

God Is Greater

“Our Loss is Great, but God is Greater”

1 John 4:4

Ye are of God, little children, and have overcome them: because greater is he that is in you, than he that is in the world.

Brandon Burlsworth was born September 20th, 1976 in Harrison, Arkansas. He graduated from Harrison High School and was a recruited walk-on football player at the University of Arkansas. His awards and his many accolades are numerous but among them are earning a scholarship the first year. He was awarded the All-SEC offensive guard in 1997 and 1998, all conference honors and named 1st team All-American.

Brandon became the first Arkansas Razorback football player to complete a master's degree before playing his final game. He was drafted by the Indianapolis Colts in the third round of the draft.

The Will of God

“I have to suffer for everything I get-maybe it’s not what God Wants - Brandon”

When Brandon started out in football in his youth league his position was defensive line; lets just say that he didn’t excel there; but when he found the right position on the offensive line he did excel and with hard work and sacrifice he he grew up to become and All-American.

We too must find the will of God in our lives and find the right position in our service for the LORD; and when we surrender to the will of God we to shall have great success.

Jeremiah 29:11 For I know the thoughts that I think toward you, saith the LORD, thoughts of peace, and not of evil, to give you an expected end.

Micah 6:8 He hath shewed thee, O man, what *is* good; and what doth the LORD require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God?

1Timothy 2:3 For this is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Saviour; 4 Who will have all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth.

We can never flourish in abundant life outside the will of God. The very God of the universe has thoughts for us and He has a plan for us; how great is that; that Almighty God would know us personally. God’s will for all of us is that we all be saved and come to the truth. God’s will is that no one should perish. God’s will for us is to walk humbly with Him.

Hebrews 13:20 Now the God of peace, that brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant, 21 Make you perfect in every good work to do his will, working in you that which is wellpleasing in his sight, through Jesus Christ; to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen.

Hebrews 10:36 For ye have need of patience, that, after ye have done the will of God, ye might receive the promise.

The will for God in our lives is to let Him do his work in us through the LORD Jesus Christ; and in so doing with patience we do the will of God so that we receive the promise of God. Brandon never quit even though he was discouraged at times; he pushed on never giving up on his dream; and he honored the LORD all along the way; he lived his Faith.

Brandon flourished when he was put in the right position and we too will flourish when we are in the right will of God for our lives; not as I will LORD but as thou will.

Matthew 26:39 And he went a little further, and fell on his face, and prayed, saying, **O my Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me: nevertheless not as I will, but as thou wilt.**

“So, one guy gets \$10,000 handed to him,
and another guy has to work for it.
Now, they both got \$10,000,
but the second guy gained a whole lot
more along the way than just the money.

Now who do you think is better off?” - *Brandons HS Coach*

Proverbs 13:4 The soul of the sluggard desireth, and *hath* nothing; but the soul of the diligent shall be made fat.

Appearances Can Be Deceiving

Marty: “well thats it, guess the LORD didn’t make you the right size”

1 Samuel 16:7 But the LORD said unto Samuel, Look not on his countenance, or on the height of his stature; because I have refused him: for *the LORD seeth* not as man seeth; for man looketh on the outward appearance, but the LORD looketh on the heart.

Jeremiah 17:10 I the LORD search the heart, *I* try the reins, even to give every man according to his ways, *and* according to the fruit of his doings.

John 7:24 Judge not according to the appearance, but judge righteous judgment.

Appearances are often deceiving. Only God can see the heart; the measure of the heart can only be seen by the actions of the person; the fruits of their labour; the life they live. Brandon wasn’t born a right guard; but through his hard work, sacrifice; Faith, and Trust in the LORD he made himself into one and the lessons he learned along the way made him into the man he was and he left a legacy honoring God.

It’s Just Not Fair

“LORD help us to understand of all people; how does that make any sense”? “It’s just not fair.”

“You can’t just trust you have to obey too” -*Brandons momma*

On Wednesday, April 28th, 1999 driving his white Subaru home to Harrison, Ark., from Fayetteville, Ark. -- a drive he had made hundreds of times -- Burlsworth was killed in a head-on collision with a tractor-trailer. Tragically, at the age of 22, 10 days after the draft, he was killed while on his way home from the University of Arkansas to attend church with his mom. In the short time Brandon was on this earth he left a legacy and a positive role model that will be remembered long after we are gone.

Burlsworth had been expected to attend a 4 p.m. ring ceremony in Fayetteville -- awarding players and coaches with their SEC West Champion and Citrus Bowl rings -- but decided to skip the ceremony to attend Wednesday worship services in Harrison. Brown said his skipping a ceremony of self-gratification to attend church was “typical Burls. He never even got to wear his Citrus Bowl ring. Probably wouldn’t have anyway.” -https://www.tulsaworld.com/archive/a-dream-shattered-by-tragedy/article_62495808-foca-5503-b88e-03168ec7044c.html

He had planned to help under privileged children and the Burlsworth family established the foundation that fall in his honor. Then, Arkansas Razorback Coach, Houston Nutt started the saying after his death, "Do it the Burls Way". A saying that meant do it the right way, even when no one is looking. The slogan is now our motto. - <https://www.brandonburlsworth.org/about-brandon.html>

2Corinthians 4:17 For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory; **18** While we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen: for the things which are seen are temporal; but the things which are not seen are eternal.

1 Thessalonians 4:13 But I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them which are asleep, that ye sorrow not, even as others which have no hope. **14** For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him. **15** For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we which are alive *and* remain unto the coming of the Lord shall not prevent them which are asleep.

16 For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first:17 Then we which are alive *and* remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord.18 Wherefore comfort one another with these words.

Brandons death was tragic; but Brandon's death upon this earth was the beginning of his eternal life in Christ Jesus; this is the truth and hope of every believer. Brandon lived this life with a Hope, Faith and Trust in the life to come.

We must trust on the mountains and in the valleys; during the blessings and in the trials. Even when we don't understand we must trust. We are but pilgrim's here upon this earth, our home is an eternal home in Heaven and therein is our Hope.

"If you read history you will find that the christians who did the most for the present world; were those who thought the most about the next world. - C.S. Lewis

The Wicked Whittler

Beloved anytime there is grief, tribulation, and pain the devil will be there to discourage and cause doubt and anger. The devil will seek us out in our weakest moments to devour and destroy our Faith and Trust in the LORD. It is during these times that we must stay closest to the LORD and under His sheltering wing. Only the LORD can provide the comfort and peace during these times that will sustain our Trust and Faith.

The whittler speaking to Brandons brother Marty:

The Whittler: "my condolences for a great injustice" holding their hands in prayer when they ought to be shaking their fist in anger"; "who are they worshipping anyway; a God that was unable to prevent this tragedy or the one who was just unwilling to?" "the LORD gives and the LORD takes away (Job 1:21) – trouble is He only gives for a little while and He takes away forever"

The wicked whittler uses scripture to attack Marty's Faith when Marty is at His weakest; right before the funeral of his brother Brandon. But it is in these times that the Word of God must speak to our hearts. The Whittler tries to draw Marty into a debate much like the serpent did to Eve in the Garden of Eden.

Genesis 3:1 Now the serpent was more subtil than any beast of the field which the LORD God had made. And he said unto the woman, Yea, hath God said, Ye shall not eat of every tree of the garden?

The devil is the great tempter; again he mis-quotes scripture to deceive; but the LORD uses the truth of the scripture to confound the devil; the Word of God is the greatest weapon we have to confront the lies of the devil.

Matthew 4:3 And when the tempter came to him, he said, If thou be the Son of God, command that these stones be made bread.4 But he answered and said, It is written, Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God.5 Then the devil taketh him up into the holy city, and setteth him on a pinnacle of the temple,6 And saith unto him, If thou be the Son of God, cast thyself down: for it is written, He shall give his angels charge concerning thee: and in their hands they shall bear thee up, lest at any time thou dash thy foot against a stone.

7 Jesus said unto him, **It is written again, Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God. 8 Again, the devil taketh him up into an exceeding high mountain, and sheweth him all the kingdoms of the world, and the glory of them;9 And saith unto him, All these things will I give thee, if thou wilt fall down and worship me.10 Then saith Jesus unto him, Get thee hence, Satan: for it is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve.**

James 4:7 Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you.

The Whittler misquotes scripture when he references Job 1:21;

Job 1:21 And said, Naked came I out of my mother's womb, and naked shall I return thither: the LORD gave, and the LORD hath taken away; blessed be the name of the LORD.

The Whittler did not quote the whole word of God for then it would not have suited his purpose. That is why it is so important to study and know The Word of God; "blessed be the name of the LORD"

The Whittler: “someday the stars are gonna burn out and there isn’t going to be anyone or anything left; nobody’s going to remember anything we did, cruel or kind; in the great scheme of things if you shake my hand or spit in my eye what difference does it make? See in our world Pol Pot gets 72 years and Brandon Burlsworth gets 22 -WHY? Like this whole universe random and meaningless.

Hear the Word of God.

Isaiah 45:12 I have made the earth, and created man upon it: I, *even* my hands, have stretched out the heavens, and all their host have I commanded.

Isaiah 45:18 For thus saith the LORD that created the heavens; God himself that formed the earth and made it; he hath established it, he created it not in vain, he formed it to be inhabited: I *am* the LORD; and *there is* none else.

John 1:1 In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.² The same was in the beginning with God.³ All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made.⁴ In him was life; and the life was the light of men.⁵ And the light shineth in darkness; and the darkness comprehended it not.

Revelation 20:12 And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened: and another book was opened, which is *the book* of life: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works. ¹³ And the sea gave up the dead which were in it; and death and hell delivered up the dead which were in them: and they were judged every man according to their works.

God’s word speaks for itself; the world was created in order and it is not meaningless; and God has His hand upon it. We all write the stories of our lives in the works that we do or don’t do; and we shall be judged by the stories of our lives that are written in the book. Our lives do matter and it does matter how you live; whether you accept or reject the LORD; for you will be judged according to what is written.

Marty to the Whittler: “people make God feel random; they praise Him when they get what they want; and they say he works in mysterious ways when they don’t.”

The Whittler: “thats right Marty most people ain’t like you and me; they want to see order and meaning but don’t have the courage to see the universe for what it really is; pitiless and indifferent.”

Beloved; the LORD is in control of all things and we can’t always understand His ways. But the LORD has promised good to us even when we can’t see it; we have to trust in the good times and in the bad; on the mountain top and in the valley.

Isaiah 55:8 For my thoughts *are* not your thoughts, neither *are* your ways my ways, saith the LORD.⁹ For *as* the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts.

Luke 12:6 *Are not five sparrows sold for two farthings, and not one of them is forgotten before God? 7 But even the very hairs of your head are all numbered. Fear not therefore: ye are of more value than many sparrows.*

Psalms 139:1 To the chief Musician, A Psalm of David. O LORD, thou hast searched me, and known *me*. ²Thou knowest my downsitting and mine uprising, thou understandest my thought afar off.³ Thou compasses my path and my lying down, and art acquainted with all my ways.

⁴ For there is not a word in my tongue, but, lo, O LORD, thou knowest it altogether.⁵ Thou hast beset me behind and before, and laid thine hand upon me.⁶ Such knowledge is too wonderful for me; it is high, I cannot attain unto it.⁷ Whither shall I go from thy spirit? or whither shall I flee from thy presence?

The LORD is not distant to His creation; but rather He is a personal loving God the very number of the hairs upon our head and the very words spoken from our lips are known to the LORD.

As Marty has been talking with the Whittler; the whittler has been whittling a piece of wood into the shape of a man.

Marty: “Is that supposed to be me?”

The Whittler: “why yes it is, not quite there yet; but I believe I’ll get you before it’s all said and done.”

1 Peter 5:8 Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour:

The devil comes to cause doubt, steal joy, bring discouragement; he will often come at us in our weakest moments that is why we must carry the Word of God in our hearts at all times; be not ignorant of the devils devices.

2 Corinthians 2:11 Lest Satan should get an advantage of us: for we are not ignorant of his devices.

The Whittler: "Some may argue that being blessed just makes it worse when things get taken away; you know Brandon did have faith; he believed that if he worked hard and did everything he was supposed to; God would make everything turn out for the best – did everything turn out for the best Marty? He was just days away from signing that contract; could have set his mom up for life getting those benefits. All he wanted to do was take care of his momma; honor thy father and thy mother isn't that one of the 10 commandments; God breaking his own rule now? Couldn't wait one week to snatch your brother away; there is no loving God Marty that's ridiculous, there's just a howling void and a real man and an honest man just doesn't get down on his knees and prays for his mercy; he stands up to it and looks him in the face and he howls right back."

The above statement by the whittler sums up the spirit in this generation of the antichrist; prideful, arrogant, blasphemous, the whittler whittles away shaping and forming people in the spirit of the antichrist and in his own image.

Proverbs 3:5 Trust in the LORD with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding.

There are many things this side of heaven that we cannot understand; but we must continue to trust in the LORD; for we only see the temporary and not the eternal.

1 Corinthians 13:12 For now we see through a glass, darkly; but then face to face: now I know in part; but then shall I know even as also I am known.

John 20:29 Jesus saith unto him, **Thomas, because thou hast seen me, thou hast believed: blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed.**

We see now in part but we that believe and have Faith will see in full; we must trust in the promises of God. For the believer through the Holy Spirit we have the second sight of FAITH and it is through this that we TRUST in the LORD. The LORD is faithful and true. The devil is full of lies and deceit and will use our hurt and disappointment against us; an honest man will fear God.

Psalms 23:1 A Psalm of David. The LORD is my shepherd; I shall not want.² He maketh me to lie down in green pastures: he leadeth me beside the still waters.³ He restoreth my soul: he leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for his name's sake.⁴ Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me.⁵ Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies: thou anointest my head with oil; my cup runneth over.⁶ Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life: and I will dwell in the house of the LORD for ever.

We Trust

Marty to the Whittler: "You know, I think I've had enough of your company today; Sir

Marty eventually told the Whittler that he's heard enough and the Whittler throws down the carved piece of wood (that isn't quite complete) and walks away. Standing on the sideline of the field his brother had played so many games on and he sees flowers in the middle of the field. Marty then walks up the steps to the top of the stadium and it is then that he can see that the flowers spell out – WE TRUST. It is only when Marty gets to the top that he can see what the flowers spell out. So to when we rise up and trust God and forsake the worlds thinking can we understand that we must trust god; even if we don't understand.

Are you allowing the devil to whittle and mold you into his image which is whittled in hate, distrust, doubt, pride, and denial? Do not let the devil shape you and conform you to the world; but rather TRUST GOD.

Brandon's mom: "We're just too small. Way too small to make the kind of judgments you're making. You have to trust that something greater sees things from a higher perspective where everything makes sense."

The Pastor: "Why do bad things happen to good people; I don't know but Brandon would say; just because we don't see the point doesn't mean there isn't one."

Psalms 56:3 What time I am afraid, I will trust in thee.⁴ In God I will praise his word, in God I have put my trust; I will not fear what flesh can do unto me.

Isaiah 26:3 Thou wilt keep *him* in perfect peace, *whose mind is stayed on thee*: because he trusteth in thee.

Brandon's life's was completed on this earth; but his eternal life in heaven is never ending and he left a legacy of love for God, love for his family; a legacy of Trust, Obedience, and Faith in the LORD Jesus Christ; we all do well if when our time upon this earth is over; we are remembered for those same things. Brandon lived his Faith and he served his God like it meant something to him.

"He sure played

that game though, didn't he?

Played it like it meant something."

Do you serve God like it means something to you or are you just going through the motions? Are you serving the Kingdom or the world? You will serve what is important to you. What is it that means something to you?

Coach Tice: "You know, football's a rough game; it's unpredictable. Life itself, squeezed into 60 minutes in 100 yards. Now, you can't control who your mom and daddy is, but you can control how hard you work. Sow with thought, you reap in action. Sow with action, you reap a habit. You sow a habit, you reap a character. You sow a character, you reap a destiny. Every place starts with a cadence and ends with a whistle. What you do in between, determines your legacy, so make sure you give it everything you've got until you hear that whistle. "

May it be said of us all-

2Timothy 4:7 I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith:⁸ Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing.

JESUS SAVES- To God be the Glory

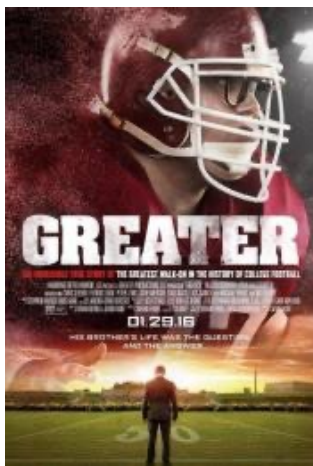
Brandon Burlsworth

ALL AMERICAN-1997-1998

ALL S. Eastern Conference

SEC Academic Honor Roll 95-98

"OUR LOSS IS GREAT, BUT GOD IS GREATER"



R.E.G.