

~Other Speakers G-L: Sermon Illustrations II:

Have you ever played pencil break? There is quite an art to the game. I tried once. This is the main sport on my school bus. One day a little boy said, "Mr. Woods would you play pencil break with me?" I said, "Sure. . . only I don't have a pencil." He assured me he would supply all the pencils we needed, so we began. Since I had never played before I got the first lick. I drew back my pencil, cocked it like I had seen other kids on the bus, but just before I was going to let it smack against his pencil in a sure break, my pencil broke from too much pressure. This happened two or three more times and he decided he didn't want to play any more. . . I was breaking all his pencils because I cocked my pencil too hard. Well, I haven't said anything about the children playing this game. It kept them entertained and fairly quite. Day after day I swept up piles of pencils off the bus. Lately however, I noticed that just a few were playing pencil break and I still had about the same amount of pencils to sweep up. I watched for several days to make sure it was the same group playing the game. . . and then Thursday morning as I drove up to the school I said, "I want Jerod, Jason, Richard, and Nick to stay on the bus." Immediately one of the boys named began to whimper. I didn't do anything! I wasn't standing up! The children filed off the bus grinning and making various comments. After I had closed the door I got to my feet and said, "Fellows I want you to know that I think that you are the best pencil break players on my bus." You should have seen their chests swell. The smiles about cut their faces in half. I then went on to say, "Since you are such good pencil break players, I thought I would give you the opportunity to pick up all the pencils on my bus this morning." One of the boys said, "Yes, sir. . . right away sir." They started to scramble up and down the aisles, checking under seats and carrying their pencils to the trash box. After their job was complete and I had inspected to make sure they had not missed any. . . another boy said, "Mr. Woods is this punishment?" I paused a moment, then I answered, "No, this is accomplishment." "What is accomplishment," they wanted to know. I said, "That's when you get something done." In the Christian life

ACCOMPLISHMENT

we have to keep pushing ahead for Jesus. There is no time for treadmill walking or backpedaling. We must be persistent and consistent in our lives.