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# ALUMNI

FROM WEST COAST BAPTIST COLLEGE

**CONFIDENCE  
IN THE FACE  
OF ACCELERATED  
CHANGE**

DR. JOHN GOETSCH

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ISSUE 2

[WCBC.EDU/ALUMNI](http://WCBC.EDU/ALUMNI)



CONFIDENCE IN THE  
**FACE**  
OF ACCELERATED CHANGE

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BY DR. JOHN GOETSCH



How would you describe our world today? What one word comes to your mind? Innocent people are killed in movie theaters.

Military recruiting stations come under gun fire. The Supreme Court decides to make laws rather than interpret them and rule in favor of same sex marriage. An Iran nuclear deal is promoted as a peaceful settlement by global leaders while their citizens cry “death to Israel and death to America” in the streets. Entire nations have declared bankruptcy. Atheism grows as religious groups are targeted and labeled hatemongers and terrorists. The word that comes to my mind is “change.”

Change is something that we expect to some degree. The Bible warns us that “evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse, deceiving and being deceived.” But the acceleration of these changes is alarming and points to devastating ruin or divine revival. The world cannot stay on its present course for long.

In the midst of this chaotic change, we can have a calm confidence. This confidence is based on two important principles from God’s Word. First, we know that we have an unchanging God. *“For I am the LORD, I change not” (Malachi 3:6a).* *“Of old hast thou laid the foundation of the earth: and the heavens are the work of thy hands. They shall perish, but thou*

*shalt endure: yea, all of them shall wax old like a garment; as a vesture shalt thou change them, and they shall be changed: But thou art the same, and thy years shall have no end”—Psalm 102:25-27.* We as God’s people have the calm assurance that God is in control. He has not vacated His throne or resigned His position. No one can or ever will unseat God!

Secondly, His plan for our lives is unchanged. Let me encourage you to stay in the battle. Of course there will be setbacks, heartaches, and discouragement. God’s people from Bible times to the present have always faced opposition. This is not the time to quit. Culture changes to be sure. We are a minority as Christians in this world and scripture reminds us that it will get worse. But what God put in your heart to do for Him with your life has not changed. His gifting and calling on your life are without repentance (Romans 11:29). God has not made a mistake. What He has called you and equipped you to do through your training, He will enable you to do. *“For it is God that worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure.”* —*Philippians 2:13*

When I think about the world today, the word “changing” immediately comes to mind. When I see your name as one of our graduates of West Coast, it is my prayer, and I hope yours, that the word “unchanging” comes to mind. ☺



**Dr. John Goetsch**

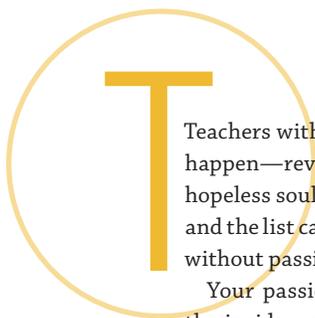
is the Executive Vice President of West Coast Baptist College.



# TEN COMMANDMENTS OF PASSIONATE PREACHING

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GABRIEL RUHL



Teachers with genuine passion can make the impossible happen—revitalize a dying Sunday school class, reach a hopeless soul, create a corporate desire to serve Christ—and the list can go on! Nothing great is ever accomplished without passion.

Your passion must come from what fuels you from the inside—your love for Christ. It’s more than having a plan; it’s about serving Christ with the same intensity He had when He went to the Cross. Allow me to shed some light on what you should be passionate about as a Bible teacher.

#### **PASSIONATE ABOUT YOUR CALLING FROM GOD**

It’s normal—even expected—to get weary in the battle of service, but we shouldn’t get weary of the battle. When weariness creeps in, we need to go to the resting place in our souls, and that place needs to be the call of God—the certainty that He has placed us where we are. Paul said in Romans 11:13, “...I magnify mine office...” He had confidence in the work Christ had for him.

Additionally, if we serve the Lord for any other reason than our love for Him, the quality and longevity of our service will suffer. Our service must be an outflow from our love.

#### **PASSIONATE ABOUT THE THINGS OF GOD**

The lives we live and the message we teach should not contradict but compliment each other. Our lives (lifestyle) should passionately revolve around all things God!

Our culture tells us that we can do anything the world is doing as long as we love God. The meaning and purity of holiness begs to differ. Our lives should be distinct—peculiar. We should want to minister in the world but not be of it. A teacher with God’s values in mind will hold in high esteem his lifestyle and example outside of the classroom.

Our prayer should be, “God, you can strip from me any personal liberty you want, I just want more influence for your name’s sake.”

*No man that warreth entangleth himself with the affairs of this life; that he may please him who hath chosen him to be a soldier.—2 Timothy 2:4*

#### **PASSIONATE ABOUT YOUR PREPARATION**

If you are not excited about teaching your Sunday school class, then do not be surprised if your students are not excited about being in your class. Blessed is the class whose teacher thinks this Sunday’s lesson is the best one he will ever teach!

On the other side, remember that you cannot impart what you do not possess. Therefore, preparation is key to providing a thought-provoking, Bible-based, helpful lesson.

*A good man out of the good treasure of his heart bringeth forth that which is good; and an evil man out of the evil treasure of his heart bringeth forth that which is evil: for of the abundance of the heart his mouth speaketh.—Luke 6:45*



## **SOULWINNING IS NOT A SPIRITUAL GIFT.** **SOULWINNING IS A SPIRITUAL DISCIPLINE.**

### **PASSIONATE ABOUT GROWTH**

Teachers who rely on past illustrations and stories have dull, deadening lessons; teachers who are alive in God's Word, and consistently gleaned from it can't help but have passion to convey the truths they are currently convinced of working!

*But grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. To him be glory both now and for ever. Amen.*  
—2 Peter 3:18

God created everything in life with the intention to grow. Not only should you be passionate about personal growth, but you should also want growth in your class. You don't have to be naturally gifted at teaching for this to happen (Praise the Lord!). Your lesson is a small part of the big picture when it comes to leading and growing a class.

Statistically, those who visit your class determine within the first seven minutes whether or not they will be returning. This generally happens before the teaching starts. It's not about natural giftedness; it's about a passionate desire to grow those we are teaching. Passionate teachers utilize every minute of their classroom time to provide a friendly, encouraging, and equipping experience.

### **PASSIONATE ABOUT PRAYER**

D. L. Moody said, "I'd rather be able to pray than to be a great preacher. Jesus never taught His disciples how to preach, but only how to pray!" Pray for yourself to be the teacher God wants you to be, and pray for those in your class by name.

### **PASSIONATE ABOUT YOUR STUDENTS**

The more you invest in your class as individuals, the more your heart will be passionate about your ministry. You can

invest by caring about what they care about. Share with them in the joy of a newborn baby and mourn with them through the death of a loved one. When my kids' Sunday school teachers send them a birthday card, I can tell you from a parent's perspective that it goes a long way!

Choose to prioritize caring for your class. We have a system in our ministry called the weekly snapshot—it's a quick overview of who has attended and who has missed each class.

Every visitor receives a visit from a teacher or class leader within six days. When people miss three weeks in a row, we visit them. Usually when people miss this much, their minds start to shift and think that no one at church really cares, and we want to prove them wrong.

Make a big deal of absentees. Make a personal connection, and don't allow people to fall through the cracks due to lack of caring.

### **PASSIONATE ABOUT SOULWINNING**

Soulwinning is not a spiritual gift. Soulwinning is a spiritual discipline. It is something we inwardly choose to be obedient to, because of the cause of Christ. Soulwinning is stepping into the image of Christ. Luke 19:10 says it best, "*For the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost.*"

"The only alternative to soulwinning is disobedience to God."—Curtis Hutson

### **PASSIONATE ABOUT EXCELLENCE**

Is "good enough" good enough for you? In high school, I worked for a fencing company. Eventually, I became a site leader. Occasionally, I would get a certain guy on my team who taught me a very valuable lesson. This guy's mentality was, "Well, you can't see

it from my house...so it's good enough." In other words, the job wasn't going the way we planned, but the customer won't notice, so it's good enough. Lesson learned. I wouldn't want this guy (his mentality) working on my house!

Sometimes in the work of the Lord, we have the same "you can't see it from my house" mentality—it wouldn't be good enough for us, but we're doing this in our spare time for the Lord, so it's good enough. However, something great for God will never be done with spare work or spare change.

*Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might; for there is no work, nor device, nor knowledge, nor wisdom, in the grave, whither thou goest.*—Ecclesiastes 9:10

### **PASSIONATE ABOUT TODAY**

Embrace and engage in all the opportunities you have today. Satan never takes a day off, and he is always working overtime. Don't save up all your passion for the weekends; choose to be passionate today about your class, and allow that passion to play out practically.

*For yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night.*—1 Thessalonians 5:2

### **PASSIONATE ABOUT YOUR LEGACY**

What kind of legacy are you leaving to the next generation? Are you showing them how to lead with love and passion? Live as if you want the dash on your tombstone to mean something.

*And Jesus said unto him, No man, having put his hand to the plough, and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God.*—Luke 9:62 🙏



**Gabriel Ruhl**

is an associate pastor at Lancaster Baptist Church.

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# CONTINUE TO GROW

BY MARK RASMUSSEN



While traveling recently, I had the opportunity to see a number of WCBC alumni who are serving in ministry. I love that! It is always encouraging to Pastor, Dr. Goetsch, and myself. While chatting, one graduate posed a question that I had to consider before answering: “What do you recommend to alumni in order to continue to grow?”

Reflecting on this, I thought of several things that I want to do to continue to grow, which might be a help for alumni to consider as they continue to grow in the nurture and admonition of the Lord.



**Dr. Mark Rasmussen** is the Vice President of West Coast Baptist College.

## RECHARGE

**Let me challenge you to consistently recharge.** Energy and spirit sometimes seem to flag and decrease. We might feel that the press of people takes vitality from our very lives. So the question might be, “How do we recharge?” Make sure that you are getting necessary rest. When one is fatigued, it will wear down your ability to properly minister to people.

## REMEMBER

**Secondly, we need to remember.** Sometimes we are so busy going from one project to another that we do not stop and reflect on the goodness and blessing of God. There is no question in my mind that when we stop and think about people who have been saved, people who are now serving, or people who are taking the next step in their Christian life, we will be encouraged and recharged.

## RENEW

**Thirdly, we need to renew our commitment.** In ministry we often talk about rededicating our lives to the Lord. It is wise to rededicate our lives to service and to remember our calling. God’s Word says, “The gifts and callings of God are without repentance.” It is a wise thing for us to commit ourselves in that which God has called us to do on a regular basis.

There are other things that can help us renew as well, like reading and relaxation, and these are certainly important. To be drained from the cares of ministry is normal and to be expected. What we need to do is to find ways to renew ourselves so that we may impact others in a way that will please the Lord and impact others for the cause of Christ. ☺

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# PLANTING A CHURCH IN WASHINGTON STATE

BY DENNIS FOUNTAIN

**F**irst of all, I want to praise our great Lord for all that He has done in and through our family, as well as MLBC. In the fall of 2010, through a series of events, God made it clear to us that He wanted us to plant the Moses Lake Baptist Church. After traveling for a few months to raise some support, we started the church on March 6, 2011. From the very first moment in which we made the official decision to come to Moses Lake, we have seen the devil fight tooth and nail, but in an even greater way, we have witnessed as God continues to work miracles.

Over the last five years we, like all church planters, have faced serious challenges. However, it has been awesome to see God's faithfulness to us and His continued work in growing us spiritually through each of these situations.

As we just celebrated 5 years in Moses Lake, it is astounding to reflect on all God has done. Through these last few years, we have seen many people accept Christ as their Saviour and follow the Lord

in baptism. We are on our 5th time to knock every door in Moses Lake, and we have been thrilled to see our church family learn to step out in missions giving. We have also been excited to see another church (Ellensburg Baptist Church in Ellensburg, WA.) start out of MLBC in the fall of 2014.

God has allowed our family to be full-time for the last 3 years, and two years ago, we were blessed to bring on a part-time staff couple (Robert & Beth Elliott). We have another couple (Micah & Rebekah Bosworth) who are also working with MLBC, and we pray we are able to bring them into a part-time basis soon, as well.

If someone were to have told me 10 years ago, as I was going through the Master's program at WCBC, that God would have worked as He has, I don't know if I would have believed him. But as I look back over the last 10 years, and especially over the last 5 years, I stand in awe. We truly serve an amazing God with much in store for His children. I am definitely humbled and honored to be a part of His work in Moses Lake, Washington. 🙌

## ALUMNI BIO

### Dennis Fountain

received his masters degree from WCBC in 2006. He is the pastor of Moses Lake Baptist Church and chaplain of Grant County Sheriff's Office in Moses Lake, WA. Dennis and his wife, Hannah, have three children, Dennis, Lina, and Micah.



THIS MEANS  
**WAR**

**JOSHUA CAMPS**  
JULY 10-16 & JULY 24-30

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**BASKETBALL**

JULY 10-16 & JULY 24-30

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**VOLLEYBALL**

JULY 10-16 & JULY 24-30

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**MUSIC**

JULY 24-30

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**LEADERSHIP**

JULY 10-16

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**MEDIA**

JULY 10-16

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**WORLD VIEW**

JULY 24-30





# THE VICTORIES OF GRAND RAPIDS BAPTIST CHURCH

BY CODY KUEHL

## 2015

2015 was a year filled with exciting milestones and victories for both our family and our church here in Michigan. Five years ago we knew we were taking a small group of people with the intention of doing a “restart” church, which would include writing the church Constitution, buying or building a building, changing the name of the church, and making it official with a charter. In March of last year we moved into our new building which we purchased and remodeled. Shortly after moving into the building, we changed the name of the church from Breton Road Baptist Church to Grand Rapids Baptist Church. Finally, Sunday December 6, 2015, we had our charter service to begin moving forward as Grand Rapids Baptist Church.

As far as family, our daughter Katie who had been diagnosed with a childhood cancer a year after we took the church (February of 2012) just turned 8! We praise God for giving her all clear reports over the last few years of remission. Our daughter Bella turned 6 this January, and we are excited to welcome a 3rd baby girl this spring. We are thankful for our growing family and look forward to many years serving the Lord together. 🙌

## TEACHING THE NEXT GENERATION

BY JANELLE STALNECKER

Hands down, I have learned more from my students in the past eleven years of teaching than any of my students have learned from me. I set out as a new teacher in the fall of 2005, anticipating that every student who sat in my junior high or high school English class that year would acquire as much of a passion as I had for grammar and the English language. It didn't take me long to discover that English class was at the top of the list on students' most hated subjects!

As hard as that was to grasp, over the years, I have developed an even stronger passion for my students to do well in my English classes. But God has reminded me time and again that doing well in my classes is not the most important thing in the lives of my students. “Doing well” in the Christian life is what I want to develop a passion for in their lives.

Pastor Chappell often says that ministry is not measured in years, but in decades. After a decade of serving in ministry, it is exciting to have seen some of my students go to college, many of them to my alma mater! Some of them have gotten married, and some have children of their own. Many of them are serving the Lord faithfully!

Of course there has been a lot of heart break along the way as well—students who make poor decisions even after all the counsel they've received. But God is always faithful in reminding me that making a difference in a life takes work. I have had many of those “I'm going to stop trying with this kid and his family” moments. And then I remember how fortunate I am that Christ never gave up on me. How grateful I am for that! I am indebted to those people who took the time to make a difference in my life, and I want to be a difference maker in the lives of my students! 🙌



**Janelle Stalnecker**  
is a graduate of West Coast Baptist College.



# LIFT UP YOUR EYES

BY ALISA BALLOU

Jesus

says to lift up our eyes? That isn't natural at all.

Walking to the school where our kids go, there are many days it's easy to have a completely different focus, mostly just tangled around, well,

self. "Do I actually have time to come here and teach once a week? I wonder how many ways there are to teach 'How are you?' to the tinier children here? I hope the teachers treat my children well today when they don't follow instructions given in a language they don't yet grasp..."

This pre-school is a Christian one, one of maybe a handful out of the thousands of otherwise Buddhist schools in the country. Though the children all come from Buddhist families, wear their charms to school, and go to the temple with their parents, at school they hear about the true and living God. Their school year ends this week, and the oldest kids move on to receive the normal Thai education that's steeped in the darkness of Buddhism.

I watch Brody, our three year old who is still a bit of a novelty, lead a pack of other children running after him all laughing and care free. All of the children's hearts are still free from decades of lies about a false god and religious system; the soil of their hearts is new and fertile. They all laugh so heartily and freely, love fully, and trust easily.

Looking up at the children makes me see clearly,

if just for a moment. These few represent millions of other children in this country, and billions just in this corner of the world who are equally beautiful, have equally tender and delightful hearts, as the children I've come to love here. See them and you think, "Of course Jesus loves children and asks us to have their kind of faith."

Instead of selfishness and weariness comes intense gratitude for truth I've been fed (so rare even in America) via family, church, and school. Instead of hoarding my time, I want to give it. Instead of cringing at having to give up my rights to pretty much anything, I remember nothing is my own anyway.

Whatever we look at the most is what we become like. What if, by keeping our eyes on Him, we could begin to think like Jesus? His ministry was anything but natural. *"Our Lord never evidenced the slightest sign of fear or cunning or diplomacy. He was never suspicious of anyone, yet He trusted no one except His Father. Consequently, He was never vindictive, nor was He ever humiliated. It is only possible to be humiliated when we are serving our own pride."*—Oswald Chambers. Ministry with that strength of mind and purity of service was only possible because of Jesus's own pure vision.

So put concisely, what does it mean to lift up our eyes? Looking to Jesus first (Hebrews 12:2), then learning to see like Jesus does (John 4:35). And that changes everything. 🍃



Jay and Alisa Ballou are missionaries to the people of Thailand.



# LOVE THY NEIGHBOR

BY JENETTE CONNER

**L** “Love thy neighbor as thyself...” is one of the truths that I am constantly trying to instill in the hearts of our three young boys, specifically, towards each other. However, the truth carries much farther than just those in my immediate family. Since our family moved to the Hastings–Sunrise neighborhood in the heart of Vancouver, Canada to plant a new church, our family has tried to literally apply this principle in a tangible way.

Living in such a densely populated area, you are always surrounded by a lot of people, yet it is easy to experience immense loneliness as well. This is how most of our neighborhood functions day to day. We hear a lot about “community” and they are all searching for connection in a variety of places, yet they are missing out on true community found in a loving church family.

This is why for the past year and a half I have been intentionally connecting with my neighbors through the “spiritual” gift of baking. It may not seem like much, but in a community like ours, a friendly visit with a freshly baked loaf of banana bread, with our families’ contact information attached, assuring them if they need anything, can go a long way in breaking down the barriers that many choose to live within. The simple Christmas, Easter, new baby gifts go a long way as well. We have even had a couple accept our dinner invitations. Little by little, we are showing them the love of our Jesus.

Regardless of their demographic, or even if it is just our local fire hall a few blocks away, we have found this to be an incredible way to connect and build relationships within our neighborhood. And now, when we walk to the corner market, bakery or produce stand, we often run into our neighbors, opening another door to build relationships, and allowing them to grow comfortable with our family. We are still new at all this, but we are trusting that God will honor our desire to love our neighbors as ourselves, and that He will continue to open many hearts to the life changing Gospel we are so blessed to share. 🙌



**Jenette Conner**

is a graduate of West Coast Baptist College.



# A CHILDLIKE FAITH

BY GABRIEL RUHL

The

Gospel of Mark tells of a time in Jesus' life when parents sought Him and wanted Him to bless their children, "...And they brought young children to him, that he should touch them..." (Mark 10:13) What happens next is a little surprising. Jesus' disciples tried to stop them! I'm sure the parents weren't expecting opposition to come from fellow believers—especially those closest to Jesus—but opposition to the faith sometimes comes from unexpected sources.

Perceptibly, Jesus interceded and put the disciples in their place when He said, "...suffer the little children to come unto me, and forbid them not..." (Mark 10:14) If I were a parent in this story, I would naturally fight the tendency to look down at the disciples and think, *Jerks! We're just trying to get our kids to Jesus. You guys should be FOR this!* And I would probably be rooting on Jesus as He reproved His disciples.

In all fairness, however, we should look through the eyes of the disciples. They were the closest observers to Jesus' schedule, His lack of rest, His constant traveling, and His many followers. In their best judgment, they probably thought his body needed a pause. In Mark 10:1-12, you'll see why—Jesus was busy teaching and engaging with the Pharisees.

In ministry I have found myself on both sides of this story. I have been faced with opposition from the most unexpected sources, but I have also been buried by important responsibilities and ministry

## THE LORD EXPECTS US TO LOOK TO HIM WITH A "NEEDY" CRAVING FOR HIM—A HUMBLE DESIRE FOR HIS GUIDANCE.



**Gabriel Ruhl** is an associate pastor at Lancaster Baptist Church.

opportunities and failed to see the priority right in front of me. Can you relate?

Jesus completely understood the complexity of the situation. So, how did He respond? He focused on what both the parents and the disciples had in common—faith! He focused on the children and rebuked the disciples by using the children as an example and pattern for adults to follow. These lessons on faith work and need to be resonated in our culture.

### A CHILDLIKE FAITH IS CHARACTERIZED BY OUR DEPENDENCE ON GOD

Children have no problem living dependent on their parents. It is natural. In fact, if you have a two-year-old, you can testify that they are often so needy that it requires much patience and gentleness. The Lord expects us to look to Him with a "needy" craving for Him—a humble desire for His guidance.

*I am the vine, ye are the branches: He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for without me ye can do nothing.—John 15:5.*

### A CHILDLIKE FAITH IS CHARACTERIZED BY OUR DESIRE TOWARD GOD

Children desire to be around parents who love them! Small children crave time with loving and attentive adults. Our Heavenly Father is both loving and attentive, and He longs for fellowship with us. Jesus reminded Christians that He wants us to come to Him, and He wants us to delight in time with Him, just as children openly enjoy connection with those they admire.

*For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.—John 3:16.*

*As the hart panteth after the water brooks, so panteth my soul after thee, O God.—Psalm 42:1.*

### A CHILDLIKE FAITH IS CHARACTERIZED BY OUR DISPLAY OF A RELATIONSHIP WITH GOD

Children are refreshingly open about their thoughts, feelings, and needs. When they are around an individual they adore, everyone can see the evidence of their admiration. These evidences outwardly point to a relationship. What outward evidences point to our relationship with God?

I am convinced that most of the complicated situations we face can be resolved if we would learn to respond as these children behaved—run to Jesus with complete faith and dependence on Him and openly express our love and devotion to Him.

*Trust in the Lord with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding. In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths.—Proverbs 3:5-6.* 🙏



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