

*“Whatever you do,
work at it with all your heart,
as working for the Lord,
not for human masters,
since you know that you will receive
an inheritance from the Lord as a reward.
It is the Lord Christ you are serving.”*

COLOSSIANS 3:23-24



PRESENTED TO:

30 Devotions for TEACHERS

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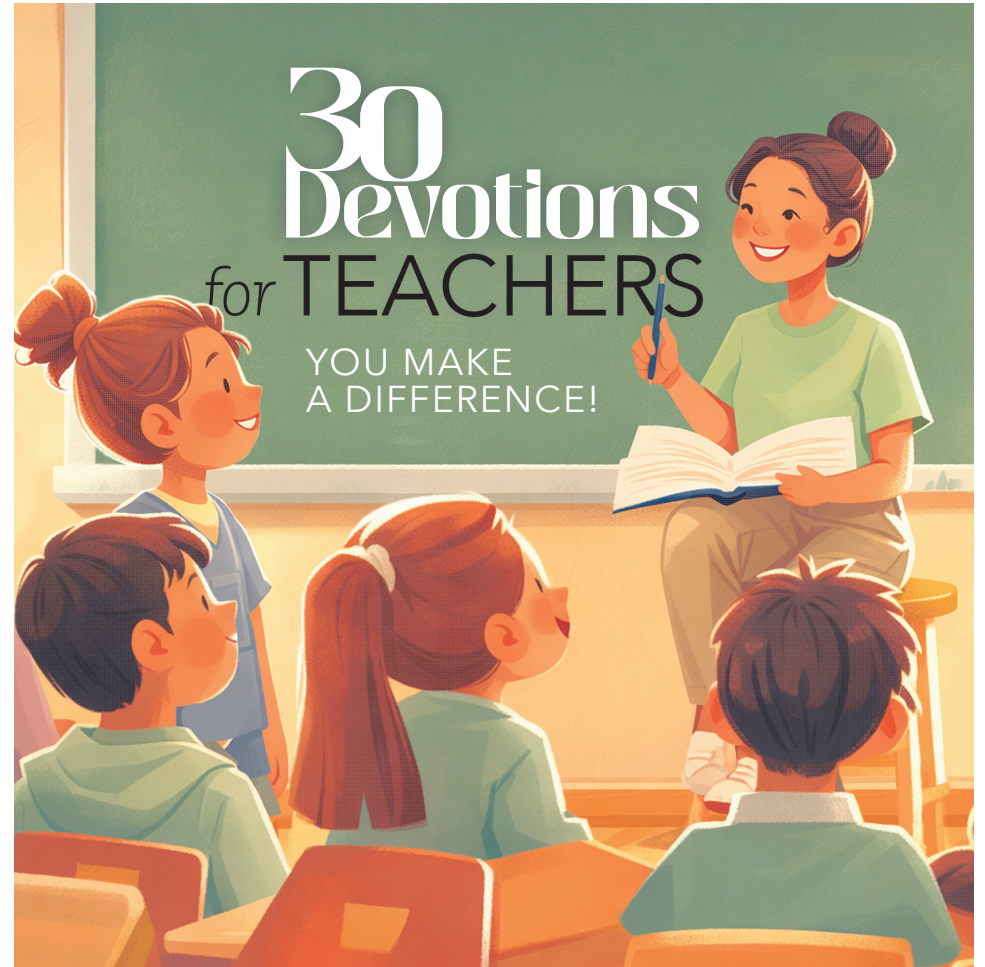
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**CHURCH
LEADERS**

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P R E S S

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Who Was Your **FAVORITE TEACHER?**

You know, the one who really saw you. Who gave you the courage to risk trying out for the school play or stick with an equation until you outsmarted the problem.

Or who opened your eyes to grace as together you opened a Bible.


In the same way that teacher inspired and encouraged you, you can do the same for others. Perhaps for many others.

That's because when you're teaching, you're face-to-face with people God loves. And He's eager for them to get to know Him...through you.

Maybe you can speak openly of your faith where you teach, and perhaps you can't. But nothing can stop you from being that teacher whose compassion and caring reflect the love of God.

The God who sees and loves each person you teach and who's given them the gift of—you.

Let God's love flow through you as you affirm, pray for, and connect with those you teach. No matter where you teach, you can make a remarkable difference in someone's life.

An illustration of a classroom scene. A male teacher with a mustache, wearing a yellow jacket and blue shirt, stands in the center, pointing towards the left. A female student in blue overalls stands next to him, looking towards the teacher. In the foreground, the backs of two other students' heads are visible as they listen. The background shows a bookshelf with books and a small potted plant on top. A speech bubble on the right contains the text: "God is with you as you teach...and we're cheering you on, too."

God is with
you as you
teach...and
we're cheering
you on, too.



Welcome to the **MISSION FIELD**

I If you've never thought of yourself as a missionary, reconsider.

Missionaries are simply people of faith who choose to enter a new culture with the intent of making Jesus known. Some are able to proclaim Christ boldly. Others do their work quietly as they serve by building churches, digging wells or... teaching.

As a teacher you've chosen to enter the culture of your students. As a believer you carry the gospel with you.

The question is whether you also carry the intent of making Jesus known through your words, actions and attitude.

You're on a mission field; are you a missionary?
Ask God. He'll let you know.

“So whether you eat or drink or whatever you do, do it all for the glory of God.”

1 CORINTHIANS 10:31

This Side of HEAVEN

One thing that is tough about teaching: You seldom see the final results of your efforts.

You're in one of those "you won't know your impact this side of heaven" situations. You crank out amazing lesson after amazing lesson and hear...crickets. No applause from students or lavish praise from parents. No trophies, plaques or rewards for a job well done.

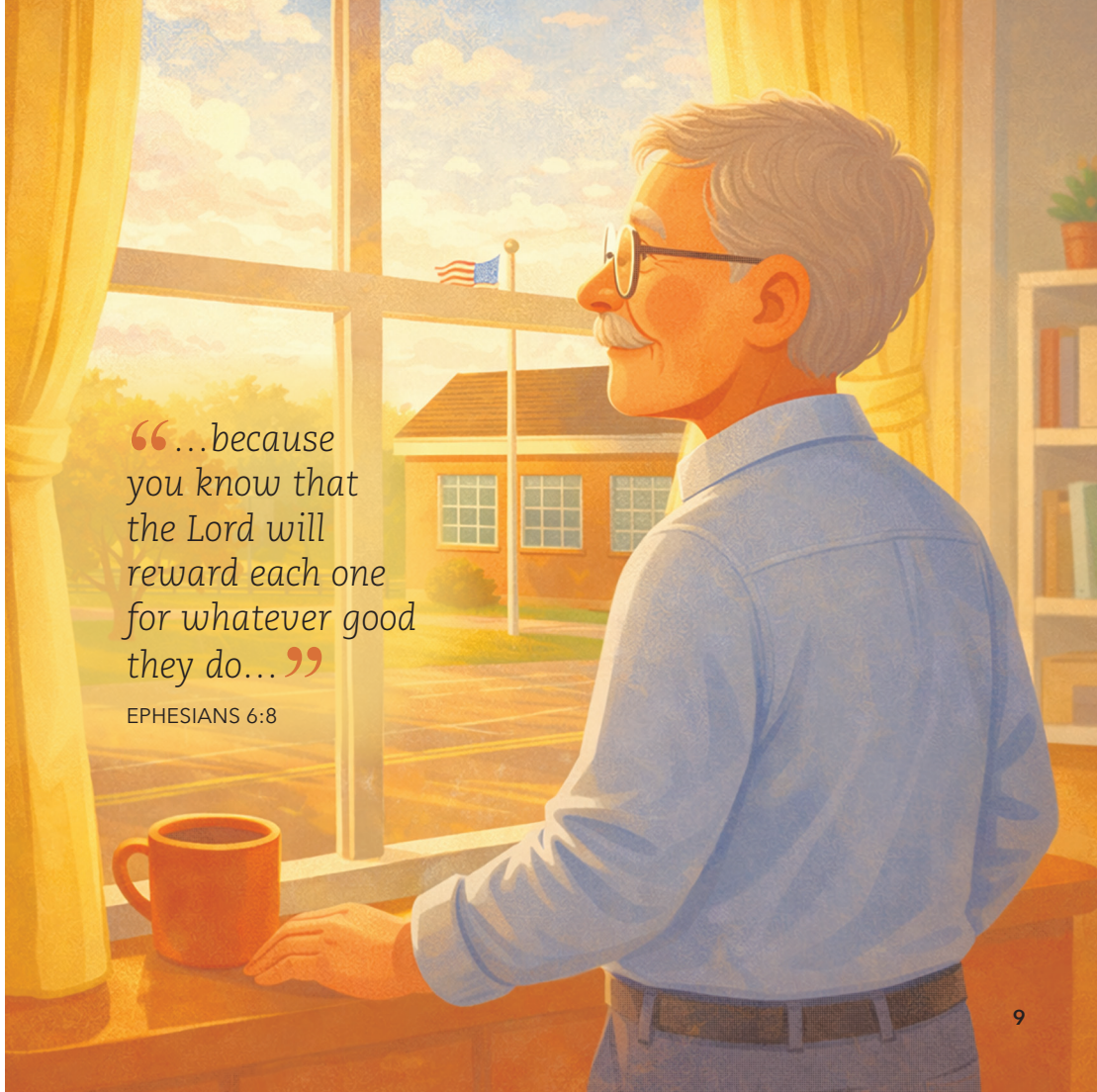
You may wonder if anyone notices what you do—or the effort you put in—at all.

Rest assured you're having an impact even if you can't always see it. The relationships you build with students, how you're living out your faith in front of them—God can and will use it all.

Just not necessarily while you're watching.


Thank you for continuing to teach even if your students aren't bouncing into class eager to dive into lessons. Stick with it. Keep investing. Stay the course.

Good things will come for your students—and you.



“...because you know that the Lord will reward each one for whatever good they do...”

EPHESIANS 6:8

A colorful illustration of a young man in a pilot's uniform. He is wearing a dark blue cap with a gold winged emblem, a white short-sleeved shirt with gold epaulettes, and dark blue trousers with a gold belt buckle. He has a red lanyard around his neck with a blue ID badge. He is standing on a tarmac with a small white and orange airplane in the background under a bright, sunny sky with clouds.

*“But seek first
his kingdom and his
righteousness, and all
these things will be given
to you as well.”*

MATTHEW 6:33

JUST THREE DIALS

When Terry was training to be a pilot, his instructor had him climb into a flight simulator, and then asked him to study the control panel.

“There had to be three dozen dials and just as many switches,” recalls Terry. “I had no idea what I was looking at.”

The instructor pointed to three dials, one after another.

“She told me that everything I needed to know to stay in the air was on those three dials. They would tell me my altitude, flight speed and whether I was flying on the level.

“The rest of the instrumentation provided details that were helpful, but so long as everything was good with those three dials, I wasn’t falling out of the sky,” he says.

It’s helpful to know what matters most when you’re a student. And a real gift from you to let your students know.

As you lean into teaching, what do you point to as most important? What do you want students to know, feel and do when they walk away?

SURVIVING as a Teacher

Read the quote on the opposite page aloud. We're not sure who said it first, but they nailed it.

To teach is to have a wishbone and wish for the best—for your students and their learning, and for yourself and your teaching.

You'd best have a sturdy backbone, too. Sooner or later, someone will take you to task for something you said or did—or didn't say or do. You'll need to stand up to critique, criticism and—worst of all—apathy.

And if you can't find the humor in teaching, your funny bone might need fixing. Most teachers have a stack of stories about experiments that went haywire and lectures that took a sudden wrong turn.

Teaching has never been for the timid or easily discouraged. It's for someone like you.

“But as for you, be strong and do not give up, for your work will be rewarded.”

2 CHRONICLES 15:7



“To survive as a teacher, you need three bones: a wishbone, a backbone and a funny bone.”

UNKNOWN



“Rejoice always,
pray continually,
give thanks in all
circumstances;
for this is God’s
will for you in
Christ Jesus.”

1 THESSALONIANS 5:16-18



PRAY for Your Students

You know that class roster you look at each day? Make it your prayer list. Even if you teach in an environment where praying aloud is frowned upon, nothing can stop you from silently praying for your students. Or praying aloud when you’re alone.

One teacher comes to her school early once per week so she can walk around her classroom, pausing at each desk to pray for the students who’ll fill it during the day.

If you teach in a setting where prayer is encouraged, then let students see you pray for them. It not only encourages them, it also softens your heart toward students.

And that last part can change everything for you. When you love your students—and let God’s love flow through you into their lives—teaching becomes more than sharing information with a group.

It becomes a personal, heartfelt ministry.

ALL IN

Should anyone question the dedication of public school teachers, mention these facts about U.S. teachers:

- Teachers work an average of 52 hours per week.
- 94% of teachers spend an average of \$480 of their own money per year on school supplies.
- 76% of teachers report experiencing high levels of stress.
- 81% of teachers report being emotionally drained at the end of the day.

To be an effective public school teacher, you need to be all in. All in mastering your subject matter. All in caring for your students. All in making your teaching environment one in which students feel safe and can flourish.

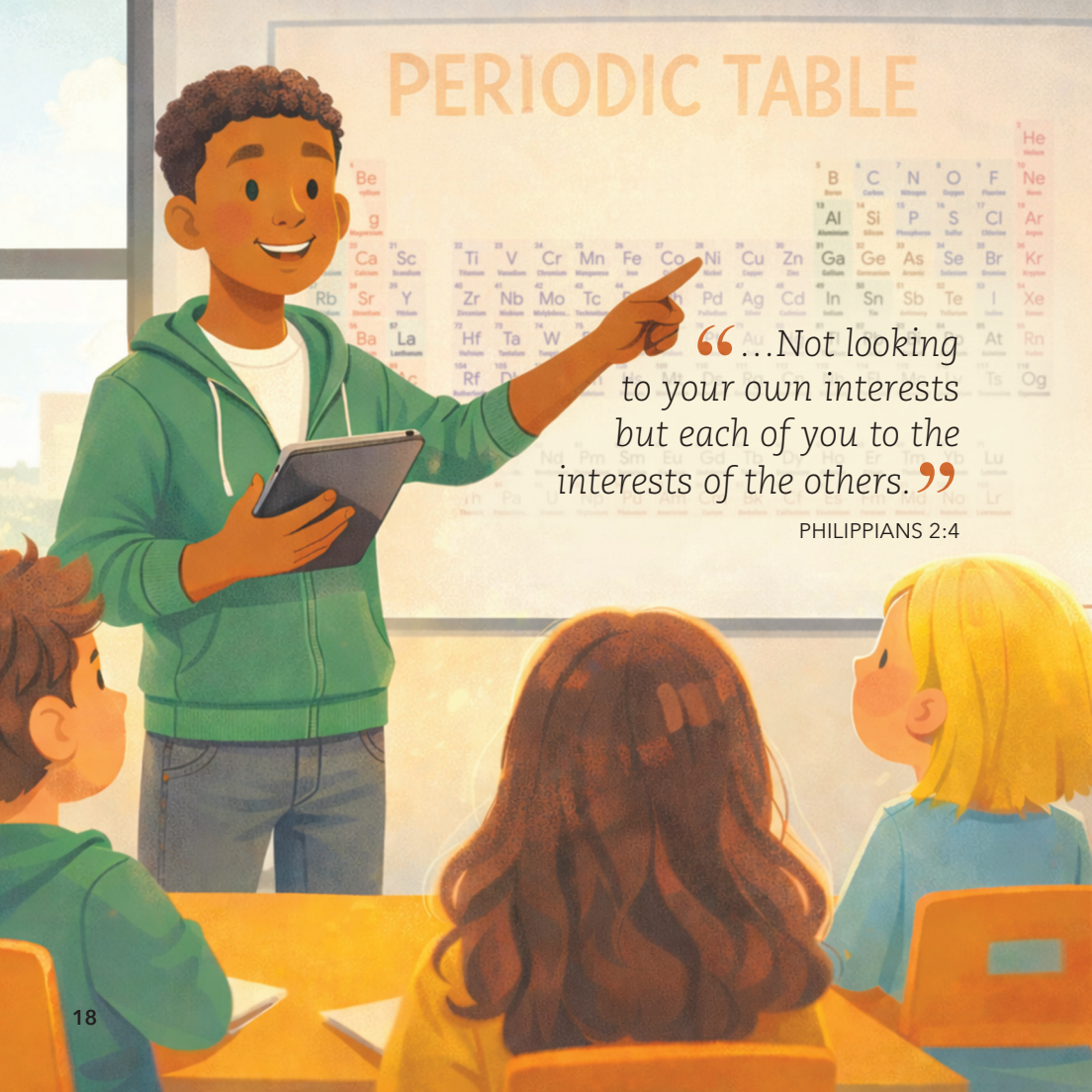
The same can be said for teachers who engage students at church, at home or anywhere else they connect with learners. Thanks for being all in.

We appreciate you—and so does God.



“Serve wholeheartedly, as if you were serving the Lord, not people, because you know that the Lord will reward each one for whatever good they do...”

EPHESIANS 6:7-8



“...Not looking to your own interests but each of you to the interests of the others.”

PHILIPPIANS 2:4

Consider Yourself **DEPUTIZED**

Most teachers are handed a curriculum to guide their teaching—and that’s a good thing. A well-designed curriculum ensures you hit the right stuff, in the right order, at the right time.

Unless it doesn’t.

It’s tempting to stick to the curriculum no matter what. After all, if you fall behind today explaining the periodic table, you’ve got even more elements to introduce tomorrow. Things snowball, and by the end of the week, nobelium is nowhere to be found.

Well, raise your right hand and repeat: *Students first.*

Which means that while you want to cover the subject matter outlined in the curriculum, what’s happening in the lives of students outweighs lesson plans. If you spot a bruise on a student’s arm or notice a child seems unusually withdrawn, it’s worth missing two minutes of class instruction to take that student aside to find out what’s up.

If someone is crying...if a fight is brewing...if something traumatic has fractured your community—you pause to address it. Why? Because first and foremost, you are human.

And as a teacher, you’re on the front lines as students struggle to navigate life.

Are you willing to come alongside to help?

Forty-nine and **COUNTING**

MaryAnne is teaching Sunday school this weekend like she's done for the past 49 years.

"People ask when I'll retire," she says, "But why would I walk away from something that gives me so much?"

MaryAnne credits teaching with keeping her in the Bible. "I'm not sure I'm disciplined enough to do daily reading if there weren't lessons to pull together," she says.

And since she works with school-age children, MaryAnne's teaching has prompted her to think through challenging biblical truths so she can present them simply and clearly.

"I'm far more settled in my faith because of teaching," she explains.

Plus, teaching slips a bit of adventure into her week. "I never quite know how lessons will go," she says. "I prepare, but the Lord leads. And He seldom warns me what's coming."

MaryAnne sees teaching not as a chore but a blessing.

How do you view it? In what ways is God using your teaching to bless you?





*“Let us
not become
weary in doing
good, for at the
proper time we
will reap a harvest if
we do not give up.”*

GALATIANS 6:9

Meet **JOHN B. CHAPMAN**

Once Henry Ford made his fortune, he founded Greenfield Village near Dearborn, Michigan. Spread over 90 acres, the village is an open-air history museum featuring historic buildings Ford relocated to show how Americans lived and worked since the founding of the country.

At Greenfield Village, you can visit the homes of Robert Frost and Noah Webster. Wander around Edison’s laboratory. Stand in a courthouse where Abraham Lincoln practiced law, and step into the bicycle shop where the Wright brothers built their first flying machines.

And admire the modest home of none other than John B. Chapman.

Um...who?

Chapman taught in one-room schools during the early 1870s. One of his students, a young Henry Ford, never forgot his childhood teacher and honored him decades later by relocating Chapman’s house to Greenfield Village.

So keep teaching, and teaching well. None of your students may thank you by turning your home into a tourist attraction, but your impact will be felt for a lifetime.

TRUST GOD

*“Trusting God’s plan is the only secret I know
in the gentle art of not freaking out.”*

LYSA TERKEURST

Sometimes the wheels fall off.
One kid throws up. Another melts down. Your lesson
is so derailed the train tracks are no longer in sight.

And there you stand, quietly questioning every life choice
that led to your being the ringmaster in this particular circus.

On those days take a deep breath and, if at all possible,
relax. You might not know what’s next, but God does. Nothing—
even the sudden dramatic death of the classroom hamster—is
coming as a surprise to Him.

Maybe you lack the patience to survive the day, but He has
plenty. And He’s ready and able to give you just enough of what
you need to cross the finish line.

What do you need today to teach well? To see your students
as a ministry field, not a minefield?

Trust God for what’s needed.

