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Anew

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WELCOME TO THE GORDON REVIEW!

The *Gordon Review* is an independent, student-run publication. We exist to provide the greater Gordon College campus community with a rich array of opinion and journalism covering faith, theology, culture, and student life. We are dedicated to promoting, preserving, and defending Gordon College's historic mission as a Christian liberal arts institution.

As an organization, we publish a print magazine once a semester and regularly post submissions from members of the Gordon community on our website.

We affirm the college's Statement of Faith, Life and Conduct Statement, Philosophy of Education, and the Board of Trustee's Statement on Sexual Ethics. Our conviction is that the foundation Gordon sits upon is solid: a Christian understanding of the liberal arts rooted in a comprehensive vision of what Scripture says to us about the human person, the nature of sin, and redemption.

Our hope is to help make Gordon a healthy place for civil dialogue, and we welcome you to join us in this endeavor...

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A NOTE FROM THE EDITOR

“For behold, the winter is past; the rain is over and gone. The flowers appear on the earth, the time of singing has come, and the voice of the turtledove is heard in our land.” -Song of Solomon 2:11-12

Regretfully, I have not spent much time studying Song of Solomon. The book is filled with language resembling a love letter, and scholars often interpret the book as either a description of love between a husband and wife, or a metaphor for love between God and His people. Regardless, the verses that inspired *Anew*, chapter 2, verses 11-13, point us to the love the Lord shows us as His creatures.

As the winter ends, the flowers appear, and the birds are heard chirping, we are reminded that not only is the Lord so kind to us as to create a world in which we can take joy in these delights, but we are reminded of Christ’s victory over our own spiritual winter.

Just as the grass dies under the weight of snow and sleet, we were once crushed by and dead in our sin. However, because Christ defeated death through His work on the cross and rose on the third day, we can take heart. We are made new creations, brought back into communion with God.

Because of the Gospel, the sun is shining on us once again. We can see the flowers and hear the birds. If we can rejoice now in the newness that Spring brings, how much more can we rejoice that we are brought back to life in Christ?

I hope the articles in this edition are an encouragement as you explore what it means to live anew. Let us go forth and embrace the newness and vibrancy found in life with Christ!

GIOVANNA JOHNSON
EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

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STUDENT LIFE

Photo by Viktoriia Yatseniuk

A REFLECTION ON WHAT HAS GREENWICH TO DO WITH JERUSALEM?

BY ABRAHAM ANTONELLI

“In January, during the days leading up to the start of the spring semester, Gordon College Professor Dr. Damon DiMauro and his colleague Bob Frishman, horologist and scholar, arranged a timekeeping exhibit entitled *What Has Greenwich to do with Jerusalem?* in the Barrington Center for the Arts gallery.

The purpose of the exhibition was multi-faceted. It served to educate the Gordon campus and local New England residents of the industrial, mechanical history of their region. Six long case clocks were used in the gallery, from the personal collections of Dr. Damon DiMauro and Bob Frishman, which hailed from local makers. In addition, a large iron tower clock movement had been put on display, originally fixed in George Whitfield’s Newburyport church steeple.

The exhibit was also an opportunity to display the beauty, quality, and intricacies of the horological world through the incorporation of artworks, tool arrangements, and demonstrations. Various works of horological significance were displayed, on loan from Bob Frishman. In addition, a maker’s bench was set up with a lathe, where I demonstrated to eager visitors basic movement function, disassembly, and repair.

Most centrally, however, the exhibit was an illustration of how our faith, and time, both mechanically and philosophically, have long been intertwined.

Despite its New England focus, the exhibit



The mini gallery, featuring a watchmaker's bench located in the rear, where repair demonstrations took place.

entertained an international audience during Symposium day, where the gallery auditorium reached standing room only. Speakers included Dr. Jennifer Powell McNutt, who studied horology’s connections to the Reformation in Switzerland, and Dr. Sara Schechner, who shared how ancient history gave way to the sundial for the purpose of maintaining consistent prayer times and holy days. Additionally, Rev. Dan Benson of Toronto proposed connections between science and faith, mentioning Christian usage of horology, and William J. H. Andrewes of England spoke of the influence of the mechanical clock on the spread of Christianity.

The gallery remained active until March 5th. Doors were left unlocked when the building was occupied, to encourage visitors to stop in, and explore. Though the exhibit has now concluded, it is the hope of the curators that local conversation and interest in horology will continue.



The exhibit curators, Left to Right: Damon DiMauro, Bob Frishman.



View from left rear perspective of gallery, relative to main entrance. Fixed in the center are two copper clock hands, retired from a church steeple. Beneath it is a wood and iron clock movement, which originally powered the clock in George Whitefield's Newburyport church, Old South Presbyterian Church.



The two exhibit curators, and four speakers, Left to right: Dr Jennifer Powell McNutt, Rev. Dan Benson, Bob Frishman, Dr Sara Schechner, Damon DiMauro and William J.H. Andrewes.



Faceless clock, showing the location of the movement, and a collection of miscellaneous clock repair tools, showing the intricacy of clock repair. Located in the secondary gallery.



Tall Case Clock by Simon Willard (1753-1848, Roxbury).

COMMENTARY

Photo by Екатерина Коробова



Photo by Jacob Vizek

COURAGE TO BE MENDERS IN AMERICA

BY MORIAH BOOZ

God is always at work in the lives of His people. This is sanctification. We have been saved through Jesus's death and resurrection, justified, but this salvation is only the magnificently gracious first step in an entire way of life. This way of life requires a sacrificing, softening, and changing of our sin-hardened hearts. Sanctification is a name for that journey, a wonderful journey but one that means we will always be experiencing change and growth. I don't know about you, but sometimes I wish things would just be predictable, dependable, and comfortable with none of this changing and growing business. So, that is how I tried to set up my life this semester. Rhythm. Balance. Safety. It almost worked – but then, I began to feel unsettled, dare I say convicted, and maybe even called to something less safe and steady than what I planned. But, let me stop for a moment before you start to think that this is a story of bravely taking action. Instead, this is the very current story of a fearful follower of Christ who can not escape the reality that there is a call to change on her life – a call to take a step into growth; a call to know her neighbor; a call not yet answered but developing clarity.

Our country, cities, and neighborhoods are struggling places. Prejudice and polarization are everywhere both in the physical every-dot-on-the-map kind of way and in all the minds of the people walking by kind of way. This is a reality we all feel but can be hard to understand. But, that's what school is for right? Recently in class I had the chance to read bits of Tocqueville's *Democracy in America* and Robert Putnam's *Our Kids: The American Dream in Crisis*. Both men describe a country that is no longer entirely recognizable. Let me briefly explain.

Tocqueville visited America in the early 1830's and wrote a book describing the people and places he encountered, focusing on how society organized itself in this new country. The America he describes is one which holds two opposing values in balance – freedom and equality. He theorizes on whether the ability to peacefully hold these two values comes from America's location and physical attributes, her laws, or the customs of the people. While the first two are important it is this third attribute that he sees as the strongest uniting, ordering, and prospering force in America. This set of customs he witnessed was one under girt by christian morals. And I would argue that the

particular moral that kept Tocquville's 19th century America relatively free and equal, is the very christian moral of self sacrifice. To maintain equality, or opportunity for all, people must be willing to sacrifice some individual actions or what we can call freedom. Tocquville saw this and wrote a stern warning that when a society tips the scales too far towards individual freedom,

“envy, hatred, and scorn of one’s neighbor, pride, and an and an inflated self-confidence invade, so to speak, the human heart and for some time make it their domain. This, leaving aside equality, contributes forcefully to divide men, bringing about a distrust of each other’s opinions and a search for illumination only within themselves” (Tocqueville 497).

Here, a society is described that is made up of self-centered individuals who pursue their own interests, rights, and freedoms even at the expense of someone else's; this is a description of individualism. The conclusion is that you cannot have infinite freedom and universal equality; they are two ends of a single scale.

Robert Putnam continues this train of thought by describing the midwest 1950's neighborhood where he grew up. In *Our Kids: The American Dream in Crisis*, he tells stories about individuals from his graduating class where equality was such that, despite their varied economic backgrounds, they all lived in the same neighborhood and had a similar chance to succeed, go to college, and get a better paying job than their parents. The American dream, the America Tocquville had seen 120 years before, was still alive with its lack of class barriers and its ever present opportunity for upward mobility, though race and gender are significant factors I am not focusing on here. But this dream land is not the America that Putnam, or most of us, now see. Our neighborhoods, schools, and friend groups have become largely separated, primarily by socioeconomic class. This creates a society where the rich and poor do not have equal opportunity for upward mobility. Instead the rich get richer and the poor get poorer inside their own economic bubbles on the opposite sides of town. Tocquville's unifying Christian moral is gone and

in its place individualism flourishes along with all the other demons he said would come with it – division, scorn, envy, hatred, and pride.

After reading these things and looking around my comfortable, free, individualistic life of personal education, I was left asking how do we fix our society? How do we currently balance the scales between freedom and equality? How do I contribute to the imbalance and its consequences?

“If we stop and listen to those who are most unlike us we can begin to be menders of the gaps and gulfs.”

When something is on my heart and mind, God has a way of making the things I am learning, the speakers I am listening to, and the conversations I am having all add train cars to the same long train. So when Mrs. Jan Carlberg, a very wise grandmother, came and spoke during Gordon College's tri-weekly chapel, I saw God's guidance in her words. Her message was multi-pointed and very powerful. She, like Putnam and many of us, sees a world filled with, “gaps, gulfs, and wedges between people;” a world that busily seeks individualistic gain, avoiding forgiveness, avoiding facing responsibility for those gaps and gulfs. Mrs. Carlberg's charge was to stop, “to admit that you might be the problem in this gap, in this gulf, in this hard to come together stuff.” And then, like Jesus when he came to bridge the gap between us, we must extend love. She talked about the way Jesus' love, like a painter putting a frame around the most overlooked of moments, frames people as precious and worthy of stopping and listening to – of asking who they are and what is behind the wrinkles and lines in their face. If we stop and listen to those who are most unlike us we can begin to be menders of the gaps and gulfs. Menders, those are the people needed to face the rampant individualism that has divided America.

To bring it all together, Toqueville saw the American moral culture as containing the key to equality. Putnam identified the crumbling of this moral culture, the rise of individualism, and the alarming decrease in equal opportunity with economic class effectively separating communities into the rich and the poor. Finally, Mrs. Carlberg spoke of the only solution, one that is cultural and moral, like Toqueville and Putnam observed, rather than economic or legislative. A solution based on menders extending forgiveness and love across the gulfs. This is people like you and me, people who can afford a private education, kneeling down to wash the feet of those who can not and have not had such an education for generations. This is us listening to our poorer neighbors with respect, sharing our lives with each other. But, this type of selflessness is not easy. It requires courage and personal inconvenience.

It requires us to identify the gaps and intentionally step across into the rough neighborhoods, the underfunded schools, and the hurting, often dangerous, parts of this world. That could mean taking the risk of intentionally raising a family in the heart of a broken city instead of comfortably hiding in the suburbs. It could mean voting for laws that do not benefit you directly but lift your neighbor a little higher. Or, it could mean joining organizations and missions that physically cross the gulfs, bringing together diverse peoples to serve and be served. Regardless, the starting place is always in leaving individualism behind to meet and listen to those who are different from yourself. This is the step I am trying to be brave enough to take.

I have realized that the people I have surrounded myself with on a personal level are all very similar to me. I have realized that what I say about being unbiased is not reflected in my heart's response to those who are different from me. I have realized that this attitude is not a harmless thing. I have realized that we are all connected and that ironically, my own individualism harms others. I have realized that I must change or risk being a Jonah in the face of God's call. I have realized I have not changed because I am afraid.

I will leave you with the encouragement that Mrs. Carlberg left with me. Have you ever seen those old maps that fill the areas not yet explored with terrible monsters and proclaim, "Here be dragons. Here be demons" – maps that illustrate our fear of the unknown? But, here is the hope: We serve a God who knows all. He is the kind of God who sent his Son to frame us with love. A God who sees every portion of every map and is working for our sanctification. So, as we spread out those maps to examine the days ahead, instead of "Here be dragons" we can write "Here be God." I pray for courage to be a mender who can do her small part to change the culture and customs in this individualistic place. Will you join me?

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SIGN OF THE TIMES: AMERICA'S YARD SIGN EPIDEMIC AND WHAT IT MEANS TO BE A FAITHFUL ACTIVIST

BY IRIS MARK



Photo by Tim Mossholder

If you stand for nothing Burr, what will you fall for?"

Like an apparition in the night, lines from *Hamilton* often come, unbidden, from the depths of my consciousness – my eighth-grade self avenging her supposed “maturity.” But this line, delivered at the end of the second song of the original Broadway recorded track, feels relevant to America’s ongoing conversation of causes and consequences, backwards and forwards, great again and back again. There is at once a demand for everyone to have a cause, and yet in choosing a cause, there is the danger of falling prey to identity politics. As I observe the silent battle of yard sign activism in my neighborhood, I am increasingly cautious of my reactions to signs I disagree with, let alone understand. It’s scary how easily I can feel justified in assuming someone’s character based on their front lawn; how easy it is to categorize issues that either have nothing to do with each other, or were meant to combine constructively for the benefit of all; how natural it feels to slip into cynicism towards this small, but nevertheless legitimate, form of activism.

There is always a war happening when one is looking for it. Subtle and discreet, or loud and obnoxious, these conflicts bubble up as a first instinct against discomfort, and if you aren’t paying enough attention, you’d mistake its knobby fingers for conviction and its rotten breath for absolute truth. However, like any issue that requires renewal, joy must stand at the center of its solution – joy in our words, joy in our encouragement, joy in our conviction. Without joy there is no validity to calls for hope, peace, or anything that departs from standardized indifference or hate. Joyful participation calls forth

those who are scared, intimidated, scornful, and calls them and their concerns sacred, set-apart and invited to the conversation. So, as we examine our yard sign “epidemic” with cynicism, passion, or dissonance, let us remember that at the heart of any action, there must first be joy; an acknowledgement that perfection in activism cannot exist.

If You Stand for Nothing...

The town of Upper Arlington is a suburb barely 10 miles across in diameter that sits nestled in the northwest corner of Columbus, Ohio. Like many suburbs of similar Americanian ilk, Upper Arlington boasts its own police force, a rec center, very little racial diversity, and a rather high income rate. It stinks to high heaven of brand loyalty and many of my classmates found themselves heirs to familial tradition as third or fourth generation “Arlingtonites.” Amidst cookie cutter houses and the remnants of redlining, there’s a culture war brewing in the form of unspoken, no-confrontation-required, yard signs.

“As we examine our yard sign ‘epidemic,’ let us remember that at the heart of any action, there must first be joy.”

First you need a problem, some stance to hold on to because everyone these days is telling you that

it's up to you to change the system. To make things right again. Maybe you don't actually care about this cause, but it's relevant enough you suppose, and a convenient way to get out some of the general frustration you feel because everything's changing so fast. Then, you need an outlet for said cause.

Maybe it's social media, or some kind of PTO group that can lament about the ways your child is growing up in a world whose innocence is no longer hidden behind a veil of ignorance. And then, you get fired up. Maybe you heard a speaker, or went to a protest that your friend invited you to. And you start to realize that you have agency, and there are others, just like you who feel the same way. So you buy a sign. It's easy and cheap, and you feel good about having done something. A week goes by and then your neighbor across the way also puts up a sign. It's not the same as yours, and it doesn't necessarily relate, but you begin to feel like your constructive civic engagement is under fire, and that your neighbor (who comes around once a week to look at the gutters) maybe isn't as good a person as you once thought.

They're kind of ignorant, you think, because they believe in the lies they're being told. It's with a mix of condescension and irritation that you pass them in the street, only petting their adorable dog once instead of the usual snuggles and kisses you would normally bestow. And slowly, you stop seeing your neighbor because those once-a-month barbecues stopped happening due to someone's busy schedule and no one's bothered to reconnect. The sign in your yard needs replacing by the way, its faded colors have faced one too many midwestern winters.

...What Will You Fall For?

Activism for any cause is like driving a car to

protest fossil fuels: tricky and riddled with moments for potential hypocrisy. Faithful activism, like the kind Jesus demonstrated, is inclusive and loving, and serves the ultimate purpose of glorifying the Lord. It is not out of fear or anger or hatred for the other, but for a desire and wish to see kingdom justice done on Earth.

This year I had the honor of serving as a college fellow for Young Evangelicals for Climate Action, and I am ashamed to admit that fact because I feel as if I've failed them. I thought that I was going to be able to make sweeping changes—solar panels on KOSC, a reformed dining service that values food integrity over waste, perhaps even a changed campus community who embraces sustainability as a part of Christian identity. I feel as though I have done none of that. Sure, I write periodically to my representatives, sometimes even calling their offices and talking to overworked secretaries, but I feel as though I cannot call myself a climate activist because I am wholly inadequate.

What have I done but wallow in arrogance, placing comfort over work and allowing myself to push deadlines farther and farther back? I've wasted their time and I've nothing to show for it. Someone else should have taken my place, because I was not prepared to complete this fellowship with all the time that it deserved.

Part of this angst is genuine – I do feel a certain amount of guilt at the lack of “product” I have to show for my stipend-ed fellowship. YECA was the unfortunate fall-guy of the lesson God has been teaching me this year: I cannot continue to stretch myself so thin because instead of being the incredible change maker I think I might be, I end up being ineffective in all the areas I participate in. But, perhaps there is another underlying tension here – an insecurity about being “enough” that plagues even the most active of activists.

I take great comfort in the words of Bishop Ken Unterer, who said in memory of priest Oscar Romero, “We cannot do everything, and there is a sense of liberation in realizing that. This enables us to do something and to do it well.” There are many temptations within the sphere of activism that deter us from justice, even as they arrive disguised as righteous acts: Leaning into divisive words, alienating the other side, giving power to the lie that says you can never make a real difference because the world is too broken and the problems too big. But, we were not made as individuals who will be single catalysts.

In fact, solutions rarely arrive in neat little single-use packages.

Bishop Unterer concludes with, “We may never see the end results, but that is the difference between the master builder and the worker. We are workers, not master builders; ministers, not messiahs. We are prophets of a future not our own.” Even if putting a sign in your front yard encourages you to act, or directs you towards more community and problem solving, so be it. We are prophets of a future not our own, so let us enter it with joy and thanksgiving in our hearts.

THE WHOLENESS OF THE RESURRECTION: WHAT SEVERANCE HAS TO SAY ABOUT NEWNESS

BY JOHNNY MINNS

News headlines and social media trends have made it increasingly difficult to be unfamiliar with Apple TV's hit show, *Severance*. Bringing to fruition the creative aspirations of Ben Stiller--yes, *that* Ben Stiller, and writer Dan Erickson, the basis of *Severance* revolves around a surgical procedure that separates your home-conscious from your work-conscious, effectively creating two distinct identities. The faces telling this story range from A-listers to rookies alike; *Severance*'s two leads are Adam Scott (Parks and Rec.) and Britt Lower, for whom *Severance* is largely considered a breakout role—though she carries herself like a seasoned vet. While the nuance of *Severance* is far too great to unpack in such a brief article, there are highlights that have become increasingly pertinent for Christians and college students alike to consider. Inspired by my colleague and friend, Mary Zook, who asked “What Does Scripture Have to Say About Career Anxiety?” I’m seeking to ask “How should *Severance*, whose focal point is corporate work, make us think about seeking newness?”


Known for its thoughtful and off-putting use of color, symbolic camera-work, and twisting script, *Severance* creates the world of Lumon, a corporation whose work is a mystery, though menacing. In season 1, viewers are quickly introduced to the main-character Mark. Mark’s “outie” is Mark Scout, a mourning and ruffled ex-college professor who recently lost his wife in a car accident. His “innie” (or Lumon persona), though, is merely known as Mark S. We come to learn that Mark pursued the severance procedure because of his inability to cope with his wife’s sudden death. Seeking to separate himself from mourning, he creates a new person with no recollection of these aspects of their shared life.

While the ethics of such a procedure are certainly a part of the show’s basis to be reckoned with, my focus will be on Mark’s inability to cope, and the religious-like identity he finds in his work—both thanks to his “outies” complicit behavior and Lumon’s nefarious, cult-like identity they impose upon otherwise ignorant employees.

From the outside, it's easy to condemn Mark Scout for his cowardice. Certainly, coping with loss by nonconsensually creating an alternate being forced to live your life is an easy “cop out” for dealing with life’s troughs. More than this, it’s an ineffective way of doing so. In the moments viewers get with outie Mark, he’s portrayed as unsatisfied and angsty, as though he still after two years hasn’t come to terms with the gaping hole left in his life. The winter, for Mark Scout, hasn’t passed and now, viewers come to find both versions of himself suffering. Here, the consequence of choosing numbness over wholeness manifests itself strikingly and encourages me to think about the resurrection’s place in achieving contentment and wholeness. As we enter the Easter season, I encourage you to consider the fact that the resurrection wasn’t about forgetting sin, it’s about redeeming it.

I find myself forgetting this simple truth. Life with Jesus never will be and was never meant to be painless. After my first year at Gordon, I expected some “wow” moment that would show me the satisfaction found in Christ alone. While I know there certainly is satisfaction in Christ, I know this process isn’t something magical (at least in the common sense of the word) and I know it requires a thoughtful rejection of the “severance-like” distractions that promise Christ-like fulfillment. No, your career isn’t the key to happiness, and no the number of degrees you have isn’t either. But no matter how many times this simple advice is echoed by friends, family members and mentors, it fails to ring true. For me, it was an unhealthy amount of time bingeing seasons 1 and 2 of *Severance* that helped me feel the gravity of God’s promises. A promise that guarantees newness.

FAITH

Photo by Roma Kaiuk 

A NEW IDEA OF ENCOUNTER

BY JOZIAH CASTILLO

It was a Sunday morning at my old home church, and the worship service was so profoundly divine that the Lord met me in the front row. I felt a warm presence, and tears streamed down my face. It was an experience that I will never forget. The following Sunday, the worship service was again so enriching that I raised my hands to signify my surrender to the Lord, and tears rolled down my face yet again.

The following Sunday, I expected the same thing to happen again, but it didn't. Well, maybe next Sunday, I thought to myself. And the next Sunday, still nothing happened. The worship was great, as it was before, but my experience wasn't the same as the previous times. Is there something wrong? I thought.

This is a common story for many believers: Trying to encounter God at a certain time, and in a certain way. When I was young in my faith, I struggled with this. Why did it seem like I could only encounter God through a worship service? And, why wasn't he meeting me there again? These challenging questions led me to learn that I can encounter God through different experiences that are aligned with him.

First, let's understand what encounter means. There can be at least two meanings. The first, to encounter, means to come across, meet, or experience something in a significant or unexpected way. The second means to experience God's presence in a real, personal, and often transformative way.

When we talk about encountering God, most people think of encountering God through worship services on a Sunday. While that's not a



Photo by Jon Tyson

bad thing, it can lean towards having a traditional-legalistic mindset where you think Sunday is the day that God will show up, but then you miss how he shows up on other days.

God has taught me (and is still teaching me) that there are different ways in which we can encounter God. There are times when the people of God experience him through small, quiet, or whispered ways. Elijah on Mount Horeb and Samuel as a child both experienced God in this way (1 Kings 19:11-13 NLT, 1 Samuel 3:1-10 NLT). This shows us that God doesn't always speak loudly; sometimes, he meets us in silence, solitude, or stillness. And, God can begin with small moments that grow into something significant. A personal example of this is while I was in my first semester of my community college, I was met with a gentle whisper that said, "What if there was a Christian College?" That, I believe, was the Holy Spirit speaking to me while I was alone in my room, which led me to come to Gordon.

In the Bible, there are also examples of people encountering God through big, powerful, or loud encounters, like Moses and the Burning Bush and Saul on the Road to Damascus (Exodus 3:1-6 NLT, Acts 9:1-9 NLT).

And, while it's great to experience God through the small and big moments, we shouldn't neglect or forget how God can meet us in the ordinary. We see examples like Martha and Mary or when Jesus

calls the first disciples (Luke 10:38-42 NLT, Matthew 4:18-22, Luke 5:1-11 NLT). If you read these passages carefully, you'll find that when we have a posture of being present with God, that's when God meets us right where we are.

Even in those moments, God has also created avenues for us to seek his face: Through Nature, which reflects his glory (Psalm 19:1-4 NLT); through his word, which reveals his voice and instruction (2 Timothy 3:16-17 NLT); through the community, which shows his children and his wisdom being poured out through them (Matthew 18:20, Hebrews 10:24-25 NLT); through personal struggles, which cause us to lean on him (2 Corinthians 12:9-10 NLT); through hobbies and creativity, which can help us be present with him and reflect his beauty and gifts (Exodus 35:30-35 NLT, 1 Corinthians 12:4-7 NLT, 1 Peter 4:10-11 NLT).

It's through those moments that I've encountered God many times, and he never fails. He continues to surprise me when he shows up. It is for our good because, as this theme, *Anew*, reflects: In renewal, fresh beginnings, and stepping into new things, God is teaching us that different forms of encounter can lead to renewal, transformation, and a fresh perspective on faith. Take, for example, the Samaritan woman at the well (John 4:7-30 NLT). She encountered Jesus through a conversation, and her life was changed, which led her to speak boldly about him. I truly believe that believers have been stuck in spiritual routines where our relationship with God feels stagnant. That is why encountering God in different ways can help us experience him in a fresh way. It helps us see him *anew*.

This newness speaks of stepping into something fresh and leaving behind old lifestyles and mindsets. God has initiated this just by being a Father and the initiator of the relationship. This has taught me to be content with expectations not being met for how I think God *should* show up. It taught me not to place expectations or even emotional experiences (like my story) on a higher pedestal. It taught me to step into the newness and to encounter God differently.

ON SPIRITUAL FULFILLMENT AND CHRISTIAN COMMUNITY

BY BOSTON LAMB

I'd like to begin by posing an important, yet all-too-neglected question: What does community mean to you? Better yet, what does a Christ-centered community mean to you? These questions ought to be asked for a number of reasons—firstly, you should be able to cite the reasons as you are part of a given community. If you do not consider yourself part of any community, then you should evaluate the reason. I believe that these self-imposed questions are particularly important for this latter group that may feel isolated from others and may be somewhat unsure as to whether or not they actually want to immerse themselves in a company of others. As Christians, we should seek brothers and sisters in Christ when attempting to find fellowship, because that is who we want to be chiefly responsible for our growth as individuals.

Let us evaluate why we should even think about the idea of community. As humans, we are by definition social creatures that crave interaction; regardless of differences in levels of introversion or extraversion, we exist with a general desire for company by some measure. Furthermore, our existence among others is not merely to satiate this desire. If this were the case, then anyone could fulfill our communal needs regardless of compatibility, despite that by simple observation, we know that specific companionship has to do with the unique characteristics of others. This is because there is not only a desire to be with others, but a positive benefit from it, and this benefit varies depending on the individuals we surround ourselves with. This benefit manifests itself not only by means of entertainment, but more significantly in the ways in which we develop; when we are consistently around other people, we form bonds and become more akin to them, which is to say that we are, in a lot of ways, being changed by those people. Being with others, just like any other kind of muscle, intelligence, or skill, develops our own social abilities and our social selves, which are important for daily life.

With these considerations in mind, it is obvious not just why we want to be in community, but why we should be. A bond with others, large or small, is how we are changed, improving in sociality and adapting to those around us in other ways. It is in the latter notion that we arrive at why we should be, more specifically, in Christ-centered community. No doubt a central goal of a Christian is to be more like Christ, the Savior and Redeemer. If what has been concluded regarding the effects of and reasons for community is true, we are mandated to place ourselves closely with those who bear Christ-likeness. The practical conclusion to be drawn is that by surrounding ourselves with those who are strong in faith, and who express this strength, we will be transformed into (in addition to becoming perhaps more bold, firm, confident, etc. as the personalities around us dictate) a more Christlike person, which is well in pursuit of our calling.

None of these previous assertions, however, directly answer the questions posed in the first paragraph, specifically what Christ-centered community looks like. How will we know that we are a part of a Christ-centered community, and how is this set apart from a community that is simply Christian? While a Christian community can mean that those within are themselves Christian, Christ-centeredness is a characteristic of the community itself; a Christ-centered community will be made known by its fruits, and how it serves those within and outside of it. What is significant about a Christ-centered community is that it lifts its members up, puts the self aside for the sake of one who needs assistance, and is a shining example of Christ even to those outside of it. You will be edified in daily interactions, with gentle straightening of paths and accountability for one another, and a love for each person that is a part of it, as well as a recognition of the gifts that everyone brings to the overall body. Acquaint yourself with those who will make you work towards your spiritual betterment.

ARTS

Photo by Ksenia Philippova

THE FLOWER POEM

BOSTON LAMB

Intensely alluring rafflesia
Roughspun networks of silk hanging off the vines
Tension traces the stem up to the first petal
By a powerful breeze it parts from the body
And flows outward into the moonlit clearing.

A cackling of cicadas
Breathes in and out of milky stars
An aria for a distant lover
Echoes unrepentantly
Calls forward its recipient.

Fungi picks out the bones from the grime
Swallows the dead whole
Some fungi prefer the living
“Arise, soldier, and carry my seed,”
Cordyceps decrees to Sir Wasp.

Buzzing briskly and beautifully
The bee gently reaches down
And plucks fluff from a maiden’s heart
He proliferates her love and she blossoms
As he makes sweetness out of toil.

Concealed by a verdant plumage
Lying in anxious anticipation
Circulation escapes its steady ankle
Falling in of their own volition
Nutrients seep down through its lips.

Aromatic alluring rafflesia
Grandiose and ambitious
Pretty and tasteful
Fleeting and graceful
She dissolves her planter.

A planet of deep foliage
What lies beneath?
A sanctuary of shrubbery
A grouping of mulberry
Densely packed in the forest of guilt and shame.

Where did you go Romeo?
Were you made prey to Juliet
And her wicked fangs?
Why were you so amply invested
When you could be swallowed up and digested?

A cacophony erupts from all around
As a century of crickets falls victim
To peckish fly traps whose names are all Venus
Just like the place they probably came from
And just like the goddess they probably met.

They grow themselves, flowers do
Sometimes they need a host or a carrier
Or someone to buy them all the things they never had
But people could never touch any of it
And flowers would rule the earth.

A billion butterflies watch on now from the skies
Because they dare not touch the ground
Creeping in among the flowers
Saccharine and tempting
Ravenous monsters that crave the clippings of their
wings.

Egregious alluring rafflesia
What now have you done?
Lovely, she has slain her beloved
Drained his life and looked on
Depraved and wanting.

The flower has been burgeoned by her great friends
Sir Wasp has died
And his carcass inspired a nation of fungal freaks
Ophrys Apifera siphons the popularity
Of the once joyous flower.

And then one day a flood rolls in
Or a wildfire
Or a drought
Or something to cut off the lifeblood
Of the flagrant gluttons.

Some of us await the new order
Allomerus decemarticulatus
Nest inside the plant and become dependent on
her
A peculiarity in this kingdom
A steady restructure of society.

What to be thought of Jenny
From the family of Lentibulariaceae
She winds her tendrils through the wet soil
And fishes for a first date
She introduces herself, and then she moves on.

Portuguese Sundew holds tightly
She squeezes so hard because she can't let go
She can't move on
Abandonment is difficult
For someone so attached as *Drosophyllum*.

As brambles climb higher and higher
So too does time more quickly expire
A dance without a ball
Or a ball without a dance
From decomposition arises a second chance.

Redemptive alluring rafflesia
Remembers all of their names
They come to her because they can't live like this
And they'd rather die in her arms
Surrounded, to be made part of, something
beautiful.

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As an organization, we publish a print magazine once a semester and regularly post submissions from members of the Gordon community on our website.

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