

Reasons

Four experienced teachers ... we won't call them old ... were sitting at a table enjoying coffee and donuts late on a Thursday afternoon during Teachers' Convention. Each of them was an exceptional teacher, well respected and acknowledged for their ability in the classroom. They were talking about how, over the years, each had become a good teacher.

The first one said, "I've always found that to be successful, I needed persistence. If I had trouble with something, I kept working at it, and no matter how much effort it took, I never gave up until I achieved my goal."

The three other teachers agreed. "Yes, persistence is important" one of them said. "But I think knowledge is important too. I could never have become a good teacher without knowing the curriculum, and without knowing what skills were necessary to manage a classroom."

"You're both right, of course" said the third. "But there's something else. I know I couldn't have done as well as I have without the support of other teachers, and especially those one or two who helped me a lot when I was just starting out. I still ask for help a lot. The help and encouragement from friends is important for a teacher."

The fourth teacher didn't say anything for a minute or two. Then she spoke up, quietly at first. "The things you've said are all true. They were important for me too, even when I was in college. I always worked very hard, and never gave up. I tried to learn everything I needed to know to be a good teacher. And I certainly asked for help when I needed it ... which was a lot, at the beginning!" She laughed. But then she grew serious.

"There was something else. I am a good teacher because I have had help. I've had help when the workload got so great that I never thought I'd get through it. I've had help learning all the things I needed to learn to become a good teacher. I've had help learning to accept that others want to help me to succeed, and that it's OK to let them."

One of the other teachers interrupted. "You are very fortunate. Who was this person who gave you all this help? He must be a terrific friend!"

"He is" the fourth teacher replied, with a smile. "God has been helping me, with everything I do. *That's* why I'm such a good teacher."

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