

To embrace, encourage and empower through a network of Christian educators.

A Christmas greeting from the Council

Gabriel had the awesome task of delivering to Mary the news that would change her life forever. "Do not be afraid, Mary, you have found favor with God. You will be with child and give birth to a son, and you are to give him the name Jesus. He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High" (Luke 2:30-32a).

What an amazing task and privilege it would be to give birth to the Son of God, to raise this child, and to watch His growth in every area of life. I'm sure that Mary often felt inadequate. Yet she had a profound faith in God, and she trusted Him to help her take care of His Child.

As teachers, we sometimes become weary during the Christmas season. The students become excited and restless, and they find it difficult to concentrate on the lessons. Teachers face many distractions also. It may be difficult to find the time for everything that needs to be done at school and everything that needs to be done at home and/or church.

What might Mary and Joseph have been thinking as they awaited the birth of Jesus? Did they face ridicule and scorn from gossiping townspeople? Perhaps they experienced some fears at the thought of raising the Son of God. They may have rejoiced as they realized God loved people so much that He was sending His Son as our Savior.

At this Christmas season, let's join in thanking God for the greatest Gift--Jesus.

Rejoice and praise God!

The members of the Nazarene Educators Worldwide council would like to take this opportunity to wish you and your family a wonderful Christmas season. God bless you as you continue through this school year. May you make a lasting impression upon your students because of your love and commitment to being the best teacher for your students.

"Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways acknowledge him, and he will make your paths straight" (Proverbs 3:5-6, NIV).



Kids Reaching Kids Mission Offering Project for 2013

Dan Harris

The Ultimate Adventure is this year's Mission Offering Project, with the emphasis on helping to raise money to supply children with discipleship resources in every world region. In addition, money raised through the Ultimate Adventure will be used to help train leaders who disciple children. Along with raising money for discipleship materials and training, the Ultimate Adventure is a discipleship adventure for each and every child who chooses to participate. Here's how to begin:

- Log onto www.kidsreachingkids.com to find out more about The Ultimate Adventure and the ministry of Kids Reaching Kids.
- Set your offering goal and order promotional pieces to help you and your children promote the Ultimate Adventure.
- Log onto www.kidsreachingkids.com to download the Ultimate Adventure: Prayer, the Word, Discipleship. These devotionals are free to download and can be used to help the children of your local ministry grow as disciples of Jesus Christ as they raise money for the Ultimate Adventure Mission Offering Project.
- Plan a service project or a special fund raising activity that involves the children of your local ministry, and if possible, your entire local congregation. Visit www.kidsreachingkids.com or our Facebook page for ideas and suggestions.
- Finally, collect your Ultimate Adventure offering. This can occur during your local Vacation Bible School, or all year long. You can send your offering to Kids Reaching Kids at any time. However, all money collected for the Ultimate Adventure must be received by September 30, 2013. For more information on anything concerning the Ultimate Adventure, visit our website at www.kidsreachingkids.com.

"Let us consider how we can stir up one another to love. Let us help one another to do good works" (Hebrews 10:24, NIRV).

WANT TO GET PUBLISHED IN THE NEW? WRITE TO US!

Has God placed something on your heart to say? Would you like to voice your opinion on an issue? Do you have questions that need to be answered? Put your thoughts into words and send them to the editor at mksauer13@gmail.com. We will choose the best articles and publish them in our newsletter! We can't wait to hear from you!



Political hope for Christians

Mallory Sauer

Politics. The word itself evokes in us an uneasy feeling—especially with the heated tension of the recent Presidential election. Some rejoiced at the outcome, while others are still in disbelief or have submitted to despair. Many in the Church who were displeased with the results—if not crushed by them—are asking questions about the future of our great nation and if America will even survive as a Republic. The order of the day seems to be hopelessness—a plunge into the miserable drudges of socialist oppression and economic ruin.

However, we seem to be forgetting one thing... God.

» continued, PG. 3



Prepare your kids for the 'real world'

Janine Wilkins

Whose job is it to disciple children? Who trains them to follow Christ? Who shows them how to deal with all the ups and downs of life on this planet? It seems pretty obvious that it is the job of the ones to whom the children were given. "Children are a heritage from the LORD, The fruit of the womb is a reward" (Psalm 127:3, NKJV). However, we don't always act like it's our job. We must admit, our schedule doesn't always reflect that we think it's our job. It's easy for all parents to let this imperative task be crowded out by all that we have to do. Homeschooling parents have the incredible blessing of time with their children, but all Christian parents should be able to do what God requires of them: disciple their children.

» continued, PG. 2

NEW nominating committee needs your help

Beula Postlewait

A ballot will be emailed to Nazarene Educators Worldwide members in May for the election of people to serve on the NEW Executive Council for 2013--2017. We are asking for nominations for the NEW council. You may know some people who are excellent educators who could serve on that council.

Please consider the educators you know. Would you be willing to nominate someone to serve on the council? Would you like to nominate yourself? We need each educator's name, area of education and contact information (email, postal and phone). Please also write a few sentences describing what you know about the individual. Our nominating committee will contact each person nominated and provide additional information to the nominee. A job

description for the council members is included in this article. We are interested in people who are passionate about the area of education they represent.

We need one chair and two individuals to represent each of these areas:

Public and private schools (K--secondary)
Childcare/preschools
Homeschools
Christian Schools (K--secondary)
College/university education departments

Please send nomination information by January 15 to Lance Howard at ldjlhoward@msn.com.

Thank you for helping the nominating committee to find the best individuals to serve and support our Nazarene educators in their ministry.

Job Description for NEW Executive Council Members

The general officers will represent one of these areas of education:

Public or private schools (K--Secondary)
Childcares/preschools
Homeschools
Christian schools (K--Secondary)
College/university education departments

General Officers

General officers will resource and encourage all Nazarene educators whom they represent.

- General Officers will represent their group in Executive Council Meeting discussions and carry out assignments

that will help those they represent. The Executive Council may meet in person once a year, usually in Kansas City. There will be scheduled conference calls.

- They will assist in the planning and implementing of annual and/or general conferences sponsored by the Nazarene Educators Worldwide.
- General Officers will contribute articles to the electronic newsletter geared for the educators they represent.
- They will network with the educators they represent and communicate current research and materials to resource the educators.
- General Officers will communicate regularly with those they represent with inspirational and/or encouraging thoughts.
- They will be available to assist and encourage the District Nazarene Education Directors.

Nazarene Educators Worldwide Chairperson

- The Nazarene Educators Worldwide Chairperson will preside at the general conferences and at the meetings of the Nazarene Educators Worldwide Executive Council. This would include videoconferences and teleconferences.
- The NEW Chairperson will resource and encourage all Nazarene educators.
- The NEW Chairperson will communicate regularly with the District Nazarene Educators Directors and support them in their tasks.
- The NEW Chairperson will support the general officers as they fulfill their responsibilities.
- The NEW Chairperson will contribute articles to the electronic newsletter.
- The NEW Chairperson will communicate news about current research or materials that will resource or encourage Nazarene educators.
- The NEW Chairperson will help to promote membership in Nazarene Educators Worldwide.



Prepare your kids for the 'real world' Cont.

Jesus told us to make disciples of all nations in Matthew 29:19-20. It only makes sense to start with the part of "the nations" that we live with—our own kids. What good is it if we make disciples of the people in our neighborhoods or in another country if we don't start with the children God gave us?

In the Great Commission, Jesus says we must teach them "to obey everything I have commanded you." That sounds pretty clear. The next step is to prepare them to live in the world. Jesus also said, "I have given them your word and the world has hated them, for they are not of the world any more than I am of the world" (John 17:14, NIV). We need to disciple our children so they can stay strong in the face of hatred.

In the 1960's a social scientist William McGuire tried to figure out why some prisoners of war chose to stay with their captors. He studied what is now called "brainwashing." What he discovered is that, while soldiers believed in democracy and freedom, they were unable to hold on to that belief in the face of skillful debate against it. McGuire studied how to make people resistant to persuasion. He proposed the Inoculation Theory. It works just like a vaccination. If a person is given the arguments he will face ahead of time and is then asked to defend his true belief from such "weak attacks," his resolve to defend his belief will be strengthened. We can use this theory to prepare our children for what they will face in the world, on TV, at college, etc.

Pastor Chap Bettis of The Apollos Project puts it this way: "Those most able to resist the persuasion were those who were given the arguments before hand, and were told 'you have a duty to research it yourself--here are some other resources'... Those are the ones most likely to resist. In a similar way our young people are going to hear ideas that are against Christianity, and we need to prepare them—not by isolating them, but by inoculating them...by telling them what they are going to hear and giving the defense—

what the truth is... This is a distinctly biblical method. Jesus did it with his disciples. On his final night He knew they'd be all churned up seeing the Messiah that was going to usher in the kingdom actually crucified. So he predicted what was going to happen... 'I'm telling you so that, when it happens, your faith will be strengthened'" (from "Introduction to the Fearless Apologetics Videos").

So are we just "pre-brainwashing" our kids? I don't think so. I think it's preventing them from being brainwashed by the world! I want them to think for themselves! I want them to have discernment! I want them to have those critical



thinking skills. I want them to know the truth, and Jesus is the truth! The truth can stand up to vigorous debate. I want them to practice that before they go out there. If I don't do this actively, they will be tossed to and from by whatever new idea comes along (Ephesians 4:14).

From my "Google" education on Inoculation Theory, the steps according to McGuire are as follows:

1. Warn of an impending attack.
2. Make a weak attack.
3. Demonstrate the defense.

I had a similar conversation with my 11-year-old son, Adam:

ME: "Not everyone believes that Jesus is God."

ADAM: "Really?"

ME: "Yup, listen to this: this guy says Jesus was just 'a god' and that the word trinity is not even in the Bible. What do you think of that?"

ADAM: "Uh, I don't know, can I play xBox?"

ME: "Adam, listen, how do we know that Jesus is God?"

ADAM: "It's in the Bible?"

ME: "Where?"

ADAM: "Uh, He forgave sins when He healed the paralytic in Matthew 9. He couldn't have done that if He wasn't God." (Thank you, Jesus, for Naz Teen Bible Quizzing!)

ME: "Wow, I'm impressed! That's great. Let's see where else..."

That wasn't hard. What's hard is to make time to have these kinds of conversations. This year I put it on my "to do" list by formally studying apologetics. I'm really excited about this curriculum. Don't we all get excited about new curriculum? This incredible tool is called "The Apollos Project: Equipping parents to disciple their children" (www.theapollosproject.com). We are using Chap Bettis' apologetics curriculum as part of Stoa Speech and Debate (www.stoausa.org). He also has an online booklet called "The Disciple Making Parent."

Also, in order to learn about our Nazarene heritage, we just started a Nazarene membership class from the Nazarene Continuing Lay Training website: www.thediscipleshipplace.org. Additionally, before all my children were baptized we went through the "Basic Bible Studies" by Chic Shaver (from www.nph.com).

We do what we can with the tools we can find. The important thing is to make the time to disciple our kids. Thankfully Jesus ends the Great Commission with these encouraging words: "and surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age" (Matthew 28:20, NIV).

Political hope for Christians *Cont.*

Our great nation was built on a powerful idea—a nation founded on “the gospel of Jesus Christ,” as Patrick Henry proclaimed. We live in a land founded on the principle that “we recognize no sovereign but God, and no king but Jesus,” as John Hancock and John Adams declared. America is a place where freedom rings, symbolized by our Liberty Bell, on which is inscribed: “Proclaim liberty throughout all the Land unto all the inhabitants thereof” (Leviticus 25:10). We are, as John Winthrop said, a shining “city upon a hill.”

God has protected us as a country—in the beginning, many times against overwhelming odds. He has been with us through our colorful history and has kept us from falling because we are a people who recognize Him.

However, there are members of the Christian community who have lost faith in that America. New laws, new practices and a new mindset have begun to engulf America—one that does not recognize God as our sovereign or Jesus as our king, as our forefathers did. That has caused the Christian community as a whole to lose hope and even to grow complacent and simply throw their hands up in defeat.

So is it any wonder why America is decaying morally—and in effect, financially? The answer is obvious. Edmund Burke said, “Evil prevails when good people do nothing.” We as Christians have failed this nation by letting evil prevail in a very specific arena—government. And it’s no surprise, since we’ve been force-fed the notion that there must be a “separation of church and state,” which is not found in the Constitution nor in any of our founding documents.

For some reason, many Christians in this country feel that engaging in politics is a “dirty business” and should simply be avoided. But just as Pilate was not innocent when he washed his hands and let the crowd decide Jesus’ fate, Christians are not innocent merely because they “wash their hands” by refusing to vote and ignoring their duties as Christian citizens to “select from all the people able men, such as fear God, men of truth” (Exodus 18:21, NIV) to be our leaders. As 2 Samuel 23:3 (NIV) says, “He who rules over men must be just, ruling in the fear of God.” How is this to be accomplished if Christians remain lukewarm and “politically correct” by not being political at all? Proverbs 29:2 (NLT) says, “When the godly are in authority, the people rejoice. But when the wicked are in power, they groan.” How true!

Another founding father and the first Chief Justice of the Supreme Court John Jay charged us with this: “Providence has given to our people the choice of their rulers, and it is the duty, as well as the privilege and interest of our Christian nation, to select and prefer Christians as their rulers.”

My fellow Christians, “politics” is only a dirty word in our culture because we, as Christians, have been absent from it—asleep at the wheel while our godly nation steers off course and is ready to crash into the ditch!

If you are disheartened at the state of our nation and where it is headed, then don’t just offer lip-service! The Declaration of Independence states, “But when a long train of abuses and usurpations, pursuing invariably the same Object evinces a design to reduce them under absolute Despotism, it is their right, it is their duty, to throw off such Government, and to provide new Guards for the future security.”

In the 1770s, the only way “to throw off such government” was through war. In today’s America, we have representation and the ability to use our votes, our voices, our time, our talents and our resources to change the course of our futures.

Here are a few ways you can influence the course of America’s future:

- Give to an organization that defends our religious liberties in the courts.
- Educate yourself and others about our true godly heritage.
- Don’t be silent when you see injustice.
- Research political candidates’ voting records and vote for the most godly among them.
- Contact your state senators and representatives about issues that matter and influence their decisions.
- Be a real follower of Christ by showing the rest of the nation how we love and how dedicated we are to the cause of freedom—freedom in Christ and freedom as a nation!

This especially applies to educators in Christian schools. Don’t be afraid to teach your students the value of being responsible Christian citizens and using their votes to elect godly leaders!

There *is* hope for America because, with God, there is always hope! Remember what Joshua 1:9 (NIV) says: “Have I not commanded you? Be strong and courageous. Do not be afraid; do not be discouraged, for the LORD your God will be with you wherever you go.” If there was ever a cause to celebrate victory or a reason to have hope! Even when the future seems bleak or our way of life is threatened, our Mighty Father will not fail us, if we trust in Him. He tells us in John 16:33 (NIV), “In this world you will have trouble. But take heart! I have overcome the world.” So take heart, Christians! Don’t wait for someone else to act! Take responsibility, and you will see God bless this nation again!



There’s something I am forgetting

Beula Postlewait

I am so busy with school, home and church. Sometime s I think I am losing my mind . I have to keep a list to make sure that I don’t forget important things. Now, I know there is something that I do each year before Christmas ...now what is it? The word “new” keeps coming to my mind. There is something connected with “new” that I need to do. (I’m sorry about the poetry, but maybe that will help.) Now I know it! This is the time of year to join or renew membership in the Nazarene Educators Worldwide (NEW)!

NEW is an organization that supports Nazarene educators in Christian Schools, public schools, private schools, homeschools, global and international schools. It also includes the educators in our universities and colleges who train our teachers. NEW supports the administrators and pastors of Christian Schools. The membership period extends from October 1, 2012 to September 30, 2013. Information will be coming about opportunities for NEW members to get together during the 2013 General Assembly events. NEW members will be voting in the spring for the council members for 2013-2017.

Membership forms are available at the NEW website, www.nazarene.org. Please complete the membership form, include a check for the appropriate amount, and mail it to Dan Harris, Coordinator for the Nazarene Education Office. Make checks payable to the Global Treasury Services. Or, you can join online by following the instructions at the website. Those who return the membership form by January 14, 2013 will be included in a drawing for a \$100 prize. The winner will be announced on January 18, 2013.

If your church has members who are part of a home-school co-op, we would like to know about the group. We have two representatives on the NEW Council who support and resource homeschool educators. We would like the homeschool co-ops to register with the Nazarene Education Office also. You can download registration forms from the www.naznew.org website as well. Homeschool educators in a co-op can join NEW as an institution or as individual members. For questions about membership for homeschool groups, contact Becky Ramsey or Janine Wilkins. Their contact information is listed at the NEW website listed above. Co-ops that return the completed registration form and/or membership form by January 14, 2013 will be included in the drawings for a \$100 prize.

Thank you for your support for Nazarene Educators Worldwide. Dr. Jim Upchurch, the Dean of the School of Education at Olivet Nazarene University, is the chair for this quadrennium. NEW’s mission statement is: “To embrace, encourage, and empower through a network of Christian educators.” The theme for this quadrennium: is “Educators Supporting Educators.” The council members are ready to help you with your needs and concerns. You will find an updated list of the officers for 2009-2013 on the NEW website. You are encouraged to contact Dr. Upchurch or your council representative about your needs or concerns.

“...Educators in Christian schools...Don’t be afraid to teach your students the value of being responsible Christian citizens and using their votes to elect godly leaders!”

Grumbly hateful or humbly grateful?

Becky Ramsey

By the time November has finished its course in the school year, many things have transpired. While there have been many positive happenings in most of our classrooms, our focus is more likely to be fuzzy when it comes to those well-founded, flattering aspects of the learning cycle and much more pronounced on the negative naggings of those things that have just not gone as we had planned.

It could be the new lesson attempt that flopped, the one parent who seems to find a flaw in every feature of our classroom approach, or the extra duty that we have been dealt because Miss Suzy down the hall just does not have time to take care of a task delegated to her. If it is left undone, our classroom or our reputation will suffer.

The newness of the school year has worn off, the individual classroom supplies of each child have begun to show wear, are not working correctly, or have come up missing altogether. The first quarter grades are in, but there are conferences to face. There are parents who think their precious child could not be in the wrong! There is still the task of the end of the quarter personal evaluations to complete and purposeful personal goal setting for the rest of the year.

November and December should be that special time of year when we celebrate a season of Thanksgiving, seek to count and commemorate all the blessings we have received, and look forward to the most wonderful time of the year, the celebration of the birth of our Savior.



Why is it that we too often find ourselves feeling and personifying a grumbly hateful attitude rather than acting and living humbly grateful? Satan has been able to cleverly disguise his most useful, strategic, and expensive weapon—discouragement!

To avoid Satan's trick, we must be vigilant to recognize its use and to diffuse its power. Why is the tool of discouragement useful? Satan does not need to get us totally off track. He just needs us to lose our power source. We do not need to turn our back on our Savior; we just need to attempt to complete the tasks at hand in our own strength. It would be the same as trying to build a house using only crude hand tools rather than resorting to ultra modern power tools that are so readily available today. I Chronicles 16:11-12a (NIV) proclaims, "Look to the Lord and his strength; seek his face always. Remember the wonders he has done."

When we focus on the Creator rather than what we are trying to create, we will be able to have a different attitude: "Deliver us . . . that we may give thanks to your holy name, that we may glory in your praise!" (1 Chronicles 16:35b).

Not only is the tool of discouragement useful, but it is also strategic. Satan does not need to utterly destroy us; he only needs to render us ineffective. If he can keep our focus on the negative rather than to rely on the power of prayer, he has accomplished his goal. James 5:16 declares, "The prayer of a righteous man is powerful and effective." This verse also relays an important message in the inverse. A man who does not pray will lose his power and effectiveness to be a righteous example to those around him.

Discouragement is useful, strategic, but most importantly expensive. Proverbs 4:7 (NIV) admonishes us, "Wisdom is supreme; therefore get wisdom. Though it cost all you have, get understanding." Too often in our educational pursuits, we exchange the quest for dispensing knowledge for

the more valuable and costly wisdom and understanding.

Pursuit of knowledge ends in this lifetime; wisdom is for eternity. We often settle for the prattle of facts instead of pursuing the preeminence of understanding. The price tags have been switched, and we have been left with the gaudy impersonation of what God considers to be truly important. "Blessed is the man who finds wisdom, the man who gains understanding, for she is more profitable than silver and yields better returns than gold. She is more precious than rubies; nothing you desire can compare with her. . . those who lay hold of her will be blessed" (Proverbs 3:13-15, 18a, NIV). We cannot settle for knowledge when we have the privilege of pursuing and passing on a passion for His Wisdom.

As we close this season of Thanksgiving and prepare to celebrate the birth of our King, may we determine in our heart to be found humbly grateful. We can accomplish this proper attitude by deciding where our focus will be. "Whatever is true, what- ever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable—if anything is excellent or praiseworthy—think about such things" (Philippians 4:8, NIV). We can choose to allow God to work through us rather than trying to accomplish the impossible in our own strength.

We can say with the Apostle Paul, "I have learned the secret of being content in any and every situation, whether well fed or hungry, whether living in plenty or in want. I can do everything through him who gives me strength" (Philippians 4:13, NIV).

I will choose to be humbly grateful!



Message for Nazarene Christian schools

Beula Postlewait

1

It is time to register Nazarene Christian Schools. There are so many changes in a facility from year to year, and we want to be aware of them. Thank you for taking the time to help us update our records. We use the information you provide to complete our General Board report. A registration form is available at the Nazarene Educators Worldwide website, www.naznew.org.

The General Board Bylaws of the Church of the Nazarene require churches to register child cares/preschools and schools with the Nazarene Education Office (birth—secondary). Please complete the registration form and return it as soon as possible. Those who return the completed registration form by January 14, 2013 will be included in a drawing for a \$100 prize. We will announce the winner on January 18, 2013. Please return the form by January 14, 2013.

2

This is the time of year to join or renew membership in the Nazarene Educators Worldwide. NEW is an organization that supports Nazarene educators in Christian Schools, public schools, private schools, homeschools, global and international schools. It also includes the educators in our universities and colleges who train our teachers. NEW supports the administrators and pastors of Christian Schools. A NEW membership application is available at the NEW website listed above. The membership period extends to September 30, 2013.

Please complete the membership form, include a check for the appropriate amount, and mail it to Dan Harris, Coordinator for the Nazarene Education Office. Make checks payable to the Global Treasury Services. Or, you can join online by following the instructions at the website. Those who return

the membership form by January 14, 2013 will be included in a drawing for a \$100 prize. The winner will be announced on January 18, 2013.

3

If your church has members who are part of a homeschool co-op, we would like to know about the group. We have two representatives on the NEW Council who support and resource homeschool educators. We would like the homeschool co-ops to register with the Nazarene Education Office also. You can download additional registration forms from the www.naznew.org website. Homeschool educators in a co-op can join NEW as an institution or as individual members. We welcome individual homeschool educators as individual members. Co-ops that return the completed registration form and/or membership form by January 14, 2013 will be included in the drawings for a \$100 prize.

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empower through a network of Christian educators." The theme for this quadrennium is "Educators Supporting Educators." The council members are ready to help you with your needs and concerns. You will find an updated list of the officers for 2009-2013 on the NEW website, www.naznew.org. You are encouraged to contact Dr. Upchurch or the Christian schools representatives with your needs or concerns.

It is a privilege of Christian schools to openly celebrate the birth of Christ and enjoy all of the spiritual aspects of the Christmas season. God bless you as you influence students and families with a reminder of the real reason for Christmas—the birth of Jesus, our Savior and Lord.



Homeschool mom discovers new method

Janine Wilkins

Online education is taking the world by storm! It seems like everyone is doing it. On the other hand, my son is still using the same books I bought when I started homeschooling my oldest daughter 19 years ago! This year, after much consideration and agonizing weighing of the pros and cons, we are scrapping our beloved Saxon. My sixth grader is now using Khan Academy for math.

If you haven't heard of Khan, it's an amazing website with 3,600 videos on a variety of subjects, and it is very easy to use. Just go to www.khanacademy.org. We've been using it for quick math help for at least a year now.

When I can't remember the order of operations or if my son still can't figure out how to change a fraction to a percent, I just do a three-second search on the Khan Academy website and find exactly what I need. A six-minute video explains the concept and guides us to some practice problems. By the way, the entire thing is FREE. It has some pretty credible sponsors including Bill Gates. The best explanation of Khan Academy is summed up by the man who hosts all the videos, Salman Khan, in the YouTube video "Salman Khan: Let's Use Video to Reinvent Education." Take 20 minutes to watch the video, if you want the whole story.

My son is pretty good at math, but I began to wonder if it was all sinking in. Since he is considered to be "ahead" in Saxon, I decided to plunge in with Khan Academy. I had him start at the very beginning with "1 + 1." Of course, he whizzed through the lower levels. The program kept throwing problems at him until he mastered the topic. When he passed the "challenge" he got a badge and progressed to the next topic. This method has been so effective. We've uncovered little "holes" in his understanding, and I just love that this program fills those holes.

Also, it's graded INSTANTLY, so I don't have to wait. Since it moves so quickly, he doesn't whine about having to "do it again." The whole time he's working, there are videos available to watch if he needs an explanation.

I've signed on as his coach, so I can check his progress. Yesterday, I was away from home and he was doing school at my daughter's house. I called and asked what he was doing and he said he did "about an hour" of math. I logged on to Khan and could see exactly what he accomplished. I could also see that he actually did only 38 minutes. He was

to complete it. He will beg me: "Please, can I do Khan?!" Shocking, isn't it?

They have badges to earn that you really have to work for, and he loves it! It seems like it's helping him move into that wonderful place where there's an internal drive to get work done, as opposed to an external force pushing him to complete his work—me.

Khan Academy also has videos in science, history, art, computer science and finance. The brain teasers are really fun as well. The recreational math by "Mathemusician" Vi Hart is downright entertaining. I feel like we've only begun to scratch the surface of Khan's possibilities. Although, I don't agree with everything I've seen in science and history videos, so with a younger child, I would make sure a parent is present for additional guidance. On the whole, it's all very well done and straightforward.

I've read some criticisms of the "Khan method," mostly along the lines that it's too "practical" without giving enough attention to theory. However, I figure a year of something different can't hurt and might relate better to certain learning styles. And did I mention that it's free?!

There is a little insecurity in the fact that all of my son's work is in cyberspace on a cloud somewhere, and while I can periodically print out the

pages showing what he's completed, I don't have any nice neat tests to put into a binder. But the coaching pages are very specific—like a detailed checklist. Instead, I log his hours. It's a bit uncomfortable for this old-fashioned teacher, but that feeling goes away when I see him run to the computer when I say it's time for math!

My advice: just dive in and try it!



shocked that I could access this information, and I felt very technologically capable! We are both still figuring out all the cool features Khan offers.

This curriculum goes all the way up to college level math, and what students can achieve is determined entirely on how much time they invest. My son loves being independent, and we both enjoy watching the videos, which are all free. When he gets close to finishing a challenge, he strives

The best gift

Beula Postlewait

This bit of humor was sent to me by Dr. Derl Keefer, district superintendent of the Wisconsin District.

Four brothers left home for college, and they became successful doctors and lawyers. They prospered.

Some years later, they chatted after having dinner together. They discussed the gifts they were able to give their elderly mother who lived far away in another city.



The first said, "I had a big house built for Mama."

The second said, "I had a hundred thousand dollar theater built in the house."

The third said, "I had my Mercedes dealer deliver an SL600 to her."

The fourth said, "You know how Mama loved reading the Bible. You know she can't read anymore, because she can't see well. I met this preacher who told me

about a parrot that can recite the entire Bible. It took twenty preachers 12 years to teach him. I had to pledge to contribute \$100,000 a year for twenty years to the church, but it was worth it. Mama just has to name the chapter and verse and the parrot will recite it."

The other brothers were impressed.

After the holidays the mother sent out her Thank You cards.

She wrote: "Milton, the house you built was so huge; I live in only one room, but I have to clean the whole house. Thanks anyway."

"Marvin, I am too old to travel. I stay home; I have my groceries delivered, so I never use the Mercedes. The thought was good. Thanks."

"Michael, you gave me an expensive theater with Dolby sound. It could hold 50 people, but all of my friends are dead. I've lost my hearing, and I'm nearly blind. I'll never use it. Thank you for the gesture just the same."

"Dearest Bob, you were the only one to have the good sense to give a little thought to your gift. The chicken was delicious.

Thank you.
Love Ya, Mama"

Each brother thought he had sent the best gift to his mother. What is the best gift to send to someone?

As we enter this Christmas season, we are reminded of the best Gift that was ever given. God sent the best Gift, His only Son, Jesus. In the midst of shopping, parties, programs, and family events, don't forget to thank God for the best Gift. God's love and grace and His Son, Jesus, will help us fulfill the needs of our life throughout the year.

THE NEW

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