

Κατανῶμεν Let us consider...

A Parent's Journey

by Marty Wynn

In the spring of 2007, my husband and I found ourselves at an unexpected fork in the road in raising our children. We had pulled our daughter out of the public school that she attended midway through the second semester of her second grade year. We did this without having a plan and it felt drastic, but we simply knew that God was clearly showing us that we needed to do something different in educating our children. We had absolutely no idea what that should look like. As we were in prayer about what God would have for our family, we started asking questions of Christians that we respected. The first two people we asked suggested that we look at Grace Classical Academy. We had never heard of Grace Classical Academy or of classical Christian education. We attended an open house at GCA a few weeks later. As we walked inside, we felt a little like we were entering a foreign land. By the time we left at the end of the evening, what had seemed like a foreign land felt like home.

We heard Mr. and Mrs. Vandiver speak, as well as a board member and a parent. We met teachers and saw classrooms and curriculum. We took our daughter to visit during a school day the following week. Each time we visited, we could feel God's presence and a sense of peace in the school. We could hear love for God and passion for offering a Christ-centered education in the words of administrators, staff, parents and teachers. We saw well-behaved, respectful children with smiles on their faces. We saw where God wanted our family, and it felt like coming home. We enrolled our daughter in 3rd grade and our oldest son in K4. We had a peace about the decision which was a gift from God even though we could not see exactly where we would go on this journey.

As people found out that we were taking a different path in educating our children, we were taken aback by some of the responses—often from well-meaning fellow Christians. We were advised that we should not “raise our children in a bubble” or asked “Where will the public schools be if all the ‘good’ Christian families leave?” Not wanting to sound judgmental or argumentative, we would usually respond with, “This is what God has for our family right now.”

During the summer of 2007 and that first school year, we continued asking questions of ourselves and others. We began reading about
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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 these words that I command you today shall be on your heart. You shall teach them diligently to your children, and shall talk of them when you sit in your house, and when you walk by the way, and when you lie down, and when you rise.

Deuteronomy 6:6-7 (ESV)

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education and classical Christian education, specifically. We didn't want to raise our children in a bubble; we wanted to raise children that could articulate their Biblical worldview. We wanted to raise children that served the Lord, loved people, and owned their faith. Telling ourselves that "we did not know that we did not know" was not a valid excuse. We often thought back to the advice that my husband's oldest sister and brother-in-law had given us as we sought a different path for our family—making decisions about raising your children and the parenting choices that are in front of you is clear if you always come back to "Does this benefit my child's spiritual journey and does this help my child grow closer to God?" Parenting becomes clearer when this is your baseline test for everything as you raise your children—not easier, just more straightforward.

Our consumer-driven culture and the atmosphere of competitive parenting in our society today creates a lot of unrest in parents. There is a delusion in our culture these days that we must raise "perfect" kids, be "perfect" parents, find "perfect" schools, and give our kids "every opportunity" lest they "fall behind." Christian parents are not necessarily immune. In his article "Forging the Vision for Academic Discipleship," Dr. D. John Seel says, "Christian parents want a career-oriented education that provides religious justification for a suburban lifestyle of personal peace and affluence. They want an education that is practical, unquestioning, and status promoting. Finally, they want an education that will bring their children back to their neighborhood. They want their children to be just like them: enmeshed, affluent, superficial, and content." Ouch! We've been those parents. Having our three kids at GCA has challenged us to think differently about society's status quo. Just because a path has a lot of footprints doesn't mean it's the right path for our family or where God would have us.

In the same article, Dr. Seel says that, "In the long term, the education we give our children is far more important for the kingdom of God than who sits in the White House." and "Christian parents need children who have been educated to think about all aspects of life from within a Christian worldview and from the vantage point of the historic tradition of the church." Dr. D. John Seel's writing challenges Christian parents and we need to be challenged.

So, what have we experienced, so far, on our journey to educate our children? We have experienced a peace in our home that comes from the alignment of ideas being taught at church, home, and school. We have been challenged to live, as a family, at a higher level for Christ. We understand that it is more important to be an advocate for our children's education, spiritual life, and character growth than

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This newsletter is a quarterly publication of Grace Classical Academy

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just to be an advocate for our children as the world would have us believe. We have found friendship and Christian community with like-minded people. Our children get to watch adults and other families walk out their faith in different ways.

Is GCA, its staff, teachers and parents, perfect? No. And it would be idolatrous to think so or to have those expectations. Are there sometimes growing pains and tough conversations with administrators, teachers and fellow parents? Yes. But knowing that we all share a love for the Lord and are committed to raising children that first and foremost serve God, love people, and own their faith make those conversations necessary and beneficial. Do we always agree with every single person's theology? No. Yet, we know that if we agree on the core Statement of Faith, we can disagree on secondary issues and still encourage and love one another.

We accept and encourage you in the following challenges: 1) to continually seek God as we parent and educate our children, 2) to clarify what we are seeking as we educate our children, 3) to read about and gain an understanding of classical Christian education, and 4) to trust in God's grace and plan for our families and 5) to enjoy the journey He leads us on. May "The Lord bless you and keep you; [may] the Lord make his face to shine upon you and be gracious to you; [may] the Lord lift his countenance upon you and give you peace." Numbers 6:24-26 (ESV).

Source:

Seel, D. John, PhD. "Forging the Vision for Academic Discipleship." Article reprinted with permission in the Grace Classical Academy newsletter, 2nd Quarter, 2008.

www.graceclassical.org

GCA Teachers' Reading List

The first four books are required reading for each teacher at GCA. The rest of the books are part of a continued reading program for our teachers.

Assumptions that Affect Our Lives by Christian Overman

Case for Classical Christian Education by Douglas Wilson

The Seven Laws of Teaching by John Gregory

Clergy in the Classroom by David A. Noebel

On Secular Education by R.L. Dabney

Of Education by John Milton

On Christian Doctrine by Augustine

The Lost Tools of Learning by Dorothy Sayers

Education, Christianity and the State by Gresham Machen

Why Johnny Can't Read by Rudolf Flesch

Recovering the Lost Tools of Learning by Douglas Wilson

Repairing the Ruins edited by Douglas Wilson

Foundations of Christian Education by Berkof & Van Til

The Paideia of God by Douglas Wilson

Excused Absence by Douglas Wilson

Ideas Have Consequences by Richard Weaver

True Spirituality by Francis Schaeffer

Mere Christianity by C.S. Lewis

The Abolition of Man by C.S. Lewis

Millstones & Stumbling Blocks by Bradley Heath

Letters to a Diminished Church by Dorothy Sayers

One Thousand Gifts by Ann Voskamp

Teaching to Change Lives by Dr. Howard Hendricks

Overcoming Dyslexia by Sally E. Shaywitz

Meet Our 2013 Graduates



Shauna Price attended Grace Classical Academy for 8 1/2 years. Prior to coming to GCA, she was homeschooled and attended another Christian school. Shauna was born in Indiana and moved to Springfield with her family when she was 5 years old.

Shauna plans to attend Evangel University in the fall and would like to study missions and Biblical studies. She has an interest in serving in ministry or on the mission field and feels a call to Israel.

Shauna especially cherishes the friendships she made with teachers and fellow students while attending GCA. Shauna appreciates how Mrs.

Vandiver spoke into her life over the years and how she was an example of a Godly woman to her. She and Mrs. V share a love of poetry. Mrs. Winkler is another person that impacted Shauna while she was at GCA. Mrs. Winkler always shares words of wisdom with her students and finds every opportunity to seize teachable moments. Memorizing the book of James in Mrs. Burrell's class was also a highlight for Shauna. Mrs. Burrell definitely influenced Shauna and taught her about truly loving God.

When not in school, Shauna enjoys writing poetry and making crafts and greeting cards as well as attending prayer meetings and the ministry of pre-service prayer at church. Shauna, thank you for being a part of GCA and best wishes for a future that honors Christ!

Alex Daugherty came to Grace Classical Academy in the 5th grade and attended GCA for 8 years. Alex was homeschooled before attending GCA. He grew up in the Springfield area with his family.

Alex plans on attending Lee University in Cleveland, Tennessee, in the fall and has not yet decided what degree he wants to pursue. Alex's hobbies including shooting and hiking, playing guitar, and metal-detecting. He also enjoys hunting deer and turkey.

While at GCA, Alex really enjoyed having Mr. Bradley for a teacher. "Mr. Bradley's art field trips were always so much fun and he does a great job helping students prepare for college and teaching them about time management." Dr. Brannan also influenced Alex with his thought-provoking questions and encouragement for students to think for themselves. Alex appreciated the sense of humor that Mr. Larsen has in the classroom. Another great memory was an overnight field trip to Hutchison, Kansas, to visit the Kansas Cosmosphere and Space Center with Mr. Bowman. Alex, your GCA family wishes you well in your future endeavors!



Meet Our 2013 Graduates

Alex Deren attended Grace Classical Academy for 11 years, beginning in the 2nd grade. He was homeschooled prior to starting at GCA. Alex will be working at GCA full-time in the fall while attending college part-time. Alex would like to study computer sciences and information in college because he has always enjoyed technical things.

Alex enjoys playing all different kinds of sports. He also likes to hunt. Alex likes to listen to music and play the guitar. He remembers often being the 'instigator' in his early years at GCA and getting to know Mr. Vandiver pretty well. During the 5th grade, he and other boys in his class began having wrestling matches on the playground during recess. Those matches quickly came to an end when discovered by Mr. V. Alex's fellow graduates attribute the quote "Always is one of those words you never want to use." to him and mentioned that they often quote him.

Alex enjoyed having Mrs. McGinnis as a teacher at GCA. She would give students little erasers in different shapes and characters, and he collected them. Alex was also impacted by Mr. Bowman who taught students to be better speakers and to overcome their fear of speaking in front of others. Dr. Brannan also influenced Alex in his Bible classes. Dr. Brannan always challenges his students to take their faith to the next level.

Alex, we will enjoy having you back on staff at GCA in the fall while you pursue your college studies!



Wyatt Nelson attended GCA for 5 1/2 years, beginning in the 7th grade. He and his family moved to Springfield for his dad to attend Central Bible College. Wyatt will be attending College of the Ozarks in Hollister, Missouri, in the fall. He wants to study economics in college.

Wyatt appreciated Mr. Vandiver's influence while attending GCA and his wisdom in guiding students through high school. Mr. Vandiver has the Bible verse Proverbs 22:6 "Train up a child in the way he should go; even when he is old he will not depart from it" (ESV) hanging in his office. Wyatt likes how Mr. V really takes that verse to heart. Wyatt really enjoyed all of his

classes taught by Mr. Bradley at GCA. He liked Mr. Bradley's information-driven teaching style and how he keeps history and political science really interesting. Wyatt was influenced by Dr. Brannan's personal testimony and how he lives for Christ and also enjoyed Dr. B's stories.

Wyatt enjoys baseball and played for the Lighthouse Christian Academy Chargers. Best wishes, Wyatt!



SPELLING BEE WINNERS

1st—3rd Grades
Katherine Moss
4th—6th Grades
Trevor Talley



4th Grade
Trevor Talley

5th Grade
Dawson Prewitt

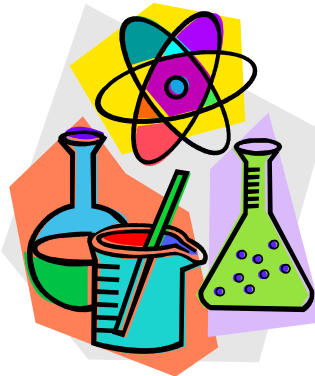
6th Grade
Hannah Chastain

7th Grade
Taylor Flores

2013 GCA Science Fair Winners

1st—2nd Grade Division

Landon Cummings



3rd—4th Grade Division

Gabby Mitchell

5th—6th Grade Division

Paige Cummings

Junior High Division

Ethan Morris

High School Division

Josh Isbell

Staff Birthdays

June

June 16 - Jennifer Morris
June 22 - Missy Orrick
June 30 - Ky'a Wheeler



July

July 17 - Ian Mosley
July 18 - Denise Burrell

August

10 - Betty Herzog

Need Uniforms?



Mrs. Harrison will be available at school for ordering uniforms on Tuesdays from 9:00 am to 3:00 pm during the summer. Please call the school office to schedule an appointment. She is also accepting used uniforms for account credit over the summer.

2013 Etiquette Banquet



Some of Mrs. Harp's 1st graders during their Greek Olympics



The 2013 Graduates enjoying a moment before their graduation ceremony



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June 2013

3 Tuition Due

16 **Father's Day**

Summer Office Hours:

Monday-Thursday

9:00 am—3:00 pm

Fridays

9:00 am—12:00 pm



July 2013

1 Tuition Due

4 **Independence Day**
Office Closed

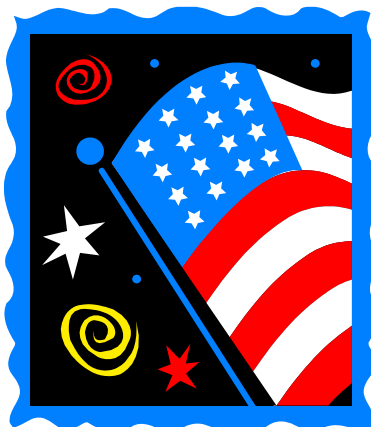
Summer Office Hours:

Monday-Thursday

9:00 am—3:00 pm

Fridays

9:00 am—12:00 pm



August 2013

1 Tuition Due

5-7 Teacher Training

8-9 New Teacher Training
Teacher Prep Time

12 **Orientation, 7:00 pm**

12-13 Teacher Prep Time

14 **1st Day of School**

23 **Evening Prayer for
GCA, 7:00 pm**

30 **Solid Color Day**

