

Katanòmen Let us consider...

A Student's View of Christian Education

by Anna Mercer

Pieter Stok has explained the purpose of Christian education in this way: "Healthy Christian Education develops critical thinking by having the courage to explore other world views from the perspective of its own worldview...Students are recognized for who they are: sinners in need of God's grace in Christ."¹ These words perfectly describe a Christian education. Sadly, we live in an extremely perverted world. What used to be viewed as despicable is now considered a norm. People claim neutrality but are quick to anger when you voice an opinion that challenges their own. We are experiencing a spiritual drought in America, and it is possibly due to the way that God has been taken out of the public school system.

In the 1960's, when America's journey away from God began, most unreligious teachers still taught with morals similar to those of the Christian faith. But now, evolution and atheism dominate the minds of teachers, which is then presented as truth to impressionable young students. It seems that as a nation, we have forgotten the miraculous God that helped us break away from Great Britain and have spiritual freedom in America. We have forgotten the God that helped the early church survive persecution. We have forgotten the God that sent His only Son to save our worthless souls from

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The mission of Grace Classical Academy is to provide an education designed to help our children know the love, grace, truth and holiness of our glorious God and, from this understanding, strive for excellence in knowledge, wisdom and service.

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Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that by testing you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect. —Romans 12:2 (ESV)

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eternal torment in hell. A God, who provides more blessings for us than we can even count, does not deserve to be forgotten. He deserves everything we can give Him and more. A true, God-honoring education shows us how to devote our lives to His will and lets Him control our education as well as the rest of our lives.

In addition to allowing us to devote our lives to God, Christian education trains us to discern the things of the flesh from the things of God. Romans 12:2 says this: "Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that by testing you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect." (ESV) By being constantly surrounded by thoughts of God at school, we can more easily recognize foreign, sinful ideas. A Christian education provides a way for us to see these "good and acceptable and perfect" things, as well as recognize God's will in all our decisions.

Lastly, a solid upbringing in Christ provides a route for applying what we have learned to our everyday walk with God. A good student learns his book knowledge, but a great student will apply the knowledge to his life. At a public school, the students can learn and have a private life with God, but at a Christian school we have the privilege to live the way God teaches us. We learn essential subjects like math, history, and science from a Christian viewpoint. We are personally equipped to walk a daily walk with our Lord as well as aim our whole life towards Him. While learning, we see the massive faults of mankind. This makes us appreciate the love and mercy of God even more. Who are we that God would want to actively pursue a relationship with us?

In conclusion, a Christian education is an indispensable aid to our faith. Through it, we can devote our lives to God, distinguish good from evil, and apply learned lessons to our everyday Christian walk. We are blessed by God with an opportunity to learn about Him in all aspects of life; we need these lessons to protect our constantly-bombarded faith. Our God is a merciful heavenly being, and we can better further our knowledge of Him by following His will for our education.

¹ Stok, Pieter, "15 Reasons Why Christian Education is Important." Travels from Ur. <http://pieterstok.com/2011/09/22/14-reasons-why-christian-education-is-important/> September 22, 2011.

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—Anna
Mercer,

9th Grade
Student**

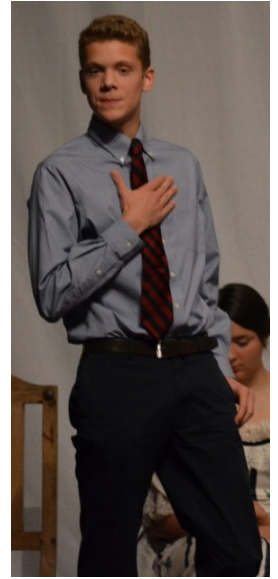
This newsletter is a quarterly publication of Grace Classical Academy

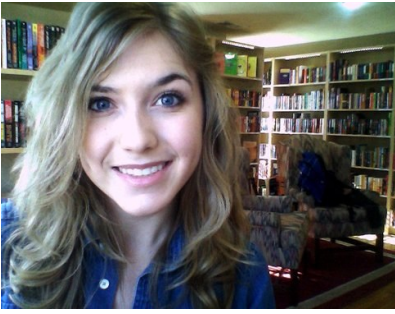
Editor: Marty Wynn

Please e-mail comments and suggestions to admin@graceclassical.org

If you have received this newsletter in error, or need to change your mailing address, please call (417) 877-7910.

High School History Day





My Experience at *WORLD Magazine*

Alissa Robertson graduated from GCA in 2011 and is currently a junior at Patrick Henry College in Purcellville, Virginia. This past summer, Alissa had the opportunity to intern at *WORLD Magazine*. In the following essay, she shares her experiences.

Looking back, one thing that attending Grace Classical Academy taught me was that God directs our steps—and there was something about leaving home that really made me realize it. This past summer, I had the privilege of interning with *WORLD Magazine* in Asheville, N.C. It was both a whirlwind of learning and a time for reflection and rest.

In high school, I didn't fully realize the blessing it was to be educated at Grace Classical Academy. Not only was I first introduced to *WORLD Magazine* at GCA, but the skills I needed to prepare me for an internship at a major news organization began at Grace. GCA seeks to produce a well-rounded graduate that is rooted in the truth of Scripture—a preparation I have been extremely thankful for both in college and as an intern.

My teachers at Grace would discuss current issues with the students in light of a Biblical perspective. They taught me what my blind spots were in writing and how to improve. Most importantly, they taught me that truth needed to be shared, and lies needed to be exposed. This teaching gave me the ability to look at the world around me and see where it lacked truth. What stuck out to me the most at the time was the media. I became frustrated with the media and didn't really see any news organization completely telling the truth—something they all boast about.

GCA gives its teachers a free bi-monthly issue of *WORLD*. When my mom started working as the 0th grade science teacher, we started reading it as a family. It wasn't until we started reading *WORLD* regularly that I thought of journalism for a career—at the time, *WORLD* was the only news group I had been exposed to that told the whole truth. When I found out that Patrick Henry College had connections with *WORLD* News Group during my college search, I was sold.

After a year of indecision and another year spent in two journalism courses, my dream to work with *WORLD* came true—much faster than I had imagined. I didn't take any journalism courses my freshman year at PHC and by the end of my sophomore year, I had only taken Journalism I and II—the basics. I had written a couple of stories that had been put up on the website after some serious editing, but I didn't think I would get completely connected until after graduation.

One day, in the middle of my fourth semester (last spring), I was talking with my journalism professor about a public relations internship opportunity that fell in my lap. The PR internship was an amazing opportunity in itself considering that the company was a well-known D.C. establishment and that my only recommendation was from one of my second cousin's friends. So I told my professor about it and honestly, he didn't like the idea. Let's put it this way: to a journalist, PR is the "dark side." My professor asked me to apply for a two week class in Asheville with *WORLD* called the *WORLD* Journalism Institute and to see what would happen from there. If I didn't get in, he said I could "do the PR thing."

A few weeks later I went back to my professor's office to talk with him about applying and he said, "Well, why don't you just talk to Dr. Olasky about it? He's right down the hall." Dr. and Mrs. Olasky are the head editors at *WORLD* and are rarely on campus. This week, they were at PHC for Dr. Olasky's bi-annual *Newsmaker Interview Series* for the magazine. When my professor sat me down in Dr. Olasky's office for an impromptu interview, I was beyond nervous. They asked me a few cordial questions, found out about my PR opportunity, discovered my interest in abortion and said this: "Here's what you should do: don't work with [the PR organization]."

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Battle Grammatica Photos



Pictured left to right:

Luke O'Dell—7th Grade winner

Genna Tlustos—6th Grade winner and **Grand Champion** for 4th-7th Grades

Sheridan Sellers—5th Grade winner

Katherine Moss—4th Grade winner

Congratulations to all the 2014 GCA Battle Grammatica participants!



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Take our two week class this summer and intern full time as our abortion beat writer.” I walked back to my room and had no words. I honestly didn’t think I heard him right. He wanted *me* to be the abortion beat writer for the website? By the grace of God that’s what happened and I’m still looking back amazed at how God shapes our lives.

While interning this summer I learned far more about writing and abortion than I thought possible. I learned that writing for news is supposed to be clear and, above all, honest. One thing I love about *WORLD* is its position on Christian journalism. It is not our job as journalists to just report the good news, but the truth. At the same time, we want to report the good news when it’s there as an encouragement to our readers. Journalism is meant to keep the leaders in our society accountable and in many ways, is thought of as the fourth branch of government. If we were to neglect writing about a fault in our Christian community, wouldn’t that be doing our fellow brothers and sisters in Christ a disservice? If Christian journalism is merely a confidence booster, then we are neglecting our founding principle: truth.

My duties over the summer consisted of a story meeting every morning and then researching and writing the story I was assigned that day. Seeing my stories up on the website every evening was definitely an encouragement. As in most careers, journalism is best learned by practice, practice, practice. I say that it was a restful summer because of the type of atmosphere present in *WORLD*’s news room. It is not a huge cut-throat paper, but an impactful magazine with writers spread all over the nation, so very few are actually at the office. I would spend the first half of the day writing at the office and the second writing in the Olasky’s living room. Mrs. Olasky would edit our papers in “her office” which was out on the screened-in porch overlooking pine trees and bunnies running around in the yard. Their house is in the middle of the Smoky Mountains, so seeing a raccoon while going through line-by-line editing was not a surprise. All I can say is that this experience has made me so thankful for the Lord’s guidance in my life. I can now honestly *continued on pg. 6*

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say that I live knowing that everything I have is from Him. It may not compare with what the Lord has given others, but this is what the Lord has given me, and I am so incredibly blessed.

Here are some things that interning with *WORLD* taught me about Journalism: I learned that there are three kinds of news stories one can write—stories that reflect creation, stories that reflect the fall, and stories that reflect redemption. If you read *WORLD Magazine*, you will find stories about all three.

Most news stories written today revolve around the fall. The adage “bad news is the best news” rings true for most journalists that start hopping up and down every time a disaster hits or another government official is caught in a sex scandal. For Christian journalists, this mindset can be easy to fall into. But, what I love about *WORLD* is that when reporting these issues, they do not look at bad news with excitement. As a whole, those at *WORLD* write about Scripture and point the readers to a proper response.

Another pit easy to fall into for any journalist is that of despair. If you have to stay current on all of the awful truths in our world as your job, it can get pretty depressing. When I started researching for the abortion beat, there were times I was filled with a deep anger against those who lie to women and pressure them into getting an abortion. Through prayer and after talking with my parents and the Olaskys, I came to realize that despite all of the pain we go through, there is still a Redeemer. As long as there is sin on this earth, people will break God’s laws and cause pain to others. Journalists need to uncover the truths about the evil in this world in order to help the people stop as much of it as we can. When we win little battles yet still see that ocean of sin yet to conquer, we can take comfort in the fact that we already have victory through Jesus Christ.

See the blue box on this page for more information on WORLD Magazine and how to access Alissa’s articles online.

Staff Birthdays**March**

March 1 - Larry Larsen

March 1 - Lonnie Vandiver

March 26 - Kim Deren

March 30 - Luke Shawhan

**April**

April 5 - Christine Gillis

April 7 - Gil Flores

April 9 - Terry Flores

April 14 - Cheryl Vandiver

April 15 - Jim Bradley

April 16 - Jennifer Morris

***WORLD Magazine***

WORLD Magazine is a bi-weekly Christian news magazine, published in the U.S. by God’s World Publications. *WORLD Magazine* is a resource GCA provides to teachers and staff. More information may be obtained at www.worldmag.com

To access the archive of articles written by Alissa Robertson, go to http://www.worldmag.com/writer/alissa_robertson

Praise Report

Our hearts are full of gratitude and praise to our Lord for the continued blessings GCA enjoys. The following are a few examples, of which there are many, that we offer praise and glory to our Lord for:

- We enjoy the freedom few others around the world do to choose our curriculum and to work to honor Christ in all grade levels and in all subjects and to keep Him in His rightful and truthful place as the center of all learning.
- Year after year GCA has been blessed with financial provision. So far this school year we have received over \$75,000 in donations. We have met the matching grants that we were offered at the beginning of the school year.
- The heart for our students that the teachers and staff at GCA consistently demonstrate is another blessing that few schools could ever hope to enjoy.
- King's Chapel, whose facilities we rent, has been a very gracious landlord to GCA which is a huge blessing.
- Our families are an amazing group of people that we are blessed to have the privilege to partner with in the education of their children.

For these and all other blessings, both known and unknown, we give thanks and praise to our holy and gracious Lord God.

—Lonnie Vandiver

**Oh give thanks to the LORD: call upon His name; make known His deeds
among the peoples! Sing to Him, sing praises to Him; tell of all His
wondrous works! Glory in His holy name; let the hearts of those who
seek the LORD rejoice!**

1 Chronicles 16:8-10 (ESV)



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March 2014

- 3 Tuition Due, Last Day for Reenrollment Discount
- 7 **End of 3rd Quarter**
- 9 Daylight Savings Time Begins
- 10-14 **No School, Spring Break**
- 10-12 Teacher Training
- 11-12 **Optional Parent/Teacher Conferences**
- 21 **Dots & Stripes Day**
- 28 **High School Etiquette Banquet, 6:30 pm**



April 2014

- 1 Tuition Due
- 4 **Open House, 6:30 pm**
- 10 **Spring Concert, 7 pm**
- 11 **K4 History Day, 11 am**
Kindergarten History Day, 2:45 pm
- 14-17 **SAT Testing, 1st Grade & Up**
- 18 **No School, Good Friday**
- 20 **Easter Sunday**
- 21 **Snow Make-Up Day**



May 2014

- 1 Tuition Due
- 9 **Spelling Bee**
- 11 **Mother's Day**
- 13 **Senior Graduation, 7 pm**
- 15 **8th Grade Graduation, 2:30 pm**
- 16 **Kindergarten Graduation, 10 am**
Last Day of School, Early Out, 11:30 am
- 26 **Memorial Day**
- 26-30 **Office Closed**

