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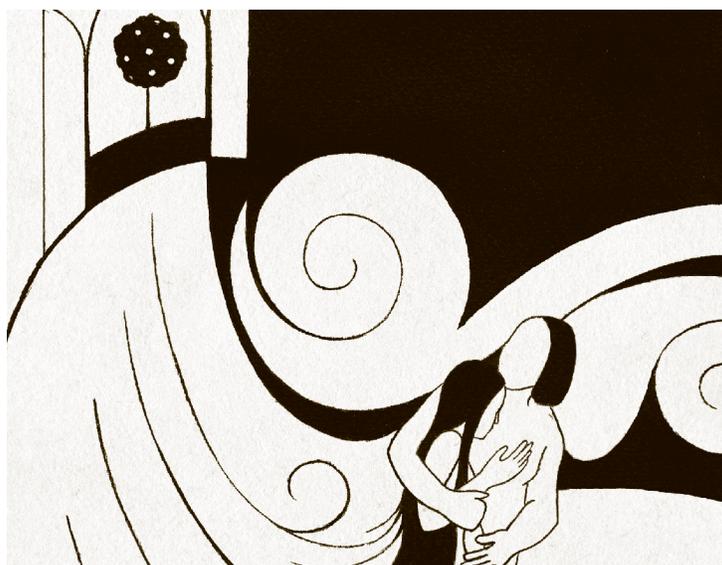
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Sexual Brokenness, Part 2: How Can the Church Express the Truth About Sexuality in a Loving Way?

Note: In the last edition of The Journal, we answered the question, "How can Christians develop a consistent, defensible sexual ethic in the church?" This month, we feature an excerpt from a new book by Summit instructors John Stonestreet and Sean McDowell titled Same-Sex Marriage: A Thoughtful Approach to God's Design for Marriage. This excerpt discusses how to answer some of the tough questions that come up about the issue of same-sex marriage.



So, What Now? Guidance for Everyday Questions

It will be difficult to wrestle through the specific situations believers will face in the days to come, so it is essential that we begin to have conversations about them now. We shouldn't wait until the heat of the moment. Pastors, leaders, and parents, we need to start this conversation now and be prepared with a gracious, thoughtful response.

It matters also *how* we have the conversation. Here are a few things to keep in mind:

1. *Search the Scriptures.* We can't know God's mind on an issue without it. Though the Bible does not always provide specific guidance, it offers the framework and principles that apply to every situation.

2. *Pray for guidance, and trust God to give it.* "If any of you lacks wisdom," James instructs, "let him ask God, who gives generously to all without reproach, and it will be given him. But let him ask in faith, with no doubting, for the one who doubts is like a wave of the sea that is driven and tossed by the wind" (James

1:5-7).

3. *Don't do it alone.* "Without counsel, plans fail," Proverbs 15:22 says, "but with many advisers, they succeed." Communities of faith must be in this together, praying and supporting one another.

4. *Be charitable and gracious.* First, we must be gracious and hesitant to pass judgment on our Christian brothers and sisters as they walk through these difficult situations. In the age of instant social media, it is far too easy to be harsh and self-righteous without knowing all the facts. Second, we must be gracious to those on the other side of the issue, even if they make our lives miserable. As Peter wrote to a group of Christians facing increasing cultural pressure:

"But in your hearts, honor Christ the Lord as holy, always being prepared to make a defense to anyone who asks you for a reason for the hope that is in you; yet do it with gentleness and respect, having a good conscience, so that, when you are slandered, those who revile your

good behavior in Christ may be put to shame" (1 Peter 3:15-16).

5. *Determine the lines that must not be crossed.* Daniel is a great model of this discipline. In a foreign court, he "resolved that he would not defile himself with the king's food or with the wine that he drank" (Daniel 1:8). He knew ahead of time where he could not compromise, and he was able to stand strong when the pressure came.

6. *Look for creative alternatives.* Patience and entrepreneurial thinking will often reveal options that at first we cannot see.

For example, Daniel and his friends seemingly had only two choices: (1) violate their convictions by imbibing the king's food and drink, or (2) die. There was another alternative, however. Appealing to the head of the court, they suggested a 10-day test period in which they would eat only vegetables and trust the Lord for the results. God made them 10 times better than their peers in the court (see Daniel 1:8-20). In many cases, we may be able to find a way to keep a potential conflict from escalating while still allowing us to follow our conscience.

7. *Avoid the victim complex.* It really doesn't help our cause if we are perceived as whiners. When it comes to our views on marriage, we will face double standards, misrepresentations, and scorn. We shouldn't be surprised when it happens. Plus, Jesus promised that His followers would be hated in the world (see John 17:14).

With that framework in mind, let's consider some potential scenarios.

from the president's desk

a word from dr. jeff myers



Persuasion, Persecution, and Speaking the Truth in Love

Asked about same-sex marriage at a church in San Francisco in March 2013, Rob Bell, a former pastor who makes a living shocking Christians, told the audience, “I think the ship has sailed ... this is the world that we are living in, and we need to affirm people wherever they are.”

Advocates of same-sex marriage hope that the “ship has sailed” expression will work its way into public consciousness. It conveys inevitability. It expresses momentum. And it works. In spite of the recent Centers for Disease Control study showing that only 1.6 percent of Americans identified as gay or lesbian, and .7 percent as bisexual,¹ the same-sex marriage lobby has effectively controlled legislatures, courts, and the media.

From a Christian perspective, is it true that Christians must cease their opposition to same-sex marriage in order to reach out to those who struggle with same-sex attraction? Unsure, most Christians remain silent. They disagree with being herded onto the same-sex bandwagon, but they just don't know how to resist without coming across as mean-spirited.

That's why we're glad to see the new book *Same-Sex Marriage: A Thoughtful Approach to God's Design for Marriage* by Summit instructors Sean McDowell and John Stonestreet. They passionately advocate man/woman marriage and yet rec-

ognize that in our daily lives we must stand for truth with compassionate clarity, not cynical contentiousness.

McDowell and Stonestreet show how to faithfully answer the talking points of same-sex marriage advocates and how to engage the culture winsomely — even if by doing so they risk social or legal sanction. I hope you'll get the book soon (available now in the Summit bookstore) and enter the discussion.

So what does the future hold for

“**In the end, our hope does not lie in what same-sex marriage advocates do or don't do. Our hope lies in knowing that we live in a world in which Christ has risen.**”

Dr. Jeff Myers

Christians who insist that man/woman marriage is both biblical and society's best chance for flourishing? In the long run, it looks like same-sex marriage propagandists will overplay their hand as most of history's propagandists have done. Peripheral persuasion based on self-righteous celebrity proclamations and public shaming is more fragile than it

appears because it doesn't engage people at a deep level — it just seeks to shut them up.

Meanwhile, though, Christian businesses are being shut down, civil service employees are being marginalized, and neighbors are at odds with one another. All because of expressing the simple belief — which just about everyone in the world today and in all of history past has believed — that man/woman marriage is a cultural good that makes society better for all of us.

In the end, our hope does not lie in what same-sex marriage advocates do or don't do. Our hope lies in knowing that we live in a world in which Christ has risen. It is in this great hope that we speak the truth in love.

Summer Update: By the time you receive this, we will have completed eight out of nine Summit sessions for the summer. Most of our programs in Colorado, California, and Tennessee were bursting at the seams. Plus — a new version of *Understanding the Times* is arriving from the printer as we speak. Thank you for your prayers and support of this ministry as we equip the rising generation to understand the times in which they live and know how Christians can positively impact their culture.

Notes

1. <http://www.cdc.gov/nchs/data/nhsr/nhsr077.pdf>

sexual brokenness

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What if a gay friend, co-worker, or family member announces that they are getting married to their partner?

Everyone we meet is made in the image of God. We ought never reduce anyone to his or her sexual orientation or decision to pursue marriage. We cannot endorse a same-sex marriage, but we can treat people with dignity.

In the case of an acquaintance, distant family member, or co-worker, we think it is possible to “rejoice with those who rejoice” (Romans 12:15) without rejoicing in what makes them rejoice. In other words, we can be happy someone is happy without being happy about why they are happy. Responding to someone’s proud announcement of his or her same-sex wedding plans with condemnation will most likely end the relationship. While saying something like, “I think that’s great!” would be dishonest, we could respond by saying, “Wow! That’s a huge decision. Tell me more about this person and how you met. What are you looking forward to most in marriage?” In asking these questions, we can deepen the relationship.

What if I’m invited to a same-sex wedding ceremony?

We believe wedding ceremonies are sacred and that attendance implies a complicit blessing of the union itself. At a wedding, a covenant, even when not acknowledged, is being made between two people, the community, and God. Therefore, we could not attend a same-sex wedding in good conscience (would we really want to “speak now or forever hold our peace” on this?).

On the other hand, a protest is rarely necessary or helpful. The extent to which Christians should verbally express disagreement will depend on

how close we are to those who invite us. It may be appropriate to sit down and calmly explain our disagreement in love, but two things should already be in place. First, there should be a strong relationship. Second, as much as is possible, people should already know where we stand. It’s much easier to say, “You know, I think you already know my convictions on gay relationships, so it’s probably not a surprise that I cannot come to your ceremony. May we talk about this further?”

What if a gay friend, co-worker, or family member asks me to participate in a same-sex wedding ceremony?

We couldn’t participate in, or officiate, a same-sex wedding ceremony for the reasons given above. However, this could be a very difficult decision

“First, there should be a strong relationship. Second, as much as is possible, people should already know where we stand.”

for a brother asked to be the best man or a father asked to walk his daughter down the aisle. Even in very personal cases like these, we would have to decline.

It’s likely that if someone asks you to participate in their wedding, you have a close relationship with them. As we said earlier, it’s very helpful to get ahead of the situation if possible. If they know where we stand on homosexuality and same-sex marriage, yet continue to enjoy a friendship, it may make the difficult conversation easier.

...

What if a same-sex couple shows up at my church and/or wants to send their children to Sunday school?

How would you respond if a co-habiting couple showed up at church and brought their children to Sunday school? The answer should be no different (and, hopefully, the answer is, “We would welcome them”). We can welcome people into the Church without compromising biblical standards.

When it comes to membership, leadership, and receiving communion (or other ordinances considered sacred by the Church), requirements should be clearly stated in writing. Christian organizations and nonprofit organizations should include convictions about human sexuality and marriage in their Statement of Faith and employment policies.

“But we don’t want our children to see such things in church!” you may reply. Well, they will see it in culture. Why not use the Church to help Christians understand the gay lifestyle properly? This means that pastors and leaders must find ways to help parents communicate to their children age-appropriate information as it becomes necessary.

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What if a Christian friend begins to embrace pro-gay theology?

Several books are influencing Christians to reconsider the historic Christian stance on same-sex marriage, including *Torn: Rescuing the Gospel From the Gays vs. Christians Debate* by Justin Lee; *God and the Gay Christian: The Biblical Case in Support of Same-sex Relationships* by Matthew Vines; and *A Letter to My Congregation* by Ken Wilson, a pastor in the Vineyard

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Church movement. Each endorses only committed homosexual relationships. While we disagree with their conclusions, we recognize they are provocative, articulate, and persuasive to many people.

Churches, pastors, and parents need to know the arguments found in these works and how to respond. If someone is questioning, offer to read with them books on both sides of the issue. Many younger evangelicals wrongly assume that because they were raised *hearing* that homosexuality was wrong, they *know* the full truth about marriage and why it does not include same-sex relationships. In our experience, that simply is not true. Terrific resources that support natural marriage include *What Is Marriage? Man and Woman: A Defense* by Robert George, Ryan Anderson, and Sherif Girgis; *Washed and Waiting: Reflections on Christian Faithfulness and Homosexuality* by Wesley Hill; and, of course, this book!

...

What if my son or daughter thinks gays should be allowed to marry?

When I (Sean) was a teenager, I announced to my father, who has spent his life proclaiming and defending the Christian faith, that I wasn't sure I believed in Christianity anymore. He lovingly said that he respected my questions and offered to help me search any way he could. He encouraged me to hold on to my faith unless I was persuaded it was not true, and he assured me that he and my mom loved me regardless of the outcome.

That's a great way to handle any teenage questions about the faith. It's not a sin to question, and mentors should guide the questioning process. Be open, ask questions, give space, point to the best resources, and

walk through the questions with the questioner. Above all, maintain the relationship.

What if I hear a fellow Christian "gay-bashing"?

In 1996, a white supremacist with an SS tattoo and a confederate flag shirt became separated from other Ku Klux Klan members at a rally in Ann Arbor, Michigan. A group protesting the rally chased him, and when he fell, began to beat him. Instinctively, 18-year-old Kiesha Thomas threw herself on the man to protect him. Kiesha is an African-American.

Our faith requires us to defend anyone who is mistreated, even if we disagree with them. To do so, we may need to make the difficult decision to call out inappropriate words and actions from those on "our side."

What if I'm asked what I believe about same-sex marriage?

Whenever we talk about this issue, we risk being called "intolerant" or "hateful." Greg Koukl suggests that we can get ahead of the accusations by asking the following question before offering our opinion:

You know, this is actually a very personal question you're asking, and I'd be glad to answer. But before I do, I want to know if you consider yourself a tolerant or an intolerant person. Is it safe to give my opinion, or are you going to judge me for my point of view? Do you respect diverse points of view, or do you condemn others for convictions that differ from yours?

Asking this upfront makes it difficult for someone to dismiss our views as intolerant or judgmental without looking guilty of the same crimes. It's amazing how framing the discussion as one of mutual respect and *true* tol-

erance can change the dynamic of the entire interaction. We have both found that most people are willing to talk about this issue if they feel respected, understood, and valued. So before you dive in and give your thoughts on this sensitive subject, make sure the person is truly tolerant and willing to respect people with different views than their own. And, of course, show the same respect in turn.

...

These, obviously, are not the only scenarios we will face. As a Church and as a culture, we are headed into uncharted waters. But we need not despair. Yes, same-sex marriage is here. It will do us no good to run from culture, pretend this is not true, or cry foul. The real question is, how will we respond? ... We will only positively influence lives and culture if each of us takes responsibility for the opportunities God has given us.

And let's remember that we need each other. The author of Hebrews wrote, "Let us hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering, for he who promised is faithful. And let us consider how to stir up one another to love and good works, not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another, and all the more as you see the Day drawing near" (Hebrews 10:23-25).

We are at a unique point in history when we can learn from the past and move forward, trusting God with confidence. There is a broken and hurting world that desperately needs the truth, the love, and the hope of Jesus. Let's go!

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Editor's Note: Our President Emeritus, Dr. David Noebel, helps us with research by sending 20-30 pages of clippings of each month's news. To see the complete list of Doc's clippings, go to www.summit.org/resources/the-journal/, open the PDF, and scroll to page 9, or call us at 866.786.6483.

Academic Freedom

From former New York City Mayor Michael Bloomberg's commencement address at Harvard University, May 29:

Repressing free expression is a natural human weakness, and it is up to us to fight it at every turn. Intolerance of ideas — whether liberal or conservative — is antithetical to individual rights and free societies, and it is no less antithetical to great universities and first-rate scholarship.

There is an idea floating around college campuses — including here at Harvard — that scholars should be funded only if their work conforms to a particular view of justice. There's a word for that idea: censorship. And it is just a modern-day form of McCarthyism.

Think about the irony: In the 1950s, the right wing was attempting to repress left wing ideas. Today, on many college campuses, it is liberals trying to repress conservative ideas, even as conservative faculty members are at risk of becoming an endangered species. And perhaps nowhere is that more true than here in the Ivy League.

In the 2012 presidential race, according to Federal Election Commission data, 96 percent of all campaign contributions from Ivy League faculty and employees went to Barack Obama. Ninety-six percent. There was more disagreement among the old Soviet Politburo than there is among Ivy League donors.

That statistic should give us pause — and I say that as someone who endorsed President Obama for re-election — be-

cause let me tell you, neither party has a monopoly on truth or God on its side.

When 96 percent of Ivy League donors prefer one candidate to another, you have to wonder whether students are being exposed to the diversity of views that a great university should offer.

Diversity of gender, ethnicity, and orientation is important. But a university cannot be great if its faculty is politically homogenous. In fact, the whole purpose of granting tenure to professors is to ensure that they feel free to conduct research on ideas that run afoul of university politics and societal norms.

When tenure was created, it mostly protected liberals whose ideas ran up against conservative norms.

Today, if tenure is going to continue to exist, it must also protect conservatives whose ideas run up against liberal norms. Otherwise, university research — and the professors who conduct it — will lose credibility.

Great universities must not become predictably partisan. And a liberal arts education must not be an education in the art of liberalism.

The role of universities is not to promote an ideology. It is to provide scholars and students with a neutral forum for researching and debating issues — without tipping the scales in one direction or repressing unpopular views.

“I strongly believe that a university's obligation is not to teach students what to think but to teach students how to think.”

Michael Bloomberg

Requiring scholars — and commencement speakers, for that matter — to conform to certain political standards undermines the whole purpose of a university.

This spring, it has been disturbing to see a number of college commencement speakers withdraw — or have their invitations rescinded — after protests from students and — to me, shockingly — from senior faculty and administrators who should know better.

It happened at Brandeis, Haverford, Rutgers, and Smith. Last year, it happened at Swarthmore and Johns Hopkins, I'm sorry to say.

In each case, liberals silenced a voice — and denied an honorary degree — to individuals they deemed politically objectionable. That is an outrage, and we must not let it continue.

If a university thinks twice before inviting a commencement speaker because of his or her politics, censorship, and conformity, the mortal enemies of freedom win out.

And sadly, it is not just commencement season when speakers are censored.

Last fall, when I was still in City Hall, our Police Commissioner was invited to deliver a lecture at another Ivy League institution — but he was unable to do so because students shouted him down.

Isn't the purpose of a university to stir discussion, not silence it? What were the students afraid of hearing? Why did administrators not step in to prevent the mob from silencing speech? And did anyone consider that it is morally and pedagogically wrong to deprive other students the chance to hear the speech?

... As a former chairman of Johns Hopkins, I strongly believe that a university's obligation is not to teach students what to think but to teach students how to think. And that requires listening to the other side, weighing arguments without pre-

a look at our world

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judging them, and determining whether the other side might actually make some fair points.

If the faculty fails to do this, then it is the responsibility of the administration and governing body to step in and make it a priority. If they do not, if students graduate with ears and minds closed, the university has failed both the student and society.

— Michael Bloomberg
The Wall Street Journal

May 31-June 1, 2014, p. A11

Gay Marriage

On May 19, it happened in Oregon. The next day, it was Pennsylvania's turn.

In Oregon, U.S. District Judge Michael J. McShane said the state's marriage amendment, which the people of Oregon enacted via referendum in 2004, had no "rationally related government purpose." Democratic Attorney General Ellen Rosenblum announced in February that she would not bother defending the law. Take that, voters.

Meanwhile, in Pennsylvania, U.S. District Judge John E. Jones III decided that he, too, was smarter than God, plus all previous generations and major religions that believe the defining essence of natural marriage is the union of male and female.

Listen to Judge Jones' assessment of the ethos behind marriage laws: "We are a better people than what these laws represent." The hubris here is truly stunning, but Judge Jones was not finished. "It is time to discard them into the ash heap of history."

The latter is an interesting turn of phrase. It is most often associated with Ronald Reagan's defeat of communism and the Soviet empire — an unalloyed victory of good over evil that lends itself to moral language. Does trashing a marriage law rise to that level?

By using that phrase, Judge Jones, a George W. Bush appointee, has signaled that Pennsylvania lawmakers who voted 177-16 in the House and 43 to 5 in the Senate to pass the measure in 1996 were deluded or perhaps even as evil as com-

munists. So, too, are billions of people who now believe and have believed in marriage as the union of a man and a woman. If this is not so — that all these people were and are morally deficient — why are we now a "better people" for radically redefining marriage?

More alarming is Republican Gov. Tom Corbett's refusal to appeal the ruling. He issued a statement saying that lawyers told him the appeal had little chance of success.

Earlier this month, the governor refused to appeal a ruling by a federal judge striking down Pennsylvania's voter photo-ID law. According to the Associated Press, "state lawyers acknowledged they couldn't produce examples of in-person voter fraud."

Really? Maybe they should look harder. In Philadelphia, baton-wielding New Black Panthers members physically threatened voters at a polling place on Election Day in 2008, and dozens of precincts in 2012 reported not even a single vote for Mitt Romney.

When you're paying lawyers to get results and they tell you something is impossible, perhaps it's time to look for new legal talent. Governors, attorneys general, and other lawmakers take an oath to uphold the law, not cower before judges.

Given the media's numbingly jubilant coverage of left-wing activists and lawmakers "hailing" every new corrosive episode of judicial activism, plus the popular culture pouring out propaganda, most conservative lawmakers have stayed in the tall grass, hoping it will blow over.

It won't. Lawlessness breeds more lawlessness, and a feckless response to bullying invites more of the same. Ever since the U.S. Supreme Court struck down much of the federal Defense of Marriage Act, federal judges have overturned marriage laws in 13 straight cases. Unlike millions of voters, they apparently think natural marriage is unworthy of legal protection.

How did we come to a place where judges think that marriage certificates

don't need a bride and groom, and that it's racist to ask someone to prove who they say they are before they cast a ballot?

Beginning in the 1950s, America began changing rapidly from a Christian-based "ideational" culture — one defined by pursuit of virtue informed by religious values — into a "sensate" culture, in which individuals seek pleasure at the expense of family, community, and, ultimately, country.

Harvard sociologist Pitirim Sorokin saw the trend in America beginning even earlier and wrote about it in his book *The Crisis of Our Age* in 1941:

"Our culture simultaneously is a culture of man's glorification and of man's degradation. On the one hand, it boundlessly glorifies man and extols man-made culture and society. On the other, it utterly degrades the human being and all his cultural and social values."

In such a culture, there is little respect for the words of Jesus, who quoted Genesis: "[F]rom the beginning of the creation, God 'made them male and female. For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh.'"

When man — instead of God — becomes the measure of all things, morality becomes muddled. The left casts unwanted, unborn children, timeless institutions such as natural marriage, and even election-integrity laws as impediments to personal happiness.

They have amply demonstrated that they will stop at nothing to shape the legal and political culture to fit their worldview and punish those who disagree.

Every day, we learn anew that elections have consequences.

— Robert Knight
The Washington Times
June 2, 2014, p. 31

Former Soldier Now Enters the Battlefield of the Mind

By Aaron Zubia

Boot camp could not prepare Tim Khan for what he would experience on a daily basis in the Marine Corps, which he joined as an 18-year-old greenhorn from rural Wisconsin. During his five years on active duty, Tim, an air support operator, was responsible for coordinating between different combat arms of the military in order to keep a battle space safe for troops and effective against the enemy. Serving as a kind of emergency dispatcher, Tim worked extensively with airstrikes, medical evacuations, artillery strikes, and other air-ground events.

Without hesitation, Tim acknowledges the beneficial skills he learned while in the Marine Corps. And without provocation, Tim expresses his appreciation for the core values of honor, courage, and commitment that were ingrained in him as a serviceman. But Tim is equally forthright about what had the most lasting impact on him: death.

While in Afghanistan in 2012, he commonly sat in front of video feeds watching drone strikes. And although he clearly voices his support of drones, he also admits that the regular viewing of insurgents burning to death changed him.

And there was no respite. After spend-

“Being a student at Summit Semester helped me immensely with better understanding what had happened in Afghanistan and how to live in light of it.”

Tim Khan



Tim Khan

ing entire shifts watching enemy lives expire, Tim would often attend funerals for coalition personnel during his off hours. Everywhere he turned, it seemed, he was surrounded by death — the death of enemies, the death of friends.

This constant exposure to evil on the battlefield and negativity in the ranks fed a growing disillusionment that turned Tim's head upward, away from the horrors of war and toward the door of heaven. But at the time of his release from the Marines, Tim thought of heaven simply as an escape. For Tim, heaven had nothing to do with earth, and earth had nothing to do with heaven.

When he left active duty, Tim's cousin began encouraging him to attend a Summit conference in Colorado. After continual pestering, Tim finally relented, but not because of an undying interest in the Christian worldview. Remarking on what attracted him to Summit, Tim smiles and says, “Really, just the fact that it was in Colorado.” Soon after he arrived on the Summit campus and listened to lecturers expound on the biblical worldview, however, Tim discovered that where Marines Corps boot camp failed, Summit boot camp — the boot camp for the heart and mind — succeeded. “Pre-Summit, I had a very nihilistic outlook on things,” Tim says. “After Summit, though, I have a better understanding of why engaging and caring for

culture is a personal responsibility, for God and His creation, our neighbors, and ourselves.”

Having awakened to the breadth of the Christian worldview, Tim was infused with a desire to learn God's purposes, to accomplish God's will on earth as it is in heaven. So, last fall, Tim attended Summit Semester, and under the tutelage of Dr. Michael Bauman and other Summit faculty, he learned how to ask the right questions about life, about death, and about what it means to be a human being. “Being a student at Summit Semester helped me immensely with better understanding what had happened in Afghanistan and how to live in light of it,” Tim asserts.

For Tim Khan, Summit has supplanted a culture of death with a culture of life and given him renewed hope in the goodness of God, which is present even in a fallen world.

Rejuvenated and intent on pouring the ointment of God's goodness on a wounded culture, Tim served as a Summit staff member this summer, leading small groups, cooking, and helping the maintenance team. Mentoring students and building friendships with other faithful Christians on staff has further nurtured his spiritual walk. But Tim quickly dispels the belief that working as a Summit staffer is a cake walk. “It was definitely the most exhausting thing I've done since the Marines, but also the most rewarding. If I had to get burned out from working a job, I can't picture a better job to get burned out doing.” After completing two semesters at the University of Iowa, where he put his Summit training to good use by countering the secular worldview assumed by so many of his professors and classmates, Tim is going to spend the fall soaking in as much C.S. Lewis and G.K. Chesterton as possible. As a philosophy major, Tim will enter a new battlefield — the battlefield of the mind. This time, thanks to Summit, he will be better equipped for what lies ahead.



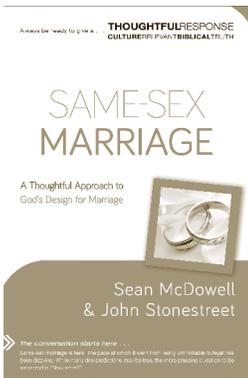
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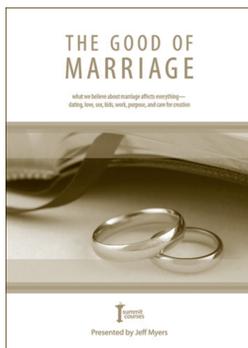
Resources on Biblical Marriage:



Same-sex marriage is here, presenting unique challenges and opportunities. How do those who follow Christ faithfully answer the standard talking points for same-sex marriage? And how can they best articulate the case for one-man, one-woman marriage in everyday conversation? Christians need to know that because Christ has risen, there is no such thing as "all hope is lost." They are still called to engage culture even if they are viewed as wrong, illegal, and intolerant.

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bookstore!**

Order online: summit.org/store/Same-Sex-Marriage/



Marriage is on the brink of crisis. It didn't begin with the push to legalize same-sex "marriage." It began when we forgot what marriage is for and why it's good. Join Summit President Dr. Jeff Myers as he starts at the beginning — the very beginning — to examine why marriage is good, why it's under attack, and what we can do to restore purpose to the institution of marriage. Each training kit comes with a DVD and a study guide.

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a look at our world

from the desk of dr. david noebel, continued from page 6

Academic Freedom

Shortly after the 2010 mid-term elections, my old mentor M. Stanton Evans offered his interpretation of the Republican landslide: “The election represents a return of the conservative principles of low taxes, fiscal responsibility, family values, and a strong national defense. In other words — *hate*.” If anything, this gag is understated — vindicating Evans’s Law of Insufficient Paranoia — which holds that no matter how bad things look, a closer inspection will always find that they’re even worse than you thought.

Earlier this year, campus feminists at Wellesley claimed to feel “assaulted” by a newly installed sculpture of a man in his underwear. At Swarthmore, a student objected to an appearance by Princeton’s Robert P. George (paired with Cornel West), telling the campus paper, “What really bothered me is, the whole idea is that at a liberal arts college, we need to be hearing a diversity of opinion.” Or take the Harvard *Crimson* editorial writer who argued that the traditional ideal of academic freedom should give way to “academic justice” — which means suppressing any dissenting views, she explained, starting with lonely campus conservative Harvey Mansfield.

The apotheosis of this trend is the current demand for “trigger warnings” of potentially offensive themes and ideas students might encounter in classes or assigned readings. (“Warning: *The Great Gatsby* includes scenes of violence, sexual infidelity, and class exploitation.”) Oberlin College considered but wisely rejected — for now — proposed guidelines for faculty to

“be aware of racism, classism, sexism, heterosexism, cissexism [against transsexual and transgendered persons], ableism, and other issues of privilege and oppression.” Nowadays, questioning animal rights and asserting an intelligible hierarchy of nature — “higher” and “lower” animals — is “speciesism,” though PETA has not (yet) taken to suggesting that cooping chickens is Jim Crow.

The real action at colleges today is around the kaleidoscope — or is it collioscope? — of gender enthusiasms. At the left-leaning University of Colorado at Boulder where I taught the past academic year, gay marriage represents the *right wing* of sexual politics. At least gays and lesbians who wed are imitating a heterosexual practice. Much more startling is the way gender “de-norming” has galloped into prominence, in which it is now presumed that human beings are, or should be, completely free to “choose” their gender, even if they do not avail themselves of surgery and hormone therapy. It’s one thing to decide you might be happier and more personally fulfilled if you switched teams. It’s quite another to say gender is purely a “social construct.” When it comes to human nature, we are now, as Winston Churchill said in another context, “solid for fluidity.”

At many universities it is now official policy that faculty must formally recognize whatever gender self-identification someone may choose, including something theoretically indeterminate (called “intersex”). Even the gender-defining community is having a hard time keeping up. At Boulder, the standard shorthand is LGBTQ (for Lesbian, Gay, Bi-Sexual, Transgendered, and

Queer); at Bowdoin College in Maine, it’s LGBTQIA (adding Intersex and Asexual); while down the road at Bates College, it’s LGBTIQQ (the second Q for Questioning).

This spring, after I publicly defended Boulder’s mostly left-leaning philosophy department from a feminist-inspired attack and suggested on Colorado Public Radio that “gender studies” is politicized, two students scoured old writings of mine to find something to give offense. The best they could do was a six-month-old blog post that noted the alphabet soup of “what goes by the LGBTQIRSTUW (or whatever letters have been added lately) ‘community.’” The chair of the Faculty Assembly, Professor Paul Chinowsky, promptly declared this off-campus remark to be “bordering on ... hate speech” and requiring a formal censure.

Yes, Chinowsky ought to get out more, or perhaps just take in some late night TV. (David Letterman: “Earlier today, President Obama announced that he supports same-sex marriage. [He] also announced a new cabinet position — decorator of the “interior”! But these episodes are about more than free speech or academic freedom. George Orwell’s “two minutes of hate” drill in 1984 has become institutionalized at universities today, where campus culture is suffused with a thoroughly oppressive atmosphere — all in the name of ending oppression.

We’re returning to ’60s-era theories of “repressive tolerance,” which argued sternly for junking free speech and suppressing opposing points of view. As Herbert Marcuse wrote back then, “[T]he restoration of freedom of thought may necessitate new and rigid restric-

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tions on teachings and practices in the educational institutions.” The difference today is that the far Left no longer deigns to dress up its authoritarian streak in any kind of theory. We know what’s right, they insist. So shut up.

— Dr. Steven F. Hayward
Claremont Review of Books
Spring 2014, p. 74

Christianity

The nation’s largest Presbyterian denomination has been busy these days. It has voted to approve same-sex marriages, to endorse divestment as a protest against Israeli policies toward Palestinians, and now has approved allowing babies to die who are born alive during botched abortions.

Wesley J. Smith at National Review Online observes, ‘It is breathtaking that the Church wouldn’t even agree to ‘reflect’ on protecting the lives of born babies and denounce Kermit Gosnell-style murders.’

— Susan Berry
Breitbart.com
June 25, 2014

The Presbyterian Church has never boycotted Iran, North Korea, or China. Shamefully, the organization last week voted to divest from businesses that supply products in Israel, and as The American Jewish Committee stated, a group within the Presbyterian Church was “driven by hatred of Israel” and had led a campaign of misinformation. (Organizations including the Simon Wiesenthal Center, ADL, B’nai B’rith, and many others also condemned the church.)

While the organization has been quiet about burning churches in the

Middle East, they wrongfully work to harm the only Jewish state. A 1998 Presbyterian Church General Assembly Overture called for a suspension of all U.S. aid to Israel. For a long time, the website of the Presbyterian Church website said, “Proponents of divestment say it would pressure Israeli and American companies to change policies toward the Palestinians in the same way economic pressure on South Africa led to an end of apartheid.”

The best answer comes from the Zionist prophet Ze’ev Jabotinsky in an essay he wrote many years ago:

“Instead of excessive apology and instead of turning our backs to the accusers — as there is nothing to apologize for, and nobody to apologize to — it is long overdue to respond to all current and future accusations, reproaches, suspicions, slanders, and denunciations by simply folding our arms and loudly, clearly, coldly, and calmly answering, ‘Go to Hell!’

“Who are we to make excuses to them; who are they to interrogate us? What is the purpose of this mock trial over the entire people where the sentence is known in advance? Our habit of constantly and zealously answering to any rabble has already done us a lot of harm and will do much more. The situation that has been created as a result tragically confirms a well known saying: ‘Qui s’excuse s’accuse’ (He who apologizes condemns himself).

“We ourselves have acquainted our neighbors with the thought that for every embezzling Jew, it is possible to drag the entire ancient people to answer, a people that was legislating at a time when their neighbors had not even invented a bast shoe. Every accusation

causes such commotion among us that people unwittingly think, ‘Why are they so afraid of everything?’ Apparently their conscience is not clear. Exactly because we are ready at every minute to stand at attention, there develops among the people an inescapable view about us, as of some specifically thievish tribe.

“We think that our constant readiness to undergo a search without hesitation and to turn out our pockets will eventually convince mankind of our nobility; look what gentlemen we are — we do not have anything to hide! This is a terrible mistake. The real gentlemen are the people that will not allow anyone for any reason to search their apartments, their pockets or their souls. Only a person under surveillance is ready for a search at every moment. This is the only inevitable conclusion from our maniacal reaction to every reproach, to accept responsibility as a people for every action of a Jew, and to make excuses in front of everybody.

“I consider this system to be false at its very root. We are hated not because we are blamed for everything, but we are blamed for everything because we are not loved. We do not have to apologize for anything. We are a people as all other peoples; we do not have any intentions to be better than the rest. We do not have to account to anybody; we are not to sit for anybody’s examination and nobody is old enough to call on us to answer. We came before them. We are what we are, we are good for ourselves, we will not change and we do not want to.”

In fact, with Muslim extremists killing Christians and burning churches throughout the Middle East today, one

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can ask The Presbyterian Church, as Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu asked at the United Nations some years ago, “Have you no shame? Have you no decency?”

Decent people everywhere should say shame on The Presbyterian Church. Israel’s struggle — as Netanyahu notes — against “fanaticism does not pit faith against faith nor civilization against civilization. It pits civilization against barbarism, the 21st century against the 9th century, those who sanctify life against those who glorify death.” It is the good guys against the bad guys.

In recent years, countless Christian-Americans and Christian world leaders have been strong allies and partners for Israel, and they undoubtedly will continue to be, despite this wrong decision by The Presbyterian Church.

— Ron Torossian
Front Page Magazine
June 23, 2014

Religious Freedom

For at least three reasons, the contemporary persecution of Christians demands attention: It is occurring on a massive scale, it is underreported, and in many parts of the world it is rapidly growing.

The Pew Forum on Religion and Public Life finds that Christians are suffering persecution in more places today than any other religious group; between 2006 and 2012, Pew says, they were targeted for harassment in 151 countries — three-quarters of the world’s states. Similar findings are reported by the Vatican, *Newsweek*, *the Economist*, and the 60-year-old Christian support group Open Doors. Most people in the West are unaware of

these facts, though that may be changing.

A few cases do get press coverage — the desperate plight of Meriam Ibrahim, for instance, who gave birth in a Sudanese prison just the other day. She was raised a Christian, but after officials learned that her long-absent father was a Muslim, she was sentenced to death for apostasy — for leaving Islam. And since in Sudan a Muslim woman may not be married to a Christian, her marriage to her American husband was declared void, and she was convicted of adultery and sentenced to 100 lashes to be administered before her execution. These punishments will be dropped if she renounces her Christian faith, which she steadfastly refuses to do.

Another case receiving attention is North Korea’s sentencing of a South Korean missionary, Kim Jong-uk, to life with hard labor. On May 30, he was convicted of espionage and trying to start a church. North Korea also still holds Kenneth Bae, an American sentenced to 15 years’ hard labor, on charges of trying to use religion to overthrow the political system.

The Chinese government’s demolition of the 3,000-member Sanjiang church in Wenzhou on April 28 was newsworthy partly because of the church’s size, but also because Sanjiang was not an “underground” church but an official, approved, government-registered “Three-Self” church. Some 20 other official churches in the area have had all or parts of their buildings removed or demolished, and hundreds more are threatened with destruction.

And, most notorious, the abduction into slavery of hundreds of schoolgirls

in Nigeria on April 14 by the al Qaeda-linked Boko Haram led news cycles and tweets for a time, though the religious dimensions of the story were often played down. While the kidnapped girls include Muslims (Boko Haram regards them as apostates because of their Western education), most are Christians, seized in a predominantly Christian area and now subjected to forced conversion.

These events get media attention because they are particularly poignant or dramatic, or involve foreigners, but our media miss countless other stories. Since the kidnappings, Boko Haram has killed — not kidnapped, killed — hundreds of people, many in the predominantly Christian Gwoza area of Borneo State, destroyed 36 churches, and kidnapped at least eight more girls. On June 1, it attacked a Christian area in neighboring Adamawa state, killing 48 people. In Sudan, a second woman, Faiza Abdalla, has been arrested on suspicion of converting to Christianity, and on April 8, a court terminated her marriage to a Catholic. Iran is imprisoning and torturing pastors from the rapidly growing house church movement, including an American citizen, Pastor Saeed Abedini. Vietnam has imprisoned over 60 Christian leaders. Eritrea holds more than 1,000 Christians in conditions so inhumane that prisoners die or are permanently crippled. In Somalia, in an ignored religious genocide, Al-Shabaab systematically hunts Christians and kills those it finds.

Of course, people of all religions suffer persecution for their faith or lack thereof — the situations of Baha’is and Jews in Iran, Ahmadis and Hindus

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in Pakistan, Tibetan Buddhists and Falun Gong in China, independent Buddhists in Vietnam, and Rohingya Muslims in Burma are particularly dire. Traditionally, the United States has been regarded as the country that advocates religious freedom for all, often to the disdain of other Westerners. In recent years, however, that has changed. Now America is quieter, while others speak up.

British Prime Minister David Cameron said recently that “our religion is now the most persecuted religion around the world,” and “we should stand up against persecution of Christians and other religious groups wherever and whenever we can, and should be unashamed in doing so.” German chancellor Angela Merkel has repeatedly stressed that Christians are the world’s most widely persecuted religious group. Probably most outspoken of all is Vladimir Putin; no doubt this reflects geopolitical calculation, but the fact remains that he is stressing the matter.

The Italian Foreign Ministry has established an “Observatory on Religious Freedom.” Quite properly, it is concerned with all religions, but its genesis was the upsurge in killings of Christians. Two years ago, it hosted a conference on “Stopping the Massacre of Christians in Nigeria.” Former French foreign minister Bernard Kouchner established a similar agency in the Quai d’Orsay, and later the ministry gave financial backing to an “Observatory of Cultural and Religious Pluralism” devoted to monitoring “attacks on freedom of conscience, on freedom of expression, and freedom of religion around the world,” particularly

with respect to the Arab Spring. Canada now has an ambassador-at-large for religious freedom, a title borrowed from the United States.

In the United States, meanwhile, the position of U.S. ambassador-at-large for religious freedom is vacant, as it has been for over half of President Barack Obama’s tenure. Even when the position has been filled, in the last decade it has usually been marginalized. President Obama gave a great speech on religious freedom at the National Prayer Breakfast, but little action followed.

The United States has marginalized the issue in other ways, too.

After the massacre of 25 Copts by the Egyptian military on October 9, 2011, the White House lamented the “tragic loss of life among demonstrators and security forces” and called for “restraint on all sides.” As my colleague Sam Tadros commented, “I call upon the security forces to refrain from killing Christians, and upon Christians to refrain from dying.”

On Easter morning in 2012, a church in Kaduna, Nigeria, was the target of a Boko Haram suicide car bombing that killed 39 and wounded dozens. (The previous Christmas, Boko Haram had bombed St. Theresa’s Catholic Church outside the capital, Abuja, killing 44 worshipers, and also attacked churches in the towns of Jos, Kano, Gadaka, and Damaturu.) There was no official comment from the Obama administration about the Kaduna massacre on Christians’ holiest day. Instead, Secretary of State Hillary Clinton issued a press release celebrating the Romani people and demanding that Europe become more inclusive of them.

At the beginning of the State Depart-

ment’s annual report on international religious freedom for 2013, Secretary of State John Kerry stated, “While Christians were a leading target of societal discrimination, abuse and violence in some parts of the world, members of other religions, particularly Muslims, suffered as well.” The assertion is incontrovertible, yet the wording elides the truth: Christians are not just “a leading target,” they are the leading target. American officials seem so scared of being accused of selectively defending Christians that they consistently overcompensate and minimize what is happening.

The Catholic and Orthodox churches are more outspoken now than they were in the past, partly because the plight of their brethren, especially in the Middle East, is so stark. Pope Benedict XVI raised the issue many times. Pope Francis, speaking three days after the September 22, 2013, suicide bombing of All Saints Church in Peshawar, Pakistan, in which over 80 congregants were killed, urged Christians to examine their consciences about their response to anti-Christian persecution: “Am I indifferent to that, or does it affect me like it’s a member of the family? ... Does it touch my heart, or doesn’t it really affect me, [to know that] so many brothers and sisters in the family are giving their lives for Jesus Christ?”

Cardinal Timothy Dolan, in his November 11, 2013, address as he stepped down from chairing the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops, spoke of the “Via Crucis currently being walked by so many of our Christian brothers and sisters in other parts of the world, who are experiencing lethal

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persecution on a scale that defies belief.”

Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew I of Constantinople has observed that “even the simple admission of Christian identity places the very existence of [the] faithful in daily threat,” and Metropolitan Hilarion, chairman of the Russian Orthodox Church’s Department for External Church Relations, has been raising the issue with American churches for several years.

Happily, there are signs that some Americans are again paying attention to the issue. Last month on Capitol Hill, a wide coalition of Christian leaders was convened by the co-chairs of the Religious Minorities in the Middle East Caucus, representatives Frank Wolf of Virginia, a Republican, and Anna Eshoo of California, a Democrat. They committed themselves to a “Pledge of Solidarity and Call to Action for Religious Freedom in the Middle East.”

Although the persecution of Christians is widespread — Nigeria is where most are actually being killed, North Korea is the most repressive, China represses the largest number — the Pledge of Solidarity focuses on the Middle East and specifically on Syria, Iraq, and Egypt. These are countries where the situation has deteriorated rapidly to the point where Christian communities — along with smaller religious minorities such as Mandaeans, Yezidis, Baha’is, and Ahmadis — now face “an existential threat to their presence in the lands where Christianity has its roots.”

In the last decade, half of Iraq’s Christians have fled the country, and many others have fled to the Kurd-

ish region. In three days last August, Egypt’s Coptic Christians experienced the worst single attack against their churches in 700 years — with 40 churches utterly destroyed and over 100 other sites severely damaged. Tens of thousands of Copts are estimated to have fled their homeland. Syria’s Christians, like all Syrians, are caught in the middle of a brutal war, but, according to the pledge, they “are also victims of beheadings, summary executions, kidnappings, and forcible conversions in deliberate efforts to suppress or eradicate their religious faith.”

Too often these communities in the ancient heartland of Christianity have been forgotten. Speaking in Rome in December, Baghdad’s Catholic Chaldean patriarch, Louis Sako, lamented, “We feel forgotten and isolated. We sometimes wonder, if they kill us all, what would be the reaction of Christians in the West? Would they do something then?”

In Washington, pledges like this new one tend to have about as much staying power as campaign promises. Still, there are reasons to believe that the Pledge of Solidarity will have an effect.

For one thing, the breadth of the coalition behind it is remarkable. Speakers included Cardinal Donald Wuerl, archbishop of Washington; Archbishop Oshagan Choloyan of the Armenian Apostolic Church of America; Leith Anderson, president of the National Association of Evangelicals; and Greek Orthodox metropolitan Methodios of Boston. Pledge signers include Southern Baptist Ethics & Religious Liberty Commission president, Russell D. Moore; Sojourners’ Jim Wallis; Episcopal Church presiding bishop,

Katharine Jefferts Schori; Anglican Church in North America archbishop, Robert Duncan; Samaritan’s Purse president, Franklin Graham; Robert George of Princeton University, chair of the U.S. Commission on International Religious Freedom; and George Marlin, chair of Aid to the Church in Need-USA.

Also promising is the fact that the Pledge of Solidarity sets forth focused goals — the appointment of a special envoy on Middle East religious minorities (legislation to create this position has passed the House but is stalled in the Senate, reportedly by a hold placed by Republican Tom Coburn of Oklahoma), a review of foreign aid to ensure it upholds principles of religious freedom, and an effort to see that refugee and reconstruction assistance reaches all religious communities.

But the pledge will have its greatest effect if, rather than falling on deaf ears, it awakens rank-and-file Americans and others to the religious diversity of the Middle East and the plight of Christians there and elsewhere. When Pope Francis and Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew I met in Jerusalem in May, their joint communiqué echoed the pledge, singling out “the Churches in Egypt, Syria, and Iraq, which have suffered most grievously due to recent events.” The concern expressed by these religious leaders and a handful of politicians is abundantly justified. Still missing is any large-scale mobilization of free people on behalf of persecuted Christians around the world.

— Paul Marshall
The Weekly Standard
June 23, 2014, p. 30

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Biology

The discovery in the 1970s that only a tiny percentage of our DNA codes for proteins prompted some prominent biologists at the time to suggest that most of our DNA is functionless junk. Although other biologists predicted that non-protein-coding DNA would turn out to be functional, the idea that most of our DNA is junk became the dominant view among biologists. That view has turned out to be spectacularly wrong. ...

The arguments by Dawkins, Miller, Shermer, Collins, Kitcher, Coyne, and Avise rest on the premise that most non-protein-coding DNA is junk, without any significant biological function. Yet a virtual flood of recent evidence shows that they are mistaken. Much of the DNA they claim to be 'junk' actually performs important functions in living cells.

— Jonathan Wells
The Myth of Junk DNA
p. 9, 27

A whole new class of genes has been discovered which do not encode proteins but encode functional RNAs. Such genes have escaped recognition in computer searches for protein-coding sequences, and so have been overlooked as true genes. But they are true genes, and they probably comprise a large part of the genome (Mattick, 2001; Dennis, 2002; Storz, 2002). They are just now being discovered within DNA regions that were previously dismissed as 'junk.'

— J.C. Sanford
*Genetic Entropy and the
Mystery of the Genome*
p. 38, 39

For decades, most of the human genome (98 percent) has been considered "junk" DNA, with only about 2 percent coding for proteins. The geneticist Susumu Ohno first coined the term *junk DNA* in 1972. He stated, "The earth is strewn with fossil remains of extinct species; is it a wonder that our genome too is filled with the remains of extinct genes?"

That perspective is changing radically. When the first version of the human genome was reported in 2001, scientists found far fewer genes than they had expected. (Genes are packets of information in the DNA responsible for making proteins.) Although nearly all cells in the body have the same DNA content, they need to make certain proteins at certain times and under certain conditions. What regulatory processes are keeping all this genetic activity straight? To answer that question, scientists needed to take a much closer look at the other 98 percent of human DNA.

The past decade of research has produced a cornucopia of surprises, forcing evolutionists to rethink their position on junk DNA. Yet the opposition among dyed-in-the-wool evolutionists remains fierce, continuing to hinder research into the secrets of the human body and the nature of disease.

A DECADE OF DISCOVERY. In 2003, the ENCODE project (acronym for ENCyclopedia Of DNA Elements) was launched to begin evaluating the role of the non-protein-coding DNA regions of the genome. In 2007, the ENCODE project released the first series of papers explaining their findings after analyzing just 1 percent

of the human genome. Their initial findings were shocking — "junk" DNA was hot junk; it was very likely functional!

In 2012, another series of papers was published, and the ENCODE project estimated that at least 80 percent of the genome is functional in the sense that it has "specific biochemical activity." While this is a broad, general term that has stirred much debate, it indicates that researchers still have a lot to learn and understand. Much of the function is believed to be regulatory. In the simplest terms, the non-protein-coding parts of the genome (formerly called junk) are telling the genes when to produce their products (the proteins) and a whole lot more.

The goal is to eventually figure out the function of each and every one of the three billion bases of human DNA. ENCODE researcher Tom Gingeras said, "Almost every nucleotide is associated with a function of some sort or another, and we now know where they are, what binds to them, what their associations are and more." Ewan Birney, ENCODE's Lead Analysis Coordinate, said, "It's likely that 80 percent will go to 100 percent."⁴ In light of this evidence, it's obvious that a more appropriate term for junk DNA is needed! In fact, ENCODE researchers themselves don't even use the term *junk DNA*, but instead refer to these regions as non-coding DNA.

One obvious benefit of the ENCODE findings will likely be disease diagnosis and treatment. For many years, scientists have known that certain variations in DNA (called single nucleotide polymorphisms, SNPs) are

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associated with risks for a disease or with the disease itself. But 90 percent of those variations fall outside of genes (they are in the junk DNA). Up to this point, no one really knew how that variation was causing disease.

The ENCODE study found that 60 percent of these variations fall in regions that may affect the activity of genes. For example, the ENCODE study found five variations in patients with Crohn's disease related to a specific factor that past researchers weren't even looking at. Of course, translating the lab science into treatments will take time, but it puts scientists one step closer in the battle against disease in this sin-cursed world.

A third phase of the ENCODE project is now beginning to further refine exactly what all the junk DNA is doing. Ewan Birney stated, "We are the most complex things we know about. It's not surprising that the manual is huge. I think it's going to take this century to fill in all the details."

UNDETERRED NAYSAYERS.

Although many scientists were thrilled about the newest ENCODE findings, there has also been opposition. For many evolutionists, the finding that junk DNA has function is inconsistent with an evolutionary worldview. It was assumed to be an evolutionary waste-land of sequences that were discarded as humans climbed the "tree of life" from a single-celled organism. One popular argument against the idea that junk DNA has function is the so-called "onion test." Evolutionary biologist T. Ryan Gregory states, "The onion test is a simple reality check for

anyone who thinks they have come up with a universal function for non-coding [junk] DNA." Whatever your proposed function, ask yourself this question: Can I explain why an onion needs about five times more non-coding [junk] DNA for this function than a human? The common onion, *Allium cepa*, has a genome five times as large as the human genome. The argument goes that if onions, which are much less complex than humans, have a lot of junk DNA that is not functional, then junk DNA in humans must not be functional either. Other onion species with smaller amounts of DNA can grow and survive quite well without the large amounts of DNA. So junk DNA in *Allium cepa* — and by analogy humans — is not functional.

But this is an argument from ignorance. Do scientists know that this DNA is not necessary for the onion? It's possible that junk DNA is only necessary under certain environmental conditions, as onions don't have the same choices as mobile organisms.

This is yet another example of how evolutionary ideas can inhibit scientific discovery. It is rather ironic that creationists are accused of inhibiting scientific discovery because of their supposed "God-did-it-so-there's-nothing-more-to-study" mentality. In reality, the opposite is true. Creationists for many years have argued that junk DNA is not junk.

Once again, we see that observational science is consistent with historical science based on God's Word. Scientists have observed, tested and discovered that "junk" DNA is key to genome function. This is

consistent with an omniscient and omnipotent Creator God who designed and created all living things, including their DNA, during Creation Week approximately 6,000 years ago.

Creationists may look forward to the next installment of papers from the ENCODE project. Hopefully, too, the term *junk DNA* will be discarded as evolutionary debris and God's design emphasized, as it always should have been.

— Dr. Georgia Purdom

Answers

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You might be reading this outside, basking in the warm sunlight, iced drink in one hand. Maybe you're on the beach, salt wind in your hair, sunglasses leaving faint tan lines on your cheeks. Or maybe you're enjoying a cup of coffee in the quiet moments of the morning.

Now recall a time when you could find no warmth, when the cold grasped your bones and chattered your teeth. Do you remember that feeling?

Antarctic icefish happily live in the ocean waters surrounding Antarctica. The temperatures there often remain below freezing, making survival difficult for most living creatures. Saltwater freezes at a lower temperature than freshwater due to the salt's disturbance of water's crystallization. Though the water outside remains liquid, the frigid cold still causes the water in a fish's veins to freeze. Such freezing will prove fatal to any creature not prepared for it.

But no worries for the icefish. How does it manage to survive — and thrive — in such frigid waters? Just as

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one sparrow will not fall apart from the Father's care (Matthew 10:29), He carefully provided for the pale icefish as well.

Within the blood of the Antarctic icefish is a special protein that acts as an antifreeze. When the ocean's temperatures drop, the water in the icefish's blood will begin to crystallize. However, the antifreeze protein latches onto the growing ice, forcing the water molecules to disperse and remain fluid. This specific design allows the icefish to enjoy a habitat with little competition for limited resources, so it can thrive in the quiet waters near the South Pole.

But stopping ice from forming in your veins is not enough to ensure good health in bitter cold. Under such conditions, our blood (along with the blood of many other warm-blooded creatures) would thicken and cease to flow, overtaxing the heart's circulation, leading to a slow end. How does the icefish's circulatory system keep from becoming overwhelmed?

Antarctic icefish are the only known vertebrate on the planet to have no red blood cells or hemoglobin in their blood. Red blood cells are used to transport oxygen from the lungs to the rest of the body. Hemoglobin is the iron-based protein that combines with the oxygen, often within the red blood cells. However, the presence of these cells makes blood much thicker and sluggish in colder weather.

Icefish use a much simpler method of oxygen transportation. Since Antarctic waters are more oxygen-rich than other oceans, the icefish can absorb oxygen directly into their plasma, which then transports the oxygen to

the rest of the body. Their clear blood is so much thinner than that of other animals that the fish appears translucent.

Surviving in the cold is no easy task, no matter how easy the icefish makes it seem. Be grateful our blood is red, soak up the warmth of the sun, and count your blessings that you don't lie in such a cold place.

— Heather B. Bruce

Answers

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Academia

Famous commencement speakers make graduations extra special and bring notoriety to schools — but secular colleges are becoming infamous for changing speakers at the last minute because of protests from leftist students. This year, former Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice withdrew from Rutgers' graduation ceremony following student protests, and International Monetary Fund Managing Director Christine Lagarde did the same after being verbally attacked by Smith College students.

Students at Christian colleges and universities haven't been part of that commencement trend, but some made themselves heard during the spring semester. In April, Azusa Pacific University "postponed" a scheduled visit by conservative sociologist Charles Murray: The university's president, Jon Wallace, wrote, "Given the lateness of the semester and the full record of Dr. Murray's scholarship, I realized we needed more time to prepare for a visit and postponed Wednesday's conversation."

Murray responded, in an open letter

to Azusa students, that his visit had "been planned for months. ... Ask yourself if I'm anything more dangerous than an earnest and nerdy old guy. Azusa Pacific's administration wants to protect you from earnest and nerdy old guys who have opinions that some of your faculty do not share. Ask if this is why you're getting a college education."

Azusa had Sacramento megachurch pastor Ray Johnston as its commencement speaker, while other administrations chose political orators. Liberty University followed up an April speech by Mormon Glenn Beck with a May commencement address by Louisiana Gov. Bobby Jindal, a convert from Hinduism to Catholicism. Liberty President Jerry Falwell Jr. said prior to Jindal's speech, "We believe that you, our graduates, will be better equipped to defend your faith and your values because you have heard firsthand from leaders who have different theological and political beliefs."

Jeb Bush, who has moved from Episcopalianism to Catholicism, spoke at Grove City College's commencement. The college did not disclose his fee, but the website for the company that handles his engagements says it is at least \$40,000 for each time he speaks. Victoria Morra, a 2014 graduate, told me, "Grove City's reputation for conservatism makes Jeb Bush (and Laura Bush a few years ago) a reasonable fit for headlining the graduation ceremony."

The most famous commencement speaker at other Christian colleges was probably Ben Carson (a conservative Seventh Day Adventist) at Regent University. Eastern University

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invited Leith Anderson, president of the National Association of Evangelicals. The speaker at California Baptist University was E. Bruce Heilman, an 88-year-old World War II veteran and motorcyclist who is chancellor at the University of Richmond. Geneva College welcomed Greg Baylor, the Christian attorney currently representing the college in an Obamacare lawsuit. Wheaton College chose alumnus and parent David Iglesias, a former U.S. district attorney whose dismissal in 2006 by the Bush administration was highly controversial.

How do Christian colleges choose commencement speakers? Some set up committees and seek the famous, but Trinity Christian College near Chicago chose Dave Larsen, an alumnus who directs the Bright Promise Fund for Urban Christian Education in Chicago. Trinity President Steve Timmermans told me he makes the selection and does not look for fame: “Commencement should be a time to celebrate student accomplishments in a way that honors God. ... I try to find an excellent speaker already connected to the college in some way and avoid political figures and other speakers whose presence would be a distraction from our purpose.”

— Dave Swavely
World Magazine
June 14, 2014 p. 84

Climate Change

Climate McCarthyism has claimed another victim. Dr Caleb Rossiter — an adjunct professor at American University, Washington D.C. — has been fired by a progressive think tank after publicly expressing doubt about man-made

global warming.

Rossiter, a former Democratic congressional candidate, has impeccably liberal credentials. As the founder of Demilitarization for Democracy, he has campaigned against U.S. backed wars in Central America and Southern Africa, against U.S. military support for dictators, and against anti-personnel landmines. But none of this was enough to spare him the wrath of the Institute for Policy Studies (IPS) when he wrote an OpEd in the *Wall Street Journal* describing man-made global warming as an “unproved science.”

Two days later, he was sacked by email. The IPS said: “We would like to inform you that we are terminating your position as an Associate Fellow of the Institute for Policy Studies. ... Unfortunately, we now feel that your views on key issues, including climate science, climate justice, and many aspects of U.S. policy to Africa, diverge so significantly from ours.”

In the WSJ OpEd titled “Sacrificing Africa for Climate Change,” Rossiter argued that Africans should benefit from the same mixed energy policy as Americans rather than being denied access to fossil fuels on spurious environmental grounds by green activists. He wrote: “The left wants to stop industrialization — even if the hypothesis of catastrophic, man-made global warming is false.”

But the Institute for Policy Studies (“Ideas Into Action for Peace, Justice, and the Environment”) is ideologically committed to ensuring that Africans only enjoy the benefits of expensive, intermittent, inefficient renewable energy such as wind and solar.

Rossiter told Climate Depot: “If people ever say that fears of censorship for ‘climate change’ views

are overblown, have them take a look at this: Just two days after I published a piece in the *Wall Street Journal* calling for Africa to be allowed the ‘all of the above’ energy strategy we have in the U.S., the Institute for Policy Studies terminated my 23-year relationship with them ... because my analysis and theirs ‘diverge.’”

His sacking follows the persecution last month of Lennart Bengtsson, a Swedish meteorologist and climatologist who decided to resign his position at the Global Warming Policy Foundation after being harassed by climate alarmists for his “incorrect” views on man-made climate change.

— James Delingpole
Breitbart-London.com
June 13, 2014

Prof. Dr. Lennart Bengtsson of Sweden is a perfect example of the scam artists behind the global warming joke. ... Bengtsson is a huge figure in climate science. He was director of the Max Planck Institute for Meteorology and the author of volumes of research. This week, Dr. Bengtsson was forced to resign from the academic board of a British think tank (Global Warming Policy Foundation) after a coordinated pressure campaign by the warmists. Even worse, they blocked publication of his research, labeling it ‘less than helpful’ to their agenda (even if his research is true).

— Judith Curry
Climate ETC.
May 14, 2014

Earth’s atmosphere is composed of 78 percent nitrogen gas, 21 percent oxygen, and 1 percent of other trace gases. Carbon dioxide is one of the trace gases,

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comprising much less than 1 percent. ... The small contribution of carbon dioxide to the greenhouse effect, just one of many physical processes of Earth, has become the explanation for every global event, even earthquakes

— Steve Goreham

The Mad, Mad, Mad World of Climatism
p. 72

Energy

The owner of a Danish mink farm at the centre of a controversy over nearby wind turbines has reported more casualties among his animals.

Breitbart London reported on Tuesday that the turbines have been linked to a series of miscarriages and deformities among the mink, as well as increasingly aggressive behaviour, but the farmer now says that things have got worse, with healthy pups having to be put down.

The farmer reports having to separate the mothers from their young after they became aggressive and started attacking them. This happened at the same time that the wind changed to the south, bringing the noise from the turbines directly over the farm.

He says: “The wind turned south yesterday, and the noise from the turbines came just over the farm, the females began to bite their puppies, just as I had expected.”

...

The farmer reports that 21 mink puppies have now had to be put down because of their wounds. Another 40 are under observation, but many are so young that they cannot survive without their mothers.

The farm has already suffered thanks

to the wind turbines installed 350 yards away. The turbines have been linked to a massive 1,600 miscarriages on the farm, with many mink born with serious deformities.

The farmer has also lost millions of Danish kroner due to damaged pelts after the animals became aggressive and started attacking one another.

This latest incident adds to the mounting evidence that the noise and vibrations from wind turbines can adversely affect humans and wildlife.

Kay Armstrong, who lives near a wind farm in Ontario, Canada, has reported that her home is now “virtually uninhabitable” due to the infrasound from the turbines disturbing her sleep and making her feel dizzy. She also says that local deer are agitated and awake all night, that birds are flying around all day rather than going to roost, and that seals in the area are suffering miscarriages.

In another instance in Canada, an emu farm had to close after its animals started becoming aggressive and losing weight when wind turbines were installed nearby. Something similar happened in Taiwan in 2009, when about 400 goats died from exhaustion due to being unable to sleep thanks to noise from a nearby wind farm.

An academic study from Portugal also blamed wind turbines for deformities in foals born nearby, while an Australian vet said working dogs living near a wind farm were exhibiting unusual behaviour, often refusing to work or even get out of their kennels.

Despite the numerous incidents, no authority has yet taken the issue of “wind turbine syndrome” seriously.

— Nick Hallett

Breitbart-London.com

June 13, 2014

Greenpeace co-founder Patrick Moore criticized new EPA regulations that he says are ‘all about politics’ and ‘almost nothing about science’ that will ‘punish the red states’ and ‘benefit people in the blue states.’

He strongly criticized those who claim the science on climate change is settled. Moore declared, “There’s nothing settled about climate change,” and pointed out that there has ‘been no global warming,’ even as carbon emissions have increased. He stated there is ‘no proof’ that humans are responsible and ‘it may well be that most of the warming that has occurred since the end of the Little Ice Age is caused by natural factors.’

Ian Hanchett

Breitbart.com

June 11, 2014

Life Lessons

The following is adapted from the commencement address by Adm. William H. McRaven, ninth commander of U.S. Special Operations Command, at the University of Texas at Austin on May 17. A fuller version can be found online at WSJ.com.

The University of Texas slogan is “What starts here changes the world.” I have to admit, I kind of like it. If you will humor this old sailor for just a moment, I have a few suggestions that may help you on your way to changing the world — for the better.

While these lessons were learned during my time in the military, I can

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assure you that it matters not whether you ever served a day in uniform. It matters not your gender, your ethnic or religious background, your orientation, or your social status. Our struggles in this world are similar, and the lessons to overcome those struggles and to move forward — changing ourselves and the world around us — will apply equally to all.

I have been a Navy SEAL for 36 years. But it all began when I left UT for Basic SEAL training in Coronado, Calif. Basic SEAL training is six months of long, torturous runs in the soft sand, midnight swims in the cold water off San Diego, obstacle courses, unending calisthenics, days without sleep, and always being cold, wet, and miserable. It is six months of being constantly harassed by professionally trained warriors who seek to find the weak of mind and body and eliminate them from ever becoming a Navy SEAL. But the training also seeks to find those students who can lead in an environment of constant stress, chaos, failure, and hardships. To me basic SEAL training was a lifetime of challenges crammed into six months. So here are lessons I learned from basic SEAL training that hopefully will be of value to you as you move forward in life.

1. Every morning in basic SEAL training, my instructors, who at the time were all Vietnam veterans, would show up in my barracks room and the first thing they would inspect was your bed. If you did it right, the corners would be square, the covers pulled tight, the pillow centered just under the headboard, and the extra blanket

folded neatly at the foot of the rack — that's Navy talk for bed.

It was a simple task, mundane at best. But every morning we were required to make our bed to perfection. It seemed a little ridiculous at the time, particularly in light of the fact that we were aspiring to be real warriors, tough battle-hardened SEALs, but the wisdom of this simple act has been proven to me many times over.

If you make your bed every morning, you will have accomplished the first task of the day. It will give you a small sense of pride, and it will encourage you to do another task and another and another. By the end of the day, that one task completed will have turned into many tasks completed. Making your bed will also reinforce the fact that little things in life matter. If you can't do the little things right, you will never do the big things right. And if by chance you have a miserable day, you will come home to a bed that is made — that you made — and a made bed gives you encouragement that tomorrow will be better.

If you want to change the world, start off by making your bed.

2. During SEAL training, the students are broken down into boat crews. Each crew is seven students — three on each side of a small rubber boat and one coxswain to help guide the dingy. Every day, your boat crew forms up on the beach and is instructed to get through the surfzone and paddle several miles down the coast.

In the winter, the surf off San Diego can get to be eight to 10 feet high, and it is exceedingly difficult to paddle through the plunging surf unless

everyone digs in. Every paddle must be synchronized to the stroke count of the coxswain. Everyone must exert equal effort, or the boat will turn against the wave and be unceremoniously tossed back on the beach.

For the boat to make it to its destination, everyone must paddle.

You can't change the world alone — you will need some help — and to truly get from your starting point to your destination takes friends, colleagues, the goodwill of strangers, and a strong coxswain to guide them.

If you want to change the world, find someone to help you paddle.

3. Over a few weeks of difficult training, my SEAL class, which started with 150 men, was down to just 42. There were now six boat crews of seven men each.

I was in the boat with the tall guys, but the best boat crew we had was made up of the little guys — the munchkin crew we called them. No one was over about 5-foot-5. The munchkin boat crew had one American Indian, one African-American, one Polish-American, one Greek-American, one Italian-American, and two tough kids from the Midwest. They out-paddled, out-ran, and out-swam all the other boat crews.

The big men in the other boat crews would always make good-natured fun of the tiny little flippers the munchkins put on their tiny little feet prior to every swim. But somehow these little guys, from every corner of the nation and the world, always had the last laugh — swimming faster than everyone and reaching the shore long before the rest of us.

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SEAL training was a great equalizer. Nothing mattered but your will to succeed. Not your color, not your ethnic background, not your education, and not your social status.

If you want to change the world, measure people by the size of their heart, not the size of their flippers.

4. Several times a week, the instructors would line up the class and do a uniform inspection. It was exceptionally thorough. Your hat had to be perfectly starched, your uniform immaculately pressed, and your belt buckle shiny and void of any smudges. But it seemed that no matter how much effort you put into starching your hat or pressing your uniform or polishing your belt buckle, it just wasn't good enough. The instructors would find "something" wrong. For failing the uniform inspection, the student had to run, fully clothed, into the surfzone and then, wet from head to toe, roll around on the beach until every part of your body was covered with sand. The effect was known as a "sugar cookie." You stayed in that uniform the rest of the day — cold, wet, and sandy.

There were many students who just couldn't accept the fact that all their effort was in vain. That no matter how hard they tried to get the uniform right, it was unappreciated. Those students didn't make it through training. Those students didn't understand the purpose of the drill. You were never going to succeed. You were never going to have a perfect uniform. Sometimes, no matter how well you prepare or how well you perform, you still end up as a sugar cookie. It's just

the way life is sometimes.

If you want to change the world, get over being a sugar cookie and keep moving forward.

5. Every day during training, you were challenged with multiple physical events. Long runs, long swims, obstacle courses, hours of calisthenics — something designed to test your mettle.

Every event had standards, times that you had to meet. If you failed to meet those standards, your name was posted on a list, and at the end of the day those on the list were invited to a "circus."

A circus was two hours of additional calisthenics designed to wear you down, to break your spirit, to force you to quit. No one wanted a circus. A circus meant that for that day you didn't measure up. A circus meant more fatigue, and more fatigue meant that the following day would be more difficult — and more circuses were likely.

But at some time during SEAL training, everyone — everyone — made the circus list. Yet an interesting thing happened to those who were constantly on the list. Over time, those students, who did two hours of extra calisthenics, got stronger and stronger. The pain of the circuses built inner strength — built physical resiliency. Life is filled with circuses. You will fail. You will likely fail often. It will be painful. It will be discouraging. At times it will test you to your very core. But if you want to change the world, don't be afraid of the circuses.

6. At least twice a week, the trainees were required to run the obstacle

course. The obstacle course contained 25 obstacles including a 10-foot-high wall, a 30-foot cargo net, and a barbed-wire crawl, to name a few.

But the most challenging obstacle was the slide for life. It had a three-level, 30-foot tower at one end and a one-level tower at the other. In between was a 200-foot-long rope.

You had to climb the three-tiered tower, and, once at the top, you grabbed the rope, swung underneath the rope, and pulled yourself hand over hand until you got to the other end.

The record for the obstacle course had stood for years when my class began training in 1977. The record seemed unbeatable until one day a student decided to go down the slide for life — head-first. Instead of swinging his body underneath the rope and inching his way down, he bravely mounted the top of the rope and thrust himself forward.

It was a dangerous move — seemingly foolish and fraught with risk. Failure could mean injury and being dropped from the training. Without hesitation, the student slid down the rope, perilously fast. Instead of several minutes, it only took him half that time, and by the end of the course he had broken the record.

If you want to change the world, sometimes you have to slide down the obstacle head-first.

7. During the land-warfare phase of training, the students are flown out to San Clemente Island near San Diego. The waters off San Clemente are a breeding ground for great white sharks. To pass SEAL training, there are a series of long swims that must be

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completed. One is the night swim. Before the swim, the instructors joyfully brief the trainees on all the species of sharks that inhabit the waters off San Clemente. The instructors assure you, however, that no student has ever been eaten by a shark — at least not recently.

But, you are also taught that if a shark begins to circle your position, stand your ground. Do not swim away. Do not act afraid. And if the shark, hungry for a midnight snack, darts toward you, then summon up all your strength and punch him in the snout and he will turn and swim away.

There are a lot of sharks in the world. If you hope to complete the swim, you will have to deal with them.

So, if you want to change the world, don't back down from the sharks.

8. As Navy SEALs, one of our jobs is to conduct underwater attacks against enemy shipping. We practiced this technique extensively during basic training. The ship-attack mission is where a pair of SEAL divers is dropped off outside an enemy harbor and then swims well over two miles — underwater — using nothing but a depth gauge and a compass to get to their target.

During the entire swim, even well below the surface, there is some light that comes through. It is comforting to know that there is open water above you. But as you approach the ship, which is tied to a pier, the light begins to fade. The steel structure of the ship blocks the moonlight, it blocks the surrounding street lamps, it blocks all ambient light.

To be successful in your mission,

you have to swim under the ship and find the keel — the centerline and the deepest part of the ship. This is your objective. But the keel is also the darkest part of the ship, where you cannot see your hand in front of your face, where the noise from the ship's machinery is deafening, and where it is easy to get disoriented and fail. Every SEAL knows that under the keel, at the darkest moment of the mission, is the time when you must be calm, composed — when all your tactical skills, your physical power, and all your inner strength must be brought to bear.

If you want to change the world, you must be your very best in the darkest moment.

9. The ninth week of SEAL training is referred to as Hell Week. It is six days of no sleep, constant physical and mental harassment, and one special day at the Mud Flats. The Mud Flats are an area between San Diego and Tijuana where the water runs off and creates the Tijuana slues — a swampy patch of terrain where the mud will engulf you.

It is on Wednesday of Hell Week that you paddle down to the mud flats and spend the next 15 hours trying to survive the freezing-cold mud, the howling wind, and the incessant pressure from the instructors to quit.

As the sun began to set that Wednesday evening, my training class, having committed some “egregious infraction of the rules,” was ordered into the mud. The mud consumed each man till there was nothing visible but our heads. The instructors told us we could leave the mud if only five men

would quit — just five men and we could get out of the oppressive cold. Looking around the mud flat, it was apparent that some students were about to give up. It was still over eight hours till the sun came up — eight more hours of bone-chilling cold. The chattering teeth and shivering moans of the trainees were so loud it was hard to hear anything.

And then, one voice began to echo through the night — one voice raised in song. The song was terribly out of tune, but sung with great enthusiasm. One voice became two, and two became three, and before long everyone in the class was singing.

We knew that if one man could rise above the misery then others could as well. The instructors threatened us with more time in the mud if we kept up the singing — but the singing persisted. And somehow the mud seemed a little warmer, the wind a little tamer, and the dawn not so far away.

If I have learned anything in my time traveling the world, it is the power of hope. The power of one person — Washington, Lincoln, King, Mandela, and even a young girl from Pakistan named Malala — can change the world by giving people hope. So, if you want to change the world, start singing when you're up to your neck in mud.

10. Finally, in SEAL training there is a bell. A brass bell that hangs in the center of the compound for all the students to see.

All you have to do to quit is ring the bell. Ring the bell and you no longer have to wake up at 5 o'clock. Ring the bell and you no longer have to do the

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freezing cold swims. Ring the bell and you no longer have to do the runs, the obstacle course, the PT — and you no longer have to endure the hardships of training. Just ring the bell.

If you want to change the world don't ever, *ever* ring the bell.

To the graduating class of 2014, you are moments away from graduating. Moments away from beginning your journey through life. Moments away from starting to change the world — for the better.

It will not be easy.

But start each day with a task completed. Find someone to help you through life. Respect everyone. Know that life is not fair and that you will fail often, but if you take some risks, step up when the times are toughest, face down the bullies, lift up the down-trodden, and never, ever give up — if you do these things, then the next generation and the generations that follow will live in a world far better than the one we have today. And what started here will indeed have changed the world, for the better.

Thank you very much. Hook 'em horns.

— William H. McRaven
Wall Street Journal
May 24-25, 2014, A11