



## Κατανῶμεν Let us consider...



### 2015 Eighth Grade Graduation Address

by Dr. Mark Sellers

In his address to the graduating class of 2019, GCA board member Dr. Mark Sellers exhorts us to remember three truths about God and understand that God is always at work in our lives, no matter the circumstances we face.

After driving to Kansas City to visit the World War I Museum with this class and listening to a few hours of the many virtues of Batman, I was thinking I should change my topic to this caped-crusader. But instead, I'd like to discuss a few things I've learned over the years that could be helpful as you transition to the high school years and beyond. While you may be a much different person in the future, the habits and behaviors you exhibit and practice now will make up a large part of your future self.

AW Tozer said that ***what we believe about God is the most important thing about us.*** Think about that for a moment. It's not our status or intellect or background or our circumstances. Our view of God shapes how we perceive the world and focuses the choices we make. God does not change; only our viewpoint or perception about who He is changes in relation to His underlying truth and character. I challenge you to spend time and get to know Him more. He will direct your paths in all things if you acknowledge Him.

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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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**And we know that  
for those who love  
God all things  
work together for  
good, for those  
who are called  
according to his  
purpose.**

**Romans 8:28**

**The fool says in  
his heart, "There  
is no God."**

**Psalms 14:1**

One underlying truth we must believe about God is the promise of Romans 8:28 that says that for those who love God, all things work together for good. I work for the Federal Bureau of Prisons and, 3 years ago, I was reporting for temporary assignment in Tucson to help a colleague and had taken the airport shuttle to the federal complex to check in and pick up a vehicle. Apparently, I was supposed to go to the penitentiary instead, which is where the vehicles were kept. Since it was Sunday evening, there was little activity at the federal complex. I waited for about fifteen minutes in the lobby before anyone came to the front area to assist me. It turned out that the gentleman who came out was the chaplain and usually he would have been gone about an hour earlier, but he had been praying with four female inmates who had just given their lives to Christ! He offered me a ride to the penitentiary, and we talked about our faith, the goodness of God, and how all things work together. I kept thinking that evening about how thousands of large and small details throughout the day lined up, so I could get a lift from the chaplain and praise God with him for the four new sisters in Christ. If one small circumstance had been off—lost baggage, flight delay, mechanical issues, or weather—the chaplain and I wouldn't have had a time of celebrating God's goodness. I **encourage** you to pay attention to what most people attribute to chance or randomness and instead look for the hand of the Creator in all aspects of your life. He is constantly working out the details to bring you into closer relationship with Him.

A second truth we must realize is that science and faith are **not** mutually exclusive. Psalm 139:14 says that I am fearfully and wonderfully made. I have a background in nuclear engineering and a doctorate in pharmacy, so I've endured a lot of biology, biochemistry, and immunology classes. The more classes I had, the more it strengthened my faith. Each progression of a subject exposed further layers of complexity. This incredible complexity demands an answer. While attending pharmacy school in Maryland, I'll never forget the morning I was listening to a lecture from a professor whose whole area of research was topoisomerase enzymes. There are four classes of these enzymes

This newsletter is a quarterly publication of Grace Classical Academy

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that function to separate a small section of helically-wound DNA by cutting the phosphate backbone and allowing transcription of DNA information for gene function or replication. On the surface, this may sound like a small thing, but these enzymes are crucial for all forms of life. My professor spent an entire hour talking about the intricacies of this single enzyme—how it is turned on and off, the speed at which it can replicate, and the incredible accuracy it repeatedly displays to sustain life. Just as class was finishing, he summed up the lecture, and essentially his adult life's research, with the conclusion that a bolt of lightning and the blind chance of evolution led to proteins and organisms utilizing this enzyme for the continuation of life. *I was shocked!* Clearly, he and I had opposing ideas about the origin of life. I saw the incredible detail and accuracy of a masterful Creator; he saw dumb luck as the author of his existence. The mindset of evolutionary thinking is that if you blow up a Scrabble factory enough times over millions of years, the falling letters will at some point spell out Tolstoy's novel War and Peace. Modern statistical analysis of the chance that enzymes alone came together randomly (assuming the pre-existence of amino acid building blocks) is  $1 \times 10^{40,000}$ . Anything with a probability less than  $1 \times 10^{50}$  is considered impossible. It's as if God put an exclamation point on His creation for man to discover the truth...if man is honestly seeking answers.

Finally, we must learn **patience**. I recalled a story from my childhood while preparing for this address that I haven't thought of in decades. My dad and I were out in the woods near Sullivan, MO, looking for a cave that was supposed to be in the area. We had looked for quite some time, and I was getting tired. He mentioned that I should sit down for a bit while he hiked the ridge to see if the cave was in the next valley. Some time had passed and I started getting concerned, because I hadn't heard from him. I started calling at regular intervals and didn't hear anything back. I finally saw him come back over the ridge and asked him why he hadn't responded. He said that he kept responding, yet every time he called back I was already calling out again, drowning out his response. There are times in life when we call out to God and then drown out His response because we are impatient. We want a text or email back from Him. We want an instant resolution to our circumstances. In these times, it may seem that God is not listening, but I can assure you *He is*. While the concept of time does not apply to Him, He is working on the details of your lifetime, because He loves you and is more concerned about developing your character than your comfort. God can accomplish more in three minutes by bringing circumstances together than we can in three months of trying to act without faith in Him.

When Peter's eyes were fixed on Jesus, he was able to walk on water. He began to sink when He took his eyes off Jesus and focused on his circumstances. There will be many challenges in the years ahead, and many things will probably not work out the way you plan in your mind. Remember that God is always at work in the midst of your circumstances and strive to trust Him to help paint the masterpiece that will be known as your life.

# Bible Reading Logs

They say that people come in every shape and size; however, sin does not. This is the one area where every single person on earth is alike. We are all the same in that we were all born sinners. For example, when the people of Israel were complaining, the passage said that everyone did it, not just one person. They were sinning because they were not happy with what God had provided for them.

Exodus 4-21

Esther Roos

I learned that God will make things as elaborate as needed in order to bring glory to His name—just like the Ark, the Tabernacle, and the tent of meeting. He is obviously a God of order...

Exodus 22-40

Sheridan Sellers

**In the 7th and 8th grades, students read seventeen chapters of Scripture each week and then turn in comments. Here are some of the comments:**



I found that when God wants His people to do things, He always gives them the ability to do it.

Exodus 4-21

Cameron Frazier



Man always turns back to his sinful nature— when God freed the Israelites from Pharaoh, spared them in the wilderness, and guided them by day and by night, they still made false gods. God was so gracious to them and then they turn around and do what they're not supposed to do.

Exodus 22-40

Will Wynn



I learned that man is easily deceived and we have trouble believing in God, even though He says to trust Him.

Caleb Morris

Genesis 1-17



If our main focus is on anything but God, it will lead us to disappointment. But if we put all our focus and attention on God, He will help us to be content, and God will never bore us because He is an everlasting, powerful God.

Ecclesiastes 5

Elizabeth Sherman

# Praises and Prayer

GCA Family,

I am so thankful for the opportunity to be a part of this school—it is a joy and a blessing. This school has been and continues to be a testimony that God is faithful and involved in daily life. While there is not room to list them all, here are just a few of the many blessings that GCA has experienced in the last couple of months:

- New students who are excited to be here and that we are excited to have
- Amazing teachers who love their students and staff that are seeking to please God in their endeavors
- A supportive and involved board of directors
- Volunteers with a “what more can I do” attitude
- Parents who are encouraging and supportive
- A spirit of unity and encouragement within the GCA family
- Over \$15,000 in donations since August 1st

Here are a few things to continue to pray about:

- That we may find and follow God’s direction for our future, trusting and depending on Him
- That God will continue to bless and provide the resources necessary for all He has called us to do
- That all of the GCA family develop strong, personal commitments for Christ-centered, prayerful lives

May we always praise Him for what He has done and never forget His faithfulness and blessings!

Jedidiah Moss

# Questions for the Kitchen Table

The 11th and 12th graders turn in questions every Friday in the Ethics class. We offer these questions to you as ideas for discussion at a family meal or to simply ponder:

- Does obedience to God flow from faith and love for God, or does faith and love flow from obedience to God?
- I know I can deal with guilt of my sin by trusting in God’s grace, but what do you do when people refuse to extend grace to you and keep reminding you of your sin and guilt?
- How do you get to the point where you love reading your Bible?
- Can Christians adopt some of the principles of utilitarianism (an antinomian system) without being inconsistent with Christian principles of law and absolute truth? (*Utilitarianism*: the end justifies the means, even if the end is good but the means are wicked. *Antinomian*: contrary to absolutes)



# The First Day of School



## Staff Birthdays

### October

October 3—Jody McNulty

October 14—Chris Beeson

October 22—Melanie Brookie



### November

November 8—Marion Winkler

November 14—Stephanie Beeson

November 15—Michale Nelson

November 27—Jill Sellers

### December

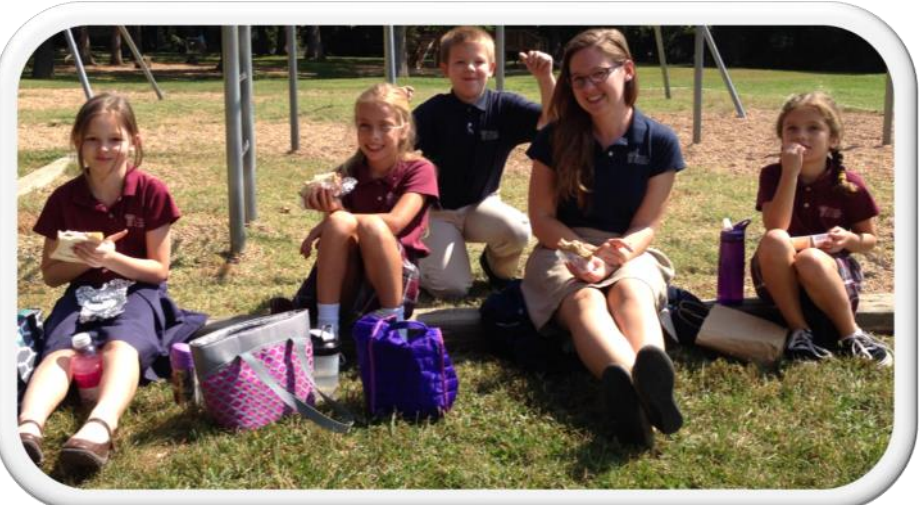
December 5—Robin Harrison



# Around the School



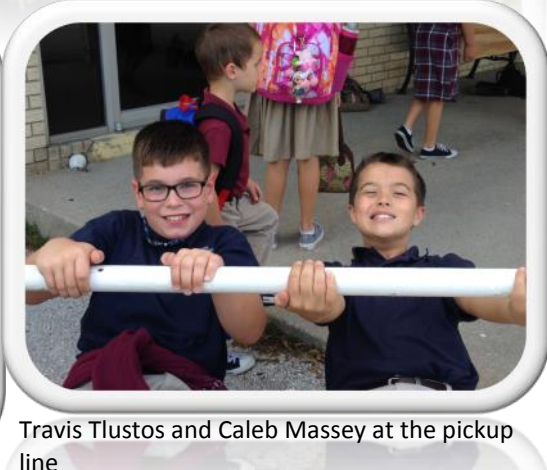
Silas Garrison trying to avoid getting his picture taken



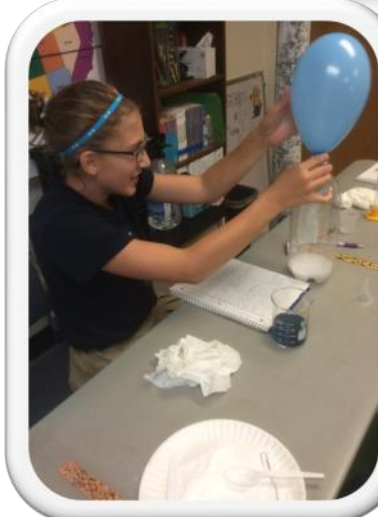
Lilly Greer, Haven Humphreys, Cody Dale, Mrs. McDowell, and Macy Perryman enjoying lunch outside



Above: Mrs. Morris' crazy 6th grade class



Travis Tlustos and Caleb Massey at the pickup line



Left: Sheridan Sellers in Mrs. Winkler's 7th grade science class

Right: Allie Vernon, Anna Mercer, Blake O'Dell, Olivia Tolbert, Annie Epler, and Katie Sparks in Mrs. Harrison's discipleship class





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### ***October 2015***

- 1 Tuition Due
- 2 **End of 1st Quarter**
- 5-9 **No School, Fall Break**
- 12-13 Optional P/T Conferences
- 16 Early Out: 11:30
- 16 Teacher Training
- 23 Nifty 50s Day
- 31 **Reformation Day**

### ***November 2015***

- 1 **Daylight Savings Time Ends**
- 2 Tuition Due
- 6 1st-8th Grade History Day/All School Open House. 6:30 PM
- 11 Veterans Day
- 19 **High School History Day, 9:30 AM**
- 20 **Fabulous Foot Day**
- 23-27 **No School, Thanksgiving Break**
- 26 **Thanksgiving Day**

### ***December 2015***

- 1 Tuition Due
- 4 **Elementary/Jr. High Choir Concert. 7:00 PM**
- 8-15 Finals, 7th—12th grades
- 16 **Christmas Dress Day  
End of 2nd Quarter  
All-School Chapel  
Early Out: 11:30 AM**
- 17-31 **No School, Christmas/  
New Year's Break**
- 25 **Christmas Day**