

EXCELSIOR NEWSLETTER

Excelsior Classical Covenantal Community

November 2007

www.excelsiorclassical.org

“Our Hope is Built On...” by Misty Snyder

I have had to ask myself lately where I place my hope for my children's future, for the church's future, for our nation's future. I hear myself saying that my hope for all this is in God, but I wonder what idols are slipping into my heart.

Obviously, education is important to me. Much of my time and effort goes into giving what I hope is the best education I can give my children. The first time I saw a Veritas Press catalog I thought, "These are the books I wish I'd been given to read in school." Having the children study logic and rhetoric seemed a great idea to me. I was drawn to the classical approach and had tried it a year on my own when I was introduced to Excelsior. It has been a great help to me. I feel the children are getting much more than I could ever have given them on my own.

“The only people who achieve much are those who want knowledge so badly that they seek it while conditions are still unfavourable. Favourable conditions never come.”

~ C.S. Lewis

In my own heart searching I have had to ask myself what I want for my children. The future of our children is dear to every parent. Mothers in particular—not only out of sincere love, but also from pride—become very intense about this matter. For many of us, educating our children is our primary employment; therefore, this area is subtly tied to our ego. (This may not always be so subtle to those around us.)

I have come to the conclusion that I would rather my children be garbage collectors and really love the Lord Jesus than to have any other profession and not love Him. I say this not only because I do not want my children in hell but also because the love of the Lord Jesus is the one thing in life I could not be without. It is the best thing I have ever known, and I

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Mom's Night In / Prayer

Monday, November 26th, 7:00 p.m.

at the Moeller's House

OLDER Student Dinner / Discussion Night

Friday, November 16th, 6:00 p.m.

at the Moeller's House

Cross Country Info:

The runners will be taking a break until after Thanksgiving and then running on their own until after Christmas. When classes resume, we will also resume training. The focus in the spring will be on speed and strength, with a transition into distance as the summer approaches. Anyone willing to put in a little blood, sweat, and tears is welcome... the results will be undeniable! Also, thanks to Matt Chunn and Logan Green...the first two graduating Spartans! We will miss you next year; great job!



want this for them. I also want God to be honored through their lives because He deserves it, and honor can be brought to our Father through what we may consider the lowliest of professions, if done truly out of love to Him. As I write this, I think of how much time I spend cleaning the bathrooms, doing laundry, grocery shopping, etc.

However, I have come to another conclusion as well. I also want them to succeed academically, have friends, and make a difference in the world. I see academics as one of the tools to help them make that difference. Herein lies a great danger, however. We have been told to love the Lord our God with all our heart, soul, mind, and strength and our neighbor as ourselves. These are the greatest commands.

Upcoming Events

MSU Field Trip -

This day trip to their Archeology and Meteorology Departments is still in the works and will be scheduled the first or second week of December.

Moms Christmas Brunch-

We would like to plan an Excelsior Christmas brunch. If you are interested in helping to coordinate this please contact Nita Fradenburg.

Outreach Opportunities-

- * We would like to put together a Thanksgiving basket to give to a needy family in our community. We will be collecting can food items and monies starting Friday, November 9th. You may add fresh items during the week of Thanksgiving.
- * There is a wonderful missionary family to Ethiopia who is trying to adopt a precious little boy. This is enormously expensive, and we would like to be able to assist in their expenses. If you can help, contact Misty Snyder. See their blog at www.cold-water-news.blogspot.com.

Pre K - 2nd grade Thanksgiving Feast

We are planning a Thanksgiving celebration for the little ones on November 16th. We will be changing our schedule to accommodate time for our activities. You are welcome to dress your children up as Pilgrims or Indians (be sure to bring the cameras!).

Christians are not told that we must make a difference; we are told we will. We are not told to act like salt and light, but that we are salt and light. We are commanded to love, not to strategize. There are scriptures, such as the great commission, where we are told to make a difference; but being must always precede doing. We tend to assume the being and head straight for the doing.

Making a difference is a fruit. If our goal is to know and love God, the fruit will come. It comes naturally from a tree planted by the 'rivers of living water.' If our goal is to make a difference, which could be merely an expression of our pride, we will miss everything—we will miss knowing Him. What I am saying is that we can teach our children a body of

knowledge, how to think well, how to write well, and how to speak well; but they will not carry the gospel to others until it has changed their own hearts. Not only will they not make a positive difference in the world; they are sure to make a negative one. The most tragic effect for them will be that they miss knowing the love of Jesus. Our children may know the truth, but unless they love the One who is The Truth they are still in the same camp as Satan, who believes and trembles. I wonder if some of our children believe enough to tremble.

I am not advocating that we stop educating our boys and girls, but I am advocating that we stop calling them 'salt and light' or 'future Christian leaders' when they manifest no love for Christ and are besotted with cultural distractions. Instead, let us tell them we love them, but they are sinners without hope as long as they are without God in the world. No benefit is gained from lying to our children.

In fact, I think that even our Christian students should not be told that they are being trained to be leaders since the disciples of Jesus Christ were (and still

“I believe that the imperative need of the day is not simply revival, but a radical reformation that will go to the rest of our moral and spiritual maladies and deal with causes rather than with consequences, with the disease rather than with symptoms.”

~ A.W. Tozer

are) trained to be servants. Many of these men were fisherman; our Lord himself spent most of His earthly days in a carpenter's shop. Let's not demean honest work done with the hands. Jesus wasn't above it—neither are our children. (And here I speak firmly to myself.) Let's also remember as, Amy Carmichael has said, "The way of the cross leads to the cross and not to a bank of flowers."

Are we like the mother of James and John, who asked if her sons could be given the seats on Christ's right and left hand when he came into His kingdom? Are we like her, wanting our children to rule with Christ rather than to suffer and serve with Him? Our children must know that following Christ means death to self. We mothers need to see that following Christ does not necessarily lead our children to a high-paying, well-respected, meaningful, and highly influential job—it leads to wherever God chooses. Yet the way of the cross does not only lead to self-denial; it leads to Christ himself. Here is life. If He does not captivate us, does not satisfy us, we must ask ourselves why. Let His honor be our first concern, and our souls and the souls of those we love our second.

We can be tempted to hope in many things. They may have little to do with education. I spent many years living on relationships and sports (of all things—I'm much too out of shape to think anything that makes me sweat could bring joy). Teaching great literature and ancient history seems much more noble and is therefore a more subtle temptation for a middle-aged mom (though I am still tempted to hope in those other things for happiness of my children.) Homeschooling is not the only activity in which we might place our hope. Let's be careful to jealously guard our hearts and minds against any hope other than our Lord.

Please don't misunderstand me; I believe that a classical Christian education is a wonderful tool that God may choose to use in the lives of our children to accomplish His pleasure. But we must keep in mind that He doesn't need any of us. He has stated quite plainly that it will be the foolishness of the preaching of the cross that changes the world, not the strategy of placing clever young adults in prominent positions. I am thankful for every godly judge, politician, lawyer, and professor in our land; but God may raise up a publicly educated janitor to impact this generation. I know of one such man that God has used in the life of many of the children in our church.

My life has been greatly influenced by a godly Korean lady who never studied the classics. I read of a missionary who shared a house in China with a mentally-challenged woman whose simple faith changed the life of that missionary, who was then used greatly by God. I have also gained from many finely educated men and women—many of them classically educated—who have written great books.

I believe it is pleasing to the Father to educate our children well. I am merely questioning our motivation: is it our children's future, the church's future, the nation's future? Those things are far too big and important to be sacrificed to the idol of education. Let's place them fully and finally in the hands of our Master, giving diligence to the task at hand out of gratitude for His kindness.

I would not expect anyone to disagree with these words, but let's honestly ask God to search our hearts and show us if we are in any way stealing His glory by hoping in something other than Him.

Psalm 33:16-22

No king is saved by the multitude of an army;

A mighty man is not delivered by great strength.

A horse is a vain hope for safety; Neither shall it deliver any by its great strength.

Behold, the eye of the LORD is on those who fear Him,

On those who hope in His mercy, To deliver their soul from death, And to keep them alive in famine.

Our soul waits for the LORD; He is our help and our shield.

For our heart shall rejoice in Him, Because we have trusted in His holy name.

Let Your lovingkindness, O LORD, be upon us,

According as we have hoped in You.

Preparing for November...

November Headmasters

November 2nd - Charlie Hardin

November 9th - Kevin Smith

November 16th - Larry Ramsey

November 30th - Scott Duley

November Clean-Up

November 2nd - Hardin family

November 9th - Smith family

November 16th - Ramsey family

November 30th - Duley family

Pink Palace Field Trip Scheduled for Saturday, November 10

For families wishing to participate in all events, the following schedule is recommended:

12:45 pm - Arrive at Pink Palace Museum

1:00 pm - Begin touring the "time-line" museum (Note: displays supporting evolution displayed at the beginning of this exhibit)

3:00 pm - View "Seasonal Star Show" in Sharpe Planetarium

4:00 pm - View "Deep Sea" Imax film

Families may join/leave the group at any time. Group rates are offered only to those reserved guests participating in all three events ...

Please phone **Susanne** (or e-mail her) no later than **Thursday, Nov 1, 12:00 noon** for group reservations ... even if you have already given your number. We will collect "group" funds on-site. All others will purchase tickets separately.

Bundle Rates:

Group rates for all three events (reserved only): \$13.50 - adults, \$12.00 - children.

Unreserved rates for all three events: \$16.50 - adults, \$13.00 - children.

Individual exhibit rates (no group rates for these):

"Time-line" museum: Adults - \$7.25, Children - \$5.75

Seasonal Star Show: Adults - \$4.50, Children - \$4.00

IMax - Deep Sea: Adults - \$8.00, Children - \$6.25

Should you have any questions, please feel free to call or e-mail me at **662-489-6867**. The phone number for **Pink Palace** is **(901) 320-6320**.

Lunch:

November 2nd - Connie's

November 9th - Wendy's

November 16th - Pizza Dr.

November 30th - Danver's

Please leave your completed order form and money in the box labeled "LUNCH" in the foyer of Bldg A. a week before the lunch you're ordering.