TYNDALE UNIVERSITY

3377 Bayview Avenue
Toronto, ON
M2M 3S4

TEL:
416.226.6620
www.tyndale.ca

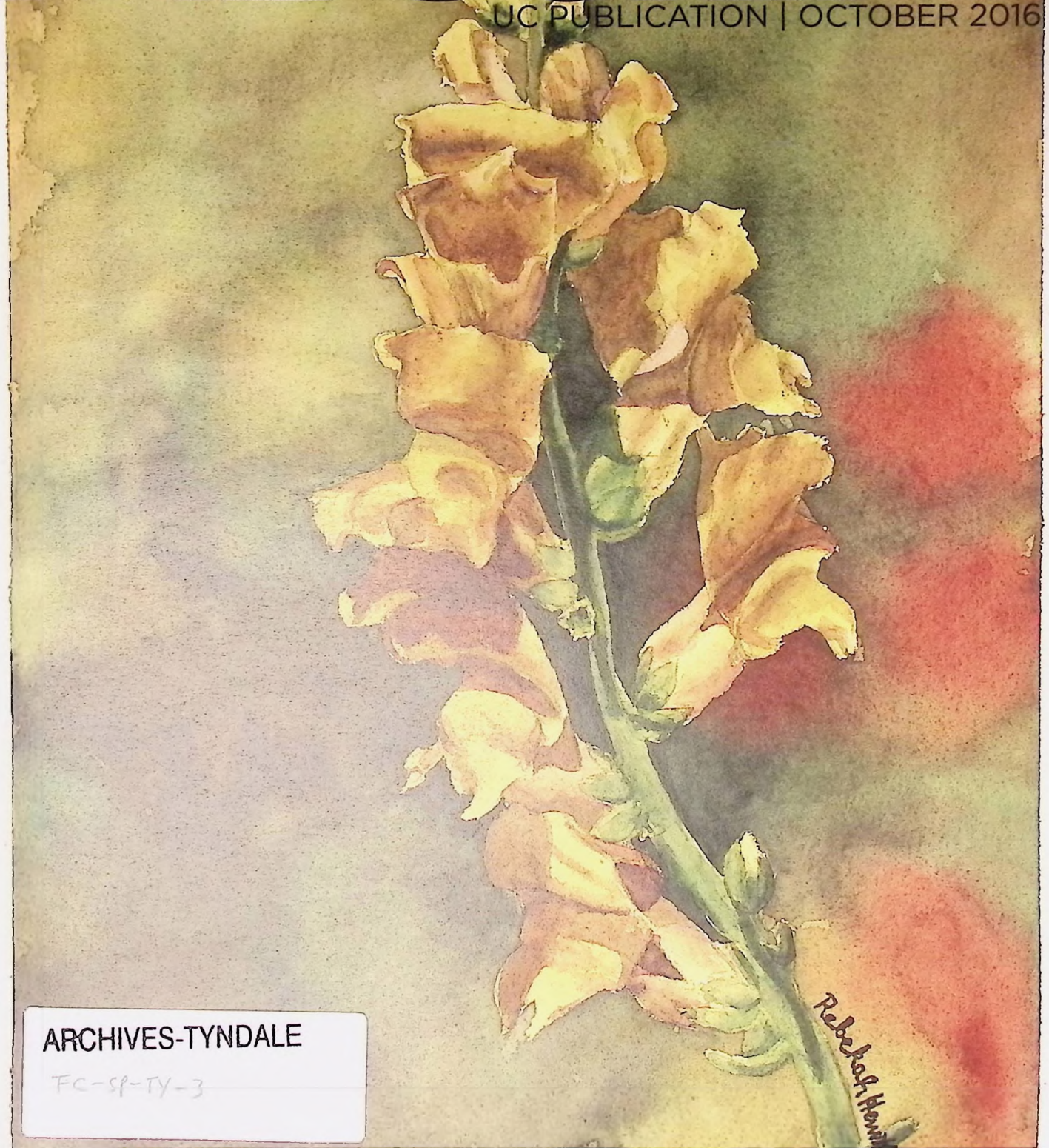
The Script (Tyndale University College & Seminary) (October 2016)

Reclaiming the Moral High Ground
-|Reese Gaillard|-

Hillary is No Role Model
-|Elizabeth Crouse|-

THE SCRIPT

UC PUBLICATION | OCTOBER 2016



LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

Hello Tyndale,

I am honoured and pleased to present the *UC Scriptis* to you. The *UC Scriptis* team, with some guidance from Student Development and input from fellow students, have renamed what was formally the Canon 25. Canon 25 refers to a collection of works by the students of 25 Ballyconnor Ct. With the move to the new campus, it felt right to rename the student magazine. "Scriptis" is Latin for "writings," and so the *UC Scriptis* (or *The Script* for short) is a collection of that–a manuscript of UC students' thoughts, opinions, ideas, and expressions.

We hope you find it is a helpful, interesting, and delightful outlet for honest discussion and expression, characterized by the love of Christ. Please note that we have a no anonymity (and no pseudonyms) publication policy. In my experience, anonymity tends to breed meanness and discouragement; you only have to look at most internet comment sections to see this. If you have a thought, opinion, or idea stand by it! We will print all respectful and thoughtful submissions because you have a right to think and express your opinions and we have a right to publish them!

This edition features the watercolour art of Rebekah Hewitt. If you are an artist who would like to have your work featured, please email us. We look forward to publishing your work in the coming months! Look out for Facebook posts, posters, or someone from the UC Scriptis team pestering you to submit something! Email to tyndalestudentpublication@gmail.com.

Until next month,

Elizabeth Crouse

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Scriptis Team

Editor in Chief: Elizabeth Crouse
Copy editors: Emma Syron and Sierra Sedge
Hard-copy editor: Paulina Roberts
Design and Layout: Sam Wachob
Promotions: Elza Manukian

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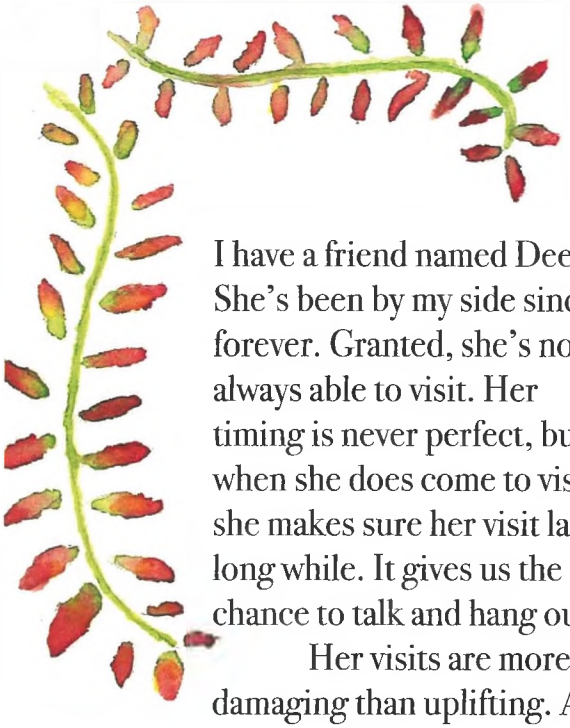


I have a friend named Dee. She's been by my side since forever. Granted, she's not always able to visit. Her timing is never perfect, but when she does come to visit, she makes sure her visit last a long while. It gives us the chance to talk and hang out.

Her visits are more damaging than uplifting. After she leaves I feel alone. When she's gone I experience periods of sadness, sometimes brought on by the thought of her, other times brought on for no reason at all. These periods last for a while.

When she's not in town to visit my days are brighter. But when she's around dark clouds storm my thoughts and sight – I can no longer see light. It's like she sucks the life out of me. Her presence has that kind of effect on me. I lose interest in the things I used to love. Everything feels hopeless. I feel numb.

She also drains me physically. When she's around I lose focus. I can't concentrate. I either get no sleep or get an overbearing amount of it. I eat too little or I eat too much.

She's important to me, but I know she's a bad influence. I can't seem to let her go. She's been in my life for so long I don't know how to let her go without hurting her. But she's hurting me, and friends aren't supposed to hurt other friends, right? If I continue to keep her I'm the one who will end up hurt, or worse.

By now, you're probably wondering one of two things. Or both:

1. I'm a masochist
2. I have a poor choice in friends

I can guarantee you that I'm not a masochist and I don't have poor choice in friends. I don't know if you've gotten the point of my relationship with Dee. You really have to read between the lines to realize that Dee is not my friend. She's not an actual human being: she is depression.

The gears in your mind are clicking now and you get it. I don't use the term "depression" lightly. I know people, both in the past and in the present who suffer or have suffered from depression. This is the only way I can explain how I've been feeling for the past couple of weeks. There have been some days that have been great, where Dee doesn't show up at all. Unfortunately, there have been many days where she's come to visit me. I've spent more days in solitude with tears than with friends and a huge grin on my face. There have been days that Dee has left me with my own thoughts and racing heart to the point where I stay in one spot, cry, or visualize one racing thought after another, sinking me deep within fear.

You'll be glad to know that I'm quitting my friendship with Dee. I've signed up for counseling.

There are people out there, including the people we surround ourselves with or pass by in the hallways who have a friend like Dee in their lives. To those people, I want to let you know you're not alone in this. You don't have to keep Dee in your life.

Let me Tell You All About my Best Friend...

She isn't easy to get rid of. I'm still trying to bolt down my door so she can't come in. Maybe you're trying to keep Dee out of your life too but she finds a way to kick down your door. Keep trying to lock her out. Maybe the five locks you've put on your door wasn't good enough. Trust me, there are a variety of locks you can use to keep her out. Know there are people who can help you put on those locks, or help you keep the door shut when Dee tries to karate-chop your door in half to get in. If you need help, let me know. We can help each other to prevent Dee from coming back.

It gets tiring trying to keep Dee out. I've noticed when I try to keep her out on my own life she manages to barge in. There is someone else who is on your side who can help you. He's in the business of restoring and mending people. He'll give you the strength to keep Dee away from your door. Your weakness plus His strength will make Dee's legs break. Ankles will get broken, but it won't be yours.

So remember you don't need Dee in your life. She's persistent and has no respect for who you are. She pretends to care but she doesn't. Being friends with her will drain you physically, emotionally, and spiritually. There will be days where she finds an alternative way to your room, either by a window or drilling a hole in a wall. But it's not impossible to keep her out. You have people on your side who are ready to help you. Just look around. Even more importantly, you have someone who came to put Dee and her ways to an end. You can trust Him; He is for you. After all, He has told us to come to Him, all who carry heavy burdens. He promises to give us rest and in Him we can find that rest, that peace from knowing him and being in a relationship with him. Something Dee could never bring to your relationship.

Roxanne Oduro

The Surrender

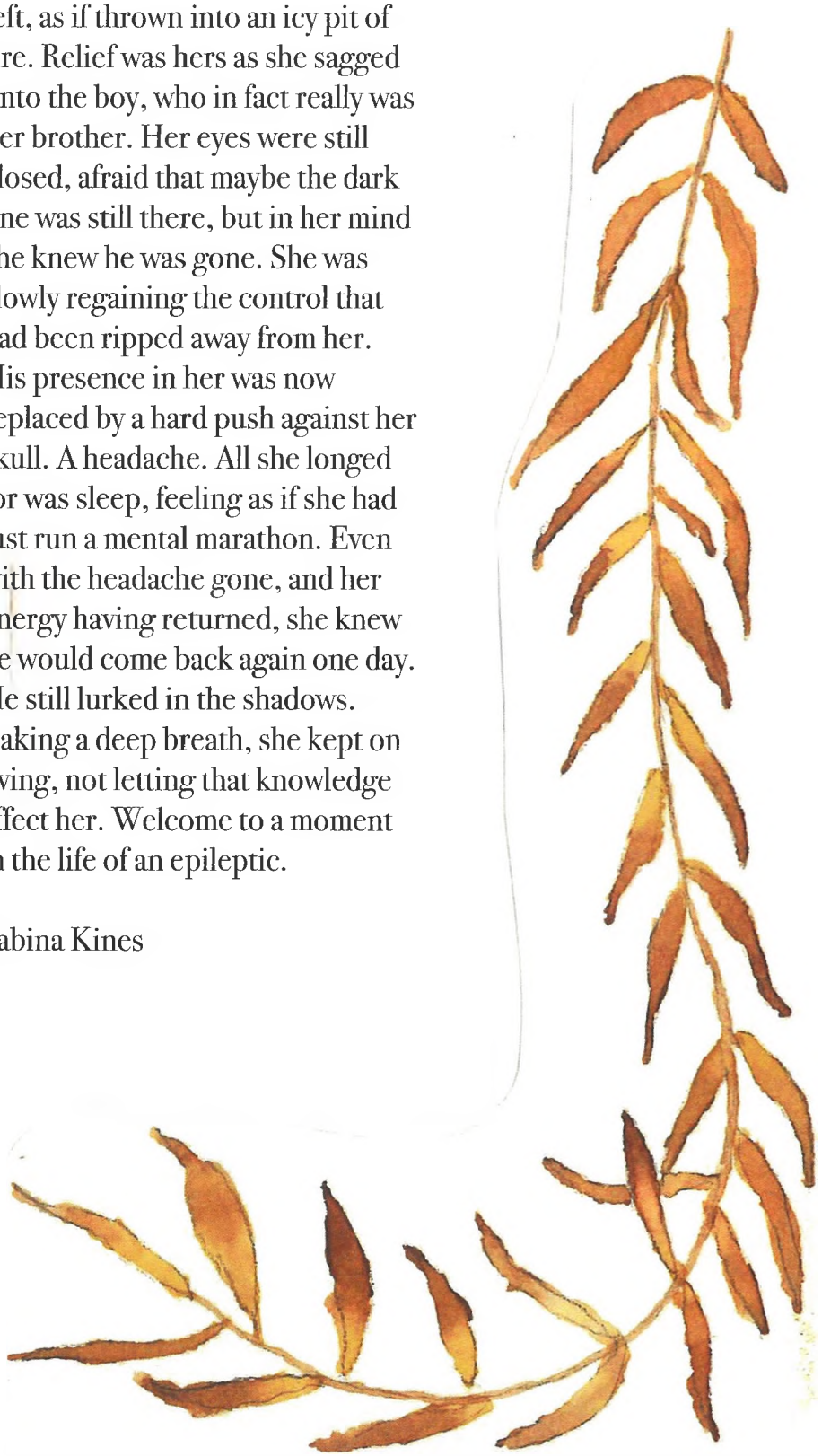
It was morning, the sun high up in the sky
"What a beautiful day", followed by a sigh
Brushing her teeth, and making her bed
A feeling, an unwelcome feeling spread
Has this not happened before?
Mr. Deja-vu staying for tea
She asked, "Why, sir, why me?"

Emily was happily relaxing in her big bed one afternoon, tired after a long morning. She was reading one of her favourite books by Jane Austen, *Pride and Prejudice*. Unfortunately the happy relaxing would slowly come to an end. Reading really shouldn't take that much energy out of a person should it? Reading those well written sentences took her longer and longer to read. The dread of what was coming washed over her. Soon it seemed as if she had to push through a wall to read each word until it came to the point where she barely understood what the words meant. For all she knew, she was reading the book in a foreign language. Frustration is no one's friend. She knew she should immediately close the book yet she didn't. She was having such a nice day, so why did she have to give herself over to him, the one that was coming? Oh, she knew he was coming. He was always there after all, looking over her shoulder, waiting to attack. He was hidden, but that didn't stop her from knowing. Why couldn't she just read in peace? She didn't deserve this, did she? What had she done to the world that she had to be ready for an impossible battle all the time? Slowly closing the book, she touched the tethered edges, not wanting to leave. Even reading had become something she had to think about. An impossible decision lay before her: fight or flight? If she fought him, would she be strong enough? If she didn't fight him now, he would only creep in at the end of the day. If she didn't fight him now, her day would be spent in concentration trying to push him away. But if she fought him now the other one might come. Maybe letting herself be taken by him was for the best. She was tired of these never truly-ending battles they had been having for years. Couldn't he pick on someone else? No. She wouldn't wish his anger upon anyone. Giving in she started losing control over who she was. Yes, Emily was strong, friendly, shy but outgoing, fun, crazy, weird, interes...she was int...what was she? Straining her eyes to see properly, she concentrated as hard she could. Right, she was...Emily was...who was she? It was too hard to think. Blinking, she tried to remember. What was she? Losing, that's what she was. This was all too familiar. She could feel him. His soft yet cold touch made her shiver. He was invisible to the world, but not to her. He was all to real to her. To anyone else Emily looked to be pondering over her book as she stared into space. To her? She was about to be attacked. No, the attack had already started. She wasn't sure of time anymore, she was losing herself. She tried not to fight him, but have you ever tried not fighting someone when under attack? Her instincts were telling her to resist him. Her head was a battlefield of mixed orders. Staring at her closet as if it were the most interesting object in the world, she concentrated hard on getting through this darkness he was casting on her. She had never concentrated on anything this much before...except the other times this happened. This dark creature always crept up out of nowhere. She felt like a little child lost in a supermarket crying for its mother. Except Emily was lost in her own head and body and her cries were painfully silent. This wasn't her anymore, was it? Where was she? She was giving up, leaving her body and letting her mind get taken by the shadowy creature. She was no longer in control, he won. Let him take over. Her body moved of its own accord, her legs tripping over themselves. A claustrophobic feeling came over her. Panic. Panic. Panic. She was hanging on

The Surrender

by the last threads, hope was long gone. In the midst of this battle she noticed a person in the background. Maybe they could help? Was it her brother? Emily couldn't tell anymore. She was struggling, how could she even concentrate on such a trivial concept? Words were spoken, probably by her brother. Not that she would really consider them words as they sounded more like a child babbling. It didn't make sense. There it was again. Frustration. She wanted to know what he said but she was busy. But being near her brother, or whoever it was, made her feel slightly hopeful that the gloomy creature would leave her alone. A dark icky feeling was inside her head, inside her body, and she wanted it to leave! Please! She cried out silently, desperately. Finally understanding spread across the boy's face, though his face swam in front of her. She couldn't see properly. She was imprisoned, even the tears she wanted to come out disobeyed. She tried crying for help, to say something, but even that right was taken away from her. All she said, if anything, was complete nonsense. She was alone, and scared, and powerless. She hung on to the boy's body for dear life and closed her eyes, hoping that maybe she would return to her body. It felt like hours. When suddenly, she felt the creature slowly occupy less of her space! A mixture of hot and cold waves washed over her as he left, as if thrown into an icy pit of fire. Relief was hers as she sagged onto the boy, who in fact really was her brother. Her eyes were still closed, afraid that maybe the dark one was still there, but in her mind she knew he was gone. She was slowly regaining the control that had been ripped away from her. His presence in her was now replaced by a hard push against her skull. A headache. All she longed for was sleep, feeling as if she had just run a mental marathon. Even with the headache gone, and her energy having returned, she knew he would come back again one day. He still lurked in the shadows. Taking a deep breath, she kept on living, not letting that knowledge affect her. Welcome to a moment in the life of an epileptic.

Sabina Kines



Reclaiming the Moral High Ground:

How the Left Bullies Those They Disagree With

If You Send Your Kid to Private School, You Are a Bad Person. That was the title of Slate.com's Allison Benedikt article. In the article Allison writes, "You are a bad person if you send your children to private school. Not bad like murderer bad—but bad like ruining-one-of-our-nation's-most-essential-institutions-in-order-to-get-what's-best-for-your-kid bad. So, pretty bad."

Allison then goes on to say, "I am not an education policy wonk: I'm just judgmental. But it seems to me that if every single parent sent every single child to public school, public schools would improve. This would not happen immediately. It could take generations. Your children and grandchildren might get mediocre educations in the meantime, but it will be worth it, for the eventual common good."

Really? What if their children are handicapped and need special assistance that is better provided at another school? Are parents bad for wanting the best for their child? According to the author, yes. Now how can someone who self-admittedly knows nothing about policy or about how a school might run, make such a judgment claim from some moral high ground? Leftism.

Look closely: I did not say anything about liberalism but rather I said something about its ugly brother. Dennis Prager, a Jewish political commentator explains, "You must know this about leftism, it is 100% rooted in feelings 0 in intellect. They use intellectual language but it is all rooted in feeling."

Allison beautifully embodies what a typical person on the left's

Reclaiming the Moral High Ground:

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knowledge on the issue, but 100 percent when it comes to moral authority. Disagreement with such people will be met with negative claims about your character. A sort of bullying takes place, rather than discussion. But that is their goal! To shut down dissenting viewpoints. There is a reason why people make moral arguments rather than intellectual ones. Moral arguments win people. When they win people, they win power. When most people are given a decision between good guy, bad idea, or evil man, good idea, people will always choose the former.

The act of bullying that the left engages in is best explained by Ben Shapiro, author and political commentator. He remarks, "When someone calls you a racist, sexist, bigot, homophobe because you happen to disagree with them about tax policy or same-sex marriage or abortion, that's bullying. When someone slanders you because you happen to disagree with them about global warming or the government shutdown, that's bullying. When someone labels you a bad human being because they disagree with you, they are bullying you. They are attacking your character without justification. That's nasty. In fact, it makes them nasty." Simply by going against the grain of society, you will become an enemy of the left. No matter how reasonable you seem to be, disagreement is met with shaming and insult, such as calling someone bad for sending their kid to private school.

So what can we do as Christians, who are often targeted by those on the left who want to make us out as nothing worse than evil? To win people over we must speak the message of morality. The common man listens more to the moral arguments than the philosophical ones. So what should we do? My first suggestion is not to engage with these types of people at all! People on the left do not want to listen to different viewpoints, and someone who refuses to reason refuses to listen. If argument is necessary (such as your grade depends on it, you will be labeled a racist if you don't, or under the rare condition that a person on the left is willing to be persuaded by sound argumentation), my second suggestion is to frame the debate in a way where you are not defending yourself from personal attacks and by going on the offensive when they do. Punch back twice as hard when they use a personal insult; make sure to tell them that insults have no place in this conversation. Remember to be respectful and keep a sober mind; you do not want to appear as the aggressor, but you want to make arguments that are strong and concise. You may make enemies for speaking the truth, but take courage. Many leaders in Christianity and culture made enemies for their views, which are common nowadays.

Interested in more political discussion? Then check out my podcast on youtube or itunes! Search: The Life On Campus or email me at lifeoncampusshow@gmail.com

Reese Gaillard

The Gift of Gratitude

C.S. Lewis made a very profound observation about his own generation when he noted that all around him there was a marked "disenchantment" of the world. This disenchantment is deeply felt in our own time too, and is often accompanied by feelings of discontent, weariness, dissatisfaction, restlessness, and a complete lack of excitement in ordinary, day-to-day life. Materially, we lack in practically nothing and we freely admit that we own and have so much... but what about spiritually – can we say the same?

I have struggled with feeling discontented myself, and it took several years for God to reveal to me what I was missing – what the "secret" is of the believer whose joy and contentment is able to transcend even the most mundane and painful circumstances. What I discovered is actually no secret at all – it is nothing new, but it is radical. It is simple, yet powerful. It is life-changing, perspective-reversing, spiritually transforming, and utterly fulfilling. It is one of the many gifts we were all born with: the gift of gratitude.

Since we see God-given abilities as gifts, that was my motive in titling this devotional "the gift of gratitude." I have come to believe that gratitude is a precious ability that every person has. At any moment, we can choose to experience gratitude, and it is a choice that brings incredible blessings and rewards. However, like most abilities, it will not have a significant impact on our lives unless we are intentional about using it.

Practicing thankfulness can bless, transform and revive us in several key ways.

#1: Gratitude roots us in God's character. In his book *Spirituality of Gratitude: The Unexpected Blessings of Thankfulness,* Pastor Joshua Choonmin Kang begins by pointing out that knowing God and experiencing His deep love and faithfulness inevitably causes a believer to be thankful for who He is; thus, our gratitude is founded on God's character. When we are rooted in God, thankfulness is a natural result (Col. 2:7). This is immensely important, for "roots define the future of the tree" (10) and good roots lead to good fruit. A tree that yields bad fruit (such as the tendency to complain) hints at infected roots of the heart, for "out of the abundance of the heart, the mouth speaks" (Matt. 12:34). Gratitude, then, comes from being rooted in God and tending the gardens of our hearts to ensure that we are producing the kind of fruit that blesses us and everyone around us.

#2: Gratitude makes us spiritually sensitive, which produces joy. Thankfulness leads directly to joy. Pastor Kang argues that this is because gratitude softens our hardened hearts, and makes us more open and "spiritually sensitive." Hard hearts are insensitive and unyielding (Eph. 4:19; Exod. 9:7), but the littlest things are able to touch a soft heart. A beautiful view or a kind word would go unnoticed by someone who is hardened, but a grateful spirit notices the little things and gives thanks for them. Our lives are filled with these "little" blessings – not little in importance, but perhaps little in how much notice we give them. Once we realize that most of the necessary things in our lives are a free gift, we are able to feel gratitude for something as basic as the air we breathe. In fact, basic is a good place to start when dissatisfaction and unhappiness seep in. As the old hymn goes, "count your many blessings, see what God has done."

Seeing how many free gifts make up the fabric of our lives causes us to suddenly recognize ourselves as rich; all of a sudden, our spirits stir to an awareness of just how much God protects and provides for us. In fact, He has done so much for us that we barely suspect how many needs we have, because He met those needs before we were even aware of having them. Slowly, through gratitude, we become able to find that enchantment we had lost. Through the eyes of thankfulness, the most ordinary day starts to tell a story of extraordinary grace and divine faithfulness. The most mundane aspects of life become witnesses of the patient, abiding

love of the Father. The dreariest parts of our routine turn out to be infused with evidence of God's presence. Being spiritually sensitive to our many blessings will always lead to joy, excitement, and that enchantment our souls yearn for.

#3: Gratitude transforms tragedy. This joy, security and comfort can be felt and attained at any time – even in the hardest and bleakest of seasons. Paul writes that we are to "give thanks in all circumstances, for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you" (1 Thess. 5:18). It is God's will that we give thanks, for gratitude does something to us that makes it possible to bear any circumstance possible.

We know that we are to "rejoice in trials" (James 1:2) because that is how the believer is refined, yet the feeling of joy is decidedly far away whenever I experience a difficult season in my own life. Gratitude for "God's sovereignty in the midst of suffering," however, transforms the tragedy and anchors me in hope and calm. Practicing thankfulness also reminds me of God's faithfulness to me in the past and present, and prevents me from feeling like all of life is dark and unjust.

There is a story of a teacher who once gave his students an exam and asked them to write what they saw. The exam was just a piece of paper with a single black dot printed halfway down the page. The confused students wrote what they could, and when they handed in their exam, the teacher read their responses aloud. Every single student, without exception, had focused on the black dot: they had described its colour, size, location on the page, and anything else they could say about the dot. But not one of them had remembered the rest of the white paper on which the black dot had been printed.

This is a picture of what we often do in our own lives. We become fixated on the black dots of our lives, on the hardships and things we are unhappy with, and forget about the rest of the white paper. Gratitude takes our eyes away from the black dots and reminds us of the far greater blessings we have from God.

There are boundless rewards for living a life of thankfulness. As Paul wrote, "Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus" (Phil. 4:6-7). Amen.

Elsa Manukian

West Hill United church

As a young Christian who is deeply interested in the events which are taking place within the Christian community, I found myself instantly drawn to the news of a church whose pastor had recently come out as being an atheist. The West Hill United church's pastor, Gretta Vosper, has been working within the church for many years and has always spoke of questioning a higher power and how things truly work beyond our finite conceptions, but it was not until the beginning of this year that Gretta's views, which were often considered to be controversial, were brought to the immediate attention of the public. In the first few months of this year Gretta began to officially recognize herself as an "atheist," which took many Christians by surprise as a recognized member of the church had now outwardly classified herself as being a person who does not believe in the existence of God.

This past Sunday, October 9, I decided to go to the West Hill United church and listen to what Gretta had to say, what message she sends to her congregation, and how the Christian community is to respond to her teachings. Unfortunately, Gretta was on a trip to New Zealand where she was at a conference speaking about moving past a theist God. Scott Kearns, the musical director for the church, travelled to New Zealand with Gretta and sent a letter back to their congregation regarding their trip. Scott wrote that Gretta was given a tremendous amount of support at the conference and that the other attendees were saddened to hear of the way in which her denomination has been handling this issue of a new self-proclaimed atheist choosing to stay as a pastor at her church. Further, the people at the conference were quite happy when they learned that Gretta's congregation is standing by her during this trying time and thus commended her for standing up for her cause, to preach love and inclusivity without speaking of or worshipping any sort of a higher power, or more specifically of God.

As I walked through the doors at the church I was immediately welcomed by long-time members of the congregation and I was given a nametag to put on to enable others to know my name, as it was my first time attending. Upon entering the chapel, my eyes were drawn to the rainbow-colored ribbons dressing the ceiling and the First Nations art pieces. As per the traditions of the United denomination, they pride themselves on their inclusivity of and advocacy for the LGBTQ community. The First Nations art pieces are placed both inside and outside of the church as it is built "on the traditional territory of the Mississaugas of the New Credit First Nation's lands which lands were previously occupied by the Seneca and Huron Wendat First Nations." The right side of chapel was filled with rows of chairs, as opposed to pews which are more common in churches. The left side of the chapel was still lined with pews but the congregation intends to have them removed in the, near, future.

After the service had started, I became overwhelmed with an extreme sense of sadness as the congregation at this church speaks of people and places around the world who need help and hope that peace will go to them but do not ground their hopes for peace in God. They often speak of "the light" and occasionally use the word "amen" but they do not root these words in any sort of belief in God. It is in times of strife and sorrow that we should lean on God to be our guiding light. By the congregation of this church not outwardly worshipping God, they seem to be missing out on the true love and peace that comes with believing in God. While I do acknowledge the importance of having an institution within our current society which one can go to and freely express their belief in some higher power, but not necessarily God, I do not think that a "church" is the right place for this type of worship. As Christians I think that we should pray for this congregation in their time of doubt and questioning and attempt to show them the true light which can only be received through the worship of our Lord Christ Jesus.

Paulina Roberts

Does Anybody Hear Him?

(Written to Does Anybody Hear Her by Casting Crowns, inspired by the last line in the song)

Does Anybody Hear Him?
Can anybody see?
He is running further From Him
Further from the truth.
But what is the truth?
He is constantly running,
Searching
Pleading for this burden to be taken from him.
The impurity that he struggles with,
The sexual sin
Can You please take it away?
You who can do ALL THINGS?
Does anyone know what he is going through?
The guilt, the shame, the constant battle
The constant repenting for the sins he has committed,
Even though he knows He bore our sins
It always seems as though he can't outrun the temptations,
The constant viewing
The lust
The images
The world
Lord please Help!
Send your angels to take him away
The constant beating of his heart reminds him that there is another day coming
Another day to get through
Another day to rely on His strength
Another day
Life goes on
He continues to reign
The chains of sin are broken
The cage is opened
Step out Oh Israel
Listen to the voice of the One calling in the Wilderness
Trust the One who walks with you in the Valley of Death
He bore our punishment and has done away with eternal damnation
Blessed are the poor for theirs is the Kingdom of Heaven
He Is Coming again
I AM

Jason Fleet

Hillary is No Role Model

The moment Hillary Clinton was officially named the Democratic nominee she tweeted a single word: "History." The Democratic Convention played a video of glass breaking–a symbolic image of one brave woman shattering the glass ceiling. Everyone was elated! Hillary is an inspiration for women all over the world (we seem to have forgotten that Margaret Thatcher did this 35 years ago in Great Britain). Finally America may have a female president. It is, after all, 2016.

Despite this and my passion for womanhood, I do not think Hillary is a good role model for girls. She has allowed her husband to walk all over her, enduring the shame of his affairs. She has followed his lead to lie to protect herself. How many scandals has she been involved in? Her latest one–the email scandal–did not end in her prosecution. However, the director of the FBI basically said that if it had been anyone else, he would have been arrested. Obviously she deserves to go before a judge.

Girls, the image Hillary projects is so far removed from what we see in Scripture. What about her is admirable? That she is powerful? That people listen to her? That she has (almost and supposedly) beaten men at their own game? My goodness, there is so much more for us as women. Not that we cannot hold positions of leadership with responsibility, it is not power we lust for. Though we have valuable thoughts and ideas, we should not want to be listened to as Hillary is. The media fawns over her as if she can do no wrong. They ignore her scandals and hardly question her judgements. Anyone who does is suddenly a sexist misogynist. That is not the Christian accountability we need. As for "beating the game," I guess she has done this. But how? By lying and cheating. People have needlessly died under her watch (Benghazi, for example) but she constantly tries to shift the blame. It is cowardly.

One of her most tragic qualities is her commitment to abortion in the name of freedom; I think it is tragic for Christians to support anyone eager to kill unborn babies. It is evil. She believes it is a woman's "free choice" to end the life of the defenceless, but she is also very selective of what kind of freedom suits her agenda. In April 2015 she said about abortion, "Laws have to be backed up with resources and political will. And deep-seated cultural codes, religious beliefs and structural biases have to be changed." It's not enough that abortion is legal. She wants to change religious beliefs! How undemocratic. She is desperate for women's rights to kill, but she ignores the rights of Americans to believe it's wrong. The beliefs that she doesn't like have to change.

I never want to be the kind of woman Hillary is. I want to be like the women of the Bible. Like Rahab, who was brave and strong, like Hannah who waited and pleaded before her Lord, like Mary who, in obedience, trusted God. I want to be like Mary Magdalene, who left everything to follow Christ, who stayed with Him in His suffering, even when the disciples fled. I want to be like the Samaritan woman, who, in the joy of her salvation, shared the Good News of Jesus Christ with those who previously shamed her. I want to fit Peter's description of "the holy women who hoped in God": being humble, doing good works, and not fearing "anything that is frightening" (1 Peter 3:5-6).

Hillary seems to be a sick woman who is obsessed with power. She will lie and abuse the system and other people to get her way. We should not look to Hillary for inspiration, but we should pray for her. She has so much more potential than what she endeavours to accomplish.

Elizabeth Crouse

Beauty Matters

As a child I remember plunking down a huge pile of scrap paper on the floor in my living room and spending entire afternoons doodling whatever came to mind. Sometimes it was faces of characters that I'd come up with for short stories, the occasional imaginary monster and quite a few wild animals.

Sketching away with those orange pencils has been a part of my life as long as I can remember, with acrylic paint getting thrown into the mix in more recent years. I find it inspiring and enjoyable to see the finished products.

For me, however, talking about "art" feels superficial. Often the word "art" conjures up tacky images of colour wheels and badly painted landscapes that a hotel manager thought would brighten the place up.

Physical art – whether it's a painting, pencil drawing or a play – is the fruit of a mind that is alive, with the imagination at work, showing internal and external realities. Through good art, we are confronted with the glory, sorrow and mystery of human life in all its intricacies in a moment of power and awe.

Art has lost its place in the church and society as a whole because the imaginative core of humanity has been neglected, and instead society focuses its effort and attention on whatever can make us most productive and efficient. With every waking hour full of activity, moving from a day of school, to 3 different extracurriculars on different weeknights, and then the pile of homework always looming with our phone constantly buzzing in our pockets, life can become shallow. We often lose sight of transcendence and avert our gaze from mystery.

Art is a product of curiosity and the experience that results. It is cultivated by a rich understanding and experience of the lives we live. If we drown our sense of wonder with the ravaging influences of unrestrained technology, superficial friendships and a cold monotony of day-by-day life, the effects are obvious.

We will not be able to be floored by the depths of beauty, truth and goodness that God allows us to experience in the world He has created. Our senses will be dulled and emotions fogged.

To fully receive our inheritance of joy and be effective as Christians, we need to engage with the beauty that surrounds us and show that God is the creative mind behind it all. Passion cultivates passion.

That's the job of the Christian artist – to pierce the heart of an increasingly uninterested and vapid culture with the fiery sword of the Spirit through artistic representations of reality.

We need to do away with the idea of art as being mere "inward expression" and instead see it as a remoulding of God's already created order, which we can present in fresh and powerful ways through imaginative work of artistic construction.

"Sub-creation," as J.R.R. Tolkien termed it, is the re-crafting of elements of God's imaginative, active Logos that hold together the natural order of existence on a second-by-second basis.

The work of the artist is not to engage in creative self-expression, but rather to render the deep truth of things in a way that strikes and resonates in a threefold experience of truth, beauty and goodness.

Good art enlivens and inspires, it quickens the soul to act or else brings restful peace and a spiritual stirring that is often unexplainable.

We've all encountered this connection at some point, whether it's the ecstatic rush while watching Les Miserables, (it is important to me to include the "Les Miserables" example)
the profound sense of closeness we

may have felt with characters from our favourite movie or the wrenching of the heart caused by a poem written during a World War. Through whatever artistic medium, we can all relate to this sense of awareness of the richness of being human and the untouchable mystery of transcendent vastness.

Author Andy Crouch analyzes the world's view of Christianity as it relates to our cultural mandate to live beautiful lives.

I wonder what we Christians are known for in the world outside our churches. Are we known as critics, consumers, copiers or condemners of culture? I'm afraid so. Why aren't we known as cultivators – people who tend and nourish what is best in human culture, who do the hard and painstaking work to preserve the best of what people before us have done? Why aren't we known as creators – people who dare to think and do something that has never been thought or done before, something that makes the world more welcoming and thrilling and beautiful?

Christians must create in a manner that is reminiscent of God who created us, treating our craft in the highest regard, finding goodness to portray rather than being mere critics of everything the secular world creates.

God is the author of beauty, and the closer we get to Him the more the world becomes alive and exciting even in that which is small and mundane. He is lifted high by the simple act of bringing beauty into a culture that so desperately needs it.

Conor Sweetman

Follow Conor and his art at @conorsweetman on Instagram.

The Script

Send your submissions to
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