

THE FINAL EXAM

by Kyle Campbell

People take final exams, and if they study they expect a good grade. But what if someone skipped a bunch of classes, missed all the study group opportunities, never read the textbook, never took notes, never took advantage of the instructor's office hours, fell asleep in class, or played on their phones (checking email, social media, etc.)? Would you say they deserved a failing grade? Here are people who knew everything they needed to do to make a good grade on the test — but refused to do it.

Would any conscientious parent let their child do this? No! We cram it down their throats that they should do well on finals, expecting nothing but the best grades. But why are we so unwilling to be less diligent when it comes to our relationship with God? If you take the aforementioned actions and put them in a spiritual context of worship assemblies and Bible classes, I've seen every one of them at the Loop. And my guess is preachers everywhere could say the same.

Why do we settle for mediocrity? We serve a living God and a risen Savior. Isaiah said, "For thus saith the high and lofty One that inhabiteth eternity, whose name is Holy ..." Given God's absolute majesty, why are we willing to be so mediocre in our devotion to Him? A passage that has meant a lot to me in my life is Psalm 116:12 which says, "What shall I render unto the Lord for all his benefits toward me?" If I am aware that He is thoroughly holy, and I recognize that He has given me wonderful benefits, then why would I treat Him in such an indifferent (and irreverent) way?

Perhaps what we need is stronger love (Matthew 22:37) — a love that affects the heart, soul, and mind; stronger memory (Psalm 104:24) — a memory focused on the great acts of a powerful God; and, a stronger resolve (Genesis 15:11) — a resolve to drive away the distractions of mind like Abraham drove away the birds from the carcass of sacrifice. Don't fail the final and miss the heavenly reward!