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Cedarville University

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Facing Fear
Maybe it’s the economy, or maybe it’s the magnitude and frequency of global environmental disasters. Maybe you heard a news story you just can’t shake about the decline in public education or the projected spike in health care costs. Maybe you can’t even name why you feel so unsettled when you think about our country, our world, and our future.

If we took seriously every warning about impending doom all around us, we’d never leave our homes — until we see a segment on the Today show about the hidden dangers of indoor air pollution and the radon in our granite countertops.

When you see ads for blockbuster apocalypse movies between newscasts about killer viruses, a make-or-break presidential election, and the end of the Mayan calendar, it’s tough to tell whether life imitates art or if it’s the other way around.

Where do you turn when it seems like all that bad news is “closer than you think” or “could happen to you”? This edition of Torch explores our fearful culture and why it has become so easy to expect the worst rather than hope for the best.

Hope has become a countercultural concept. For Christians to live differently in the 2012 world means not allowing ourselves to get sucked into the hype and spin of a 24/7 news cycle. It requires that we develop a discerning mind that can separate truth from sensationalism and even outright deception.

Our yearlong chapel theme is “Sharpening the Christ-Centered Mind.” The Christ-centered mind is shaped by the truth revealed by God and His Word, both written and incarnate. Jesus told His disciples, “Let not your heart be troubled,” because the reality of their future, and ours, is victory and peace. There are no uncertainties — game over!

The reality of this hope is what allows Christ-followers to successfully navigate this culture “wise as serpents, innocent as doves.” Hope in Christ should be the conscience core of our being. It should mark every conversation, sweeten every bitter experience, and intensify every joy (Matt. 10:16).

Rejoice! We are not like those who have no hope.

William E. Brown, Ph.D.
President of Cedarville University
A Culture of Fear
by William E. Brown, Ph.D.
When culture is immersed in fear, hope is the countercultural answer.

In Search of Solid Ground
by Robert G. Parr, Ph.D.
In a society built on a shifting foundation, we long to structure our lives on something more secure.

The Politics of Fear
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Whether it’s personal security or the economy, political leaders know how to use fear to their advantage.

Beyond the Hype
by Jeff Gilbert
A 24/7 news cycle creates urgency to get the story, not necessarily to get the story right.

Captured by Awe
by Robert Rohm, M.R.E.
Fear isn’t always something to be, well, feared. In the right context, it can lead to reverence, worship, and awe.

Looking for the Blessed Hope
by Robert Gromacki, Th.D.
As a result of Jesus’ resurrection, even death has lost its sting.
A Culture of Fear

by William E. Brown, Ph.D.

When times are uncertain, doomsday prophets prey on people’s sense of helplessness. It’s easier to expect the worst than to hope for the best.

He predicted the exact date Jesus Christ would return. Thousands of followers sold everything they owned and joined him in issuing warnings of coming judgment. They preached, shouted in the streets, held signs, and waited expectantly for the end.

But the appointed day came and went uneventfully. Followers were stunned. One said, “Our fondest hopes were blasted … we wept and wept.” The event became known as the “Great Disappointment.”

This was not radio evangelist Harold Camping and his May 21, 2011, prediction; this was Samuel Snow, and the date was October 22, 1844.

Snow and Camping are in a long line of leaders who have foretold the end of the world. Montanus did it in the second century. So did William Miller in 1843 and the Jehovah’s Witnesses in 1914, 1915, 1918, 1920, 1925, etc. Hal Lindsey did it in 1970 and Pat Robertson in 1980.

Apocalyptic prophecies usually come at times of uncertainty and change. People are edgy, fearful, and quick to grab on to the promise that “it will all soon be over.”

Fear: The Horizontal View

In times like these, it is not surprising that self-proclaimed prophets have convinced so many people that they have an inside peek at the calendar of end times. They claim either a direct revelation from God or an ability to decipher hidden codes in the Bible.
The proliferation of nonstop news only compounds the helplessness. And most news is bad news. Not because good things are not happening, but because higher ratings (and more money) go to programs that elicit emotional responses and a codependent need to “stay tuned.” When we feel powerless because of what is outside our control, we tend to believe and expect the worst.

Aristotle said, “Men are swayed more by fear than by reverence.” Even Christians get swept away by the confident pronouncements of seemingly honest and spiritual leaders — but God does not speak in riddles. Jesus was clear when he said about the end times, “No one knows the hour or the day” (Mark 13:32).

If we only look at the condition of our world, listen to the news, and watch the stock market, we can be overcome with uncertainty and fear. But we are called to be different. “We are not like those who have no hope” (1 Thess. 4:13).

Hope is a confident expectation that what God has promised will happen. Hope is the driving force behind meaning in life and significance in purpose. You want to be countercultural? Live a life that exudes hope.

I remember John Lennon speaking about the Beatles and their drug use: “The only time we took drugs was when we were without hope, and the only way we got out of it was with hope. If we can sustain the hope, then we don’t need liquor, drugs, or anything. But if we lose hope, what can you do?”

The same happens when believers put their hope in the world; whether it be their wealth, their position, or even the teachings of a so-called prophet. Misplaced hope is just as paralyzing as misplaced faith.

**Hope: The Vertical View**

The Scriptures give us at least three practical truths about hope. First, hope is grounded in God’s future for us. “I pray also that the eyes of your heart may be enlightened,” Paul wrote, “in order that you may know the hope to which He has called you, the riches of His glorious inheritance in the saints, and His incomparably great power for us who believe” (Eph. 1:18–19).

A second truth is that hope provides stability. When all around us is crumbling, we know whom we serve and what He has in store for us. This hope is “an anchor for the soul” (Heb. 6:19) that steadies us in times of uncertainty.

Third, hope provides the will to persevere. Because we know what the future holds, we faithfully serve Christ until He returns. In other words, “Stand firm. Let nothing move you. Always give yourselves fully to the work of the Lord, because you know that your labor in the Lord is not in vain” (1 Cor. 15:58).

C.S. Lewis sums it up best in this passage from *Mere Christianity*:

If you read history, you will find that those who did most for the present world were just those who thought the most of the next. It is since Christians have largely ceased to think of the other world that they have become so ineffective in this.

Aim at heaven and you will get earth thrown in.

Aim at earth and you will get neither.

I have a friend who taught me to end correspondence with the phrase: “Eyes on Him.” That’s the bottom line in our dithering world of uncertainty and pseudo-prophets.

We know Who wins in the end. This gives us not only peace but motivation to continue to faithfully serve with joy and anticipation.

Eyes on Him!

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Watergate, assassinations, campus protests, race riots, the Vietnam War, the Cold War, secularism, feminism — the 1960s and ’70s were a period of cultural upheaval. Stability crumbled as institutions, which had previously been thought firm and trustworthy, were subjected to questioning, critique, and at times, outrage.

Although these decades remain vividly impressed on the minds of many, we don’t have to look to the past to see the how fragile society is. Contemporary America has experienced similar levels of upheaval: warfare, recessions, political and religious extremism, and moral relativism. It can be disorienting when one seemingly steadfast...
institution is shaken. In today’s world, we are experiencing complex turmoil as the foundations for multiple institutions give way, leading to anxiety and helplessness. Each time we adjust to our shifting world, we do so with a little less confidence that anything can be truly stable.

The current turbulence of our social institutions exposes the emptiness of the trust we have placed in them. Whether traditional or contemporary societal arrangements, none of those attachments can carry the weight that faith in God alone can provide. A proper understanding of divinely ordained institutions enables Christians to rest in the blessings that are granted through them.

When fear seems natural, perhaps even appropriate, Christians have an opportunity to model a response that reflects their theological foundation and faith in Christ. But we, too, are prone to anxiety and often swayed by cultural unrest. Those who build their house upon the rock of God’s Word will be equipped to withstand the shifting sands of contemporary society.

Understanding Our Interconnected Institutions
Social scientists recognize five basic institutions in any society: the family, religion, education, government, and the economy. No matter how developed or simple a society might be, every group of people arranges life around these five primary institutions.

The relationship of these institutions to one another and to the broader culture has changed dramatically over the last century. Prior to the 20th century, the driving force of our American culture was the combined influence of family and religious institutions. The other three institutions were necessary and operative but played a largely supportive role. Such is still the case in many societies of the world. The Islamic world serves as a classic example, as family and religion are the engines that form culture and life among Muslim peoples.

Many social scientists believe that, because of the 20th century Western institutional revolution, the economy has replaced family and religion as the primary institution that defines culture and determines life in the other four. For example, we structure our family life around the rhythm of a five-day workweek, saving the majority of our home interactions for the weekend.

The American Church has long relied on volunteer workers, mostly women, to further its ministries. But with more women employed outside the home today and fewer involved church members, successful church ministry now requires more full-time employees, placing a financial burden on local churches.

Likewise, the economic institution has influenced education. In higher education especially, students (and their parents) want to know that their significant investment will lead to a promising career. They often view traditional subjects including history, literature, science, and philosophy as less relevant since they do not appear to bolster a résumé. The value of education has become the extent to which it enables students to market themselves to future employers.

Government and the economy are becoming increasingly interconnected. In a one-way shift of authority, local governments have less autonomy as they are eclipsed at the national level. The trade-off is the promise of more services and security at a lower cost. Government is good at promising the free services everyone wants, but the economic reality is someone has to pay for them. Consider the current European focus on economic austerity — as political satirist P.J. O’Rourke quips, “If you think health care is expensive, wait until it’s free.”

Almost everything about our culture comes back to the economic institution. A culture rooted in the economy gives rise to materialistic perspectives on life. But living well involves more than the physical

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provision of life’s basic necessities. And therein lies the tension: we live in a society built on a shifting foundation, but we recognize the need to structure our lives on something more secure. The cracks in our social foundation are causing many of us to worry, doubt, and fear.

Seeking a Firm Foundation

Humans have a tendency to place faith in one or more of society’s basic institutions to provide security, stability, significance, and sufficiency. Although Jesus explained to His followers that “without me you can do nothing” (John 15:5), we keep on trying. Despite the first commandment’s warning not to place anything or anyone before God, we all too often place our trust and worship in something other than our Divine Father.

In more traditional times, people placed their hope in their families — many still do. The marriage relationship can be one’s reason for living; a spouse becomes the source of love, inspiration, and meaning. Parents may relive their lives through their children, expecting their children to receive recognition they were denied. In some cultures, intense family loyalties lend themselves to strong clan and tribal allegiances which serve as one’s sole source of identity and significance. Ethnic and racial loyalties are extensions of this primacy of the blood relationship. But no human relationship can offer what God alone can provide.

Education is revered for its promise to provide security and significance in the form of wealth, reputation, and honor. Education is a multibillion dollar industry, and students and families rack up debilitating debt in the pursuit of a successful career and financially stable future. Their debt often prohibits their investment in other areas, such as ministry, service, and family.

Although religious institutions ideally facilitate a proper trust in God, they all too easily replace God with empty rituals. Old Testament prophets warned Israel of her misplaced trust in her sacrifices and Sabbath observances while failing to repent and obey the law of God from her heart (Isa. 1:11–17; Amos 5:21–24; Micah 6:6–8). When religious practices become the object of worship, the deity is understood as an influence to be manipulated or placated in order to achieve a desired end: healing, fortune, deliverance from difficulties, or insight into the future. A god who can be controlled by humans is no God at all. The God of the Bible is the Sovereign Ruler of heaven and earth. If He is not, then we have plenty of reason to fear.

For many Americans, the government is truly their savior. The government promises security and assistance for those who lack the means to financially succeed. If a citizen is poor, ill, or old, government programs can level the playing field. A prominent, modern role of government is to distribute society’s resources so all citizens have equal access to all of the nation’s benefits. But the government, like all the other institutions, consistently fails us, evoking further frustration and fear.

By promising to “fix” society’s needs, these institutions ignore our most fundamental problem and distract us from our central need for mercy and forgiveness.
This need is met only through the atoning work of Jesus Christ.

**Embracing Our Soul’s Security**

We will continue to be disappointed when we look to institutions for the path to the good life. The traditional faith in family and religion has shifted to a faith in education and government. Education and government have shifted to place their faith in the economy. None of these institutions operate as they used to, with a degree of reliability and predictability that once provided comfort and security.

People have placed their trust in human relationships since the Fall, but the current upheaval in society’s primary institutions has left many bereft of their gods, even those who promise more than they can deliver.

There is a connection between the object of our worship and fear. If that object fails us or turns against us, then fear will be our natural reaction. Jesus cautioned his listeners against “selling their souls” (Mark 8:35–37; John 3:19–21), yet in our economically driven culture, we are constantly bargaining and making exchanges to gain what is tangible (material), often at the expense of what is intangible (spiritual). Our value system guarantees chronic insecurity.

The Bible specifically addresses the institutions of the family, church, and government. Christians who understand their roles in relation to these will be in a unique position to appreciate the lordship of Christ over all the affairs of life. A theology rooted in Scripture recognizes that no institution is sufficient: our security resides in God alone.

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The Politics of Fear

by Mark Caleb Smith, Ph.D.

“Men are moved by two levers only: fear and self-interest.”
— Napoleon Bonaparte

Napoleon understood the power fear exercises over our decisions. Fear is a forceful motivator, one that can inspire us to bravery, cruelty, or naked self-preservation. Fear is unavoidably connected to the human condition, so it is universal, an experience to which we can all relate. Napoleon knew this and used it to his advantage. He functioned like a dictator for much of his rule over an aggressive France, but this use of fear, as a political tool, is not limited to obviously tyrannical governments.

In other words, fearmongering by political leaders, and the cowering subjects whom they often so easily manipulate, is as universal as fear itself.

Power From Prejudice
A demagogue is a leader who gains power by making emotional appeals, often based on prejudices. Like most countries, America has had its share of demagogues, and given our history, much of the demagoguery revolved around race. Southern politicians,
like “Pitchfork” Ben Tillman, Eugene Talmadge, and George Wallace, used racial rhetoric to both stir up animosity toward African-Americans and to consolidate their own power in their respective states (South Carolina, Georgia, and Alabama).

Demagoguery transcends race, though, and with clever tongues, American leaders often arouse disdain for the rich, conservatives, liberals, welfare recipients, and even Christians. In essence, demagoguery seeks to turn a majority against a minority, and the more mysterious or unknown the minority, the more nefarious they become. It is a politicization of our fear of, or hatred for, “the other.” Recently, our demagoguery has revolved more around economics. During our recent debt ceiling crisis, President Obama used a rare press conference to argue that the difference between his plan and the Republican plan was really a choice between funding programs for children or for tax breaks for corporate jet owners. Republicans are also not immune to economic demagoguery. During the GOP nomination battle, Governor Rick Perry (Texas) and former Speaker Newt Gingrich (Georgia) assailed Mitt Romney’s (Massachusetts) past as a venture capitalist calling him a “vulture capitalist” to arouse resentment and hatred of Romney’s business success. This is not serious policy making, but it is instead class-based, economic demagoguery, which uses our fears and animosities for political gain.

Sacrifice for Safety
While demagogues rely on prejudice and ignorance to gain power, other political leaders create anxiety within the population by envisioning a bleak future, one where chaos reigns or where physical harm is around every conceivable corner. This approach plays upon our fear of an uncertain future, one that might threaten our financial security or our physical safety. Since 9/11, our government, led by both political parties, has used our fears for our personal safety to restrict our rights and liberties. Previously unheard of invasions of personal privacy are now routinely justified simply to protect us from terrorists. While we have all heard stories of grandmothers being humiliated during preflight security checks, we have also gladly cooperated as uniformed agents X-ray us and pat us down. We have learned to passively watch as complete strangers rifle through our most personal belongings, even after they have been run through sophisticated detection equipment. Due to national security concerns, government routinely surveils us and our vehicles, monitors our cellphones, and searches and seizes our electronic communication without probable cause. Our fear for our own safety has forced us to humbly sit by as government’s reach into our lives continues to lengthen and strengthen.

The general response I hear, when raising these issues with students and others, is, “Well, if you aren’t breaking the law, you don’t have anything to worry about.” We are, indeed, a bit different from Patrick Henry, who, when confronted with an invasion of his economic liberties (“no taxation without representation”), bellowed, “Give me liberty, or give me death!” Our generation’s glib response to governmental encroachments...
that would have made Samuel Adams pick up a musket is more along the lines of, “Whatever, just as long as I can make my flight and check out the new episode of Glee on my smartphone.”

**Fear Over Finances**

Beyond physical safety, our fear of the economic future is perhaps even more potent. America’s economy has been stagnant, at best, for the better part of the past four years. Our unemployment rate has hovered between eight and 10 percent since the beginning of 2009, and real estate values have not yet rebounded to their precrash levels. The Dow Jones industrial average has risen and fallen like rolling terrain, and some of Europe’s economies (Greece, Italy, and Spain) may be on the brink of total collapse. Exacerbating the crisis, America’s government continues to spend money we simply do not have. If you go to usdebtclock.org, you will see a running tally of America’s national debt, which is the amount we owe, as a nation, to our various creditors. As of this writing, the clock is just over $15 trillion. How much is $15 trillion? In $1 bills, it would wrap around the earth’s equator 58,000 times. This debt has increased dramatically in a short period — almost 50 percent since 2008. In short, times are bad.

This economic crisis has had two impacts. First, it was used to justify the massive spending just noted. Both President Bush (in the form of TARP) and President Obama (with his first stimulus effort), and Republicans and Democrats in Congress, were afraid to do nothing. President Bush was fearful that anything short of a full bailout of our banking system would be catastrophic. President Obama believed that additional stimulus was necessary to avoid increased unemployment. For the most part, members of Congress went along with these arguments due to their own fears of losing future elections. Simple, basic fear caused all of Washington, D.C., to spend, spend, and spend in 2008 and 2009.

Second, and currently, the economic crisis, and the rampant spending that followed, has provided Republicans with the opportunity to attack President Obama and the Democrats. While there is room for valid criticism, Republicans and conservatives have begun to stoke the citizenry’s fear of the economic future for their own gain. In an amusing, and not necessarily representative, example, Mark Steyn, the gifted pundit, recently compared the American political economy to the famed Titanic. He noted, “the USS Spendaholic is a rusting hulk encrusted
with barnacles; there are no lifeboats, and the ship's officers are locked in a debate about whether to use a thimble or an eggcup.”

**Perspective From the Past**
Remember, however, that Republicans stand to benefit from a population that is terrified when looking to the future. For them, this is good politics, as it weakens President Obama and the Democrats for the 2012 election cycle. Our challenge, as citizens, is to pick through the rhetoric to find reasonable and responsible policy proposals to support, while refusing to be driven by our collective fears for what the future might bring. Fear has a strong tendency to cloud our thinking, and it makes easy, simple solutions (“9-9-9,” anyone?) more attractive. Our current situation, which is indeed serious, calls for sober reason, which is often the opposite of emotional simplicity.

Perspective should assuage some of our fears. While not minimizing the gravity of our situation, we must remember that, historically speaking, this economic crisis is not terribly different, and possibly much less severe, than past economic downturns. Between 1929 and 1933, the American economy plummeted into the Great Depression. Wages declined by 21 percent and investment by 84 percent. At the same time, unemployment went from 3 percent to 25 percent — a staggering figure considering so many households were built around a single income.

Again, there is no question that this economy has damaged many Americans, including some reading this *Torch*. Moreover, the amount and scale of our current government spending, and the entitlement culture that has driven so much of it, differentiates this current crisis and, perhaps, makes the choices that now confront us more meaningful and grave. Nevertheless, where there is perspective, there is hope.

**Hope From Heaven**
Our greatest hope does not rest with governments and the futures they attempt to create. Our hope, politically, and in every other way, rests in the realization that our God is sovereign and that He has promised to care for us. He numbers the hairs on our head, clothes the lilies of the field, and feeds the birds. He owns the cattle on a thousand hills, and His resources and love know no ends.

Though God’s provision may not always match our vision, He has promised to provide what we require, even if we are unsure of what that is. This hope should extinguish our unreasonable fears and should provide us with God’s eternal perspective, which is our ultimate comfort. 

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The news reports said a disruption bordering on economic disaster was coming. A buying and hoarding frenzy began: bottled water, canned goods, generators, duct tape, and anything else that would aid survival without electricity, heat, or clean water.

The year was 1999, and we feared that when the clock struck 2000, computers would shut down. Then we heard that the computer problems had been remedied. It was difficult to know what to think about the Y2K bug. Most of us didn’t know how to respond, so we did nothing or very little.

The Y2K hype evoked confusion, not only because information was disparate and unclear, but also because it was difficult to know whom to trust. As news consumers,
we need a filter that helps us discern truth from hype. Because news reports are not created equal, we must develop discernment in weighing the validity of competing truth claims.

Your filter should begin with a healthy dose of skepticism because sometimes journalists get the story wrong. At the newspaper where I worked, we mistakenly reported the name of the next football coach at a prominent high school before thoroughly checking our sources. This kind of mistake happens in the national media as well. Remember when CBS News anchor Dan Rather trusted a source and reported that George W. Bush had eluded military service? It wasn't true, but it made the news because it was a story many people wanted to believe. No matter what news sources we subscribe to, we should listen with a certain level of criticism.

News distortion is usually not intentional. Journalists want to get the story right because they know their credibility is at stake. Most do not want to be part of the story or intend to create fear. But the giant machine of the 24-hour news cycle produces ever-increasing competition among a preponderance of news agencies. They all want to get the story first, and that makes it difficult to wait until the reporting is finished. Fear is bound to thrive in that environment because, when a major story breaks, there is often little information. We get names and generalities. Then we get speculation as the story develops. And speculation leads to hype and spin.

No one can possibly consume all the news reports about the latest flu strain that threatens the public. There is no magic place to go for the truth when politicians disagree about whether a government shutdown will actually occur. Deciding what is real or hyped takes a filter.

So how do you intelligently filter the galaxy of information produced by the 24-hour news cycle?

The Way to Truth

In *The Elements of Journalism*, Bill Kovach and Tom Rosenstiel discuss two principles relevant to this discussion — truth and verification. Their research shows that journalists say they are committed to reporting the truth. It is often not an issue of deliberate or malicious distortion. But for journalists to get at least somewhere close to the truth, they must take what looks like truth and subject it to verification. According to Kovach and Rosenstiel, the essence of journalism is the discipline of verification. Without verification, hitting the truth is like trying to hit the bull's-eye the first time you throw darts.

The best journalists follow these principles because they are disciplined skeptics. They find alternative sources; they report subsequent stories in an attempt to obtain the truth; and they don't give up. Fear can be a great motivator, and fear of getting the story wrong motivates the good reporter to get at what Watergate reporter Carl Bernstein calls the most obtainable version of the truth. Look for journalists and news agencies that follow up on the initial story — of course this will take some follow-up on your part. The ones who routinely move on to the next big story lack curiosity. The ones who believe there is more to the story, who keep digging and come back a week later with more to report, are better journalists. They might never get the complete story, but they will get closer to the whole truth than the average reporter.

Pay attention to who reports what and when. Our never-ending news cycle demands far too often that journalists post their story online as soon as possible, accompanied by a Twitter tweet and a Facebook post. Multiply that times all the shares and retweets, and an unverified story can spread like dandelions. Add to your filter the ones who get it right, not necessarily the ones who get it first with no follow-up.
Verification is more than just getting the facts right. That kind of accuracy is crucial to a journalist’s credibility, but as Kovach and Rosenstiel explain, facts don’t necessarily reveal truth. The issue of global warming is a pertinent example. A reporter can get all the facts right about what the United Nations says about global warming. That doesn’t mean those facts are unbiased. Clearly, there are other opinions about the veracity of global warming. Mostly we see reports that trumpet one side or the other. You either search — probably in vain — for a report that does justice to both sides, or you compare differing reports.

When it seems that everything turns into a political issue, it becomes even more difficult to know which sources to trust. News organizations declare their objectivity, but even your most trusted sources will struggle to be impartial. Because bias is inevitable, listening to a spectrum of views is a good way to develop discernment. You will begin recognizing the value systems that underlie opposing viewpoints, and from there you can start discerning the validity of these perspectives.

Also remember that even your own filter reflects a bias. Whether we recognize it or not, we filter information toward our own political views, worldviews, values, and fears — just like journalists. The challenge is to avoid interpreting it based on preconception instead of reality.

A Wider Perspective
So what do you do with this knowledge that a lot of the information you process just might be misinformation or spin? It may or may not be the fault of the messenger. It might well be the sources in a news story who are misleading you and the reporter. Good reporters will check the facts and go back to the source with more questions in an attempt to report the most obtainable version of the truth, but too often what we get from the news is instant reporting of a he-said, she-said nature because of the demand for immediacy. Even when good follow-up reporting is done, the initial report has gained an audience, and these first impressions are difficult to overcome. Journalists who question sources are the kind you want in your filter.

Because we go so often to what we have conditioned ourselves to trust, it is wise to spend a little time to see what the others are doing. Multiple perspectives are helpful in formulating your opinions. When I wrote columns, my goal was not to get everyone to agree with me. I wanted to provoke
thought. Nor do I read only what I expect to agree with.

So much of TV news programming is analysis and commentary, and with so many competing voices it’s difficult to discern truth from fiction. The best and most credible commentators maintain what Kovach and Rosenstiel call an independence from faction. Opinion givers will naturally fall on one side of an issue, but does their commentary reflect independent thinking or does it always fall in line with the agenda of a group they are trying to please? Ignore the ones who serve factions because the truth will often get lost.

Preachers use pulpits and authors use books to spread their messages. How do you discern truth from error in those settings? Use Scripture as your filter. If the message doesn’t align, you may decide to attend a different church, change the radio station, or close the book. When two people you trust have different views, check more sources.

The same is true for having confidence in the news you consume. Unfortunately, there is not a reliable source like Scripture to go to for validation, but your filter is there to help you, even if it’s not perfect. You should continually examine where your news comes from, and be open to adjusting your filter.

If you believe everything you hear in the media, you will find yourself living in fear and flux as you listen to competing voices. It takes time and energy to listen, read, question, and weigh information, but when coupled with prayer and humility, it’s the only way to develop a discerning mind and heart. Although getting at the truth of a situation may not be easy or comfortable, you can trust that your response is based not on fear and uncertainty but on hope and truth.

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Tell Me the Story of Jesus
by Brandon Waltz, M.A.

Fear is often used as a persuasive motivator in a Gospel presentation, but is it appropriate for children? Because of his experience in children’s ministry, Torch asked Brandon Waltz, director of HeartSong Ministries at Cedarville, some fundamental questions surrounding this debate.

Why do some Christians use fear in child evangelism?
Fear is an effective motivator. I don't think the Church sat down at some point and said, “Let’s think up ways to scare children into the Kingdom,” but we have developed a way of presenting a message that speaks to people’s fear — of death and of hell — and it usually gets results. The question is whether they are the results we should be seeking.

In your opinion, what is the fundamental problem with this method?
The Gospel is about Jesus. The problem in explaining the Gospel, especially to children, comes when we make the message more about ourselves. When the Gospel becomes about what I am doing, it feeds into my fears when I’m doing poorly (“Is God out to get me because I’m not good enough?”) and it makes me prideful when I’m doing well (“I have earned my reward”).

But when I view the Gospel as all about Jesus and what He has done for me, it transforms my thinking through its message of hope and joy. In child evangelism, we lean too much on how a child should respond. This approach to the Gospel is focused on what the child needs to do rather than on Jesus and what He did. This emphasis leads to a distorted view of the Gospel.

Pastor and author Tim Keller has said, “The Bible is about Jesus — it’s not about us, but we make the Bible about us.” When we teach children the story of David and Goliath, we say, “Now you can defeat the ‘Goliaths’ in your life! You can be like David, bold and courageous for God.” We’ve made the story...
about us. Keller would say a truer reading of that story is that Jesus is the better David. He fought the battle of sin on our behalf. As the people of Israel claimed David’s victory over Goliath, we claim Jesus’ victory over sin.

**How have you used this principle with Cedarville teams?**

When I trained and sent Cedarville puppet teams to churches, people often asked, “Are you going to present the Gospel during the program?” My quick response was, “Absolutely.” There is a Gospel way of presenting forgiveness, serving, or any subject. But what they were really asking was, “At the end, are you going to give an invitation where the children can raise their hands or go forward?” which I never did. My preference was to offer to talk with anyone interested in the Gospel after the program. And many children came ... as a result of the Spirit’s work in their hearts. The Gospel is a compelling message on its own; it doesn’t need my help. Children are easily manipulated. They may go forward or raise their hands because their friends did so.

**... or because the teacher told them to?**

In a child’s eyes, the teacher is a person of authority. If the teacher says, “You need to do this,” then I need to do this. We have to be diligent in presenting Jesus so clearly that He alone is their motivation.

Children are literal, concrete thinkers. When you ask a child, “Would you like to go to heaven?” Well, yes. The streets are made of gold, who wouldn’t want to go there? That motivation is outside of Jesus. The same is true presented the other way. If the motivation is to “avoid hell,” the motivation is still something other than Jesus. It’s not about where you can go to live forever in a mansion. Although these ideas are biblical, taking them out of context can be very damaging to a child’s understanding of the Gospel.

**How does this Gospel approach translate when a child grows older?**

As they mature, young adults can process more abstract concepts like faith. It’s often during high school and college years when students begin to make their faith their own. They often question their beliefs for the first time, and some encounter a crisis of faith that can be painful and difficult to resolve. They may have a memory of raising their hand or going forward to “go to heaven” or to “avoid hell,” but a less clearly defined notion of what exactly they put their trust in.

**Does hell have a place in the Gospel message?**

A lot has been said on this topic, especially in light of Rob Bell’s book *Love Wins*. I do not agree with his presentation of the Gospel or hell, but I do think we should consider whether emphasizing hell is the best approach for a Gospel message to children. Whenever we have the opportunity to minister to children, that time is best served by pointing them to Jesus and helping them understand who He is and what He has done. I don’t want to turn children into little Pharisees by giving them a formula to follow or to fear. It’s vital children see us adoring Christ as we retell His story in a way that He becomes more real to them than He was before. The Spirit uses the Word to reveal the Son to the heart of a child. And in that moment of simple worship, they recognize Jesus and His beauty and are utterly drawn to Him. The Gospel is indeed good news!

Brandon Waltz is director of HeartSong Ministries at Cedarville University. He received his B.A. from Cedarville and his M.A. in educational ministries from Grand Rapids Theological Seminary. He has been at Cedarville since 1990.
Captured by Awe
by Robert Rohm, M.R.E.

Fearing God is the appropriate response to His incomparable majesty.
t was the summer of 1998. The Amazon River darkness seemed to swallow up everything in its path. Our pecky-pecky (dugout canoe) slowly and quietly drifted down the narrow tributary of this magnificent river. I was on a hunting expedition with nine Cedarville students, an ABWE missionary, and a Brazilian national.

We had to be so cautious. The river was full of anacondas, piranha, “orifice” fish (flesh-eating fish that enter through any possible opening in the body), and crocodiles. Fallen tree trunks and dense jungle growth threatened us with hidden danger from all around. Fear consumed us.

Then, somehow, in the midst of the danger surrounding me, God reached down and reminded me of His awesome presence. For just a few minutes, the jungle growth over us disappeared. In awe, I cried out, “Look up!”

Immediately our canoe was filled with gasps. Tears flowed and words could not quite find their way out for a moment.

There were so many stars! We were captured with a sense of astonishing awe. At that moment, the eminent danger all around us seemed trivial. Nothing compared with what we were seeing in the Amazon sky. Our fear of our surroundings turned to a different kind of fear — a humbling reverence for our Almighty God.

**Behold Your Fear**

Our experience was, in miniature, what Isaiah must have felt in Chapter 40 of the book bearing his name. God’s people so desperately needed encouragement. Hope was so far from them.

One chapter earlier Isaiah had prophesied to King Hezekiah that Judah would be taken into exile in Babylon. That is exactly what happened. The Babylonian army crushed her, carrying off any survivors. God’s people had miserably failed Him, and now they were paying for it.

Seventy excruciating years elapsed between Isaiah Chapter 39 and 40. Beaten down, Judah needed to know God had not abandoned her. She was coming unglued in captivity. The people were discouraged, disillusioned, and bitter. They believed God had failed them.

God specializes in making a way out of circumstances that cause people to fear. The first 11 verses of Isaiah 40 lay the foundation for Judah’s renewed hope. Just like my traveling companions in that dugout canoe on the Amazon River, Judah’s fear had to be redirected. These people needed comfort, stability, and most of all, assurance. They had to realize that the awesome God of the universe is the one dependable reality in their confusing, constantly changing world!

The text says voices cried out informing God’s people that their captivity was soon to be over and their sins were pardoned. Isaiah challenged his listeners to spread the good news that Adonai Yahweh was coming in all His power. Better days were ahead!

**Behold Your God**

J.I. Packer, in his masterpiece book *Knowing God*, makes this profound statement, “Living becomes an awesome business when you realize that you spend every moment of your life in the sight and company of an omniscient, omnipotent Creator.” Judah desperately needed to get a fresh view of her God. “Behold your God!” the text exclaimed.

Proverbs 14:26 says, “In the fear of the Lord one has strong confidence, and His children will have a refuge.” In order for Judah to get a grip on this reality, she was allowed to view breathtaking truth about her God. Isaiah records six realities about God found in Isaiah 40:12–31.

1. **God’s majesty is incomparable** (verse 12). John Bunyan once said, “Nothing awes the soul so much as does the glorious majesty of God.” The Amazon River contains one-fifth
of the earth's fresh water. The plume of water entering the Atlantic Ocean from the Amazon reaches out approximately 250 miles, and verse 12 casually states that God measures all the earth's water in the hollow of His hand. He measures the universe with the span of distance between the outstretched tip of His thumb and the tip of His little finger. There is no one like Judah's God!

2. **God's wisdom is incomparable** (verses 13–14). As obvious as it may seem, Isaiah had to remind Judah that no one is qualified or capable to counsel God. No one ever will be able to teach Him. His wisdom knows no boundaries. There is a Greek proverb that says, "Gray hair is a sign of age, not of wisdom." The sages of the ages will bow before the only wise God.

3. **God's greatness is incomparable** (verses 15–17). God's greatness is so vast that the imaginary weight of all the nations on the earth are like indistinguishable dust on balance scales. Verse 17 goes so far as to say that the nations are less than nothing in comparison to God. As impressive as the nations may have been to Judah (especially the nation of Babylon), they were less than nothing compared to Adonai Yahweh.

4. **God's sovereignty is incomparable** (verses 18–24). Kings and sovereigns have ruled upon the earth, but to whom could Judah compare Him? Pagan and religious people alike, in Judah's day, fashioned costly fetishes of all kinds that all eventually decayed. The best efforts of the most skilled craftsmen were useless. The one true living God was and is the authoritative sovereign of all. The text pictures Him sitting upon the arc of the earth looking down upon its inhabitants that proportionately resemble grasshoppers. God rules over all sovereigns. He sets them up and disposes of them as He wishes. Proverbs 21:1 states, "The king's heart is a stream of water in the hand of the Lord; He turns it wherever He will."

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**All Joking Aside**

by Robert Rohm, Vice President for Christian Ministries at Cedarville University

Have you heard any of the Chuck Norris jokes going around? You know who Chuck Norris is, don’t you? Among other things, he was the star of the 1990s action crime drama series, *Walker, Texas Ranger*.

In the show Chuck Norris is a contemporary Texas Ranger who uses martial arts as his primary law enforcement weapon. He is a fearsome crime fighter who drives a cool pickup truck, carries a big gun, but uses his fists and feet to get the job done. He’s bigger than life!

Just in case you haven’t heard any of the jokes, let me give you some examples. “Chuck Norris can set ants on fire with a magnifying glass … at night.” Or, “When the boogeyman goes to sleep, every night he checks his closet for … Chuck Norris.”

Isn’t it interesting how many jokes, in general, relate to things we fear? Isn’t it interesting that we can joke about things we fear, but in real life, fear can paralyze us?

The apostle Paul, in II Timothy 1:7, reminded Timothy that no matter what he might face in life, “God gave us a spirit not of fear but of power and love and self-control.”

If you have genuinely placed your trust in Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior, you know that fear does not have to rule your life. You can be “fearless,” having a sound mind and heart. While jokes about fear may be funny, living in fear is not. If you have never asked Jesus Christ to forgive your sins through His shed blood, today is your day. Choose to live free from the weight of fear.
Isaiah 40:24 even compares earthly rulers to common stubble being blown about by the expiration of His breath.

God tents Himself with the canopy of stars spread throughout the universe (verse 22). The stars encountered by the Cedarville team on the Amazon River in all of their abundance were but a tiny speck in God’s celestial blanket. Judah’s God is an awesome God who is to be feared.

5. God’s power is incomparable (verses 25–26). Isaiah, led by the Holy Spirit, enjoined his people to look up in the night sky. They needed to be experientially reminded and awed by the reality that their God is the creator and sustainer of all they could see. Amazingly, Adonai Yahweh brings out the celestial bodies (stars, planets, etc.) and calls them each by name. Not one of them is missing!

Jerry Bridges, in his book *The Joy of Fearing God*, tells a story that helps give some perspective on verse 26. He writes, “One day on an airplane flight I found myself seated next to an astrophysicist. With this verse (verse 26) in mind, I asked him how many stars are in the universe. His reply staggered me. He said there are about 100 billion galaxies, each one containing about 100 billion stars. Yet the Bible says in Psalms 147:4, ‘He determines the number of the stars and calls them each by name.’”

Imagine 100 billion times 100 billion! If my calculations are at all reliable, that is 1 followed by 22 zeros! Judah’s God, the believers’ God, is omnipotent. He is mighty enough to care for each and every one of His children!

6. God’s grace is incomparable (verses 27–31). Did Judah really believe God was unaware of their captive plight? It appears that was exactly what His people were thinking. The prophet asked Judah (in a rhetorical fashion), “Have you not known? Have you not heard?”

In the midst of her fearful conditions Judah experienced a tutorial on the fear of God. The prophet rehearsed God’s gracious provision of power and strength available to them all. God was and is fearfully awesome, fearfully wondrous, and fearfully amazing even in the outpouring of His grace.

“The friendship of the Lord is for those who fear Him, and He makes known to them His covenant” (Ps. 25:14). In times that make us anxious and fearful, let us redirect our hearts to fear our incomparable God!

Robert Rohm serves as vice president for Christian ministries at Cedarville University. He received his B.A. from Cedarville University and his M.R.E. from Grand Rapids Theological Seminary. He has been at Cedarville since 1986.
Although death is among the most common human fears, Christians do not grieve like those who have no hope. Christ’s death, resurrection, and imminent return give us new life and new hope.
n C.S. Lewis’ classic book The Lion, the Witch, and the Wardrobe, a young girl named Lucy discovers a hidden passage at the back of a wardrobe leading to a strange fantasy world. It’s cold; everything is covered in snow and ice. A 100-year curse from the White Witch has made Narnia “always winter, never Christmas.” Narnia’s residents are frozen in depression with no joy, no warmth, and no future. Only when Aslan comes does the thaw begin.

When we are confronted with death, grief, and the darkness of this world, isn’t it wonderful to know that the people of God have hope? We look for “the blessed hope and the glorious appearing of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ” (Titus 2:13).

The apostle Paul references this hope in 1 Thessalonians 4:13–18: “But we do not want you to be uninformed, brothers, about those who are asleep, that you may not grieve as others who have no hope.” In spite of the fact that death separates us from the ones we love, our grief is different. In the midst of our tears, there is hope.

In the same passage, Paul carefully reinforces that our hope is not without foundation; rather, it is based on a
relationship with Jesus Christ, who died for our sins, was buried, and rose again to give us forgiveness and life. God desires for us to live forever with Him, but only those who trust His Son will claim this hope (1 Cor. 15:1–2). The Scriptures tell us some startlingly clear and simple truths about what this means for our lives, for our loved ones, and for the future.

Hope for His Coming
We affirm the truth and rest in the hope that a day is coming when the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a cry of command, with the voice of an archangel, and with the sound of the trumpet of God (1 Thess. 4:16). This passage echoes what Jesus promised in John 14:3, saying, “And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and will take you to myself, that where I am you may be also.” Even though He spoke these words more than 2,000 years ago, they are still true, and we can rest in this promise.

We also know that when the Lord comes, there will be believers who are still alive in their natural bodies. Paul recognizes this fact and places himself within the group of those people who could live to see Christ return; in other words, it was possible within the will of God for Jesus to return in Paul’s lifetime. He uses the phrase, “We who are alive and remain” (1 Thess. 4:17), and Paul again affirms that it is possible to be among the living when the Lord comes (1 Cor. 15:51). He speaks of the mystery surrounding those who will not face death but will be caught up with Christ at His return.

This has been the hope of every generation since Christ’s first coming — that Jesus would return in their lifetime and that they would not have to die. Rather, they would be alive and caught up in the air with Christ. This was not the hope of Abraham, David, or Isaiah. The Old Testament believers knew that they would die and be raised in the resurrection of the last days. But you and I, as believers in this age of grace, can have hope that in that moment when Christ returns, we will receive an immortal body, fashioned after Christ’s body. Those who have died will get that same body through the process of resurrection. And together we will meet Him in the air (1 Thess. 4:17).

Hope Beyond the Grave
The hope we have in Christ does not apply only to the living, of course. This hope has groundbreaking consequences for believers who have already died, because we know that the dead in Christ will rise first and experience the miracle of resurrection (1 Thess. 4:15).

It’s important to note that resurrection is not reincarnation. The dead are not simply restored to the life we have now, nor do they come back in another form. To help explain this concept Paul uses an analogy of planting a seed. The sprout that comes out of the ground is related to what goes in the ground, but it’s not identical. Similarly, the dead will rise in Christ and receive a different type of body — an immortal, incorruptible body (1 Cor. 15).

Our hope also affirms that a departed believer is with Christ. Paul wrote, “For we believe that Jesus died and rose again, and so we believe that God will bring with Jesus those who have fallen asleep in Him (1 Thess. 4:14).” The Greek word meaning “asleep” is the same Greek word from which
the English word “cemetery” is derived. Put simply, a cemetery is a place for sleepers, and one day those bodies will awake. The Lord Himself said that all who were in the graves will hear His voice and come forth. We rest in the truth that our loved ones whom we have already lost from this world are with Christ. When the Lord comes, God the Father will bring those who sleep to be with Him.

It is hard for us to imagine that in death you and I are ushered into the presence of the Lord. The body is in the ground, but the real “you” is with Him. We would rather be “away from the body and at home with the Lord” (2 Cor. 5:8). To be finally, wonderfully at home — this is why Paul could write, “For me to live is Christ and to die is gain” (Phil. 1:21).

**Comfort in Hope**
The inevitable promise of Christ’s return does not negate the truth that God created us as emotional beings. We can and should mourn when a loved one or dear friend is gone, but our grief is bolstered by hope that one day we will together embrace Christ and be with Him forever.

Paul concludes 1 Thessalonians 4 with a directive and an outpouring of our hope: “Therefore encourage one another with these words” (1 Thess. 4:18). Rather than offering only future promises, Paul encourages us with truth that provides assurance right now. We have a responsibility to share with others these clear, simple words of Scripture.

**Dr. Robert Gromacki** is a distinguished professor emeritus of Bible and Greek. He received his Th.D. from Grace Theological Seminary, Th.M. from Dallas Theological Seminary, and Th.B. at Baptist Bible Seminary. He has also completed postdoctoral study at the Institute of Holy Land Studies in Jerusalem. He has been at Cedarville since 1960.

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By the world’s yardstick, Emily Shanahan doesn’t measure up. Our material culture tends to value beauty, achievement, intellectual prowess, and financial success with little regard for those who can’t make it in the fast lane.

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Choosing hope over fear, Emily Shanahan is embracing the work God has uniquely enabled her to do.

The Courage to Dream

by Joy Bennett
Born with cerebral palsy, Emily finds her self-worth in Jesus because, even though she lives in a body that displays the brokenness in the world, she knows she is made in the image of God. She believes God has a purpose for her life, and He placed her in the body of Christ to share what He has uniquely equipped her to contribute. Emily has a vision for sharing the hope and worth she finds in Christ with others who are differently enabled and drowning in despair.

Emily graduated from Cedarville in 2011 with a degree in comprehensive communication and minors in Spanish and Bible. This was no ordinary accomplishment, however, as she navigated her way to this degree with the expert assistance of “Emily’s Dream Team,” her crew of 145 assistants over four years. Dream Team members helped her with personal care (meals, bathing, restroom trips), academic work, and office administration.

While Emily has overcome so much and achieved a great deal, it wasn’t always easy. She had to overcome insecurities, weaknesses, and sometimes paralyzing fears as she trusted God to lead her.

Looking Up for Hope
It was at her fifth birthday party when Emily began to understand the long and difficult road that lay ahead. She saw for the first time that her friends could climb in and out of the ball pit on their own, but she needed someone to lift her in. She realized for the first time that she was different. The thought stayed with her throughout the day and into the next afternoon when she began to sob.

Her mother came running and asked, “What’s wrong?”

“My legs are useless,” she replied. “They have no purpose except to put cute socks on. They are like ornaments,” she replied.

Her mom, who was struggling with her own response to her daughter’s condition, tried to comfort her 5-year-old daughter. She held her close and told her God loved her, but Emily couldn’t be consoled. She cried for three days.

It was a song about heaven, by Joni Eareckson Tada, that caught her attention. When Emily’s mother heard a lyric about “pushing up daisies,” she rushed to turn it off for fear that Emily would be upset.

But Emily protested, “Please don’t turn it off! This song says I won’t be stuck in this body forever!”

She heard a message of hope and salvation through Jesus, even in the midst of her brokenness and grief. It’s this eternal perspective that has carried her, and will continue to carry her, through each trial.

Stepping Out in Faith
Emily knew that attending Cedarville as a differently enabled residential student would be difficult. She firmly believed God had led her to that decision, and from the age of 9, she spent much of her prayer time asking Him to show up and guide her through each step. She also relied on a team of advisors she calls “The Emily Achievement Council.” The
Shanahans were involved in many meetings with University staff and administrators as all involved worked through what it would take to move Emily onto campus. They developed a plan to help her realize her dream of a Christian education while living with daily independence.

The first several weeks on campus were much more challenging than she, or her family, anticipated. Since age 11, Emily had spent a few weeks each summer at SpringHill Camps. In that Christ-centered environment, she experienced a measure of independence as well as inclusion with other campers and one-on-one assistance as needed from a trained special needs counselor. Moving onto a college campus was completely different.

“I had all these people on my team scheduled and trained to help me,” she said, “but I didn’t know them at all. They were going to brush my teeth, help me in the shower, and put clothes on me. I tried to rationalize my fears away, but I was still nervous.” It was staggering to think that complete strangers were willing to enter in her life in such an intimate way.

Emily has struggled with pride and fear of failure just like anyone else. Even though she graduated from high school with honors, math was never her strong suit. In her freshman year at Cedarville, she was fighting to keep up in a college-prep math class. Near the end of the semester, Emily learned from her professor that her grade was on the line, and the next test was critical — if she passed, she would pass the class. If she failed, she would fail the class. She was troubled by the stakes and felt embarrassed because she had always done well in school. She had worked hard all semester, and she didn’t want to waste the tuition she’d paid.

Right after she spoke with her professor, Emily met a friend who was helping her with academics. “She could tell I was upset,” said Emily. “So I said, ‘I’ll explain later, but we need to read from Scripture right now because I am really scared.’ My friend nodded, opened her computer, and logged on to Bible Gateway. She pulled up Psalm 27 and sang it to me in Spanish while I read the words in English. To this day, I go to that psalm when I’m fearful, and I had my friend teach me to sing it in Spanish.”

Conversations like this, and friends who were willing to help her work through her fears, weave through Emily’s story.

Reaching Out in Love
The Shanahans know they have something important to give back to the differently enabled community. They have learned how to thrive in a world that runs circles around those with physical, developmental, or mental challenges. Emily’s parents are passionate about helping other families develop their own “achievement councils.” They are working to develop this passion into a
nonprofit organization, including plans for a ministry center. They want to give families a biblically based, relational, and resource-filled “road map,” based on Proverbs 15:22 — “Plans fail for lack of counsel, but with many advisers they succeed.”

They hope to model a method of advocacy that radiates Christ’s love and promotes collaboration from all aspects of life: medical, educational, spiritual, financial, social, and more. They plan to use what they have learned to help others obtain or customize existing equipment, assist with computer technology, and provide guidance for assembling personal care teams like Emily’s Dream Team.

With her bachelor’s degree completed and a vision for the future in mind, Emily continues moving forward. She has begun an online master’s degree at Anderson University in Christian ministry, with a concentration in nonprofit management. Emily plans to pursue motivational speaking, writing, and radio broadcasts in order to speak God’s hope into lives of others who are differently enabled.

Even though the world might define Emily by her physical capacity, she has found her self-worth in God. She has not retreated from life, rather she dares to believe God truly has a plan and purpose that is uniquely hers to fulfill. She has not allowed her fears to defeat her. She prefers to push through her fears to make the dreams God has given her into realities. ★

Joy Bennett, a 1998 graduate of Cedarville University, works as a freelance writer and lives in Mason, Ohio, with her husband, Scott, and their three children. She blogs at joyinthisjourney.com.

Emily Shanahan, a 2011 graduate of Cedarville University, is a graduate student at Anderson University. Visit her website at tomsdigitalphotos.com/emily.

The Dream Continues

In 2007, Cedarville’s maintenance staff completely renovated a women’s residence hall room in preparation for Emily Shanahan’s arrival. Crews consolidated two rooms on the first floor into one large, accessible room with a private bathroom, sleeping area for an overnight assistant, and a rail system capable of helping Emily move from her bed to the bath.

From the beginning, Emily and her parents were closely involved in the room’s layout, including guidance for where grab bars should be installed and choosing appropriate bathroom fixtures. Even as they prepared a unique space that would meet Emily’s needs, they were thinking ahead to students who would use the space after Emily graduated.

Elizabeth Ewart ’15, a political science major from Beavercreek, Ohio, is using the room today. She and Emily met many years ago when the two were enrolled in a therapeutic ballet class for children. Emily and her mother mentored Elizabeth and her mother through the transition process into college.

“We had a lot of fears about my coming to college. It was hard to even think about how it would all work out,” Elizabeth said. She had planned to attend a state university closer to home that is nationally ranked for its disability services. “During my junior year in high school, Emily’s mom invited us to campus to visit Emily, then a junior at Cedarville. When I saw the accessible room, the way the campus was laid out, and the services Cedarville provided, I began to think, ‘I can handle this.’ I could see myself at Cedarville.”

In Emily’s four years at Cedarville, she and her family continually made adjustments until they developed a system designed for her success. Their trial and error provided Elizabeth with a ready-made model, from a sample course schedule to groundwork for Elizabeth’s team of “Soul Sisters” (she’s got some “Soul Brothers,” too). “I was able to adapt their model, that they’d made from scratch, to fit my needs,” said Elizabeth. “It was a blessing to be able to start at 98 percent instead of at zero.”
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<td>Here Am I, Lord … Send Somebody Else</td>
<td>Jill Briscoe</td>
<td>Nelson</td>
<td>2004</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overcoming Fear, Worry, and Anxiety</td>
<td>Elyse Fitzpatrick</td>
<td>Harvest House</td>
<td>2001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Religion of Fear</td>
<td>Jason Bivens</td>
<td>Oxford</td>
<td>2008</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shame Lifter</td>
<td>Marilyn Hontz</td>
<td>Tyndale</td>
<td>2009</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tame Your Fears</td>
<td>Carol Kent</td>
<td>NavPress</td>
<td>2003</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trusting Enough to Parent</td>
<td>Wayne Hastings</td>
<td>Cook Communications</td>
<td>2000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>An Untroubled Heart</td>
<td>Micca Campbell</td>
<td>David C. Cook</td>
<td>2009</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What to Do When You’re Scared to Death</td>
<td>Pat Palau and Peggy Sue Wells</td>
<td>Monarch</td>
<td>2008</td>
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<tr>
<td>When a Woman Lets Go of Her Fears</td>
<td>Cheryl Brodersen</td>
<td>Harvest House</td>
<td>2010</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>When People Are Big and God Is Small</td>
<td>Edward Welch</td>
<td>P &amp; R</td>
<td>1997</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## Online Resources

Read additional resources covering this issue’s theme at cedarville.edu/torch.

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**Did You Know?**

Library staff members regularly participate in campus activities including entering a book cart drill team in the annual homecoming parade and sponsoring an entry built by the library student staff for the department of engineering’s annual cardboard canoe race held on Cedar Lake.

This resource list is brought to you by the staff of the Cedarville University Centennial Library. The Centennial Library serves the University community by providing print, media, and digital resources, as well as a wide range of information and instructional services. To learn more, visit cedarville.edu/library or email library@cedarville.edu.
Honoring Citizen Soldiers

Veterans Day is a national opportunity to honor the men and women who have served, and are presently serving, in the armed forces. We recognize their call to defend our country, and we are inspired by their sacrifice. While they serve in official capacities at home and abroad, ordinary citizens can also face threats to freedom and national security — citizens like Todd Beamer, who coined the phrase, “Let’s roll!” aboard United Flight 93 on September 11, 2001.

The theme for Cedarville’s 2011 Veterans Day chapel honored the “citizen soldier,” and Beamer’s father, David Beamer, spoke on this topic to a crowd of students and veterans alike. While his son is remembered as a courageous hero who helped thwart a terrorist plot, Beamer said what mattered more was who Todd was on September 10. It was his son’s discipline and character as a husband, father, businessman, and Christ-follower on the day before that prepared him to do what was right on September 11.

“There were many casualties of war that day,” said Beamer, “some in uniform and some not in uniform.” Although the hijackers had meticulously planned the attacks for many years, they had not anticipated that citizen soldiers aboard Flight 93 would launch a counterattack.

“‘Let’s roll!’ was, for Todd, a call to action — a battle cry to do the right thing at the right time,” Beamer said. “We all have choices to make every day, in different situations. If we would all do the right thing in matters of integrity, our world would be a better place. When you hear that phrase, ‘Let’s roll!,’ make it your call to action to do the right thing.”

The patriotic music and special presentations during the Veterans Day chapel allowed students to reflect on the sacrifices of men and women in uniform. They showed their appreciation with a standing ovation that extended for several minutes as veterans from all branches came up to the stage.

“Veterans Day chapel is by far my favorite chapel of the whole year,” said Stephanie Hill ’12. “It’s heartwarming to see all the veterans there and recognize them for their service. David Beamer’s connection to the day reminded us what we as a country are fighting for.”

cedarville.edu/veterans
History on Wheels

History is not always learned from a book; sometimes it’s better learned on a bus. In January, a group of students, faculty, and staff participated in a four-day bus tour through Southern cities that played key roles in America’s civil rights movement.

The fifth-annual bus tour began in Atlanta, Georgia, the birthplace of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., and ended in Memphis, Tennessee, where Dr. King was assassinated. Along the route in Alabama, students visited museums and historic sites in Selma, Montgomery, and Birmingham. Thanks to an institutional endowment, students paid only a minimal deposit for this once-in-a-lifetime experience.

During travel time, students watched and discussed films about the historic movement as well as racial issues in contemporary America. Students from multiethnic backgrounds wrestled together with issues of racism and white privilege. They shared stories about how these historic events are still influencing their lives today.

Interest in this trip was the highest it’s been in five years — 142 students applied for 25 spots. According to Jon Purple, dean for student life programs, students came away with a clearer understanding of how the past shapes the present and their personal role in racial reconciliation. “History makers didn’t always know in the moment that they were making history,” he said. “Sometimes they were just doing the right thing.”

[cedarville.edu/bustour]

Loving Monday

In November, Cedarville welcomed manufacturing executive and author John Beckett to headline a daylong seminar for business executives. The “Loving Monday” seminar, sponsored by the Cedarville University Department of Business Administration, was titled after Beckett’s first book, Loving Monday: Succeeding in Business Without Selling Your Soul.

Beckett’s premise is that for a Christian there is no separation between faith and work. He centered his remarks on how this principle influenced the way he structured his company’s mission statement and core principles. He has written a second book called Mastering Monday: A Practical Guide to Integrating Faith and Work.

“The seminar provided a great opportunity to engage business leaders with biblical ethics in practice,” said John LeBlanc, chair of the business administration department. “Hosting this event on our campus allowed current and future business leaders to network and gave students a window into today’s business environment.”

The seminar featured breakout sessions and a panel discussion with other executives, including Mac McQuiston, president and CEO of the Christian Executive Officers Forum; Jonathan Greenwood ’85, senior vice president at Huntington National Bank; Harvey Hook, executive director of The Gathering; Michael McDorman, president and CEO of the Greater Springfield Chamber of Commerce; Kim Robinson, president and CEO of the National Underground Railroad Freedom Center; and Randy Wilcox ’81, president of the North and South America Area for Otis Elevator Company.
In the Next Issue

Last October, Cedarville hosted a conference called G92: Equipping the Next Generation for an Effective Biblical Response to Immigration. G92 is a reference to the 92 times the Hebrew word ger occurs in Scripture (translated as stranger, sojourner, or alien). It refers to people who have come from another land, and Scripture says a lot about God’s love for them, and about how we as God’s people are to treat them. The next Torch will present a range of those ideas, and others that have emerged following the event, for how Christians can biblically respond to the 12 million undocumented workers who live among us.

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*Additional copies are available in blocks of 25, at $10 per block.

You may also contact us at:
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251 N. Main St.
Cedarville, OH 45314
torch@cedarville.edu
1-800-766-1115

UPCOMING EVENTS

Here’s a sampling of what’s happening at Cedarville during the next few months.

February
3–5 Winter Play: The Crucible
10–11 Li’l Sibs Weekend
14–15 Pastors Conference: 9Marks of a Healthy Church
17–18 Music Showcase Weekend
18 Engineering and Computer Science Preview Day
20 Education Preview Day

March
16 CU Friday
16–17 CedarMania
17 Allied Health and Pharmacy Preview Day
23 Masterworks Concert
29–31 Spring Play: Star Spangled Girl

April
12–13 Spring Play: Star Spangled Girl
13 CU Friday
14 Social Work and Psychology Preview Day

May
5 116th Annual Commencement

For additional campus events, visit cedarville.edu/events.
To find Cedarville events in your area, visit cedarville.edu/reps.
(All dates are subject to change.)
Cedarville is preparing the next generation of health care professionals — nurses and pharmacists who model the integrity and compassion of the Great Physician as they care for those in need.

If you have experienced illness or have cared for a family member, you know that a knowledgeable, compassionate nurse or pharmacist makes all the difference.

That’s why we are significantly expanding our outstanding nursing program and developing our growing school of pharmacy.

The new Health Sciences Center will provide a quality environment for the high-tech and high-touch education that sets our graduates apart.

Your investment makes a difference!

Use the enclosed envelope to help us finish the campaign by making a gift or pledge today.

cedarville.edu/hsc
In 1887, five godly men were led to found Cedarville College. They envisioned an institution that would provide an outstanding education to equip graduates to serve “for the crown and the covenant.” Their original purpose continues today “for the Word of God and testimony of Jesus Christ” through the educational mission of Cedarville University.

From a small college with fewer than 100 students to a growing comprehensive university of more than 3,300, the mission has remained the same. But the vision has grown.

Cedarville has inspired greatness for 125 years through the humble service of dedicated faculty and staff and the eternal impact of more than 20,000 alumni serving Christ around the world.

cedarville.edu/125