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## **Old Testament Reading Starts Journey from Anxiety**

**CEDARVILLE, OHIO** -- Dismissing the old in favor of the new is commonplace in American society. The latest is the greatest. But for Lexi Groters, a junior physical education major focusing on occupational therapy from Brainerd, Minnesota, it was something old that gave her a new, positive way of interacting with the world.

Although she grew up reading the Bible, Groters didn't recall reading the Old Testament, even though it comprises roughly three-quarters of its pages.

Groters first read the Old Testament her freshman year in the required Cedarville class The Bible and Gospel. She went even deeper in her Old Testament Literature class and began rereading her assigned Old Testament readings as many times as possible before each class.

"I used to think that the Old Testament was a whole bunch of history and stories used to make us act right. They weren't real stories back then," explained Groters. "But then I saw all of the connections the Old Testament has to the New Testament, and it blew me away.

"Everything in the Old Testament lays to affect to the New Testament," she continued. "Without the knowledge of the Old Testament, I was clueless as to what was going on in the New Testament. The Old Testament really gives me a full gospel knowledge."

Now, reading the Old Testament has started a different journey for Groters. She grew up in a church that encouraged her to dismiss inward sadness. They believed that since God is in control and has given the Gospel, Christians should only have pure joy. In their eyes, any sadness or anxiety was a result of not trusting in the Lord enough.

This caused Groters to bottle up her anxiety of growing up in a single-parent home. She began having panic attacks when she was 8 years old. These attacks worsened during high school when she moved across the country.

After coming to Cedarville and starting to read the Old Testament, Groters noticed that people in the Old Testament expressed their pain quite openly.

"The gravity of my emotions hit me freshman year when I started reading the Old Testament, especially in the books of Job and Jonah," Groters said. "It made me refocus on how I looked at God. Before I knew that I needed his joy, but I didn't understand that I needed to feel my emotions to have a better joy."

During her sophomore year, Groters took psychology classes that made her realize that her emotions were part of being human and that it was OK to talk about them with others. Groters'

friends also noticed something was wrong, and some of her friends who had gone to professional counselors in the past encouraged her to seek help.

Groters started counseling the summer after her sophomore year, which revealed that she was severely depressed with an anxiety disorder. She has continued to receive professional help through Cedarville's counseling services this year.

Located in southwest Ohio, Cedarville University is an accredited, Christ-centered, Baptist institution with an enrollment of 4,380 undergraduate, graduate and online students in more than 150 areas of study. Founded in 1887, Cedarville is recognized nationally for its authentic Christian community, rigorous academic programs, strong graduation and retention rates, accredited professional and health science offerings and high student engagement ranking. For more information about the University, visit [www.cedarville.edu](http://www.cedarville.edu).