October 2026 Golden Age Newsletter

Richard Buessing and Carol Pobanz
October 1, 2026

Golden Age Newsletter

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Hello Goldies, in this issue, Frank LaGrotteria shares some reconstructed wisdom from a few years ago, Dr. Richard Lewis explores why scientists may be greater believers in miracles than religionists, Larrry Moffitt takes us on a wild ride with *Tarzan Runs*, while Bob Beebe writes about Lightning striking, Walter Loew shares a Maryland memory, and another member reminds us to take a careful look at history before reacting to today's events. Mark Anderson introduces a new online community for UC widows and widowers. We also explore the surprising history of guitar pasta and offer a reminder about some recent memoirs. Enjoy!

This Month's Message

Biological Spirituality: An Essay Reconstructed from a 2015 Recorded Talk



by Dr. Frank Lagrotteria

Synopsis: You're basically looking at a million-year-old body and million-year-old emotions. Read on!

We live in 2015, in America, in a land of abundance. Food is everywhere, and medicine and science have taken us to an amazing level. It is easy to assume that because our environment has advanced so dramatically, our bodies and emotions have somehow evolved correspondingly and come into balance with modern science, technology, and circumstances.

But the reality is: they have not. We are living in a modern environment with bodies shaped by an immensely longer biological history. When you eat something, your body processes that food according to biological systems that developed over vast stretches of time, not according to the comparatively recent environment in which we now live.

Consider refined sugar. For most of human history, sugars were consumed as components of foods rather than in the highly concentrated, refined forms that are now commonplace. Modern abundance therefore presents the body with dietary conditions very different from those under which its metabolic systems developed. The resulting health consequences can include metabolic imbalance and an increased risk of conditions such as type 2 diabetes. The point is not that the body has suddenly

adapted to refined sugar; rather, our environment has changed much faster than our underlying biology.

Likewise, when I speak of "biological spirituality," I am talking about the way human beings relate with Heaven, with nature, with other people, and with themselves while carrying emotional capacities that are far older than the modern world around us.

To read more, please click here!





Unification Thoughts

Science Loves Miracles More Than Religion

by Richard L. Lewis



A not usual topic of conversations is the concept of miracles in both religion and science.

In religion, a miracle is when a spiritual input makes something really unlikely to happen. Striking a rock and creating a spring in a desert is highly improbable, but can happen when guided to a particular point.

To read more, please click here!

Arts and Culture

...And Tarzan Runs Into The Jungle



By Larry Moffitt

SanViejo@gmail.com

Tarzan looks up and sees smoke way off in the distance. "Something wrong, Cheetah." The script has this simple direction: [Tarzan runs into the jungle]. He does, and the director hollers, "Cut."

Tarzan does not go up into the treehouse to tell Jane and boy where he's going. He doesn't grab a bottle of water, an energy bar, a pastrami and mayo on white bread, not even a compass. Tarzan runs into the jungle.

To read more, please click here!

Lightning Strikes



by Robert Beebe

– based on true events that happened to his wife Karen as a trail guide in New Mexico.

Like Lauren in the story, Karen was guiding a group of girls (in her case actually about 5-6) on a mountain trail in New Mexico when she and another girl were struck by lightning. As in the story, a helicopter carried her paralyzed body off the mountain. She spent the next several months in the hospital and fortunately fully recovered.

To read more, please click here!

History Bytes

Mayhem in Maryland

God Bless America Washington DC

By Walter Loew

Early in the last "selling" (selling tickets for Washington Monument bus tickets) week, I was in a cluster of smaller "project" buildings in a "two-level" motel style, and the woman who answered my knock was definitely not a candidate. She must have been over 80, and she even had wrinkles on her facial wrinkles. Ordinarily, I would have apologized for disturbing her, but my determination was to tell everyone, so I did. She was very excited about the event, and she sent me to talk to her daughter about it.

To read more, please click here!



Testimonies, Tributes and Thoughts

Idealism and I

Over the decades since I began teaching back in the late 70s, I've sometimes noticed young people being pulled into activism because of their idealism and their anger with persistent injustice in society. And now, five decades later, many of those young people are adult spouses and parents, and thankfully, much of that idealism remains intact. Nevertheless, when the matter of activism comes up, I often feel disquieted. I wear my idealism on my sleeve, yet I can't conceal my reservations about the intensity of their fervor to combat injustice. . . .

To read more, please click here!

Widows and Widowers

By Mark Anderson



I was blessed in marriage in 1982. I lived as a happily married man for 43 years. Then, suddenly my wife was called home through a cancer diagnosis that was discovered too late. One month before she died, she said to me, "You can get married again." At the time, it did not mean much for me. But as the months from her transition have rolled by, I began to think about my situation.

To read more, please click here!

Health and Recipe

Chitarra?



Submitted by Christine Libon

I found another type of pasta called Chitarra, which is the Italian word for guitar. However, the pasta is not so named because the strands of pasta resemble guitar strings; rather, it is named after the tool originally used to cut the dough (see image). Closely strung metal strings were attached to a wooden frame, upon which a thin flat layer of dough was placed, then uniformly cut by pressing a rolling pin over the strings. This process causes the strings to produce a distinct sound, a metal twang, which further prompted the naming of the pasta chitarra!

The history of the tool *lu rentrocelo* traces back to the 1700s in southern and central Italy (Chieti Province), and the first written documentation of the tool *lu carrature* is from 1871, listing it as part of a bride's dowry.

The pasta originated in the northeastern part of the Abruzzo region of Italy in the Appennine mountains defined by its sheep-herding culture. Thus it is a hearty pasta traditionally prepared with meat sauces, originally lamb. Large chunks of meat on the bone - often three different meats including mutton and, in modern days veal, pork, or beef - are simmered for hours until tender. The meat is removed and served later separately, while the pasta is then added to the sauce.

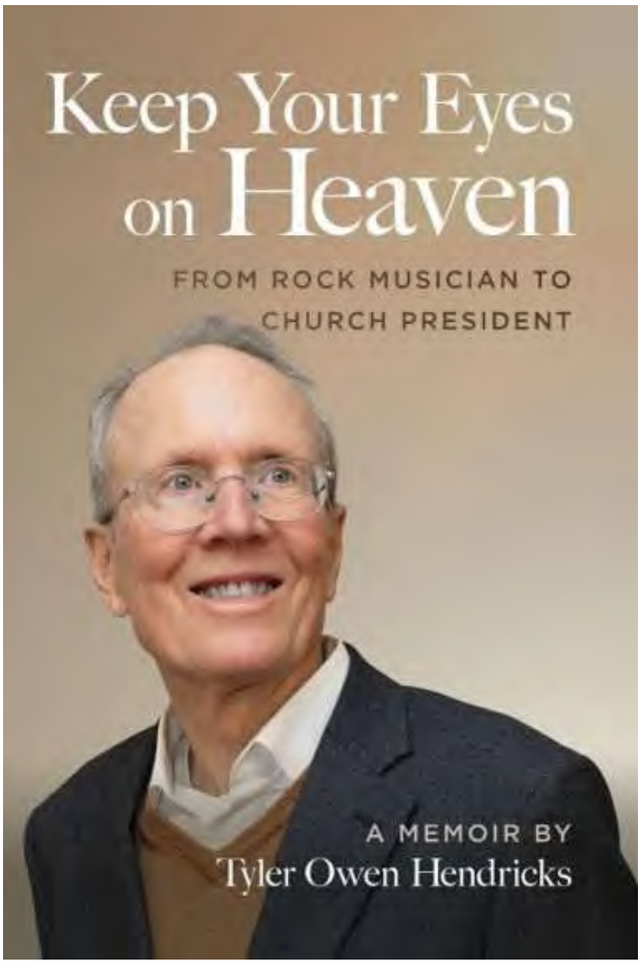
An alternative option for preparing Chitarra is a sauce called *Pallottine,* the predecessor of meatballs, which are tiny and chick pea-sized (see image) and crucially contain no breadcrumbs.

I suppose this article will be of interest mainly to those with Italian heritage or whose stomachs and taste buds have acclimated to an Italian diet. I hope all readers may have enjoyed this little trip down culinary history lane.





Bulletin Board



A Memoir by Dr. Tyler Hendricks

I hope you are doing well. I have written my memoir, *Keep Your Eyes On Heaven: From Rock Musician to Church President.* Earlier this year I published a pre-edition in Europe, through KANDO. Comments from readers in Europe introduce the book far better than I can. Here is a taste of them:

Tyler Hendricks offers a fascinating insight into the early days of the Unification Movement in the USA and its evolution over the past decades - a journey he witnessed firsthand and helped shape in many ways. From the very first pages of the prologue, I was captivated. **Gregor Sattler**

"You are honest, sincere, exact, and bring so much information about the history of our movement, True Parents and True Family. You write very well, it's never boring, I'll read your book again. It will follow us in our moving around." **Monique Schneider**

"Your content is very interesting and honestly shared, which makes me really desire to read more. I was reading some of it to two pastors. One, who attended a recent pilgrimage in Korea, wants to have your book." **Keijo Mikkanen, Vice-Chair, Universal Peace Federation, Finland**

"The way you explain the challenges you faced and how you overcame them is a valuable spiritual guide for my own struggles. I believe that all second and third generation should read your book for their own education!!!" **Claus Dubisz, Community Leader and WCLC Representative, Frankfurt, Germany**

"His dedication resulted in a mind-boggling range of experiences and opportunities, described with humor and flair. We are given insights into his Blessing and family life, academic career, a wide variety of church missions, experiences with 'channelling' …and so much more." **Catriona Valenta**

Just for background, I grew up in Oakland, California and moved into the Creative Community Project on Dana Street, January 20, 1973. Within ten months I found myself living at Belvedere, sitting at Father's feet every Sunday. God sent me, courtesy of True Parents, from New York area center member and lecturer, to MFT, UTS, home church in England, Vanderbilt University for a Ph.D., Ocean Church, CARP, Common Suffering Fellowship, clergy conferences, Assembly of the World's Religions, New England Regional Coordinator, IOWC, HSA-UWC America Vice-President then President, True Family Values Ministry, UTS President, True Parents Way website, teacher of only begotten Daughter theology (invited directly by True Mother), and now full-time grandfather overflowing with experiences that I'm so happy to share.

You can find *Keep Your Eyes On Heaven* hard copy or ebook, on Amazon, Barnes and Noble, and Walmart websites.



A Memoir by Robert Beebe

Preface

"This is the way you must live: feeling God's presence with you in every action, feeling that God is going before you."

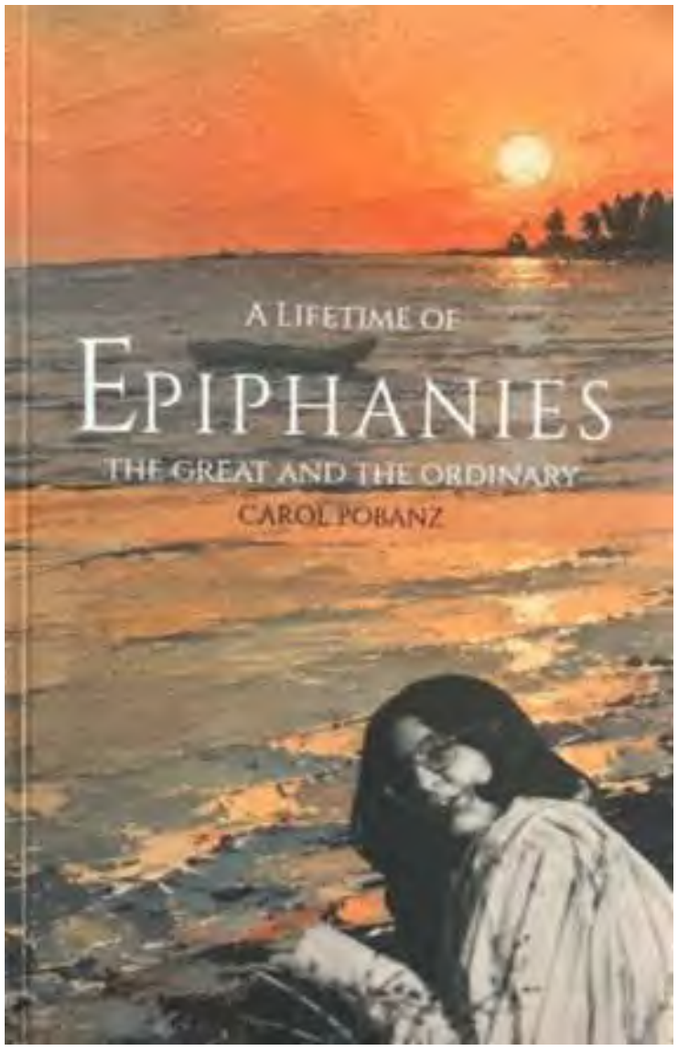
Rev. Sun Myung Moon

When one decides to write a memoir or autobiography of one's life, that person is confronted with the question: Why? Why am I writing this? For whom am I writing it? And why would anyone, among the billions of people living in the world, be interested in reading my life story and reflections? As I set to writing, I wonder: who's going to read this stuff? What should I talk about - mundane things about my daily life or high ideals? Is there a connection between the two?

To purchase the book, please click here!

https://www.amazon.com/World-Peace-Through-Ideal-Families/dp

Epiphanies
(a memoir by Carol Pobanz)



Epiphanies is a collection of reflective stories of pivotal moments that shaped my life and deepened my understanding of God. The narrative carries me from the post-World War II religious years in America, to the spiritual searching of the 1960s and 1970s, and into my life as an adherent of one of the many spiritual organizations that emerged in the United States during the second half of the twentieth century - the Unification Movement.

To buy the book click here:
https://www.lulu.com/search?sortBy=RELEVANCEandpage=1andq=a+lifetime+of+epiphaniesandpageSize=10andadult_audience_rating=00

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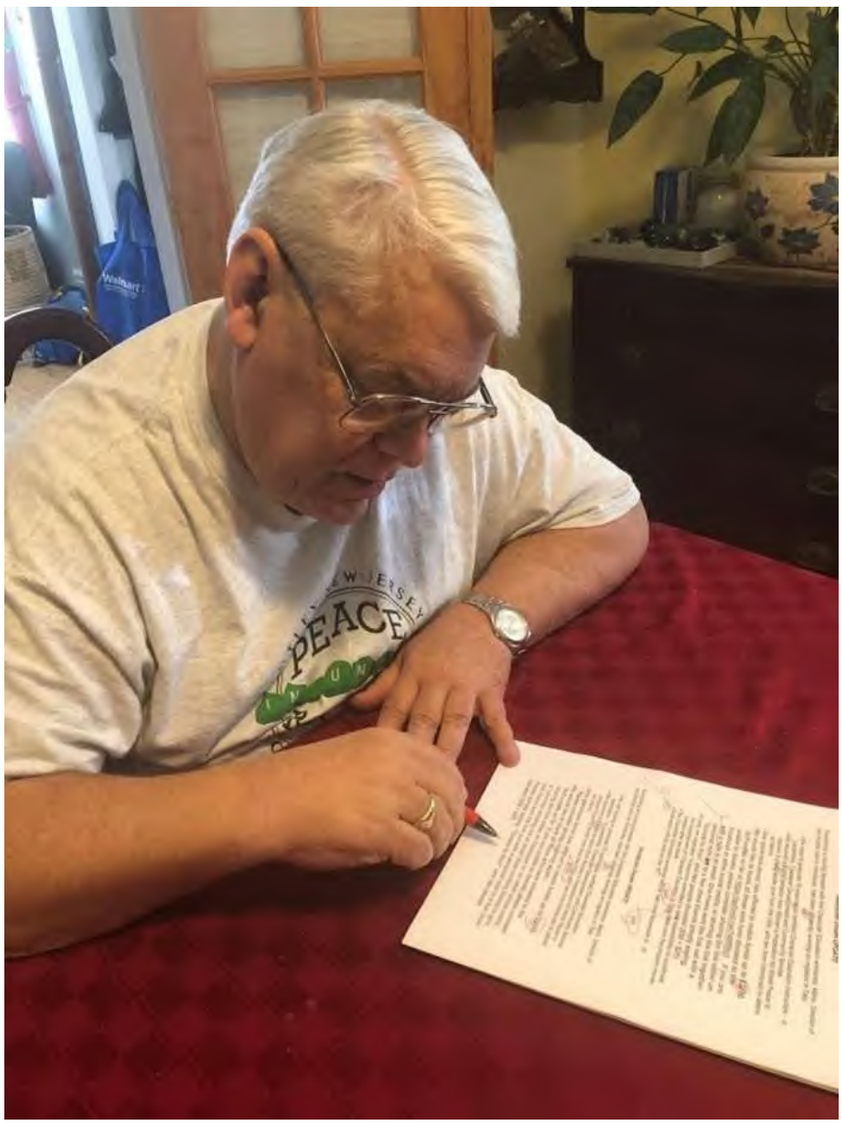


Photo credit: Carol Pobanz

The Golden Age Newsletter began as a small Clifton Senior newsletter about 3 years ago.

ARTICLE GUIDELINES

Purpose: The Golden Age newsletter has been created as a means to keep our elder community connected to one another. Articles are not in any way meant to proselytize or push a point of view.

It is a place to share God's Love – what is positive in our life as a result of finding our Heavenly Parent and True Parents.

Motto: "This is the Dawning of our New Age" – We are always in the process of redefining ourselves as we grow older and as we add experiences to our lives. Therefore, we must consider how God can use us even when we may be decreasing in our physical capabilities.

The e-newsletter is broken down into eight sections:

1. A Featured Message of Inspiration – Helping others to feel hope and inspiration for the establishment of CIG.
2. "Unification Thoughts" – any educational article on the "Fifth Realm of Heart" – Grandparents' heart
3. History Byte – A short article on a positive memory, a funny or affectionate story about experiences in the church with True Parents or with brothers and sisters or an article about the development/experience of helping to develop one of True Parents' providential projects or events.
4. Arts and Culture – A sharing about one's talents, hobbies or interests and how this relates to sharing God's love (to family, community, nation or world).
5. Tributes and Testimonies- a personal testimony of one or more life learning experiences or a Tribute to a spouse, friend, or leader
6. Health – An article that relates to health (physical or mental), possibly providing a link to an article you think might be interesting or important to other seniors.
7. I Love being a Grandparent – stories about grandparenting or about things to do with grandchildren
8. Recipe – Preferably a healthy recipe along with 2-3 paragraphs about what makes it a good or memorable recipe.
9. Book Review – report on a book that inspires thoughts toward a world of peace
10. Bulletin board – reports on personal activities, or request help on a project

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Did someone forward this to you? Subscribe to the Golden Age Newsletter here!

Biological Spirituality: An Essay Reconstructed from a 2015 Recorded Talk

By Dr. Frank LaGrotteria



all photos submitted by F. Lagrotteria

Synopsis: You're basically looking at a million-year-old body and million-year-old emotions. Read on!

We live in 2015, in America, in a land of abundance. Food is everywhere, and medicine and science have taken us to an amazing level. It is easy to assume that because our environment has advanced so dramatically, our bodies and emotions have somehow evolved correspondingly and come into balance with modern science, technology, and circumstances.

But the reality is: they have not. We are living in a modern environment with bodies shaped by an immensely longer biological history. When you eat something, your body processes that food according

to biological systems that developed over vast stretches of time, not according to the comparatively recent environment in which we now live.

Consider refined sugar. For most of human history, sugars were consumed as components of foods rather than in the highly concentrated, refined forms that are now commonplace. Modern abundance therefore presents the body with dietary conditions very different from those under which its metabolic systems developed. The resulting health consequences can include metabolic imbalance and an increased risk of conditions such as type 2 diabetes. The point is not that the body has suddenly adapted to refined sugar; rather, our environment has changed much faster than our underlying biology.

Likewise, when I speak of "biological spirituality," I am talking about the way human beings relate with Heaven, with nature, with other people, and with themselves while carrying emotional capacities that are far older than the modern world around us.

We are sitting here with ancient emotions—the same basic emotions attributed to Noah and Adam: love, hate, jealousy, greed, lust, fear, and so forth. They did not appear because of modern technology or contemporary social conditions. The circumstances in which they arise may change, but the emotions themselves are deeply rooted in human experience.

We think we live in a sophisticated environment and have enlightened ways of relating with one another, but we still feel fear and threat; we still experience love and hate; greed and lust still arise within us. Modernity has changed the setting, not the fundamental emotional repertoire.

When I use the term "biological spirituality," then, I mean that just as these ancient emotions re-present themselves in a modern context, we have to reinterpret our response to them in that modern context.

A Three-Step Framework

The first step is to identify the emotion. There are no fundamentally new emotions created by the latest world situation. They are the same human emotions, eon after eon. The difficult task is to recognize accurately what is actually occurring within us.

The second step is to assess that emotion from what I would call "God's viewpoint." The Divine Principle teaches that human beings and nature are understood as created rather than as purposeless accidents. There is an original design and purpose involved.

This brings us to the question of good and evil. If we believe in God's perfection and in an original purpose

believe in God's perfection and in an original purpose for creation, then evil is not part of that original design. Evil is not an independent creative principle standing alongside good. It can instead be understood as the absence, distortion, or misuse of the good—a failure to realize the original purpose of human existence. Evil takes what is good and perverts or misuses it.

Consider jealousy. We normally think of jealousy as simply a bad thing. But if we roll it back to its underlying function, jealousy can be understood as a protective response within a relationship or family unit. From the perspective of an ideal committed relationship, it is understandable that a wife or husband would react when the other is relating to someone else in a way that threatens that bond. In its proper context, the emotion can serve a protective purpose; distorted or misdirected, it can become destructive. The same method of interpretation can be applied to other emotions.

The emotions that arise, then, should be considered in relation to the good—to the original design, the blueprint of human existence with purpose and order. Otherwise, we would have to believe that evil has its own independent origin, life, and integrity. I do not. Evil reflects the failure of people to realize their God-given character, embody that ideal, and live it out.

So the framework is simple:

1. Identify the emotion.

2. Assess the emotion from God's point of view (or the original nature of creation).

3. Chart a course of action in response.

Here's the rub: there is no particular course of action that can simply be written on a blackboard or put into a PowerPoint for every circumstance, because charting that course of action is precisely a human responsibility.

Human Responsibility

Many people cry out, "Where is God?" when they are suffering, facing difficulty, feeling attacked, recovering from an accident, or confronting a decision. "God doesn't love me. God doesn't care about me. God abandoned me."

But it is precisely at that moment that we confront ourselves as beings of agency and consequence. You want to know what human responsibility is? It is right there—in the place where you feel that nobody is with you, nobody is helping you, and nobody cares about you. That is the gap that can only be filled through the completion of our portion of human responsibility.

Then step back and ask: is it objectively true that nobody cares about me? God doesn't care about me?

My parents don't care about me? My friends don't care about me? They may appear not to care in this particular moment, but there may be a great deal of evidence that they do.

Why, then, does it feel otherwise? Because this may be the moment of my own responsibility. God may appear silent because this is the point at which I must choose and act.

Think about parents. Parents cannot live their children's lives for them. They can guide them, give them opportunities, counsel them, and offer advice. But at the end of the day, parents cannot make every decision for their children. They cannot decide whether their children will do right or wrong or turn right or left.

And we would not want them to. We would not want our parents grabbing the steering wheel and making every decision for us. We want them to respect us enough to allow us to go forward and make decisions of our own. In this respect, I understand God in much the same way.

That is why the third point is to chart your course forward. If you are waiting for enormous hands to reach down, hold you, and carry you through the decision, you have misunderstood the situation. You are an autonomous moral being. You have agency, and your choices are consequential.

You can chart a course forward if you have first identified what is really going on—and that alone can be one of the hardest things in life. Then you must see it from the right perspective, from God's viewpoint. Finally, you must act. That is where responsibility lies.

Conclusion

When I talk about biological spirituality, I am talking about getting down to the root of our emotions and of what is really going on, then reinterpreting and reevaluating those emotions in light of modern circumstances or, in our case, from a Divine Principle framework.

But be not deceived: these are the same fundamental emotions human beings have experienced across the ages. What we can bring to the table is a clearer understanding of how to manage them and how to take appropriate action when the decisive opportunities arise.

Not every moment is a great moral crossroads. We make countless small decisions, but the big moments come only occasionally: marriage, a serious temptation, an ethical choice, a decision that can redirect a life. These are moments that define us and allow us to go forward.

That is why we need to be prepared—with good thinking, a sound philosophy, and the willingness to act.





〈 Lightning Strike

Idealism and I 〉

Science Loves Miracles More Than Religion

by Richard Lewis, PhD



All photos submitted by R. Lewis

A not usual topic of conversations is the concept of miracles in both religion and science.

In religion, a miracle is when a spiritual input makes something really unlikely to happen. Striking a rock and creating a spring in a desert is highly improbable, but can happen when guided to a particular point.

In science, miracles involve a measure called 'entropy'—a sophisticated tech term for a measure of disorder. The physical universe is ruled by a simple, commonsense principle:

In any history of any change, the disorder will always increase (or at best, stay constant). Mothers with children know this from exhausting experience. In the delightful brevity of mathematics, this translates to $\Delta S \geq 0$. Google it for more info.

Seemingly going against this, of course, is the history of a living entities, e.g., a moss, which takes disordered carbon dioxide and water and turns it into a well-

ordered plant. While Life seems to disobey the law, actually when the total environment is added to the picture, the entropy is huge, and the law is globally obeyed.

So Life does not disobey the Law of Entropy, just the law in thermodynamics, but Life is a huge generator of environmental entropy.

Whenever a natural process ends up with extra order (a decrease in entropy), rather than the lawful decline, we can define this as a mini-miracle, as it is improbably skirting the universal law somewhat.

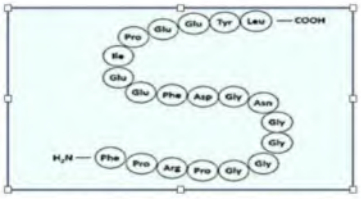
Most of the useful proteins have hundreds of the 20 amino acids strung in a chain (the Primary Structure). Their structures are improbable, even for a simple heart medicine polypeptide of just 20 amino acids in a specific sequence. Big Pharma paid big bucks to find this specific sequence, tiny needle in a sun-sized haystack.

Christianity has a few miracles, some metaphorical, and some substantial. A real one is probably Moses striking rocks into springs in the desert, or Jesus curing a disease by spiritual power. On the hand, bones coming to life or the Earth that stops revolving are decidedly metaphorical for a spiritual change.

Darwinism, on the other hand, has it accidental changes in histories (mutations) are occasionally happening, even with chances of one in a billion. As everyone knows, someone's gonna win the Powerball eventually. Trust me, every Powerball winner thinks a minor miracle occurred or even a major miracle.



Royal Flush
The Odds: 1 in 649,740



Bivalirudin polypeptide,
1 in
100,000,000,000,000,000,000,000,000

Everyone knows this. They also know that never in cosmic history has anyone won 1,000 multimillion-dollar Jackpots over a lifetime. That is just too many miracles; cheating is suspected.

The real problem with Darwinism is that its description of the history going from a simple bacteria to the first amoeba is scientifically known to have involved thousands of sophisticated, multi-step changes—mutation miracles—in metabolism, structure, eating, etc. Like a Hallmark movie, it's **Darwin zillion mini-miracles**.

Darwinism, therefore, depends on miracles that most

people, most religions, think is way overboard in improbability.

‹ ...AND TARZAN RUNS INTO THE JUNGLE

Lightning Strike ›

...AND TARZAN RUNS INTO THE JUNGLE

By Larry Moffitt



Tarzan looks up and sees smoke way off in the distance. "Something wrong, Cheetah." The script has this simple direction: [Tarzan runs into the jungle]. He does, and the director hollers, "Cut."

Tarzan does not go up into the treehouse to tell Jane and boy where he's going. He doesn't grab a bottle of water, an energy bar, a pastrami and mayo on white bread, not even a compass. Tarzan runs into the jungle.

Naked and barefoot, with a knife strapped around his waist, and his family jewels rattling around in his loincloth. He dashes headlong into the bush, across a field of pythons (all named Monty) and venomous touch-me-not frogs. Life is stark, brutal, and direct where he lives. Smoke. Something wrong. Therefore, someone must need saving. ...And Tarzan runs into the jungle.

I understand this is being shot in an indoor studio with fake trees all around, borrowed from the old Lassie set and from Bonanza being shot next door. Dirt is scattered on the floor, the area is painstakingly lit for effect. There is no rainy season in a TV rainforest. The director needs to get Tarzan out of there and into the

next shot. So Tarzan runs into the jungle.

In the high canopy jungle, long vines dangle from the treetops and somehow find their way over to an adjacent tree 100 feet away, where it drapes itself across a branch within arm's length of where Tarzan will land. There is no tree that doesn't have a vine waiting. Thus, he goes zero to 60 in three seconds, reaching the faraway smoke in no time. You don't see Cheetah swinging on vines, but he still gets to the smoke at the same time.

By the way, Cheetah is not simply comic relief. He does heavy lifting in the plot, sometimes stealing keys and taking them to Tarzan and whoever is handcuffed with him. Cheetah can also be counted on to do a silly dance in the final scene, causing Tarzan, Jane, and Boy to laugh.

Tarzan arrives on scene and lurks in the bush, spying on the evildoers, when Jane calls to ask, "Tarz, what the hell?!" His cell phone ringtone alerts the bad guys and they grab him and handcuff him to a pretty American girl with no sweat glands, wearing a safari helmet.

Just kidding. No cell phone towers. No cell phones. No computer chips either. The only computer in the mid-60s was a Video Pong game in the 7-Eleven. But even if that were not the case, loincloths don't have pockets.

This is incredibly instructive if you're able to take it. You can't even manage to clean out your kitchen junk drawer, but Tarzan, the original minimalist has zero emotional clutter. He speaks in short, clipped sentences. No moralizing speeches. No pronouns. No gender (that he's aware of). No personal space. Just a sense that someone off in the distance needs saving. ... And Tarzan runs into the jungle.



all photos submitted by Larry Moffitt

〈 Mayhem in Maryland

Science Loves Miracles More Than Religion 〉

BLESSING & FAMILY MINISTRY of FFWPU-USA

Build your Blessed Family. ♡

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Blessed Family photos by @Fukuya.Sano

Lightning Strike

By Bob Beebe



– based on true events that happened to his wife Karen as a trail guide in New Mexico.

Like Lauren in the story, Karen was guiding a group of girls (in her case actually about 5-6) on a mountain trail in New Mexico when she and another girl were struck by lightning. As in the story, a helicopter carried her paralyzed body off the mountain. She spent the next several months in the hospital and fortunately fully recovered.

This incident changed the course of her life. She began traveling with some friends, met her spiritual father in California, and joined the church.

After we were blessed, we traveled to meet her family in Texas. Her dad took us up to the attic where the clothes she had been wearing that fateful day on the mountain were stored. There were holes where the lightning had entered her pants at the waist after hitting and traveling down the metal bars on each side of her backpack and out through her boots.

The Story:

"That's it. Take my hand and I'll pull you up."

Ashley grabbed her hand and Lauren easily hoisted her up to the ledge.

"Now you, Emily."

Now you, Emily.

Lauren extended her hand to the frizzy red-haired 14-year-old down below. Emily looked up at her defiantly.

"I can do it myself, thank you," she huffed as she struggled to pull herself up. Lauren watched for a minute, then tried to assist her.

"Leave me alone, I said! I'll do it myself!"

Lauren drew back and watched Emily claw her way up to the ledge. As she straightened up, she gave Lauren a triumphant look as if to say, "See, I don't need you!"

Emily turned away from Lauren. "Let's keep going," she said to Ashley, taking her by the arm.

Emily and Ashley were best friends from years back. Emily had had a rough ride the past couple of months after her father suddenly passed away in the spring from a stroke. She really missed him. He'd been her anchor in helping her to deal with her emotional ups and downs. Without him, she felt herself spiraling out of control. Her mother wasn't any help. She was as emotional as Emily. After her father died, their relationship became unbearable. Her mother seemed to be always stressed out and controlling. To escape, Emily took to hanging out at the mall, neglecting her schoolwork and coming home late at night. Exasperated, Emily's mother arranged with Ashley's parents to send them both to a high adventure ranch in New Mexico for the summer.

This was their third day at the ranch. Emily and her friend were hiking through the Sangre de Christo mountains with this ranger who reminded her of her mother. She knew nothing about Lauren. They had just met that morning. But she seemed to be trying to control her, just like her mother, telling her what to do.

"Emily, wait!" shouted Lauren from behind. "We should stay together."

There she goes again, thought Emily. Leave me alone, will you!

Emily ignored her and kept climbing. Ashley turned around.

"Em, let's wait," Ashley said. "Lauren's right. We need to stay together."

"I can take care of myself," Emily shot back gruffly. "I don't need any guide."

She stopped to let Ashley and Lauren go on ahead of her, hanging back but keeping them in sight.

After about an hour the wind began to pick up. Threatening clouds formed over the mountain. Suddenly a bolt of lightning flashed across the sky followed seconds later by a loud boom.

"We'd better find shelter—and quick!" Lauren yelled. "We don't want to be out on the ridge in a thunderstorm."

The wind was howling strongly now. Another bolt hit ahead of them, just over the next ridge. Hail began to pelt down hard, stinging their faces and hands.

"Lauren, I'm afraid!" Ashley shouted through the howling wind. She struggled to stay close to Lauren, who had begun to pick up the pace. Emily trailed behind, stumbling over the slick wet rocks.

Suddenly the entire area went white, and a thunderous blast followed almost immediately. All three hikers went down. Momentarily stunned, Emily struggled to her feet. Peering ahead through the hail she saw Ashley and Lauren lying face down on the trail 20 feet ahead. Shocked and dazed, she made her way to them.

"Ash!" Emily shouted, shaking her by the shoulders. "Ash, get up!"

Ashley turned her head slowly and looked up at Emily. "I-I can't! I can't move!"

Emily looked at Lauren's apparently lifeless body, just three feet away. She nudged her side with her hand. No response.

"Lauren's not moving," she said, with a hint of concern.

Ashley wailed, "Oh, Emily, what are we going to do?"

Emily stood up shakily, her mind swimming. Before she knew it ,her legs were running, taking her down the mountain. Got to get help was all she could think.

"I'll be back," she shouted over her shoulder.

Frantically, she made her way down, trying to avoid falling on the slippery slope. As she desperately tried to remember the way back to the ranch, her mind flooded with feelings of remorse over the way she treated Lauren. What a jerk I've been, she thought. What did she ever do to me? Her mother's image flashed into Emily's mind, but she now realized Lauren was not like her at all. Lauren had always been calm and considerate towards her.

By the time Emily reached the ranch, the storm clouds had receded and the sun was shining. No one was in sight. She ran up to the main office and burst inside, breathing heavily. The girl behind the desk looked up. "What the...?"

"Quick! We need a helicopter right away! My friend and our guide are stranded up on the mountain. They were hit by lightning. Our guide Lauren looks..."

Tears welled up in her eyes as Emily thought of Lauren.

A rescue helicopter was requisitioned to fly to the spot where the hikers were. As it approached, Emily could see Ashley and Lauren below. Ashley was sitting against a rock. Lauren was still lying on the ground, now face up. The helicopter touched down on a level area above the girls. Emily bolted and ran down the incline.

She waved to her friend as she approached their stricken guide. Lauren opened her eyes and looked at Emily gratefully. She still seemed to be unable to move.

"Emily!" she whispered in a soft voice.

"Don't speak," Emily said, kneeling down beside her. She lifted up the young woman's head and cradled it in her arms. "I'm so sorry. Can you ever forgive me?"

Lauren managed a weak nod.

Emily sighed, "Let's get you out of here."



all photos submitted by Bob Beebe

‹ Science Loves Miracles More Than Religion

Biological Spirituality:An Essay Reconstructed from a 2015 Recorded Talk ›

Mayhem in Maryland

God Bless America Washington DC

By Walter Loew

Early in the last "selling" (selling tickets for Washington Monument bus tickets) week, I was in a cluster of smaller "project" buildings in a "two-level" motel style, and the woman who answered my knock was definitely not a candidate. She must have been over 80, and she even had wrinkles on her facial wrinkles. Ordinarily, I would have apologized for disturbing her, but my determination was to tell everyone, so I did. She was very excited about the event, and she sent me to talk to her daughter about it. The daughter lived in another section of the complex, and she must have been over 60 herself. Referring to her mother as among the "old people" who do not consider the logistics of such things, she said they had other plans. However, she directed me to a nearby retirement center, giving me the name of the person who organized trips for the residents to have planned outings to museums and other attractions. That woman's name was something like Helen Flowers.

So I went there, a modern building about 12 stories tall, and asked for Helen Flowers. Unfortunately, she was on vacation and not due until the next week. However, since this was the last week, the ladies at the front desk told me the residents had just finished lunch, but I could explain the opportunity to any still lingering in the dining area. One guided me there and introduced me to the 20 or so people sitting at tables and chatting. When I explained about the event, they were as excited as the original wrinkled lady, and they lined up to get tickets. While I was writing down everyone's information, taking the money, and giving them their tickets, one person said that Mr. Barnes wanted me to go to him. I was a bit peeved to be interrupted, but I went over to him and learned he wanted tickets as

well. He had asked to go to him - not only because he was 90 years old but because he was blind. I ended up with over 30 tickets "sold," and I revisited the location a few times during that week when others who had not been in the dining room called to ask about tickets. Overall, enough people signed up that this met the level to have one of the buses stop at the front door of the facility.

Knowing that only about 80% of the people who purchase tickets would actually show for the events, during the final week leading up to September 18th, our focus was on revisiting all the folks who had tickets to remind them about the upcoming event and let them know where the bus stops would be set up. I went back to the retirement center and met Helen Flowers in person. However, it was not a pleasant meeting, for she was more like "Hell on Fire," and totally outraged at what I had done in circumventing her responsibilities in this "unapproved" outing. Apparently, she always kept a tight rein on the sanctioned group outings, and this outing had basically violated all the controls for these elderly folks who might have complex medical issues, meal requirements, and so forth. She was like a drill sergeant, angrily going up and down the list of all the irresponsible elements of the situation I had created. Even though these were mature adults who had made individual choices, her view was that it was just as irresponsible of them as I was, but I should know better! Eventually, she proclaimed that what had been done had been done, so like Pontius Pilate 2000 years ago, she washed her hands of the whole situation, implying that any complaints, lawsuits, and so forth would be placed specifically at my feet.

But that was not enough trouble. One of people who had been contracted to provide a dozen or so buses for the event had gone to the licensing office at the end of the week to extend his license to add another six buses for the charter. The folks at the licensing office noted that his license was for charter trips only within the state of Maryland; he was not allowed to transport people across state lines, which included going into Washington DC. Thus, not only did we not have the extra half-dozen buses, but we had lost the previously confirmed dozen buses. At this time, the Maryland State Fair was also opening that same weekend, and groups around the area had contracted every bus for group transportation to the fair. Not a single bus was available. The designated bus stops had to be consolidated, and no bus would be scheduled to stop at the retirement center. I had to go back again at lunch time to provide maps for my people to know where the closest bus would be available. Fortunately, "Hell on Fire" was not having any give and take with me, so I was able to go in, meet my people, and go out without any further

confrontations.

When the day came, I was put in charge of the bus stop closest to the retirement center, but it was still several blocks away. It had a pay phone nearby, and I needed to report in once my buses arrived, and then I should hop on one of the buses. If any people were not able to get a seat, I should report that and ask for one of the backup buses to stop for them. I should stay and monitor that.

When the "yellow" buses came, I ended up with about 18 people left over, so I called and asked for one of the "backup" buses to swing by my location. What I didn't know was that we had no "backup" buses.

Meanwhile, some distance away, our group leader, Matthew Morrison, was in a similar situation with 26 family members who had not been able to board at that stop. The difference was that Matthew knew very clearly no more buses were available. The only thing he could think to do was to start praying for some miracle. He walked a short distance away so that he could pray without being seen and overheard in his desperation. However, because it looked like he might be trying to abandon them, most of the family followed him and started demanding to know what was going on. Some guy driving by saw this crowd of Black people surrounding a White dude, so he stopped to find out what was going on. Matthew explained frankly what the situation was. The guy said he owned three tour buses which had been chartered to go to the Fair, but had just been cancelled. The guy said he had three buses with drivers at his lot in the city: would Matthew like to charter them?

These three buses—air-conditioned with bathrooms—soon stopped at my area and picked up my 18 people and me.

As Satchel Paige has reportedly said: "If you don't pray in the sun, then don't expect answers in the rain."



...AND TARZAN RUNS INTO THE JUNGLE ›

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Idealism and I

Over the decades since I began teaching back in the late 70s, I've sometimes noticed young people being pulled into activism because of their idealism and their anger with persistent injustice in society. And now, five decades later, many of those young people are adult spouses and parents, and thankfully, much of that idealism remains intact. Nevertheless, when the matter of activism comes up, I often feel disquieted. I wear my idealism on my sleeve, yet I can't conceal my reservations about the intensity of their fervor to combat injustice.

That's because I'm tempered by the memory of my own experience back in the 60s and 70s, when I was a teen in high school and a 20-something in college. The Vietnam war was full on. I knew a friend's brother and a next-door neighbor who'd fought there and come back *very* disillusioned, their innocence and conviction gone.

When the protest movement against the war and everything else happened, I eventually joined it and had my first run-in with police. When told to disperse, I objected reasonably that I wasn't doing anything wrong. In my inexperience, I expected a correspondingly civil reply. Instead, the officer shouted commands at me with clear intention to intimidate; I tried again to communicate and was again bellowed at. XI That incident completely altered my understanding of police; it seemed to confirm all the "us against them" bad-mouthing that was prevalent.

Years of college had already turned me agnostic and now I leaned toward the widespread distrust of authority—not only in religion, but in government and education, as well. I'd fallen into cynicism and even some of the arrogance that can attend that dark mindset.

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At the height of the weeks of mounting protest, students at liberal arts schools across the nation were involved in massive demonstrations, forcing school closures and police confrontations. The momentum was so strong that even my own less-political engineering and design school was engulfed and I participated in its takeover and closing. When we occupied some of the office buildings, I personally took over one professor's office for days and nights. We waited as student leaders forced the administration to meet them and accept our demands.

The main leader was a charismatic macho guy who proudly styled himself after the revolutionary hero Che Guevara. He sported that man's hair, beret, tactical jacket, and he had a similarly dressed young woman as his sidekick. They seemed to bask in their roles as the high-profile commanders of the school's protesting student body.

The main leader was a charismatic macho guy who proudly styled himself after the revolutionary hero Che Guevara. He sported that man's hair, beret, tactical jacket, and he had a similarly dressed young woman as his sidekick. They seemed to bask in their roles as the high-profile commanders of the school's protesting student body.



But as the school's stalemate dragged on, I sensed that we weren't being told all the facts that we'd been assured were forthcoming. I began suspecting a concealed agenda and that just causes were being used as a subterfuge to achieve them. We were of course aware that our campus activism was one part

of a larger movement to tear down "The Establishment". It was so widespread that there was even a soundtrack provided by the rock bands of the time and played by the new, alternative radio stations. XII I was surrounded by these things, but not entirely convinced by them. I observed, with reservations, that there was too much emotionalism and too little restraint. There was a bravado to the talk, an aggression to the behavior and an abandon to the music that belied trust. Still, it was pretty heady for a while, as the counterculture seemed to gain momentum. We started believing that a massive social change might truly be imminent.

But that hope evaporated when the confrontation with police and other enforcement agencies escalated into violence. And when protesting students at Kent State University were shot and killed, that marked the beginning of the end of the revolution, for many. We'd gone up against "The Man" and learned that violently confronting armed authorities wasn't actually viable strategy.

Realizing that change wasn't going to come via these means, I withdrew and resumed looking for other answers. The "revolution" passed, I graduated with honors, but I didn't look for work as college grads normally did. I instead hoped that, *if* God existed, I'd be guided. And before summer's end, I met the movement. That first year in was the hardest of my life: I'd sought a path to enlightenment, release and inner peace but instead found that humanity exists in a state of war between Heaven and hell, in which neutrality isn't really possible.

Back then, we studied just three things: *the Principle* (with remarkable insights into the Bible and world history), *Communism: Critique and Counterproposal* (a dissection of its diabolical aims and means), and *Unification Thought* (a horizon-expanding insight into original life). And these were intense, in-depth sessions of seven, 21, 40 and 120 days, repeatedly. And then, 10 years later in 1985, I was in the Philippines to establish CARP and Wonhwa Dō (martial arts).

Some big, hard realities there were a history of colonization, foreign exportation of natural resources, and widespread poverty due to an enormous imbalance in the distribution of wealth. These were realities that directly impacted everyone's' life, including the lives of my brave students and my own blood kin. And they were a perfect storm of troubles that could ignite adults fighting to support their families and idealistic youth longing for justice. Two of my first cousins were activists—one was a student leader who was arrested, broken and died young; another was a lawyer who did pro-bono work for activist poor and was embittered.

So, while I was teaching Unificationism on campus, trying to usher in a new age of God-centered global family and presiding over the nation's CARP and Wonhwa Dō chapters,



the radical left was recruiting support for violent revolution and creating communist "cells" of students on those very same campuses. The military wing of communism in the Philippines—both then and now—is the NPA (New Peoples' Army). One of my CARP leaders told of an instance in his province where the NPA held a public execution of a townsman who encouraged resistance to them. And on campus, CARP became the clear enemy of communism when we started adding CAUSA Worldview lectures to our regional seminars for CARP leaders and students. The CAUSA organization was hosting powerful seminars throughout Latin America and then in other nations, including the Philippines, to warn against the dangers of communism.

My education climaxed when the People Power Revolution against the government of Ferdinand Marcos rose up and took to the streets. Just outside of our office on the main thoroughfare between Manila and Quezon City, over a short period of days, barricades of burning tires, cars, gutted buses and other vehicles were set up to oppose the army and impede its vehicles. Sporadic shooting broke out and this chaos was what the radical Left was counting on. It provided the expected opportunity to step up, take control of the popular revolt, push out the old government and install themselves into power, just as they'd done in other developing nations around the world. The revolt would succeed, the people would feel they'd been victorious and many of the radical left's spokespersons would appear as heroes and would naturally assume leadership in the new government that was supposed to be provisional. But as they implemented their plans and cemented their control, it would become apparent to the people that they'd been duped and that their new masters were more brutal than the old ones. That was the playbook that CAUSA had identified in Asia and that it was intensely educating Latin America against, soon followed by work in other developing nations like the Philippines.

Fortunately for the Philippines, its People Power Revolution wasn't hijacked by the left because there wasn't a power vacuum after the revolution: there already was a president-in-waiting who was

supported by the Army, and they were fully aware of the threat of communism. This person was the widely-respected and widely-supported widow of the opposition leader who'd been assassinated some years earlier. She was sincerely committed to democracy, as was the army general who'd defected in order to support her. And so that opportunity for the communists to insert themselves into power and turn the Philippines into the next Asian communist nation was thwarted.

In 1992, I went to St. Petersburg, Russia to visit college students and to staff a martial arts seminar. The flight provided a psychological experience that was and remains a unique experience in my life. I'd only heard about East Germany and the Berlin Wall, read about Lenin and Stalin, and though I lived my childhood during the Cold War, I'd never actually experienced life under a totalitarian regime. But on that trip to St. Petersburg—formerly Leningrad—we stopped in Finland to transfer flights from a normal airline to one that flew the last leg into Russia. My traveling companion to the martial arts seminar was a professional security guard. But when the passengers were queued up to transfer planes, the unusual tension in the atmosphere was palpable: everyone was totally quiet, there was no conversation, and no one made eye-contact with anyone else. My companion was spooked and asked me to carry his passport for him. I think he feared that his American-ness could single him out to be pulled aside for questioning or a search. Fortunately, that didn't happen, but the next hours on this last leg of the trip into Russia happened in absolute quietness. It appeared habitual for people to carefully avoid calling attention to themselves by speaking with anyone else. It wasn't a relaxing flight at all—the general sense of *paranoia* was pervasive and dense. My companion and I had never experienced anything like it in our lives.

In the mid-90s, I took five trips to China to staff a study-exchange program. Each two-week trip took us to two conferences in a region. We went to colleges and universities outside of the capital city and were able to get a sense of normal peoples' lives, far away from the big, urban political center of the country. But on every trip, we were always and unfailingly accompanied by a party representative from Beijing. Their clear purpose was to surveil us and make sure that we didn't get too close to any of the professors or students and share anything that might be ideologically conflicting, or learn anything about their actual lives that would be damaging to the approved, orthodox image of life that they wanted to project to our party. I managed to hear an unforgettable life-experience anyway.

For me, having lived through all these events firsthand,

a lasting lesson was learned. The events absolutely confirmed experiences I'd already had as a CARP foot-soldier in the USA:

When we'd have speaking events on campus, we had heated stand-offs with students who opposed CARP. I believe that many were simply conscientious and were possibly unaware that their core student leaders were radically Left.

I was befriended by a young Vietnamese refugee who'd been imprisoned and tortured by the Viet Cong in his country for fighting against them. Despite his age, he had a worn intensity in his manner and a smoldering lethality in his martial arts that I'd never seen.

And while fundraising, I'd stumbled into low-income housing for entire communities of displaced Cambodian families who had to flee here because of the takeover of their country by the Khmer Rouge. They lived in poverty, depression and grief. They'd lost not only loved ones and their ancestral homes, but their entire homeland. They could only find refuge in this completely foreign land, with a language and culture that they couldn't understand. Seeing them huddled in their quarters, I sensed their gnawing uncertainty about the reliability of America's largesse.

There is another more recent experience that further solidified my already cautious view of the world. On Sept. 11, 2001, I was working in a tall office building eight blocks north of the World Trade Center. I was on the north side of my building when a loud furor broke out on the south side, so I ran with others to see what was causing the ruckus. We found everyone staring in shock and disbelief at a huge blackened burning hole in one of the World Trade Center towers, smoke pouring out of it. Someone said it had been hit by a plane, so I thought it must have been some poor fool who'd accidentally flown into the building. But as we watched, another plane approached and it wasn't a small private plane but a large commercial airliner. And it went right into the second of the Twin Towers, exploding and creating another huge blackened hole. At that point—and with the memory of the recent bombing of another business building in the same area—I ran to my desk, grabbed my things and rushed many long flights down the nearest packed stairwell. When I exited the building at ground level, the street outside was littered with debris, and haze and smoke were billowing into the area from the direction of the impacts we'd witnessed. So I ran to the subway and caught the last northbound train to the George Washington Bridge, because that was the farthest point north, away from the tip of Manhattan, that the train would reach. When I got to the streets, they were packed and I found a vantage point overlooking the Hudson River where crowds were gathered, staring

south in disbelief at the burning Twin Towers. And then they slowly collapsed in clouds of smoke. I rushed to hitch a ride in a pickup truck that was going to the bridge, hoping that it would make it across before it was closed, because it surely would be—either by police or by worse. I sat in the back of that truck in shock, as others piled in. I don't recall anyone speaking, just hoping that we'd not be turned back before we could make it across. When it did reach the NJ side, we stumbled out, I thanked the driver and then slowly walked the crowded distance home in silence, through the width of two towns, until I reached home.

This isn't a memory I can forget. But it's also something I don't talk about. Because it's not likely—excluding a first responder or a war veteran—that a normal person could grasp an event that sudden, massive, violent and extreme. I remember how Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn's book *The Gulag Archipelago* was considered required reading for early members of the movement, when it was still heavily committed to the VOC mission. I knew about it, but avoided reading it, because I didn't want to bear the depressing burden of such knowledge. I rationalized that I'd seen enough in my life, heard from missionaries to occupied nations and friends who'd been in Berlin before the wall came down, and felt enough from my Dad who'd fought in WWII. That was enough to for me to take part in the battle Abonim was leading.

And so, decades later as I began noticing that young people in America are being drawn into activism because of their belief in the ideals of social justice, the memory of what I'd experienced in my own youth comes back to me. It's alarmingly similar to the stratagems that the radical Left had employed to prey on the sincere idealism of my generation's youth—in America, in the Philippines, and in other troubled nations in Latin America, Africa, Asia and elsewhere.

So, I feel it's crucial to look carefully before leaping into something, despite peer pressure or appeals to the conscience. Just as in our not-so-distant past, missteps today can increase division and enmity, lead to violence and culminate in tragedy. And individually, they can lead to a path away from the Three Blessings —a path away from God and faith, away from true love, and away from one's original creative potential. I remember that I'd observed, studied and even prayed for other options when I arrived at that crucial crossroads in my youth. And by sheer grace, after losing my idealism, I could find it again; and it's sustained me all my life.

2024.11.09; amended in 2026

Related:

- Idealism isn't merely cerebral, it's pragmatic. See *The Practical Value of Vision* .
- The Principle crucially reminds us of the possibility that the conscience can be misled: "...As the , the standard of our ..." (*Exposition of the DP*, p. 50) See *Thoughts on "Conscience"* .

Endnotes below ⇊

XIXI Much later, I learned that shouting is the first action that an officer is trained to do to assert control in tense situations.

XIIXII Music impacted many young boomers, so I include these three links (in case music trivia means something to you):
Though the raw soundtrack of 70s revolution rock (*Ohio*, *For What It's Worth*, *Volunteers of America*) sometimes grated on my ears, it clearly reflected widespread emotions that I hear echoes of today. But there's one song that, to me, reflects post-revolution disillusionment: *Won't Get Fooled Again*

〈 Biological Spirituality:An Essay Reconstructed from a 2015 Recorded Talk

Widows and Widowers 〉

Widows and Widowers

By Mark Anderson



all photos submitted by M. Anderson

I was blessed in marriage in 1982. I lived as a happily married man for 43 years. Then, suddenly my wife was called home through a cancer diagnosis that was discovered too late. One month before she died, she said to me, "You can get married again." At the time, it did not mean much for me. But as the months from her transition have rolled by, I began to think about my situation.

One day, while watching a baseball game on TV, the announcers said that they wanted to honor a former big-league manager who passed away at the age of 84. I am 71 years old. In comparison, it meant that I will likely live 13 more years. My mom (who passed

away in April) was 95 years old. Of course, we really don't know when our number will be up, but it seems likely I will live 13 to 20 more years. Given that shaky calculation, I asked myself, do I want to live alone or with someone to share life with. The answer for me was with someone.

I called the church headquarters to ask about comfort blessings and was told that they no longer are an option. One elder church leader told me, "just take responsibility." I can unite with that direction. In fact, **I started a private Facebook page called UC Widows / Widowers Community. It is a private group, so a person has to apply to be admitted.** The purpose is to be a support group for those members who have lost a spouse.

If you have lost a spouse or know someone who has, please direct them to this private group. We plan to have educational opportunities for those who find themselves in this category. It is a place to learn from others and share one's story and experience. Life on earth is short as it is.

It seems likely that God would want our members to have a place to connect and share. Given that, I am trying to let members know that this support group exists. If you have good ideas for the group, please feel free to share them with me. My email is markanderson5@cox.net.

I look forward to seeing you on the page. Mark

〈 Idealism and I

Offering Into The Settlement Era 〉