

Let's Talk About the Weather

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As I write this article, November 29, 2001, snow is lightly falling. There has been very little wind the last week, and so the snow has not blown into drifts. There is over a foot of snow piled high on our deck table, resembling a frosted Angel Food cake. The mountain ash berries have generous snow cone tops, and snow diamonds sparkle over the entire landscape.



Some people become "Snow Birds" to escape the harsh (though beautiful) weather. The rest of us talk about the weather, but can't do a thing about it.

It seems to me the weather is less predictable, and often more extreme than it used to be. For example, the devastating Pine Lake tornado that ripped apart a tourist resort, causing loss of life and extensive property damage, occurred just 35 kilometres from my home in Red Deer, Alberta. The very dry conditions of recent years have caused many of the sloughs to dry up. It seems that the atmosphere and climate is changing---worldwide.

This brings me to what I really want to talk about. Dr. Haim Ginott, in his book "*Teacher and Child*," states a very important truth on page 13.

"I have come to a frightening conclusion. I am the decisive element in the classroom. It is my personal approach that creates the climate. It is my daily mood that makes the weather. As a teacher I have tremendous power to make a child's life miserable or joyous. I can be a tool of torture or an instrument of inspiration. I can humiliate or humour, hurt or heal. In all situations it is my response that decides whether a crisis will be escalated or de-escalated, and a child humanized or de-humanized."

Ellen White, in *Christ's Object Lessons* page 339, writes so powerfully about the atmosphere that surrounds each of us.

Every soul is surrounded by an atmosphere of its own - an atmosphere, it may be, charged with the life-giving power of faith, courage, and hope, and sweet with the

fragrance of love. Or it may be heavy and chill with the gloom of discontent and selfishness, or poisonous with the deadly taint of cherished sin. By the atmosphere surrounding us, every person with whom we come in contact is consciously or unconsciously affected.

The administrator, the teacher, in fact everyone associated with the school, creates the climate of the school. Whether it is inviting, caring, helpful or uninviting, uncaring or hurtful depends on each individual.

The atmosphere that surrounded Jesus was

- Inviting to Nicodemus, who came by night even though he was not invited.
- Accepting to the publicans and sinners who ate and drank with Him.
- Loving to the little children as they sat on His knee and touched His face.
- Healing to the sick and those who suffered physical disability.
- Saving to everyone who sought a new life in Him.

As the Master Teacher, He challenges us to create the same atmosphere around ourselves – an atmosphere that calms the storms of life, and stills the cold wind of indifference. An atmosphere that is ever warm as the Sun of Righteousness shines through us.