

## **MASTER TEACHING or TEACHING FOR THE MASTER?**

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I was ready for math class! I had chosen carefully the teaching strategies; all the student materials were in place; I was organized par excellence! I had observed very quickly that the students' math skills were below grade level and I intended to change the situation as soon as possible. I knew exactly where I was going with this lesson and what I expected from the students.

The lesson went very well, and I was pleased with my performance as I pushed ahead with this particular mathematical concept. It was one of those lessons that made you wish the educational superintendent was there to see your performance as a "master teacher."

Well, there was Someone observing this math lesson, but His evaluation I think was quite different than mine.

One little female student was not meeting my expectations. In fact she was not really focused and this annoyed me somewhat. I decided that because she had not made good use of her time in class that she would stay in at lunch and she and I would go over the material again. As I positioned myself at the chalk board to review the material with her, she blurted, "***Mrs. Fortney, can you just come and give me a hug and pray with me?***"

My Lord, the Master Teacher, knew that I needed to refocus. Yes, teaching strategies, organization, student accountability are all important, but I had missed a much more important element. I had failed to clue in to a soul that needed reassurance, love, and understanding. One hug and one prayer later, this student was ready to absorb mathematical knowledge.

On page 73 of the book *Education*, Ellen White states the following:

*He who seeks to transform humanity must himself understand humanity. Only through sympathy, faith, and love can men be reached and uplifted. Here Christ stands revealed as the master teacher; of all that ever dwelt on the earth, He alone has perfect understanding of the human soul.*

I had the cart before the horse. If I had focused on teaching for the Master, along with all my preparation, I would have automatically experienced "master teaching" because my priorities would have been correct.