christian School, Grove City, MN

Covenant With Mine Eyes

"So if you ever see people or magazines or anything that makes you feel uncomfortable and you know it's better for you not to look, just close your eyes and try to think of something else. Or turn away and whisper a little prayer for help." I finished my little speech after a student told about a vivid painting of Adam and Eve in the Garden in a Bible storybook.

A seven-year-old raised his hand and said, "I've done that."

I nodded approvingly and waited for him to go on.

"Whenever my Grandma makes vegetable soup when we're at her house for supper," he explained.

— Mary Dueck, Boley, OK

The New Hampshire Historical Society writes: "the sources for these 'rules' are unknown; thus we cannot attest to their authenticity—only to their verisimilitude and charming quaintness." In other words, it's likely that these rules or similar ones were in force in their day. — editor

RULES FOR TEACHERS

1872

1. Teachers will fill the lamps and clean the chimney each day.
2. Each teacher will bring a bucket of water and a scuttle of coal for the day's sessions.
3. Make your pens carefully. You may whittle nibs to the individual tastes of the pupils.
4. Men teachers may take one evening each week for courting purposes, or two evenings a week if they go to church regularly.
5. After ten hours in school, the teachers may spend the remaining time reading the Bible or other good books.
6. Women teachers who marry or engage in improper conduct will be dismissed.
7. Every teacher should lay aside from each day's pay a goodly sum of his earnings. He should use his savings during his retirement years so that he will not become a burden on society.
8. Any teacher who smokes, uses liquor in any form, visits pool halls or public halls, or gets shaved in a barber shop, will give good reasons for people to suspect his worth, intentions, and honesty.
9. The teacher who performs his labor faithfully and without fault for five years will be given an increase of twenty-five cents per week in his pay.

1915

1. You will not marry during the term of your contract.
2. You are not to keep company with men.
3. You must be home between the hours of 8 PM and 6 AM unless attending a school function.
4. You may not loiter downtown in ice cream stores.
5. You may not travel beyond the city limits unless you have the permission of the chairman of the board.
6. You may not ride in a carriage or automobile with any man except your father or brother.
7. You may not smoke cigarettes.
8. You may not dress in bright colors.
9. You may under no circumstances dye your hair.
10. You must wear at least two petticoats.
11. Your dresses may not be any shorter than two inches above the ankles.
12. To keep the classroom neat and clean you must sweep the floor at least once a day, scrub the floor at least once a week with hot, soapy water, clean the blackboards at least once a day, and start the fire at 7 AM to have the school warm by 8 AM.



Patrick's Potential

Patrick had potential. That was the kindest thing I could say about him. His classmates called him unthoughtful, unfair, and unkind; most days he proved them correct. In addition, he disrespected authority and was skillfully dishonest—a smooth talker. He knew just when to be funny, repentant, cheerful, or glum; and when these personas didn't suit his purposes, he resorted to resentful glaring.

These stares were intimidating, but I mostly ignored them and waited to discuss the problem at hand until he had cooled down a bit. That usually happened at recess time after his classmates had been dismissed to play. With one eye on the clock, he was very workable again—desperately sorry he had challenged authority, full of ideas for improvement, starting now things would be different. And they were, for a while.

In a matter of days, sometimes hours, his resolutions crumbled. He propped them up with dishonesty, owning up to his deceit only when cornered from several angles with no way out. Again, he was terribly sorry, sometimes handing me written confessions in eloquent language. Then the cycle started all over again.

He consumed hours of attention. If he didn't have a question, he had a story for the class that was sure to jerk their thoughts far from their studies. Most days I had to reiterate some part of the new concept we had learned that day, not because he was too dull to catch it, but because his thoughts had been elsewhere during class. Faculty and school board meetings ran longer because of him. His parents brought him to school early to catch up on homework, and I spent precious minutes after school discussing his behavior with them on the phone. It seemed as if turning Patrick into a gentleman was a full-time job.

And then he left—his parents moved out of town, and of course he went along. His corner of the classroom, once lively and cluttered, became quiet and clean. Everyone missed him—including the students he had once horribly irritated. I missed

him too, wondering if I had really given him my best efforts, and regretting the times I had become impatient with him. He had come to my classroom with problems I desperately tried to fix, and now he had left, taking many of those same problems with him. Had I failed him as a teacher; had he exposed me as an imposter?

I lost touch with him for several months until one day I received a letter in the mail—from Patrick. It was straight and to the point. “I have become a Christian. There are some things I need to take care of. For starters, I lied to you in school . . .”

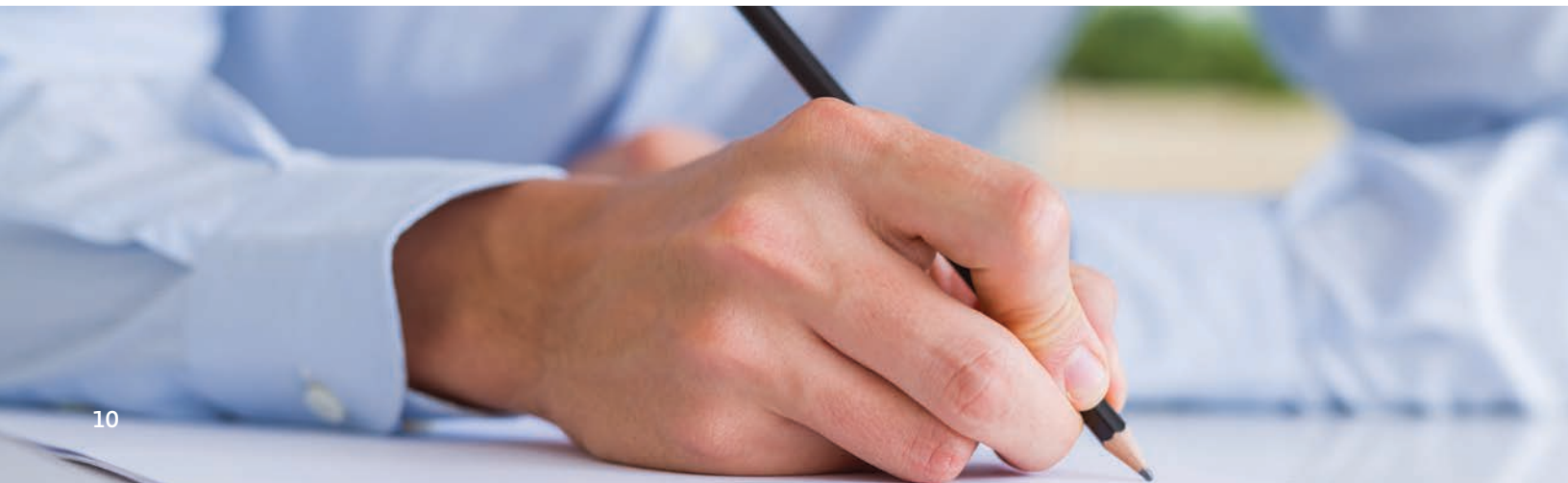
For years I had tried to curb Patrick's dishonesty, but to no avail. No matter how often I had punished him for it and coaxed him to do better, I hadn't been able to fix his dishonesty. Jesus could, and the letter I received proved He had.

It was then I realized it had not been my responsibility to change Patrick into a saint like I had tried to do. Instead, my job as a teacher is to be an example of God's love to each student I teach. At that realization my focus shifted from attempting to reform my students' lives to allowing God to reshape my own life so I can portray Him more effectively to them.

Yes, Patrick has potential, and the power of God is fanning it into fruition. If my influence on Patrick's life had a part in pointing him to Christ, to God be the glory! It's one of the teacher's rewards of instructing young souls. ■

— Author wishes to remain anonymous.

Author's note: This was a recent Aha! moment for me, a milestone of sorts, as it was the first of my students that became a Christian. While I can't take any of the credit for his decision, I was overwhelmed with the reality of the impact my teaching can have on the students, for better or for worse.





Curriculum User Guide

Included in this mailing is a copy of the revised Curriculum User Guide. Understanding the features of the curriculum and paying careful attention to curriculum procedures and controls will yield positive results.

The Crisis of Men and Boys

In an Opinion article in *New York Times*, David Brooks wrote about a disturbing social trend—men and boys struggling in many sectors of society. He discusses the indicators of this trend and possible reasons. For our purposes, we'll look mainly at the “struggle” in the classroom and academia.

American girls are 14 percentage points more likely to be ready for school than boys by age 5. By high school, two-thirds of the students in the top 10 percent of the class are girls, while roughly two-thirds of the students at the lowest 10 percent are boys.

Brooks cites Richard V. Reeves, and his new book, *Of Boys and Men*. In it Reeves takes a comprehensive look at the male crisis and also searches for its roots and offers solutions.

Reeves says that in American schools, boys' academic performance is more influenced by family background than girls' performance. He states that boys raised by single parents have lower rates of college enrollment than girls raised by single parents.

Related to being affected by family background—more men are leading haphazard and lonely lives, and are lagging women in ambition, not taking opportunities when presented. Roughly 15 percent of men say they have no close friend. One in five fathers doesn't live with his children. More young men are living with their parents than with a wife or partner. Apparently many who are married are not ideal mates because wives are twice as likely to initiate divorces as husbands.

Reeves offers a series of policy proposals to address the crisis. Possibly the most controversial proposal is that of “redshirting” boys—have them begin school a year later than girls. This, because on average the prefrontal cortex and the cerebellum mature much earlier in girls than in boys.

[For our consideration] Although popular culture has denigrated manhood and masculinity in various ways, it need not be so in Christian subcultures and in our schools. How should we respond? What are some ways in which we can affirm godly manhood and masculinity?

Thanks to Byron Dueck, principal at Interlake Mennonite Fellowship School, Arborg, Manitoba, Canada for suggesting this article.

Source: <https://www.nytimes.com/2022/09/29/opinion/crisis-men-masculinity.html>

CAT 70 Update

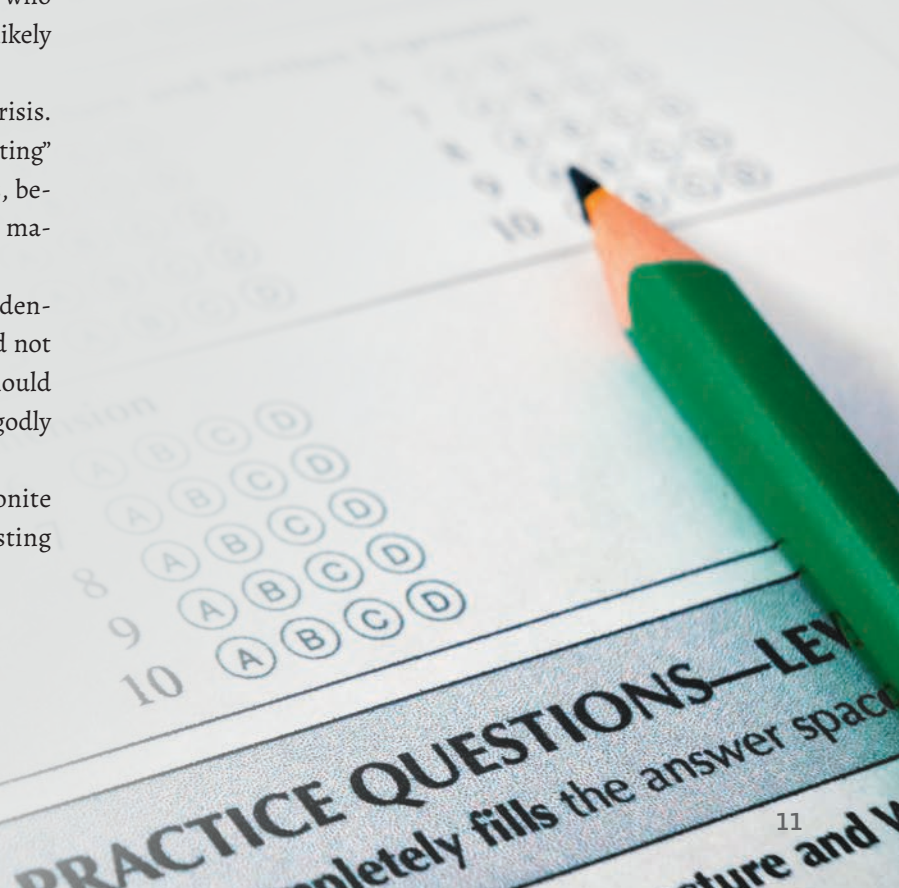
The company that now owns the copyright to CAT 70 has graciously extended our permission to print and sell the California Achievement Test, 1970 edition, until the summer of 2032. Schools that desire to purchase CAT 70 must complete an End-User Sublicense Agreement with Christian Light before purchasing these tests. Schools for which we already have an agreement on file are qualified to purchase these tests. Please contact Christian Light if you have any questions.

The Dock for Learning

On The Dock for Learning, conservative Anabaptist teachers, board members, and principals can find resources and advice gleaned from the experience of others. Named after pioneer Mennonite teacher Christopher Dock, the website provides a forum, blogs, video series, and hundreds of documents and recordings, all available without charge. What do you have to share? Join us at thedockforlearning.org.

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"Ask Another" is a question-answer space for teachers. Teachers are invited to pose questions on school-related subjects, offer responses to questions, or reply to responses. (LightLines will occasionally assign questions to experienced teachers for their qualified response.) Send questions or responses by email to lightlines@christianlight.org or by mail to LightLines Editor, P.O. Box 1212, Harrisonburg, VA 22803. (Try to limit responses to fewer than 400 words.)

Ask Another

Question:

I am searching for tips to help students who already struggle with reading comprehension to solve two-step story problems in math.
– Teacher in Tennessee

1. In Appendix B, on page 471 of Christian Light's Math 4 Textbook Teacher's Guide you will find "Word Problem Strategies," along with many other math helps and resources. The basic strategy is *Read – Understand – Choose*.

Read the whole problem for the story. Discuss, think through, ask questions, retell in the student's own words to help the student *Understand*. Then *Choose* the operation(s) to use to solve the problem. Ask "Will my answer be larger than all the numbers I'm working with?" If so, add or multiply. "Will my answer be smaller than at least one of the numbers?" If so, subtract or divide. Use the chart of "Key Words in Word Problems" as a guide. Other practical suggestions are included.

2. Ask them to read the problem out loud (sometimes one sentence at a time), and try to make it come alive for them by drawing diagrams or using objects to show what the story is asking for. Help them decide if the expected answer is going to be more or less than the numbers that are given in the problem. Let them work the first step and then ask them to give their answer a label. Ask if the steps they are taking are going to give them the expected (smaller or larger number) results.
3. In some cases it may be helpful for students to work together on the problem. They can sometimes break down and explain concepts to each other on their level and in familiar terms.

4. If large numbers are throwing them off, try working the same or similar problem with single digits to help them "see" the process in familiar terms.
5. Work on reading comprehension.
6. The teacher could read the problem to the student and have the student tell back to the teacher what he understood. The teacher will then know whether he has all the information he needs to solve the problem. *Acting out* the word problem might help him see what is happening. But that doesn't really address the reading problem.

– former teachers on staff at Christian Light

Read the word problem, a sentence at a time and underline the actual question(s). Try restating the question as a statement. Ex. How many buckets of apples did they pick altogether? Restate. They picked ___ buckets of apples in all.

– ideas from theteachingspark.com

Next question: What tips do you have for effective reading classes when you have limited time?

Please respond by April 10, 2024. We'll print your responses in the Fall 2024 issue of *LightLines*. Please send responses to lightlines@christianlight.org, fax them to 540-433-8896, or mail them to LightLines, P.O. Box 1212, Harrisonburg, VA 22803. [📧](#)

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