



Christian Report

To Win...To Disciple...To Equip...To Win

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Natural Law—by ADCS Bob Flynn, USN (Ret), President/CEO

“The law of gravity tells you what stones do if you drop them; but the Law of Human Nature tells you what human beings ought to do and do not.” C. S. Lewis, *Mere Christianity*

There is the unwritten law in the mind of humankind that I call the law of “expectation.” Depending upon the circumstances, our minds will have certain preconceived notions as to how things ought to be. This is a good thing because it enables us to see. According to the experts, sight is 90 percent

imagination. If it were not for our experience, our minds would not be able to rightly interpret the images that our eyes deliver to our cerebral cortex. Our sight and our memory play a harmonic role in allowing us to see both familiar things and those things new to us without becoming disoriented.

However, when it comes to actions, we have another law in effect that is called prejudice. It is also based upon experience

(whether good or bad, right or wrong). We see, we judge, and we react accordingly. This allows us, more often than

not, to operate our automobiles alongside those belonging to our neighbors, in rather close proximity without creating a total catastrophe. But what happens when our expectation leads us to a false prejudice? We pick up the phone and call

our insurance agent to inform him that we have had an acci-



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The First Rule of War is That Warriors Must Die — by Bob Flynn

“No foreign power or combination of foreign powers could by force take a drink from the Ohio or make a track on the Blue Ridge in a trial of a thousand years. At what point then is the approach of danger to be expected? I answer, if it ever reach us it must spring up from among us, it cannot come from abroad. If destruction be our lot, we must ourselves be its author and finisher. As a nation of freemen we must live through all time or die of suicide.” Abraham Lincoln

When Abraham Lincoln spoke these words I doubt that he could have conceived of a day when we would have

a Department of Homeland Security. It is by design that America has NOT YET suffered another Twin Tower disaster! This success has been wrought at great cost!

“With malice toward none, with charity for all, with firmness in the right, as God gives us to see the right, let us strive on to finish the work we are in, to bind up the nation’s wounds, to care for him who shall have borne the battle, and for his widow, and his orphan—to do all which may achieve and cherish a just and lasting peace among ourselves and with all nations.” Abraham Lincoln (1809-1865)
“The patriot who feels himself in the service of God, who

acknowledges Him in all his ways, has the promise of Almighty direction, and will find His word in his greatest darkness, ‘a lantern to his feet and a lamp unto his paths.’ He will therefore seek to establish for his country in the eyes of the world, such a character as shall make her not unworthy of the name of a Christian nation.” Francis Scott Key (1779-1843)

“And God has given us the task of reconciling people to him. For God was in Christ, reconciling the world to himself, no longer counting people’s sins against them. This is the wonderful message

When Marriage SUX — by ADCS Bob Flynn, USN (Ret), President/CEO

SUX, a Naval Aviation weather term (invented for the Simoom—A strong, hot, sand-laden wind of the Sahara and Arabian deserts) describing a brown cloud with an indefinite ceiling, visibility fully obscured in blowing sand; a bad day to fly)

We frequently awake from the bed of our own choosing into the often grim reality of a life full of pain and regret. We think there is no way out from under the weight that holds us there. We seem destined to be the last one to see that eagles wings await all who would wish to soar! Were it not for this negative propensity, there would be no need for encouragers.

There continues to be an innate force, perhaps written upon our DNA, that leads us as though we are predestined to look for the fulfillment of life in all the wrong places. Our culture inculcates in us expectations that climb to unachievable heights! One glance in any direction within our world and it is plain to see that is exactly who we are — self-centered, selfish, and fallen, the proud possessor of a mind deemed reprobate! A decayed papyrus upon which we wish to write the wonderful stories of life as if we were the masters of our own fate! The liberal tries to write a decayed story on the decayed paper and succeeds. The conservative tries to write a righteous story on decayed paper and always fails. After all we have successfully armed ourselves with all the wisdom of the ages that we have gleaned from the “Christian How-to books” we have read in endless streams. We suppose that we will change our plight by the numerous cause and effect actions applied in our midst. However, manipulation is not a fruit of the Spirit but rather a sin of the flesh. Instead of removing the lumber yard from our own eye, we intend to mold our mate into our own image and of course as a result, the marriage lies in piteous ruin while drowning in the pool of blood coursing from self-inflicted wounds.

We would argue on our behalf whether marriage is a covenant, sacrament, ordinance, or contract, that we might escape its stifling hold upon our dreams of a better life with another not our spouse. But here is the unvarnished truth announced: If your marriage SUX so does your faith! “Do not

be deceived, you reap what you sow” (Galatians 6:7 paraphrase mine).

My oldest and dearest friend, CDR Jerry Bruce, CHC, USN (Ret), often-times told me that apart from Christ, people will make the same mistakes over and over ad nauseam. We will flutter between relationships as a bee between flowers intoxicated by the nectar while dragging along the disease from our past failures and thus dooming our present. I speak of my friend Jerry, because he has the gift of mercy. I have been blessed to see firsthand the mercies of Christ flow through him to save more lives than the emergency room at the local hospital. I have seen a risen Savior and Lord turn the impossible into the possible with such regularity that a reasonable person would conclude that this is the “Normal Christian Life.” How can this be? Because Christ’s Mercy is the perfect blend of His Grace and His Truth! Were all the other spiritual gifts absent, the body would flourish still because Grace and Truth needs nothing else.

We probably have all heard the exhortation from Ephesians 5:25 that men are to love their wives as Christ loved the church. However, we fail to consider that it is an extension of verse 21, “out of reverence for Christ”! If you have no genuine reverence for Christ, then the rest becomes the wood, hay, and stubble of life lived in the power of the flesh no matter how sacrificial the actions may look!

Noah Webster gives us cause to ponder this word in our hearts:

Reverence — Fear mingled with respect and esteem; veneration. The fear acceptable to God, is a filial fear, an awful reverence of the divine nature, proceeding from a just esteem of his perfections, which produces in us an inclination to his service and an unwillingness to offend him.

Respect — That estimation or honor in which men hold the distinguished worth or substantial good qualities of others. It expresses less than reverence and veneration, which regard elders and superiors; whereas respect may regard juniors and inferiors. Respect regards the qualities of the mind, or the actions which characterize those qualities.

Veneration — The highest degree of respect and reverence; respect mingled with some degree of awe; a feeling or sentiment excited by the dignity and superiority of a person, or by the sa-

credness of his character, and with regard to place, by its consecration to sacred services.

Esteem — To prize; to set a high value on; to regard with reverence, respect, or friendship. To hold in opinion; to repute; to think. To compare in value; to estimate by proportion. High value or estimation; great regard; favorable opinion, founded on supposed worth.

Does this really describe the soil in which today’s believer sows in holy matrimony? You decide! You reap what you sow! Remember, though, that throughout the passing of each moment of your pain, you are one cubit from victory (the distance from standing in sin to that of kneeling in penitent prayer) and one second from Christ’s amazing and wonderful Sabbath Rest! That prayer might go something like this: I confess today, dear Jesus Christ, that my heart knows not what it is to truly revere you in the way Paul describes. My heart is full of me and I do not know what it is to grieve over my sin, let alone repent of it. Yet I continue on day after day in my own might and see failure in my marriage, the most cherished estate that you created from the beginning for me to live within. Forgive me because of your great mercy and lead me today into your Sabbath Rest.

“Who will not fear You, Lord, and glorify Your name? For You alone are holy.” (Revelation 15:4 NLT)

“This is the message we heard from Jesus and now declare to you: God is light, and there is no darkness in Him at all.” (1 John 1:5 NLT)

“But You are pure and cannot stand the sight of evil. Will You wink at their treachery?” (Habakkuk 1:13 NLT)

If you desire help in finding the blessings that are yours in knowing the Lord Jesus Christ, give us a call! (800) 798-7875

“Work hard to show the results of your salvation, obeying God with deep reverence and fear. For God is working in you, giving you the desire and the power to do what pleases Him.” (Philippians 2:12-13 NLT)

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dent. Hopefully it was not beyond the scope of repair for the car and healing for our bodies!

Unfortunately, in our personal relationships with others this law of expectation takes on unrealistic proportions. We often expect of others what we do not demand of ourselves. We may have a whole host of societal standards based upon where we live, work, or worship. These standards may or may not match those held by someone else. What results is the inevitable collision of standards of conduct where feelings are injured and relationships destroyed. "But like a good neighbor, State Farm" *isn't* there to help you pick up the pieces.

Let us now call in the accident investigator to determine the cause of the calamity. Perhaps we can listen to the cockpit voice recorder and hear what was really said in the minutes that preceded the event. We could check the flight recorder (black box) in order to ascertain the **attitude of the heart**. Perhaps we could check the weather forecast to see if there was an **air of deception** present that hindered visibility. The accident investigator looks through all the evidence and then comes to the conclusion that this accident **was preventable** and assigns fault (oftentimes to both parties).

The world looks upon us believers as though our faces were engraved upon Mount Rushmore. There is an expectation of absolute perfection in all we say or do. It is a bit like being an airline pilot whose reputation is only as good as his last landing. It would not matter if the pilot had made thousands of perfect landings if the last landing resulted in a crash. When the world holds us to account in response to these crashes, some of us believers would say of our own conduct, "I am not perfect, just forgiven!" When we are rebuked by the brethren, we counter with, "Judge not, lest ye be not judged" — the mantra of those who use Grace to self-justify a careless life.

It was no accident that the Apostle Paul called upon us to, "clothe yourselves with the armor of right living, as those who live in the light" (Romans 13:12b NLT1996). Perhaps said another way, the word used could be "virtue." Virtuous living is no accident; **it is a volitional choice** that is based upon right experience. Right experience leads to right expectation, and

right expectation leads to right prejudice.

But where does the right experience come from? Answer: "The Light!" The Light has a Name, "Jesus." In Him there is no darkness at all! Therein lies the whole answer to the whole question. The near context of the verse quoted is:

"Another reason for right living is that you know how late it is; time is running out. Wake up, for the coming of our salvation is nearer now than when we first believed. The night is almost gone; the day of salvation will soon be here. So don't live in darkness. Get rid of your evil deeds. Shed them like dirty clothes. Clothe yourselves with the armor of right living, as those who live in the light. We should be decent and true in everything we do, so that everyone can approve of our behavior. Don't participate in wild parties and getting drunk, or in adultery and immoral living, or in fighting and jealousy. But let the Lord Jesus Christ take control of you, and don't think of ways to indulge your evil desires" (Romans 13:11-14 NLT1996).

Sound familiar? It should! Let us render this in a more literal update of this same translation:

"So remove your dark deeds like dirty clothes, and put on the shining armor of right living...Instead, clothe yourself with the presence of the Lord Jesus Christ" (Romans 13 NLT2004)

Paul says in Ephesians:

"throw off your old sinful nature and your former way of life, which is corrupted by lust and deception" (Ephesians 4:22 NLT2004).

We are tested every day, all day, even while we sleep! We are only as good as our last landing! Collisions occur with the world and with the brethren. They are caused by expectations that are corrupted by lust and deception! This causes us to trip! And when we trip, we should know that it

was Jesus, the "Chief Cornerstone," over whom we stumbled. Another landing failed!

"He is the stone that makes people stumble, the rock that will make them fall" (1 Peter 2:8 NLT1996).

Virtue or vice, the choice is ours, and the fault of our failures lies within.

The final questions (plural) remain. How are you doing? Even more importantly, how are we (the Body of Christ) doing? Answer: Abysmally! Don't believe me, just ask your neighbor! Read the newspaper. Jesus changed the world with twelve unaccomplished men. Yet we live in a time when "mega-churches abound" and sin super-abounds. If the law of proportion applies, then a mega-church should change the universe. What was that thing that happened in 1740? An awakening? Who was that guy who was preaching then? What was that phrase we just passed over? "Wake up, for the coming of our salvation is nearer now than when we first believed."

As it seems to challenge an excellency above all His other perfections, so it is the glory of all the rest; as it is the glory of the Godhead, so it is the glory of every perfection in the Godhead; as His power is the strength of them, so His holiness is the beauty of them; as all would be weak without almightiness to back them, so all would be uncomely without holiness to adorn them. Should this be sullied, all the rest would lose their honor; as at the same instant the sun should lose its light, it would lose its heat, its strength, its generative and quickening virtue. As sincerity is the luster of every grace in a Christian, so is purity the splendor of every attribute in the Godhead. His justice is a holy justice, His wisdom a holy wisdom, His arm of power a "holy arm" (Psalm 98:1), His truth or promise a "holy promise" (Psalm 105:42). His name, which signifies all His attributes in conjunction, "is holy," (Psalm 103:1) Stephen Charnock, *Existence and Attributes of God*, 1682.

Top Ten Reasons To Invest in the Christian Military Fellowship

10. Makes me a financial partner in what God is doing in the military.
9. Allows CMF to continue to publish and mail a really cool newsletter.
8. Keeps me in the fight with assurance because I am prayed for in the Battle Plan.
7. Helps me know CMF will be there when I need them most.
6. Ensures my access to Christian contacts as I transfer or travel.
5. Keeps those free monthly Christian book offers available.
4. I get to help pay the utility bill at the home office

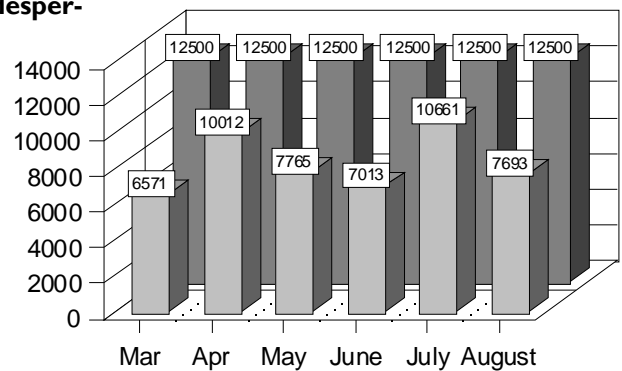
3. Ensures a voice on the CMF telephone when I desperately need prayer or wise counsel.
2. Enables me to invest in reaching that next soul for Christ.
1. Because I want CMF to be there next year and the year after.

Prayerfully consider becoming a regular giver.

New Members

LT J.D. & Megan Boesch, USCG
 MAJ Jim Hassinger, USA (Ret)
 Mr. Jonathan & Laura Langley
 CDR Mark LeBeau, USCG
 CAPT Tim & Ronda Werre, USNR(TAR)

Operating Fund



■ Budgeted Income
 ■ Actual Income

Promotions

SMSgt Bill Gates, USAFR

The First Rule of War is That Warriors Must Die — by Bob Flynn

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he has given us to tell others.” (2 Corinthians 5:18-19 NLT)

We can ponder the significance of “A Warrior’s End” from many perspectives. There is the look on a mother’s face that can never be forgotten when she is told she will never hug her beloved son again; or the empty side of the bed that grieves the young wife’s heart; the empty chair at the dinner table where Daddy used to sit. If we can introduce each one of these young men and women to the Gospel



A Warrior’s End

before the crisis, their destination will be changed for an eternity! **For those who are wounded of heart, there is one immutable fact: warriors only talk to warriors about warrior things.**

“How well do you reflect the Gospel in the pain-filled eyes of a frightened seven-year-old girl whose grandparents you just helped kill? This is not merely a rhetorical question. I had to rip the answer from myself one day in 1965 as I stared into those terrible eyes at a devastated village in Vietnam. Moral dilemmas are by no means the private territory of men at war.

However, wars do provide acute crises in moral and ethical decision-making” (LtCol Tom Hemingway, *Serving God in the Jungles of War: Moral Dilemmas of Combat*).

These are the kinds of wounds that never heal but cover over with scar tissue and if not healed by the Savior, become the future cancers that kill the soul. ***Yet serving in the military provides an opportunity to live the Gospel and share it with those with whom one is surrounded. The Gospel of Jesus Christ is not part of a believer’s life — it is his life. Therefore, to do anything less than share one’s faith with a lost and dying world would be to hide the light under a basket. The manner in which believers live and their stated convictions must be consistent. Anything less will have a negative impact on the believer’s credibility. The act of evangelism itself will carry with it risk with regard to promotion. Sharing one’s faith openly will bring criticism and scorn from those who most need its benefit.***

LtGen John Grinalds, USMC (Ret), *Evangelism in Command* — Paraphrase mine.

This is an impossible dream absent

the fullness of the Holy Spirit in the warrior’s life. The battle is waged in the temporal battlefield, while at the same time there is battle in the heavens. Victory cannot be achieved lest both foes be vanquished. The same can be said for the wounds of the body and the wounds of the soul. Neither will heal unless both be salvaged.

In these stressful times we see the military continuously being made smaller while its role is being changed from war fighting to peace keeping. This has created increased deployment schedules, lengthier family separations, and greater stresses on the service member and family alike. If Christ is our vocation and not just a hobby then we should feel the call of a sovereign God upon our lives. Paul, writing from prison to the Philippians, shared the experience of having been buffeted by life, beaten by foes, forgotten by friends, and rejected by those he loved — all for the sake of the Gospel. This is the message to the Christian in the military today that settles whether or not military service is a calling from God. Left unconvinced the military believer misses the joy, contentment, and effectiveness also expressed by the Apostle Paul. COL Richard Kail, USA (Ret), What is Your Spiritual Climate? — paraphrase mine.

This is why there is a Christian Military Fellowship — the building of character that makes our great Christian nation unashamed. The Fellowship is here to help.