Dear Center for,

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Paul Richardson, Director
Center for Creative Ministry

**Contemporary Comments**

"Jesus, the Master Teacher"
May 30, 2015


Nothing fires up our emotions more than things that involve our children
--especially their education. Teachers often aren't good enough, don't understand my little Johnny or Suzie, emphasize the wrong subjects, give too much attention to the troubled kids, give too much attention to the gifted students, are too young and inexperienced, are too old and out of touch, are only looking to move out of the classroom and into the admin office, are only in it for the money (seriously?), and the list goes on.... And if a teacher is any good, before long the school district takes him or her away from us to a school with more resources (read: money).

Politicians understand the emotional power of our children's education. Both political parties are lining up as either fully supportive or vehemently opposed to a new teaching philosophy called "Common Core." It's either the best way for children to comprehend what they are learning, or it's another government intrusion into the lives of our citizens. Whatever it is, it's stirring up strong emotions on both sides, and our children's education is now a political football game as politicians vie for votes.1

Teachers often feel kicked back and forth like a football as they try to do their best in whatever situation they find themselves in. Pulitzer Prize winning author Frank McCourt spent most of his life in high schools as a, well, here's how he describes it: "I didn't call myself anything. I was more than a teacher. And less. Instead of teaching, I told stories. Anything to keep them quiet and in their seats. I argue with myself, 'You're telling stories and you're supposed to be teaching.' I am teaching. Storytelling is teaching. Storytelling is a waste of time. I can't help it. I'm not good at lecturing. You're a fraud. You're cheating our children. They don't seem to think so. The poor kids don't know." We can suspect this internal struggle is more common among teachers than the rest of us realize!2

In this week's lesson we see Jesus in His role as teacher. In just three-and-half years of mentoring a group of illiterate, belligerent, immature nobodies, He molded them into His Church. So how does Jesus teach? What can we learn from His example? What is His curriculum? Does He use controversial teaching techniques? How does He get us--not far removed from those first twelve disciples--to learn anything?

It appears on the surface that Jesus uses some very basic and timeless teaching principles: patience, perseverance, listening to His students, attention to the needs of all, and yes, storytelling. And yet Jesus, as fully human and fully divine, must have other resources at His disposal to ingrain His lessons into the hearts and minds of His hearers.

He is, after all, the Master Teacher.

~ cb

1. nbcnews.com

About Us
Since 1988, the Center for Creative Ministry has been serving local church leaders and individuals around the world. Formerly known as the publishers of ABBA Newsletter and the Baby Boomer Ministries Resource Center, we have now broadened our generational/ministry focus to include our children. The Center for Creative Ministry took on its new name on June 1, 1996.

The Center for Creative Ministry, formerly Baby Boomer Ministries, is a privately funded and managed para-church ministry fully recognized by the Seventh-day Adventist Church in North America. We are dedicated to supporting the local church in outreach and nurture ministries by providing resources, information, training, and consulting.