



Update

October 2019

Vernon & Martha Hedge

A Recent Graduate

I had the privilege of having Brett Hodges in several of my classes at the Calvary Bible Institute. He came to Calvary Commission from prison as a Believer who wanted to learn the Bible and how to serve the Lord Jesus. And he is doing both. For the past two years he has been in a leadership position, perhaps what we would call a dorm pastor. He is mature in the Lord and has a calling on his life that he willingly embraces. A big leap from where he was a few years ago.

He is one of this year's graduates of the Bible Institute. We asked him to send a note for this newsletter to include with his picture. I am so proud of him and want you to meet him.

To answer the question "how am I different now at graduation than when I first came to Calvary commission," it could be summed up by saying I believe I can do more now than I ever thought possible.

God has placed me into such a beautiful and loving Body of Christ. From the teachers, families, staff, and church, I'm not just a student, I'm family and it's a Biblical one.

This year I graduated with my Bachelor of Arts in Theology. Before I came to Calvary Commission, I didn't think I would ever go to college much less a seminary. I am facing my fears and overcoming them.

Currently I am a part of the discipleship process of about 33 men, and it's the most rewarding thing I have ever done. I didn't know that through my own struggles God was preparing me to help others overcome theirs.

I thank God that he had special people in place at Calvary that could

see something in me that I didn't, and they had the patience and wisdom to draw it out. Jeremiah 29:11 is a solid truth in my life.

"For I know the thoughts that I think toward you, says the Lord, thoughts of peace and not of evil, to give you a future and a hope."

With love and a special thanks to all those who are laying down their lives so others can discover theirs. You have made a difference in mine.

Brett Hodges



Brett just before graduation.

Progress Report

Vernon's ability to talk continues to improve. It's a much slower process than he would like, of course, but we are both thankful for his being able to continue speech therapy.

He is pushing hard to be able to work on the computer again. But he is being patient in this difficult process. We are confident our Father God is in control.

We feel your prayers and appreciate your kind notes and cards. Thank you!

When we make Jesus Lord of our lives, we give Him our schedules as well as our plans. This quote has been encouraging to me in this journey:

"We must be ready to allow ourselves to be interrupted by God.... We must not... assume that our schedule is our own to manage, but allow it to be arranged by God."

—Dietrich Bonhoeffer ✨



We also send this letter by email. If you would like to be included in that list, send us an email to VLHedge@att.net and we will make that change for you. ✨

Living Above the Fray

The fray is all the hassles, insecure moments, down-right raw deals, and crushed plans while living our lives on this earth. In the dictionary it means “a noisy fight, a quarrel, a clash, a fistfight, and a knock-down-and-drag-out, to name a few.” One use means “to be consumed gradually by reaction or friction.”

For a believer who has committed to the Lordship of Jesus Christ the fray is what hinders the good fight of faith, (1 Tim 6:12). We have been delivered from the penalty of sin, but when it comes to the power of sin we must overcome and live in the peace that Jesus gives.

He overcame the world, (John 16:33) and whoever is born of God overcomes the world, and our faith is the victory (1 John 5:4).

Since Adam, there is a major lie. To those who do not receive the love of the truth, God will send them a strong delusion that they may believe **THE LIE**, (2 Thess 2:5-11). The “lie” covers all that Satan is about, but **the heart of the lie is: “a life lived separate from God is to be preferred.”**

Unfortunately, a believer can live and set about to manage his own life independently of God. His focus in life may center on achievement, personal goals, and producing financial security—done independently of God.

None of these are wrong in themselves; they become wrong when done in our own strength independently of God.

For the believer who is in “the fray” he has the daily struggle to survive the work world, keep his standing before people, accomplish with a sense of importance, and experience satisfaction.

Question: how do we live above the fray? Answer: enter

God’s rest, *For he that is entered into his rest, he also has ceased from his own works, as God did from his* (Heb 4:10 KJV). So the believer has stopped “trying to **MAKE** it happen” in his own power; he has stopped trying to out-figure the odds for the future and has settled into a lifestyle of obedience to God’s principles, and leaves the outcome in God’s hands. When being obedient, it is amazing how many times things look like a loss, but the Lord brings them to a good end.

We re-enter the fray when we start trying to **control the outcome of things** in our lives. The victorious believer follows the Lord in obedience, acting on His principles of truth. We walk in wisdom, make decisions, and live in a responsible and moral way, but trust Him with the outcome.

Usually fear causes us to start trying to control the outcome, which pushes us into the fray. When real fear grips a person he has the sense that no one is in control—he isn’t, no authority is, and God isn’t.

When no one is in control, and if something isn’t done, I will suffer major loss. The next conclusion is, **“No one else is taking care of me, so I am going to have to do it myself.”**

To live above the fray the victory is not a matter of the letter of the law, because the Law is rigid, cold, impersonal, and deadly. Where the Law gives no room to

move beyond the exact letter, grace gives plenty of room to move. Living in the believer’s rest removes sin consciousness in our lives, because all sins of human limitation, ignorance, weakness, and any misinformation are continually being cleansed by our **relationship** in His grace and mercy.

Look at the three parts of this verse on overcoming: *And they overcame him* (1) **by the blood of the Lamb and by the** (2) **word of their testimony, and they** (3) **did not love their lives to the death** (Rev 12:11 NKJV). For most believers, not doing the third one puts us back in the fray.

Using a soldier as an illustration: if fear grips him deeply enough, he will forget his responsibility as a soldier; he will forget the protection of his buddies, forget the cause for which he is fighting, and will run for his life. So it can be with a believer when fear grips him deeply enough.

The three Hebrews lived by part three when they loved not their lives to the death,

“O Nebuchadnezzar ... our God whom we serve is able to deliver us from the burning fiery furnace ... But if not, let it be known to you, O king, that we do not serve your gods, nor will we worship the gold image which you have set up” (Dan 3:16-18 NKJV).

Are you in the fray? If you have the power to change something that needs to change, do it, but if it is beyond your power, make the decision to release the outcome and place it in God’s hand.

If we walk in wisdom and make decisions that agree with God’s ways, we are at our best for things to turn out to our good and God’s glory. ✨ (by Vernon Hedge)
