



By President
Thomas S. Monson



The Worth of a Teacher

Some time ago three young boys were discussing their fathers. One spoke out, “My dad is bigger than your dad,” to which another replied, “Well, my dad is smarter than your dad.” The third boy countered, “My dad is a doctor.” Then, turning to one boy, he taunted in derision, “And your dad is only a teacher.”

There is one teacher whose life overshadows all others. He lived not to be served but to serve, not to receive but to give, not to save His life but to sacrifice it for others. He described a love more beautiful than lust, a poverty richer than treasure. He taught with authority and not as did the scribes. I speak of the Master Teacher, even Jesus Christ, the Son of God, the Savior and Redeemer of all mankind.

When dedicated teachers respond to His gentle invitation “Come learn of me,” they become partakers of His divine power.

It was my experience as a small boy to come under the influence of such a teacher. In our Sunday School class she taught us concerning the Creation of the world, the Fall of Adam, and the atoning sacrifice of Jesus. She brought to her classroom as honored guests Moses, Joshua, Peter, Thomas, Paul, and even Christ. Though we did not see them, we learned to love, honor, and emulate them.

When the boy heard the taunts: “My dad is bigger than yours,” “My dad is smarter than yours,” “My dad is a doctor,” well could he have replied, “Your dad may be bigger than mine; your dad may be smarter than mine; your dad may be a pilot, an engineer, or a doctor; but my dad is a teacher.”

May each of us ever merit such a sincere and worthy compliment! ■

From “Only a Teacher,” Tambuli, Oct. 1990, 3–8; Ensign, Jan. 1990, 2–7.

ASKING QUESTIONS THAT WORK

The calling of lecturer does not exist in the Church. A lecturer merely imparts knowledge. But a teacher invites class members to learn, in part by teaching one another. One sure way to transform a dull lecture into a lively, Spirit-filled lesson is by asking effective questions.

1. In your lesson preparation, plan questions to ask throughout the lesson. Consider the questions suggested in the manual. Think of others that might be helpful to your class. Seek the Spirit to help you choose several questions for each main idea you want to teach.
2. To help class members discuss how a gospel concept relates to their lives, you can ask three different types of questions in a series:
 - A fact question: “Whom does the Lord require us to forgive?”
 - An application question: “How does forgiving someone affect us?”
 - An experience question: “What is a positive experience you have had with forgiving someone?”