Recently, I read a story that struck me as being so applicable to the processes and activities that go on in our lives, especially as we all work together in our endeavors to train up young people in the way that they should go. I hope you will enjoy this story and reflect on what it can mean to you personally.

The Story of the Six Blind Men

Once upon a time, in a faraway land, there lived six blind men. Each of them was very wise. Each of them had gone to school and read lots of books in braille. They knew so much about so many things that people would often come from miles around to get their advice. They were happy to share whatever they knew with the people who asked them thoughtful questions.

One day these six wise blind men went for a walk in the zoo. That day the zoo-keeper was worrying about all of her many troubles. The night before she had had an argument with her husband, and her children had been misbehaving all day long. She had so much on her mind that she forgot to lock the gate of the elephant cage as she was leaving it. Now, elephants are naturally very curious animals. They quickly tried to push the gate to the cage to see if it might open. To their great surprise, the gate swung freely on its hinge. Two of the more daring elephants walked over to the gate. They looked left and right, and then quietly tip-toed out of the cage. Just at that moment the six blind men walked by. One of them heard a twig snap, and went over to see what it was that was walking by.

"Hi there!" said the first blind man to the first elephant. "Could you please tell us the way to the zoo restaurant?"

The elephant couldn't think of anything intelligent to say, so he sort of shifted his weight from left to right to left to right. The first blind man walked over to see if this big silent person needed any help.
"Boy," said the first blind man. "I think I must have walked into a wall. The second blind man was becoming more and more curious about what was happening. He walked over to the front of the elephant and grabbed hold of the animal's trunk. He quickly let go and shouted, "This isn't a wall. This is a snake! We should step back in case it's poisonous." The third man quickly decided to find out what was going on, and to tell his friends what they had walked into.

He walked over to the back of the elephant and touched the animal's tail. "This is no wall, and this is no snake. You are both wrong once again. I know for sure that this is a rope." The fourth man sighed as he knew how stubborn his friends could be. The fourth blind man decided that someone should really get to the bottom of this thing. So he crouched down on all fours and felt around the elephant's legs. (Luckily for the fourth man, this elephant was very tame and wouldn't think of stepping on a human being.)

"My dear friends," explained the fourth man. "This is no wall and this is no snake. This is no rope either. What we have here, gentlemen, is four tree trunks. That's it. Case closed."

The fifth blind man was not so quick to jump to conclusions. He walked up to the front of the elephant and felt the animal's two long tusks. "It seems to me that this object is made up of two swords," said the fifth man. "What I am holding is long and curved and sharp at the end. I am not sure what this could be, but maybe our sixth friend could help us."

The sixth blind man scratched his head and thought and thought. He was the one who really was the wisest of all of them. He was the one who really knew what he knew, and knew what he didn't know. Just then the worried zoo-keeper walked by. "Hi there! How are you enjoying the zoo today?" she asked them all. "The zoo is very nice," replied the sixth blind man. "Perhaps you could help us figure out the answer to a question that's been puzzling us."

"Sure thing," said the zoo-keeper, as she firmly grabbed the elephant's collar. "My friends and I can't seem to figure out what this thing in front of us is. One of us thinks it's a wall; one thinks it's a snake; one thinks it's a rope, and one thinks it's four tree trunks. How can one thing seem so different to five different people?" "Well," said the zoo-keeper. "You are all right. This elephant seems like something different to each one of you. And the only way to know what this thing really is, is to do exactly what you have done. Only by sharing what each of you knows can you possibly reach a true understanding." The six wise men had to agree with the wisdom of the zoo-keeper. The first five of them had been too quick to form an opinion without listening to what the others had to say. So they all went off to the zoo restaurant and had a really hearty lunch.

(This story is a well-known fable from India. Modernized and re-told by Phil Shapiro)

Andrews Academy Day
March 6, 2012

Please remember that the Strings/Silhouettes tour returns this Sunday around 8:00 p.m. Please remember them in your prayers as they travel.
Let's Go...CART

This is the second year that students have the opportunity to take Go Cart Rebuilding. Students work as a team on a go cart together to take it apart, clean, repair, modify and then rebuild. Later this spring students will have a chance to take their go cart to the track to enjoy their rebuilt go-cart.

This week Mrs. Butler was in charge of worships. She had many students involved in helping students evaluate and implement good choice making skills. We appreciate the involvement of so many students helping teach good choice making skills.

Mr. Vanderwaal from Andrews University presented our Tuesday assembly period. The focus of the assembly was to be well informed about the effects of alcohol. The many interesting research results on the affects of alcohol provide a lot of scientific support in the SDA philosophy to not use alcohol.
Andrews Academy Announces It's Four National Merit Finalists

Andrews Academy is pleased to announce its four National Merit Finalists. Jee Yeon & Seong Min Lee, brother and sister, originally from Korea, Ashley Reichert of Berrien Springs and Kyle Whiteside of Sodus. All four finalists are four year students of Andrews Academy.

Approximately 1.5 million students in some 22,000 high schools entered the 2012 National Merit Scholarship program by taking the 2010 Preliminary SAT/National Merit scholarship Qualifying Tests (PSAT/NMSQT). The nationwide 16,000 Semifinalists of this year are the highest-scoring entrants in each state and represent less than 1 percent of each state’s high school seniors. These are the only participants who qualified to continue into the National Merit Scholarships to be awarded in the spring of 2012.

To be considered in the rigorous competition for National Merit Scholarships, Semifinalists must advance to the Finalist level of the competition by meeting additional standards and fulfilling several requirements. Finalists named in each year’s Merit Scholarship show exceptional academic ability and potential for success in rigorous college studies. Andrews Academy congratulates these four National Merit Finalists and is so proud of each member of the class of 2012. Proud not only of their academic accomplishments but their spiritual development. We pray that each member of the class will continue to aspire to new heights of mental, physical and spiritual maturity throughout the rest of this school year, and throughout each year of their life.

About National Merit Scholarship Corporation

Established in 1955, National Merit Scholarship Corporation (NMSC) is an independent, not-for-profit organization that operates without government assistance. NMSC is exempt from taxation under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code and contributions to NMSC are tax deductible by the donor. NMSC conducts the National Merit® Scholarship Program and the National Achievement® Scholarship Program—an annual competitions for recognition and college undergraduate scholarships.

NMSC’s goals have remained constant since its inception:

- to identify and honor academically talented U.S. high school students;
- to stimulate increased support for their education; and
- to provide efficient and effective scholarship program management for organizations that wish to sponsor college undergraduate scholarships.
We celebrate this magnificent accomplishment with 4 outstanding students.

Congratulations on a job Well Done!

Brighton
Brighton H. S.
400 McPeek, Will
988 Sasser, Andrea M.

Homeschool
Stump, Adam M.

Charity Stockwell Preparatory Academy
450 Marshall, Brittany E.

Byron Center
Zion Christian School
628 Carbone, Olivia K.
450 Mooman, Matthew E.

Cadillac
Cadillac H. S.
450 Brien, Philip P.

Caledonia
Caledonia H. S.
950 Davis, Jordan R.

Canton
Canton H. S.
907 Beekman, Austin R.
457 Jin, Jay F.
999 Johnson, Robert A.
450 Marlton, Steven W.

Plymouth Christian Academy
682 Malcolm, Kristen L.

Plymouth H. S.
905 Bugjaki, Matthew J.
208 Joo, Brett E.
618 Liu, Jennifer M.
455 Meekly, Todd A.
590 Minor, Natalie C.

Cable
Cable H. S.
195 Davis, Jacob A.

Divine Child H. S.
480 Busilacq, Matthew C.
679 Kerr, Michelle J.

Dearborn Heights
Crestwood H. S.
580 Mayrey, Jarrett M.

Detroit
University of Detroit Jesuit H. S.
599 Piek, Benjamin R.
820 Peck, Grayson D.
161 Shannon, Regan P.

Dexter
Dexter H. S.
450 Brooks, Daniel J.
930 Herman-Hilker, Trevor N.
628 Kipke, Jasmine P.
160 Head, Amy R.
487 Thompson, Connor P.

East Lansing
East Lansing H. S.
843 Beecott, Aaron T.
842 Moore, Karligh J.

Edwardsburg
Edwardsburg H. S.
370 Sova, Ashton R.

Essexville
Garber H. S.
836 Zarec, Sarah E.

Farmington
Farmington H. S.
950 Kincade, Laura D.
900 Meyer, Laura D.

Farmington Hills
Harrison H. S.
907 Ramsey-Smith, Alec R.
204 Zevel, Marthe M.

Mercy H. S.
520 Berre, Colette E.
528 Eagle, Elizabeth M.
160 Weber, Eilis J.

North Farmington H. S.
450 But, Jacob A.

Fenton
Homeschool
950 Bausler, Matthew R.

Flushing
Flushing H. S.
947 Golla, Elizabeth L.

Fowlerville
Fowlerville H. S.
950 Parker, Isaac R.

Frankenmuth
Frankenmuth H. S.
881 Barret, Kristina B.
461 Edmond, Eric D.
259 Zwerk, Hannah D.

Grand Blanc
Grand Blanc Community School
742 Brumwell, Xavier S.
451 Miles, Jared F.

Homeschool
303 Holmes, Cameron M.

Grand Haven
Grand Haven H. S.
773 Wram, Hannah E.

Grand Ledge
Grand Ledge H. S.
950 Kinsal, Alexander J.

Grand Rapids
Catholic Central H. S.
450 Lach, Brian J.
161 Pelak, Ryan M.
942 Potter, Johann B.
160 VanderZee, David L.
This past weekend, February 8-12, I was privileged to attend the annual Music Convention for the TMEA (Texas Music Educators Association) in San Antonio, Texas. This is, if not the largest, one of the largest music conventions in the USA. It brings thousands of high school students and music educators from all the schools of the public and private systems of the state of Texas.

For the teachers there are clinics, lectures, concerts and rehearsals to attend, and 2 huge exhibit halls with anything you want to see about music: instruments, printed music, uniforms, etc.

For the high school students there are music groups to be part of: two full orchestras (150 members each), one string orchestra (80 members), a mass choir (over 250 voices), one ladies choir and one males choir (100+ members each), two symphonic bands (150+ members each), four concert bands (120+ members each), and a jazz band (100 members). Some selected elementary and junior high schools bring their groups to perform. They also bring a feature group from outside to give the opening performance. This year it was the Vienna Boys Choir.

The high school students that participate in the ensembles are selected by audition. Only the best of the best are chosen to be part of the groups. I was very impressed to see the quality of musicianship that those high school students brought at the end of only two full days of practice. It was music that you mostly see performed by the big professional orchestras and ensembles. Just to mention some titles: Prokofiev’s 5th Symphony, Mahler’s 2nd Symphony, Mozart’s Coronation Mass, etc. But I was even more impressed to hear some information that was given at the beginning of each concert, about the academic level of these participant students:

- The National score average for the SAT test is 1500 points
- The state of Texas score average for the SAT test is 1462 points
- Students in the String Orchestra had an average of 2119 points
- Students in the Symphony Orchestra had an average of 1984 points
- Students in the Philharmonic Orchestra had an average of 1921 points
- Students in the Choir had an average of 1847 points
- The score average for the SAT test from all the students participating in the music groups was 1825

(I did not attend the band concerts but I know their averages are between 1700-1900 points)

Each student that participates here is fully involved in music: they take private lessons, they are part of their school’s music groups, and they practice at least one hour a day on their instruments (many practice 2-4 hours every day), and they still perform better when it comes to school grades (GPA) and SAT scores. (In years past they have mentioned their GPA scores and they are an average of no less than 3.9 for the orchestra and choir programs)

I also attended a clinic called “The Fine Art of Vertical Teaming: How to Achieve Excellence from Elementary to High School”. It was presented by The Woodlands High School Vertical Team, a group of one High School, one Jr. High School, one Intermediate School (5th and 6th grade), two Flex Schools (K-6), and five Elementary Schools. They have 15 music teachers on this vertical team. All schools, elementary through high school, have choir programs. The music program is integrated to the regular class schedule. All schools integrated into the system follow the same program: K-4 – Kodaly method; 5 & 6 – Choir, Instrumental groups, music literacy; 7-12 – organized music groups (band, choir, orchestra, and private lessons).

The results of a program like this can be seen in their product: students with a love and passion for outstanding music and high academic levels.

-Mr. Flores, AA Music Teacher