



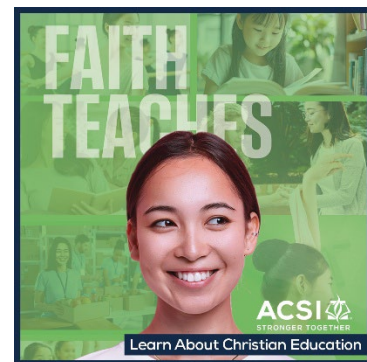
An International Division Member Connection, January 2025

Fellow International Educator,

Educators live according to well-prescribed schedules and routines. You've got class bells, grading cycles, terms and semesters, opening ceremonies, and graduations. Before joining the ACSI global team, I served 24 years as a teacher and later as an administrator in an international school. During those years, I found great joy and comfort in those routines; in many ways, I miss them.

While some might find repetitive school routines a burden, I found they allowed for improvement. Every new start meant I could improve my teaching. Every new year meant that I could meet new challenges with additional experience. Each new semester allowed me to add more wisdom to biblical integration attempts in my subjects. Those semester and summer breaks allowed me to reflect, recharge for the next start, and make more improvements. Finally, endings like graduations meant pausing to celebrate improvements made in me and my students.

This past Christmas Eve, my Bible reading took me to beautiful Psalm 65. [Take a moment and read it yourself.](#) In that Psalm of Praise, a fantastic little verse jumped out at me as we neared the beginning of 2025. It goes like this, "You crown the year with your goodness; your carts overflow with plenty" (Ps. 65:11 CSB). At the start of another year of glorious life-giving school routines, let's



make it our goal to improve and pray for the year ahead to be crowned with His goodness.

I hope I get to see you at one of our [three conferences](#) coming up this year.

Blessings to you wherever you are in the world.

Tim for the [international school team](#)

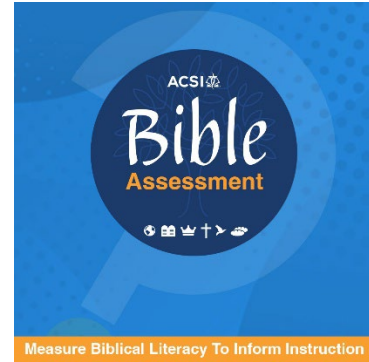
[Tim Shuman, Senior Director, International Division](#)

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Update from ACSI President & CEO, Dr. Larry Taylor



Watch the video above for a Quarter 1 update from ACSI President & CEO, Dr. Larry Taylor.

Upcoming International Events

- Early-bird rates for the ABI Conference will end on Friday, 24 January. [Act fast to reserve your spot!](#) Leaders from Accredited, Bilingual, and International schools in Latin America are invited to attend. Join us at the [Crowne Plaza Santo Domingo Hotel](#) in the Dominican Republic from 30 March to 02 April 2025.
- Calling International School Leaders to register for ISLC Europe in Mallorca, Spain, at beautiful [Melia South Beach](#). Join us from 27 to 30 April 2025. [Check out our speaker lineup HERE.](#)
- **Mark your calendars for ICEC Asia 2025**, which will be held in Malaysia on the campus of Dalat International School from 26 to 29 November 2025. Details are forthcoming.
- Are you bringing on staff for the second semester? [PFO2Go](#), our online course, can help prepare them to transition to your country and ministry. This [recent article](#) unpacks PFO2Go for you.

News, Articles, & Other Ideas

- ACSI's most recent posts and resources:
 - [On Waiting and Advent](#) with Mitch Evans
 - [Presenting a Thanks Offering of Praise](#) with Melanie Waisukirawa
 - [Supporting Children in the Wake of Trauma](#) with Wendy Mattner
 - [Sharpening Kingdom Leaders | Navigating AI](#) with Dr. Lynn Swaner and Dr. Larry Taylor
- Hey leaders, our friend Matthew Mann and the Pelita Harapan Group are launching a new program called The Leadership Journey. This no-cost opportunity is designed to equip Christian school leaders with the skills, knowledge, and encouragement they need to thrive. [Learn more and sign up here.](#)
- [Michael and Kim Essenburg](#) care for international Christian schools and love to share flourishing tips and ideas with you.
 - [International Christian school leaders, how can you make it easier for people to experience a respectful appreciation of others' cultures?](#)
 - [I read 228 books in the last year—here are 20 exceptional ones from 5 different categories](#)
 - [Board members, how deeply do you understand your international Christian school's purpose statements?](#)
- This kind of reminder is always helpful, [For a Christian, asking "Why pray?" makes no sense.](#)
- This article, [The Key to Preventing Burnout in International Education](#), also discusses some causes of burnout in international educators. This might be worthy of further discussion in your community.
- Be sure to check out many helpful and free TCK and family resources at [TCKCare-ed.org](#).
- I enjoyed this creative website called [An Ocean of Books](#). Type in your favorite author, poet, or philosopher, see where it takes you, and then explore the ocean islands surrounding them.
- Where are my fellow Earth Science teachers? [This interactive resource on the moon](#) is fantastic. It covers everything you ever wanted to know about the moon and more.
- Just in case you missed this year's New Year's Eve fireworks, you can have a good time right now [right here!](#) Enjoy.

Headship Openings Only

- Bingham Academy, Ethiopia. [Learn more here.](#)
- Christian Academy of Guatemala. [Learn more here.](#)
- Faith International Academy, Philippines. [Learn more here.](#)
- Hillcrest International School, Indonesia. [Learn more here.](#)
- International Academy of St. Petersburg, Russia. [Learn more here.](#)
- International Christian School – Uijeongbu, Korea. [Learn more here.](#)
- Mountainview Christian School, Indonesia. [Learn more here.](#)
- Tien Shan International School, Kazakhstan. [Learn more here.](#)

If you have a head of school opening coming up, please let me know. Be sure to check our [member school vacancy page](#) and the [ACSI Career Center](#). If you are interested in a position at an international school, check out the latest non-USA opportunities [here](#). Check out the latest ACSI [Job Flash](#) that goes out to thousands. Learn how you can get your needs included in the Job Flash [here](#); scroll down for Job Flash.

Testimonial: The ACSI Career Center

"We rely on ACSI when it comes to hiring—they play a critical role and consistently deliver. In the past two years we have put very tough challenges before them—finding a new principal and numerous teachers. They became a partner offering helpful advice, outreach, resume bank, and much more. In fact, I would credit ACSI's Chris Scheer as someone who typifies their commitment to Christian schools. Her guidance has been objective, actionable,

Think About Your Thinking

By Dr. David Balik, VP USA

The way you finish one season shapes how you begin a new season.

As I write this, we're about to finish 2024. I'm a firm believer that, as leaders, it is always helpful to take some time to finish the year with some reflection, and here's a way Jeff Henderson (of the FOR Company) recommends accomplishing that in just 15 minutes.

First, we're going to go 'old-school' and get out a pen and

Memorial Stones

By Chris Loncar, VP of Human Resources

If you walk into our headquarters in Colorado Springs, Colorado, you will immediately see this Scripture on the wall: "We will tell the next generation the praiseworthy deeds of the Lord, his power, and the wonders he has done" (Psalm 78:4). This is a precious Scripture to ACSI as we recognize a key part of why we exist. Across the history of the Jewish people, God was very intentional about ensuring that His

and effective. Chris, like many at ACSI, truly care about our success. More than just necessary, ACSI is a blessing."

– Dennis Gonier, Downers Grove Christian School

Click [here](#) to learn more about the ACSI Career Center.

paper (or a tablet if you must). 😊 Brain research tells us that writing this down is much more effective.

Second, set the timer on your phone for five minutes for each of the three questions. Write down everything you can think of, and if you run out of ideas, write, "I can't think of anything else."

After the five minutes are up, go to the next question, then the next. It's important not to judge or edit what you write. Just get it out on paper. All that said, here are the three questions:

1. What went well?
(five minutes)
2. What could improve?
(five minutes)
3. What will be the one area of focus for me in 2025?
(five minutes)

[Continue reading here.](#)

people remembered the key events that demonstrated His faithfulness and goodness to them. Passover celebrates God's deliverance of the Jews from Egypt in the days of Moses, and Purim celebrates God's deliverance of the Jews from Haman in the days of Esther. Our own Christian holidays, such as Christmas and Easter, follow that model of remembrance with Christ's birth, death, burial, and resurrection.

One of the biggest benefits of remembrance is bringing ourselves back to moments in time, whether in our lifetimes or across history, to recall what the LORD has done. The further we drift from the moments God moved in our lives and across history, the more subject we are to creating our own narratives that are based on present feelings, circumstances, and cultural norms.

[Continue reading here.](#)



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We strive to send valuable, timely emails to our members and friends.

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Think About Your Thinking Continued

In 15 minutes, you will have accomplished something many leaders don't do: reflecting. In my experience, great leaders consistently reflect and then adjust. Amen?

That leads me to our next exercise. "But wait, you said it would only take 15 minutes!" Okay, you're right. But if you stop now, you'll forfeit the real power of this exercise.

Tim Tassopoulos, President & COO at Chick-fil-A, encourages leaders to “think about your thinking.” So, I want you to take another 10 minutes and think about what you wrote. Reflect on why you wrote down what you did on these three questions. And then ask yourself, “Is my thinking leading me in a positive direction, or a negative one?” Perhaps the biggest insight you’ll have is to reflect on the quality of your thinking.

One final word about this exercise, and I say this with all love and respect to our wonderful ACSI Christian school community. This isn’t a criticism. It’s more of a challenge. Of the hundreds of school leaders on this email distribution list, many of you won’t do this. You won’t take the time to do this. That’s why I’m pushing you, challenging you, and praying for you. Be among the few who will. It will be a gift to you and your school from you for 2025.

“Of all persons, the Christian should be best prepared for whatever the New Year brings. He has dealt with life at its source. In Christ, he has disposed of a thousand enemies that other men must face alone and unprepared. He can face his tomorrow cheerfully and unafraid because yesterday he turned his feet into the ways of peace and today, he lives in God. The man who has made God his dwelling place will always have a safe habitation.” ~ A.W. Tozer

Prayerfully reflect on where you’ve been. Adjust for where you sense the Lord is leading you. Think about your thinking. As our President, Dr. Larry Taylor, likes to say, “Great days ahead!!” And so, our prayer for you is that 2025 will be a year full of great days and achievements that impact eternity for God’s glory. We pray you will experience, follow, and serve our God unprecedentedly as the year unfolds. Together, we are stronger, so know that we are for and with you every step of the way...

Memorial Stones Continued

Instead, by contemplative and worshipful remembrance, we remind ourselves of all that we believe and why, piercing through the shakiness of our present condition and re-establishing ourselves on the Rock of Ages. This gives us confidence that God is the same yesterday, today, and forever, with His faithfulness and goodness in the past extending further still into our present and future.

Many times in Scripture, God calls for tangible reminders of major events to be established. In Joshua 4:1-8, God instructs the Israelites to cross the Jordan River, which He miraculously stopped to allow the Israelites to cross. Joshua directs representatives from the 12 tribes to take stones from the riverbed. These stones are later set up in the Promised Land at Gilgal as a memorial to God’s faithfulness and intervention. Later in the chapter, the story continues:

On the tenth day of the first month the people went up from the Jordan and camped at Gilgal on the eastern border of Jericho. And Joshua set up at Gilgal the twelve stones they had taken out of the Jordan. He said to the Israelites, “In the future when your descendants ask their parents, ‘What do these stones mean?’ tell them, ‘Israel crossed the Jordan on dry ground.’ For the Lord your God dried up the Jordan before you until you had crossed over. The Lord your God did to the Jordan what he had done to the Red Sea when he dried it up before us until we had crossed

over. He did this so that all the peoples of the earth might know that the hand of the Lord is powerful and so that you might always fear the Lord your God” (Joshua 4:19-24).

Memorial stones can be adapted in many ways. There are the traditional Christian celebrations, sacraments, and other valuable annual repetitions of the church calendar. But they can also be created among your families. Part of how my family celebrates New Year’s Eve is we select 100 pictures and videos that represent the most significant moments of this year. I sit our family down (our kids are five and under), and we put the selections on our TV. One by one, we go through them, our family participating in sharing what they remember about those moments. Later, when our kids are in bed, my wife and I cook a meal together and memorialize the last year by celebrating God’s faithfulness through each up and down. We pray for each other and look forward to what God will do next, in faith expecting another year in which we may go through together for God’s glory.

Many people look back into the past and choose to become bound by it. But the LORD calls us to look back for purposes of looking ahead. Remembering God’s faithfulness and goodness, even if things have not gone well recently, can fill you with hope and expectation that he will redeem the past as you sing of the praiseworthy deeds of the LORD.

In 2025, take moments to stop to establish memorial stones among your families and those closest to you. Tell the next generation about the Cross, the Tomb, and the Resurrection. Tell them about how God rescued you from the depths of despair, from the clutches of your darkest sin, and from the disaster that came of your pride and selfishness.

Looking forward, 2025 will be filled with opportunities and challenges, and we don’t know what the year will bring. But prepare yourself for the end of the year by resolving in your heart to remember what God has done and celebrate what God is doing, taking stones from the riverbed and bringing them into the promised land. God only knows how the story of your 2025 may ripple through generations to come, through the ears of people you may never meet, as they encounter Jesus through the stories you memorialize.