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SEPTEMBER 2011

LIVING GRACE CHRISTIAN SCHOOL

# Raising Champions

## Principal's Message: *The Importance of Godly Character*

By Dr. Daniel L. Switzer

As we begin the school year, I want to emphasize the priority of our children growing in godly character. The school's mission is to partner with parents to raise up champions for God—servant leaders of godly character who advance the cause of Christ and make disciples of all nations. A key phrase within that purpose is *servant leaders of godly character*. One of our key focuses is to help children to grow in Christ-like character.

So often, parents want things other than godly character for their children. They might want “happiness,” not knowing that happiness is really a by-product of a life lived for God, not an end in itself. They might want “the American dream” of material possessions for their children. Or perhaps they want their children to “stack up” successfully when compared to other children. Unfortunately, what can happen is that our children's growth in godly character gets lost in the shuffle.



Each year at Living Grace Christian School we have a godly character training plan. **This year we are focusing on the Beatitudes of Jesus Christ from Matthew 5:1-12.** We want to encourage, challenge, and call our students to be “others-focused champions.” The Beatitudes express attitudes of being, or the attitudes of a Christ-focused champion. In truth, they express Christ's attitude.

I often tell the students, “Your attitude determines your altitude.” In other words, your attitude determines how high you will go. In God's Kingdom, to go high we need to go low. God gives grace to the humble and resists the proud. Jesus himself practiced this attitude of lowering himself: “*Your attitude should be the same as that of Christ Jesus: Who, being in very nature God did not consider equality with God something to be grasped, but made himself nothing, taking the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness. And being found in appearance as a man, he humbled himself and became obedient to death—even death on a cross*” (NIV, Phil. 2:5-8, emphasis added).

Jesus lowered himself and took the nature of a servant, humbling himself and becoming obedient, even to the point of a shameful death on a cross. Because he was willing to lower himself, God lifted him up to the highest place: “Therefore God exalted him to the highest place and gave him the name that is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of the Father” (Phil. 2:9-11). Of course, Jesus has been exalted—He is the King of Kings and our loving Savior!

As we exchange our life for the life of **Christ in us**, we will more and more demonstrate a focus on others as opposed to a selfish focus. In Matthew 5:1-12, there are nine beatitudes of Christ. During the school year, we will be focusing on a different beatitude each month with the students. For September, we will be teaching the students the beatitude of **Being Poor in Spirit** from Matthew 5:3: “Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.” A person who is poor in spirit is one who understands his need for God and His grace. In Jesus' parable of the pharisee and the tax collector

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## Supporting the Mission of Living Grace School: Raising Up Champions for God

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***“For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this not from yourselves, it is the gift of God—not by works, so that no one can boast. For we are God’s workmanship, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do” (Eph. 2:8-10).***

Please share with your friends about Living Grace Christian School, a school where the parents, teachers, and children work together in positive Biblical teamwork and relationship to raise up champions for God—servant leaders of godly character who advance the cause of Christ and make disciples of all nations. Living Grace Christian School is committed to Christian Discipleship, Academic Excellence, and Godly Character Development. Families are encouraged to apply for financial assistance based on need.

***Please pray about supporting Living Grace Christian School in the following ways:***

1. Praying for the school.
2. Becoming a prayer partner—the school is committed to having consistent prayer support through seeking up to twelve prayer partners who agree to pray daily for the school.
3. Helping families who cannot pay the full tuition to send their children to the school through the “Student Champions Fund.” We are committed to a ministry philosophy of “ministry over money” in which no family is excluded from the school due to financial hardship. Checks should be made out to Living Grace Christian School with “Student Champions Fund” written in the memo.
4. Supporting the long-term establishment of the school through the “Living Grace Christian School Endowment Fund.” Checks should be made out to Living Grace Christian School with “Endowment Fund” written in the memo.
5. Providing volunteer help at the school.

***If you desire to help in any of these ways, please feel free to call or email Dr. Switzer.***

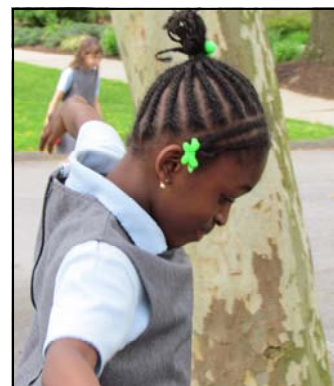
## Prayer Needs

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As stated above, the school is committed to having consistent prayer support through seeking twelve prayer partners who agree to pray daily for the school. If you would like to be a designated prayer partner, please talk to Dr. Switzer. Obviously, we encourage everyone to be praying for the school—parents, teachers, students, and extended family.

Please pray for the following significant areas:

1. The spiritual life of all parents, teachers, and students, that our relationships with the Lord would be grace-filled and marked by integrity.
2. That parents, teachers, students, and Northgate congregants work together in positive Biblical teamwork and unified relationship.
3. Effective leadership and teaching, and a commitment to Christian discipleship, academic excellence, and godly character development.
4. Walking out our comprehensive plan for parent participation: pray that the teachers would effectively communicate with parents, be receptive and accessible to them, and treat them as partners in the educational process.
5. God’s provision for families, including financial and transportation needs.
6. Parents as they fulfill the role as their child’s primary teachers. Pray that parents would “reserve judgment” when their children give them a negative report about a school situation until they have the opportunity to talk with the respective teacher.
7. Excellent study habits, godly relationships, and prosperous health and safety for the entire school body.
8. Pastors and the larger Body of Christ to increasingly see the need to educate their children (and the future leaders of the Church) in a manner consistent with their Biblical beliefs.
9. Volunteers to help in the classrooms, office, and building.
10. Consistent financial support to help needy families to be able to send their children to the school through the “Student Champions Fund.”
11. The families of all the teachers, parents, and students.
12. That these children would know that God has a plan for their lives; that God would raise up these children to be champions for God—servant leaders of godly character who advance the cause of Christ and make disciples of all nations! **Thank you for your prayers!**



# The Importance of Godly Character

(continued from page 1)

(Luke 18:9-14), Jesus commended the tax collector who said, “God have mercy on me, a sinner.” Someone poor in spirit knows his need and lives life dependent on God. People who are poor in spirit learn to rely on God. They are “poor”—they have a keen awareness that because of life’s circumstances, they need to put their trust in God. The psalmist expressed this attitude: “Yet I am poor and needy; may the Lord think of me. You are my help and my deliverer; O my God, do not delay” (Ps. 40:17). Being poor in spirit is declaring our humble state that without God we are sorely lacking. God gives his gift of salvation to us who are poor in spirit and know our need for Him. With Christ as our Lord and Savior, as the beatitude says, ours “is the kingdom of heaven”!

This character trait, as well as other godly character traits, are the things we should be stressing with our children on a regular basis. After teaching how the grace of God brings change to our lives, the Apostle Paul emphasized, “I want you to stress these things, so that those who have trusted in God may be careful to devote themselves to doing what is good. These things are excellent and profitable for everyone” (Titus 3:8). When our children receive Christ as their personal Savior and Lord, they receive the Holy Spirit—Christ in us, the Hope of glory! By God’s design, we as parents are called to teach and train our children in godly character. As our children grow, we should increasingly see the character of Christ emanating from their lives.

**While we do so at school, I also encourage you to emphasize this beatitude of Being Poor in Spirit—learning to rely on Christ—at home with your children.** In the process, we will see the character of Christ birthed in their hearts, all by God’s grace.

**Final Encouragements.** As we pray for our children and the school, I encourage you to refer to the “Prayer Needs” as given in this edition of *Raising Champions*. **Also, we are seeking twelve prayer partners who will uphold the ministry of Living Grace Christian School on a daily basis. If you would like to commit to this important ministry, please call or email Dr. Switzer.**

As we begin the school year, I encourage you to **be involved in your child’s education at what I call a “maximal level.”** I encourage you to participate with your children in the following four home learning activities on at least a weekly basis: 1) Reading with your child; 2) Overseeing your child’s assignments/reviewing content/providing necessary drill through checking the assignment book daily; 3) Setting up and monitoring time management through a daily study time; and 4) Interacting with your child on enriching education-related activities, such as discussing current events in light of God’s Word, working on projects, and playing games such as chess.

Finally, I’m looking forward to seeing you at our **Back-to-School Night on Thursday, September 8<sup>th</sup>**. This will be an excellent time for us to develop working relationships that will help our children to prosper in their education and personal growth. I’m looking forward to an outstanding year as we team together to raise up our children to be champions for God! May God’s grace be upon you and your families!

## REMINDERS

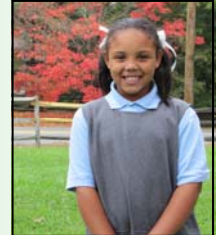
### Tuition Payments to Smart

Please remember that tuition payments are paid directly to the Smart Tuition Management Company. Each of you should have received a welcome letter and invoice from Smart Tuition. Tuition payments are due to Smart by the fifth of each month, August through May.

### Uniforms

Students are to be dressed in the proper school uniform upon arrival to school. The regular school uniform is worn by students on Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays. The physical education uniform is worn on Tuesdays and Thursdays.

*Uniform Note:* While we don’t have an “official” uniform sweater, students may wear a gray, navy blue, or white dress sweater, if necessary.



### Physical Education Uniform (for Tuesdays and Thursdays)

On physical education days (Tuesdays and Thursdays), students are to dress in gray gym shorts, a light blue t-shirt, white socks, and sneakers. During cold weather, students should wear gray sweatpants and a gray sweatshirt. These items for the P.E. uniform may be purchased at the store of your choice.

### Lunches

Students bring their lunches to school each day. Please be aware that there is no refrigeration or re-heating available for student lunches.

## Parent News

**ARRIVAL AND DISMISSAL.** The school doors open at 8:00 a.m. The school day begins at 8:25 a.m. However, arrival is encouraged by 8:15 to help students get ready for school. The school entrance is through the back door of the building. Parents, please walk your children down the back sidewalk to the school entrance. Pick-up of students is at 3:00 p.m.

**BACK-TO-SCHOOL NIGHT .** Back-to-School Night for all parents is Thursday, September 8<sup>th</sup>, at 7:30 p.m. This is one of the four team meetings for all parents and teachers. We will have an opening session and then parents will meet with their children's homeroom teacher. Essential information will be communicated. Both parents are encouraged to attend Back-to-School Night. We ask that you do not bring your children to this meeting. We are not able to provide childcare. (We do not have the space). Please plan in advance to provide childcare for your own children at home.

### AFTER-SCHOOL HOMEWORK CLUB

If you have not done so already, parents may register their children for the after-school homework club from 3:00 to 4:30 p.m. Children are able to receive help with their homework as well as some supervised recreation. If this club is needed on an occasional basis, the cost is \$10 per day.



**EMAIL COMMUNICATIONS.** Please be aware that we will be communicating with you as parents via email. As a general rule, please expect an email communication from the homeroom teacher each Monday. We will highlight upcoming events and show you how you can interact with your children that week on a specified learning assignment. Please respond to the email, even if by a simple "thank you" so we know that you have received the communication. Of course, you may also communicate with the teachers via email. Communication is very important to us.

## Volunteer Opportunities

### LUNCH MONITORS

A great way to bless the teachers is to provide them with a lunch break. If you would like to be a lunch monitor from 12:00 to 12:30 p.m. on a weekly or biweekly basis, call or email Dr. Switzer. Younger non-school-age children may be with you as you monitor lunch as well as siblings from other classes. We especially need help on Wednesdays.

### SUBSTITUTE TEACHERS

We have a small need for substitute teachers. If you would like to be available to be called upon in the event a teacher needs a substitute, please call or email Dr. Switzer. A small payment is made for this service.

### MATH BOOK CHECKERS

If you would like to help out with checking math books at the beginning of the day (after dropping off your children), please see our administrative assistant Mrs. Perdomo. This is a simple task of checking math answers, using the teacher key.

### REFRESHMENTS FOR BACK-TO-SCHOOL NIGHT

If you would like to help with refreshments at the end of our Back-to-School Night, please email or talk with Mrs. Switzer.

### PICTURE TAKERS/VIDEOGRAPHER

We are looking for parents who would enjoy taking digital pictures of events and emailing them to Mrs. Perez (tessben@yahoo.com) to include in our newsletter and in our school yearbook. In addition, if you would like to periodically videotape events and put together an edited DVD at the end of the school year, we would very much appreciate your help.

## SEPTEMBER 2011

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
			31 First Day of School	1	2	3
4	5 LABOR DAY NO SCHOOL	6	7	8 Back to School Night—7:30 pm	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	

*"For I know the plans I have for you . . . plans to give you hope and a future" (Jer. 29:11).*

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