

**July 2010: SD Website**

**JESUS OUR TEACHER**

Fellow Pilgrims:

Jesus was a supreme teacher. His students numbered in the thousands (e.g., The Sermon on the Mount, Matthew 5-7). Yet, sometimes they were centered on a single person (e.g., the Centurion, Matthew 8: 5-13). Jesus taught the people he was in contact with and has been teaching, through Scripture, ever since (Psalm 119: 105, 2 Timothy 3:14-17). A good teacher shows us what we don't know and have not yet experienced. This may be comfortable or uncomfortable. This widening of our minds and perceptions may force us to confront pieces of ourselves we would just as soon not deal with. However Jesus takes us where we need to be. I'd like to share with you a poem about great teachers. It fits my experience with great teachers and with Jesus. I have tried to teach using it as a model. It is by the famous and prolific author Anonymous.

**THE TEACHER**  
**Anonymous**

The teacher said to the students:  
"Come to the edge."  
They replied, "We might fall."

The teacher again said:  
"Come to the edge."  
And they responded: "It's too high."

"COME TO THE EDGE"  
The teacher demanded.  
And they came.  
And he pushed them.  
And they flew.

From Adam onwards through time, we have all made excuses about not coming to the edge of our faith and experiencing the fullness of God. However when we allow Jesus to enter in our lives and the Holy Spirit to empower us, we fly. We fly while rooted in the love of God our Father, in the grace of our risen Lord and savior, our brother, Jesus Christ, and in the power of the Holy Spirit. What is the result? Let me share with you a poem by Maya Angelou about Christians. I believe she has caught what it means to be a Christian.

***Christians***  
By Maya Angelou

When I say... " I am a Christian"  
I'm not shouting "I'm clean livin".  
I'm whispering "I was lost,  
Now I'm found and forgiven."

When I say... "I am a Christian"  
I don't speak of this with pride.  
I'm confessing that I stumble  
and need Christ to be my guide.  
When I say... "I am a Christian"  
I'm not trying to be strong.  
I'm professing that I'm weak  
And need His strength to carry on.  
When I say... "I am a Christian"  
I'm not bragging of success.  
I'm admitting I have failed  
And need God to clean my mess.  
When I say... "I am a Christian"  
I'm not claiming to be perfect,  
My flaws are far too visible  
But, God believes I am worth it.  
When I say... "I am a Christian"  
I still feel the sting of pain.  
I have my share of heartaches  
So I call upon His name.  
When I say... "I am a Christian"  
I'm not holier than thou,  
I'm just a simple sinner  
Who received God's good grace, somehow !

May we all embody the spirit and holiness Maya Angelou embodies in the simple but eternally profound phrase, *I am a Christian*. Amen.

In Christ's love,  
Chuck Ellenbaum ><+  
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