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## Viewpoints

*Observing events in our modern world from the viewpoint of our ascended Savior.*

### Christ Doesn't Give Diplomas ~ May 23, 2014

*There's a reason no one graduates from the Christian faith.*

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A graduation—like those occurring across our nation at this time of year— can unfortunately trigger unintended consequences. And even if someone is not actually graduating, the completion of a curriculum can also create undesirable side effects.

A year ago in May, Savannah was on the verge of completing her freshman year in high school. She had also completed the requirements to obtain her driver's license and had just turned sixteen. Her parents granted her permission to undertake her first solo drive to the grocery store to pick up dinner for the family. At 4:19 pm, just outside her neighborhood, Savannah failed to yield at an intersection and was T-boned by a semi. I pray that she was a believer in Jesus, the Son of God. For then in her sudden death, we can take comfort that she graduated from life on this earth, to life with her Savior in heaven.

It's not just young Christians (if she was one) who fall into a false sense of security. It's anyone of any age who experiences feelings of self-satisfaction and self-reliance. Oh, how easily such feelings can morph into false security! You see, the State Patrol determined that Savannah was writing a lengthy text on her phone when she drove in front of the oncoming semi. She fell prey to a false sense of security.

To eliminate a false sense of security, Jesus created the Christian faith to be a perpetual classroom. Yes, there are confirmations, and there are Bible courses completed, but no one ever graduates from the Christian Church, until they enter heaven. But you would think that Christ magically comes down from heaven and hands out diplomas by realizing how many Christians believe they are already strong "enough" and knowledgeable "enough."

Scripture teaches that Savannah's attitude lives inside each of us, in our sinful natures. But although it's native to our sinful natures, Jesus did not die and rise again to massage our false sense of security. No, when Jesus forgives our selfish attitudes, he also empowers us to be born-again in attitudes and beliefs that depend on Jesus and rely on a spiritual strength received from his promises.

To suppress our inborn, Savannah-like attitudes from sucking us into a false sense of security, the Apostle Paul writes some special words. He does not focus on a graduate's knowledge of what's been taught, but on continuing teaching. Nor does he applaud if someone was trained, but he urges an ongoing training.

There's a huge difference between someone who has graduated, and a graduate who constantly trains. Most athletes know that it takes 3,000 repetitions for the body to be able to reproduce a movement instinctively and reflexively. Because that's a lot of training, that 3,000 mark will not be reached unless one has the right attitude. And when one has the right attitude than 3,000 repetitions is still not going to be enough training.

While it's too late to teach Savannah, it's not too late for me, and you. "All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for **teaching**, **rebuking**, **correcting** and **training** in righteousness, so that the man of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work" (2 Timothy 3:16).

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*Blessings to you and your loved ones, Pastor Mike Nitz*

