



Christian Report

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Courageous Faith

All of the heroes who have served before us have already defined, with the last full measure, what courage means. One need not venture past the Quarterdeck of the San Diego Naval Hospital to see its cost. Therein you will find the names of the Hospital Corpsmen who were awarded our country's highest honor. If you ask a warrior, he will tell you that courage is NOT the absence of fear, but instead, the substance of one's convictions. Even in recent days we see the newspapers full of the accounts of heroes. Our history is rich with those days where uncommon valor was a common virtue. So the question is NOT what is courage BUT rather, from whence does it flow? This is an important question for everyone who wears the uniform of our country! In light of the fact that "Him who brings everything into conformity with His will" has, by an act of His sovereign will, made you a warrior, it would seem to me that courage would be an important virtue and courageous faith an absolute necessity!



Those of us who live in Colorado have been experiencing a drought for some years now. This brought to my mind the question: Where does water come from? In Colorado, it comes

from the rivers. Question: From where does the river get its water? Answer: From the snow. Question: From where does the snow get its water? Answer: From the sky. Question: From where does the sky get its water? Answer: From the sea. Question: From where does the sea get its water? Answer: From the river!

"Then the man brought me back to the entrance of the Temple. There I saw a stream flowing eastward from beneath the Temple threshold. This stream then passed to the right of the altar on its south side. The man brought me outside the wall through the north gateway and led me around to the eastern entrance. There I could see the stream flowing out through the south side of the east gateway. Measuring as he went, he led me along the stream for 1,750 feet and told me to go across. At that point the water was up to my ankles. He measured off another 1,750 feet and told me to go across again. This time the water was up to my knees. After another 1,750 feet it was up to my waist. The he measured another 1,750 feet, and the river was too deep to cross without swimming....All kinds of fruit trees will grow along both sides of the river.

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Some things seem to last (painfully) forever. Try singing “American Pie” karaoke style with 4 bad singers. That was the longest 7 minutes of my life. Or try sitting through a concert or speech with malfunctioning sound equipment.

Then there are the things that you wish could last forever: summers during the growing-up years, a wonderful date with a girl you care a lot about, or visits to grandma's house all come to mind. But, invariably those "moments to remember" come to an end.

In this life, things are never permanent. When you drive down old state highways, you can see houses overgrown by foliage. There are old gas stations with vacant fueling islands and shards of glass still in the window facings. When passing these "ghost" houses and gas stations, I wonder about the stories behind them. In days gone by, there was a proud homeowner or an entrepreneur excited about the prospects of being in business for themselves. Yet, 30, 40 or 50 years later these facilities stand as haunting reminders that life on this earth is transitory.

Some years ago, my wife and I went to visit New Albany, MS at Thanksgiving. As we drove around Union County, Sheri pointed out different places she had lived. She showed me the gravesites of Rev. Ernest and Altha Mae Rakestraw; her “unofficial” foster parents and pastor. I wondered about his ministry career as I stood there on that cold blustery day. I mused about what kind of an impact he had on people. I speculated on the different people that are in heaven today because he took the time to invest in their lives and lead them to faith in Christ. Yet, the gravestone in that cemetery stood in front of us as a stark reminder that this life is not permanent.

There will come a day when someone will open a family Bible or pull open a drawer in a dresser to

find a yellowed piece of newsprint. They will read down through the article to find that a guy named Tony Barnes wrote a column for the NAS News. They too may stand and wonder about the impact that Tony had on his readers. Likewise, it will serve as a reminder to them that life is temporary.



Regardless of how fleeting this life is, every human ever born on this earth has eternal life. There are two destinations. We typically think of hell as being a place for evil people. It's easy to surmise that the Adolph Hitlers and the Joseph Stalins of the world are likely in hell. But the truth of the matter is that there are some “good old boys” who are spending eternity separated from God. There are

some sweet little old ladies who did not go to heaven.

Only those that have accepted the gift of salvation and committed their lives to Jesus Christ's leadership will be in heaven. There is no list of accomplishments that must be “checked off” to go to heaven. No ritual exists that is an induction into eternal life. Entry to heaven is based upon the question, “What did you do with Jesus Christ”? If you have accepted His gift of salvation and entered into relationship with Him, you are saved and will spend eternity in heaven. This life will end. But, instead of a sad event for the Christian, it is a graduation into an eternal inheritance.

2 Peter 1:10 exhorts us to confirm our salvation. So, with that, we must each ask ourselves: *What have we done with Jesus Christ?*



Tony “T-Bar” Barnes is a 28-year veteran of the Marine Corps and Air Force. He also retired from the Department of Veterans Affairs after 10 years. Tony serves on CMF’s Board of Directors.

The leaves of these trees will never turn brown and fall, and there will always be fruit on their branches. There will be a new crop every month, without fail! For they are watered by the river flowing from the Temple. The fruit will be for food and the leaves for healing.” Ezekiel 47:1-5, 12 (NLT)

I was absolutely awestruck the first time I read this passage in the New Living Translation. Sometimes the changes in the phraseology and the unfamiliarity of the keywords will shock this old mind into seeing what was once hidden. Here we have this magnificent description of the river of healing. I believe (and many distinguished and learned minds before me) that this is really an illustration of prayer. The water that finds its beginnings at the Temple threshold are the prayers of the saints offered in the Spirit. The threshold of the Temple is where we are encouraged to enter into the throne room of Grace.



“In the same way the Spirit also comes to help us, weak as we are. For we do not know how we ought to pray; the spirit himself pleads

with God for us in groans that words cannot express. And God, who sees into our hearts, knows what the thought of the Spirit is; because the Spirit pleads with God on behalf of his people and in accordance with his will.” Romans 8:26-27 (TEV)



The prayers transformed by the Holy Spirit into something worthy of entering into the presence of the Father are now omnipotent as they flow by the right-hand of the altar (where our Savior is seated) then to continue swift and deep as eternal blessing of provision from the Father through the eastern gate toward us. We are somehow miraculously included as part of the process. Our courageous faith then is but one of the wonderful blessing of Christ Jesus that were planned before the foundations of the world. **So then, courageous faith is really God’s omnipotent peace (the substance of our convictions) “like a river that attendeth our way,”** provided of course the we are not just involved but led in prayer lest the river be empty.



ADCS (NAC) Robert W. Flynn, USN (Ret.) — Bob has been with the Christian Military Fellowship since 1981. He has served in a host of capacities including President/CEO, and Chairman of the Board of Directors. Bob enlisted in the United States Navy in 1968 and served on active duty until 1991. He currently serves on the Board of Directors.

Genesis Discussion Group

Questions about Genesis 1:1 through 11:26?

Scan this QR code to connect with us, then Save the Date: October 15, 2024 from 1900-2030, for a Zoom meeting. - **Herschel Hughes, Jr., Ed.D.**



Perhaps you remember me, the salty old shrink who shuffled out to the mailbox this past year to search for morsels of value in an otherwise sea of direct-mail flotsam and jetsam. My “better half,” Anne, and I brought the CMF membership seven letters regarding “Charting a Course for a Christian Marriage.” Well, I am at it again! This time I’m inviting any CMF member who would like to discuss the foundational chapters of Genesis to join me for a Zoom meeting on Tuesday, October 15.

My plan is to eventually co-moderate a Lay-led Discussion of Genesis 1:1 through 11:26 for a six session seminar, meeting biweekly via Zoom. My co-host, SFC Paul Morris, USAR, and I would really like to meet you and hear the questions and concerns that you, our fellow CMF members, might have as you study these chapters of Genesis before launching our seminar. In a nutshell, our passion is to earn your trust as listeners/facilitators while bolstering faith and belief in Christ and our Holy Writ. With this seminar, we aim to help our younger members especially give voice to any challenges integrating both our faith and our science as we understand it.

Our impetus for this effort was, in part, Dr. Stephen Meyer’s (Christian philosopher of science and author of “Return of the God Hypothesis”) report that his center had conducted research recently regarding the lowering percentages of young people who believe in God. His surveys indicated that 65% of young people endorse the opinion that “science makes belief in God untenable.” Dr. Meyer’s assertion, along with many other scientists, whom we want to study and discuss, is that science is pointing progressively MORE toward an Intelligent Creator/Designer. Just the opposite of what public opinion, public education, and popular culture, is pointing people towards.

If you want to read more about our vision for the seminar, I’ll email you my letter of reflection entitled “The Essential Genesis,” which might function somewhat as a syllabus for our discussion group. Paul and I are looking forward to getting together with you in September via Zoom. If this topic interests you, please reach out to us through the QR code or email me at hhughesjr@cmfhq.org. Let’s get to know one another and see how we can help each other.

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