



Christian Report

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

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Chaplain Steve Satterfield gives the memorial message for SSG Randy Haney at Camp Finley-Shields, Afghanistan.

Godincidences — by CH(CPT) Steve Satterfield, USA

Six degrees of separation is the theory that anyone on the planet can be connected to any other person on the planet through a chain of acquaintances that has no more than five intermediaries. The theory was first proposed in 1929 by the Hungarian writer Frigyes Karinthy in a short story called "Chains." Instead of using the word "coincidence", I sometimes use "Godincidence" because it describes those situations in life that happen according to the divine ingenuity. I have had three such happenings occur to me the last three

months, so I decided to write about them. my Chaplain boss! We were hoping they would meet before he deployed to Afghanistan that month. I thank the Lord that Christ set up this "happens" meeting.

Godincidence # 2. I'm ordained with the Vineyard Church USA. There are only about five Vineyard military chaplains. Would you believe I was in my office in Afghanistan, and who walked in? Another Vineyard chaplain whom I've never met before! I was able to network her with other Vineyard chaplains, so we have more connectivity. Thanks, Lord!

Godincidence #3. A nursing home in Ocala, FL has been sending us school supplies for the needy Afghan children, and I'm not sure how they found me. I emailed a couple I know from Colorado who now live in Ocala to see if it was them. It wasn't, so I asked them if they knew the nursing home and Dee, who was sending us supplies. They wrote back "We decided to go to a store to pick up a couple of

items. We don't usually frequent this store, but they happen to carry a particular brand of plastic storage bins that we like. As we came into the front of the store, there was a table set up laden with groceries and a large "Support The Troops" sign. Two ladies were at the table, so I immediately came up and asked, "you gals don't happen to know Dee, do you?" The one on the left quickly stood up and said "that's ME!" I almost cried! I gave her a big hug and then told her about you and the school supplies. She was very happy to know that you received them and told me to tell you that if you need more to let her know. I was so blessed that I was able to meet her and tell her how much of a blessing she is for helping our Soldiers and the children. God truly set that up!"

So, this gives you a glimpse how the Lord has been working in my life the last several months. I can't wait to see what other Godincidences He has planned to encourage us!

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months, so I decided to write about them.

Godincidence #1. I deployed to Afghanistan in May 2009. My parents were visiting Colorado Springs in June, and my Mom stopped in a Supercuts, which is unusual, since she goes to a shop in Denver. Whom did she meet there, but

Monthly Book Offer — *Hope for the Home Front* — Marshéle Carter Waddell

Military wives are entrenched at home in the battle for their marriages, their children, their faith, and their sanity, which are all caught in the crossfire.

A seasoned military wife, Marshéle Carter Waddell arms other military wives with God's promises of power and protection. In her warm and personable style,

she recounts many of her own family stories: a call to duty interrupting a romantic dinner, watching her husband disappear

into a submarine not to return home for months, and being far away from family during her father's illness and death. For wives serving on the home front, burdens of fear, loneliness, anger, disappointment, temptation, single parenting, and separation from loved

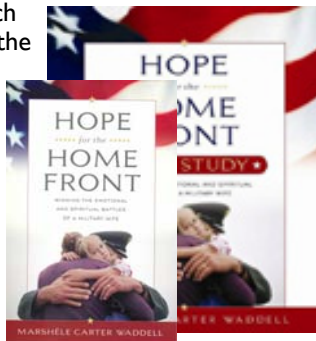
ones may easily rob them of the joy of following God's calling for their families. *Hope for the Home Front* provides scriptural promises, tested advice, and compassionate support. "We have a firm anchor," Waddell reminds readers: "our faith in an unchanging God whose promises never fail."

This book is available free to our membership while they last. You may order this and other resources from the "Members Only" Resource page of our website or call the Home Office.



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From What Height Fallen — by Bob Flynn, President/CEO

Far different is the humiliating language of Christianity. From it we learn that man is an apostate creature, fallen from his high original, degraded in his nature, and depraved in his faculties; indisposed to good, and disposed to evil; prone to vice, it is natural and easy to him; disinclined to virtue, it is difficult and laborious; that he is tainted with sin, not slightly and superficially, but radically and to the very core. These are truths which, however mortifying to our pride, one would think (if this very corruption itself did not warp the judgment) none would be hardy enough to attempt to controvert. I know not any thing which brings them home so forcibly to my own feelings, as the consideration of what still remains to us of our primitive dignity, when contrasted with our present state of moral degradation,

“Into what depth thou seest, From what height fallen.”

(William Wilberforce, The Practical View of the Prevailing)

If I could completely comprehend the full stature of the moral depravity that lives within my flesh, I would be able to speak with authority in directly referencing the depravity of the world in which I live. But to do so would only display my hypocrisy like a beacon in the night and with due diligence parade my ignorance across the fields of man's utter folly. For it is the likeness I see in the mirror each day that ought display the image of Christ in all of His fullness but does not. The reason it does not is that my heart remains hard and feels not the complete and utter despair of those who remain both called of God and lost in their sin.

So I endure all things for the sake of those chosen by God, that they too may obtain salvation in Christ Jesus and its eternal glory. (2 Timothy 2:10 NET)

Should I thus languish in my frustrations that those yet held in captivity by the blackness of sin that fills their hearts do not live as though they were numbered among the saints? Would I expect an elephant to fly? Then why is it that my heart is living in a world of impossible expectation? Because I think too highly of myself! Shall I exalt my expectations over those of the Almighty Who knows the end of all things? The complaints of my heart cannot live in the presence of Him who died for me. If the grapes of wrath should by their

weight extinguish my earthly existence would all of my worry add one second to my life or accomplish an eternal task? Should not my eyes shed the tears of the Savior's heart as he grieves for the lost? By divine decree have I been given life abundant, a life that should no longer be lived for myself but for Him who died for me. Whatever events life brings my way, will I glory in the Cross or cower in the perceived defeat? Did Stephen lose when stoned to death while a zealous Saul looked on? Or was this a divine appointment kept that would in due time break the heart of this very zealous Pharisee on the road to Damascus? Stephen was called to glory so that the Apostle Paul could become debtor to the whole world for Christ's sake.

For the love of Christ controls us, since we have concluded this, that Christ died for all; therefore all have died. And he died for all so that those who live should no longer live for themselves but for him who died for them and was raised. (2 Corinthians 5:14-15 NET)

Oh America, **from what height fallen.** Did we not pray for salvation's song to reverberate through our hearts and minds—only to abandon its Author within a generation? Did we not choose to stand idly by while one human owned another? Have we not now created an underclass of peoples here at home and around the world that toil for a menial wage because of our greed. Have we not mortgaged our future and that of our grandchildren? Do we not owe the unearned wages of generations yet to be born? Are we not financially bankrupt as a nation while our leaders keep cold cash in their government office refrigerators? Is that the American dream we offer from sea to shining sea?

At the very same time our church parking lots portray the true face of our inner heart when one lot is full of Mercedes while yet another is full of Hyundai. We strut like peacocks with our arrogant and prideful feathers spread wide because our successes are measured by the number of tires touching the fresh bituminous there laid! Our congregations are separated by the walls of culture, custom, class, color and tongue. All the while we sing a lie through our graveyard throats, “I'm going back to the heart of worship cause it's all about you Jesus. I'm sorry Lord for the thing I've made it because it's all about you.”

What is that incessant and annoying knocking at the narthex doors that disturbs my worship every Sunday?

Listen! I am standing at the door and knocking! If anyone hears my voice and opens the door I will come into his home and share a meal with him, and he with me. (Revelation 3:20 NET)

Notice that this Scripture given to the church is for once used in context! I couldn't hear the King of Glory knocking because I was blinded by the glow of a pulpit aflame with righteousness (NOT). But my eyes were diseased and the light I saw was really darkness!

The greatest obstructers of the success of the word are those whose bad lives contradict their good doctrine, who in the pulpit preach so well that it is a pity they should ever come out, and out of the pulpit live so ill that it is a pity they should ever come in. (Matthew Henry)

No one after lighting a lamp puts it in a hidden place or under a basket, but on a lampstand, so that those who come in can see the light. Your eye is the lamp of your body. When your eye is healthy, your whole body is full of light, but when it is diseased, your body is full of darkness. Therefore see to it that the light in you is not darkness. (Luke 11:33-35 NET)

I sought for the key to the greatness and genius of America in her harbors and her ample rivers ... ; in her fertile fields and boundless forests ... ; in her rich mines and vast world commerce ... ; in her public school system and institutions of learning. I sought for it in her democratic Congress and in her matchless Constitution.

Not until I went into the

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New Members

MAJ Eric & Teresa Fowler, USA
LTJG Rob & Dee Dee Williams, CHC, USN
SMSgt Jesse & Kyong Perez, Jr., USAF (Ret)
CH(1LT) Aron & Lauren Stephens, USA

Promotions

LCpl Geoff Andrews, USMC
CH(COL) Ken Bush, USA
CDR Mike Thornton, USN

Nuggets of Faith — by SMSgt Tony Barnes, USAF (Ret), CMF Board of Directors

Martyrs! Those are the Christians that were fed to the lions, right? Or those guys that were burned at the stake a few hundred years ago for their beliefs. But, surely in these modern times there aren't any martyrs! This is the age of tolerance and people are allowed to believe what they want. If that were only true, it would be a different world. It almost sounds like it would be paradise, allowing each person to believe as they wish.

Recently I was listening to a podcast from the chapel service at Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary. President Paige Patterson related the story of David McDonald. David and his wife were called by God to go to an area near Mosul, Iraq. They were engaged in helping the Iraqis to have fresh water and more importantly they were sharing the love of Jesus Christ. Upon returning to the city after a day's work, they got caught up in an apparent traffic jam. Within moments all hell broke loose. The sound of AK-47 gunfire rang out and David, his wife and the others in the party were badly wounded. Although David's wife survived the onslaught, the wounds proved to be fatal for David and the others.

A few days later, David was buried in Colorado near the Sangre de Cristo mountain range. After the funeral, an

old crusty rancher cowboy approached Dr. Patterson. Looking in the preacher's eyes, he asked why David's death had to happen. Noticing the beautiful red hues of the mountains, Patterson nodded towards the mountains and said, "Because of that." The cowboy asked him what he meant. "What is the name of those mountains?" asked Dr. Patterson. The cowboy responded with the Sangre de Cristo moniker. Patterson asked him what that name means in English.

After responding with the anticipated answer that the name was Spanish for "the blood of Christ," the Seminary President related how David McDonald had paid the ultimate sacrifice for the gospel and given his blood for the one who had shed His blood for David 2,000 years ago. The cowboy nodded and said, "I think I understand now."

David McDonald had a passion to share Jesus Christ and to be a witness. As mentioned before, he paid the ultimate sacrifice. When taking the gospel to the world, he was gunned down by extremists who oppose Christianity. If it were possible for Dave to come back to life, I believe he would do it all over again. David's presence in Iraq wasn't a miscalculation. David was there because the God who created Him had laid it upon his heart to be a witness in Iraq.

Many people over the centuries have been martyred for their faith. They weren't extraordinary people. They were obedient people. Certainly, the way they died was extraordinary. But, they were merely being faithful to share Christ with a lost and dying world. David McDonald through his death has been an evangelist. There are people who have heard the story of that evil day in Mosul who will remember the story forever. The blood of David McDonald that soaked into the hot desert sand of Iraq will serve as a seed of faith for many who will encounter his story for years to come. David's death will be a witness that though a person may perish, the gospel message we proclaim is worth the sacrifice. The world around us needs to know that the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ is life changing. Our community needs to know that we are willing to die if need be for our faith. It should be evident to our realm of influence that we serve a risen Christ.

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From What Height Fallen — by Bob Flynn, President/CEO

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churches of America and heard her pulpits flame with righteousness did I understand the secret of her genius and power. America is great because America is good, and if America ever ceases to be good, America will cease to be great. (Tocqueville, Charles Alexis Henri Maurice Clèrel de)

We have not only lost the secret but buried it where it cannot be found—in the depths of self-righteousness, willful disobedience and counterfeit worship. The pinprick of light emanating from the clergy pulpit or the one given to every believer for the sake of his neighbor is piteously small and ineffectual because our **bad lives contradict our good doctrine**. We look to each other and compare our chrome and fail to notice the absence of an undergirding steel. We furiously shout through the hawespipe of our gospel — without noticing the ship has no keel!

Then Jesus said to his disciples, "If anyone wants to become my follower, he must

deny himself, take up his cross, and follow me. For whoever wants to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for my sake will find it. For what does it benefit a person if he gains the whole world but forfeits his life? Or what can a person give in exchange for his life?"
(Matthew 16:24-26 NET)

We in this postmodern world are more likely to cruise the river of denial rather than come to terms with the truth here spoken to us by our Lord. We think of self-denial as an act of giving up something—perhaps doing without certain delicacies or comforts. However, this is only an infinitesimal part of His greater calling upon the heart.

To deny oneself means in every moment of life to say no to self and yes to God. To deny oneself means once, finally and for all to dethrone self and to enthrone God. To deny oneself means to obliterate self as the dominant principle of life, and to make God the ruling principle, more,

the ruling passion, of life. The life of constant self-denial is the life of constant assent to God. (William Barclay)

Brother Lawrence would call this "Practicing the Presence of God." Pastor Andrew Murray would call this "Absolute Surrender." This is to give up all that would come between us and the Savior and thus prevent us from doing His will; to push self off the throne and let Jesus truly become Lord of our life.

A slumbering faith is an inactive one. It is not exercised upon its appointed Objects nor performing its assigned tasks. It is neither drawing upon that fullness of grace which is available in Christ for His people, nor is it acting on the precepts and promises of the Word. Though there still be a mental assent to the Truth, yet the heart is no longer suitably affected by that which concerns practical godliness. Where such be the case a Christian will be governed more by tradition, sentiment, and fancy,

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From What Height Fallen — by Bob Flynn, President/CEO

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rather than by gratitude, the fear of the Lord, and care to please Him. So too when his hope becomes sluggish, he soon lapses into a spiritual torpor. Hope is a desirous and earnest expectation of blessedness to come. It looks away from self and this present scene and is enthralled by “the things which God hath prepared for them that love Him.” As it eyes the goal and the prize, it is enabled to run with patience the race set before us. But when hope slumbers he becomes absorbed with the objects of time and sense, and allured and stupefied with present and perishing things. Likewise when love to God be not vigorous, there is no living to His glory; self-love and self-pity actuating us. When the love of Christ ceases to constrain us to self-denial and a following the example He has left us, the soul has gone to sleep. (Arthur W. Pink, Practical Christianity)

Is the scene we see acted out in our lives and in the churches where we worship of the former torpor or the latter earnest hope? The vision most often cast is one of constant entertainment and incessant complaint—the sermon too long, the music too loud, not enough hymns, and too many choruses. Perhaps this can be overcome by the continuous gossip we send and receive in our holy intercourse each week at the I don't care group. The Lord of the Universe is not amused, and His righteous anger burns white hot because of the dung we offer up in contempt and paint as a holy offering!

He must take up his cross. That is to say, he must take up the burden of sacrifice. The Christian life is the life of sacrificial service. The Christian may have to abandon personal ambition to serve Christ; it may be that he will discover that the place where he can render the greatest service to Jesus Christ is somewhere where the reward will be small and the prestige non-existent. He will certainly have to sacrifice time and leisure and pleasure in order to serve God through the service of his fellowmen. The really important thing is not the great moments of sacrifice, but a life lived in the constant hourly awareness of the demands of God and the need of others. The Christian life is a life which is always concerned with others more than it is concerned with itself. (William Barclay)

But above all pursue his kingdom and righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well. (Matthew 6:33 NET)

Now large crowds were accompanying Jesus, and turning to them he said, “If anyone comes to me and does not hate his own father and mother, and wife and children, and brothers and sisters, and even his own life, he cannot be my disciple. (Luke 14:25-26 NET)

If we reduce this to the simplest of terms, we must push aside the television, video games, and even the O'Reilly Factor for the duties of elder, deacon, teacher, youth leader, or to visit those who are sick, discouraged or lonely. We perhaps will forgo the possession of certain conveniences that we might give more with hilarity.

He must follow Jesus Christ. That is to say, he must render to Jesus Christ a perfect obedience. When we were young we used to play a game called “Follow the Leader.” Everything the leader did, however difficult, and, in the case of the game, however ridiculous, we had to copy. The Christian life is a constant following of our Leader, a constant obedience in thought and word and action to Jesus Christ. The Christian walks in the footsteps of Christ, wherever he may lead. (William Barclay)

For to this you were called, since Christ also suffered for you, leaving an example for you to follow in his steps. (1 Peter 2:21 NET)

We have come to know love by this: that Jesus laid down his life for us; thus we ought to lay down our lives for our fellow Christians. But whoever has the world's possessions and sees his fellow Christian in need and shuts off his compassion against him, how can the love of God reside in such a person? Little children, let us not love with word or with tongue but in deed and truth. (1 John 3:16-18 NET)

Now those who belong to Christ have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires. If we live by the Spirit, let us also behave in accordance with the Spirit. (Galatians 5:24-25 NET)

Why is this so important? What does this have to do with Christian mili-

tary ministry? Because the enemy of our soul has chosen a strategy right out of the divine playbook! He will try to break America's independence by breaking the military!

In fact, I will bring an end to Israel's independence. I will break its military power in the Jezreel Valley. (Hosea 1:4b-5 NLT)

We often forget that there is always a battle unseen and because of this there is always more at stake than meets the eye. Remember that it was on August 7, 1990, that Operation Desert Shield began. I am not sure how to quantify the prudent limit of endurance for troops, families, and machines. However, with the ever-increasing unrest in our world, our prayers ought to be more earnest and prolific for our troops and for our nation. Behold the Jezreel Valley looms large in the horizon!

Then if My people who are called by My name will humble themselves and pray and seek My face and turn from their wicked ways, I will hear from heaven and will forgive their sins and restore their land. (2 Chronicles 7:14 NLT)

Temperance is true self-government. It involves the grace of self-denial and the spirit of a sound mind. It is that poise of spirit that holds us quiet, self-possessed, recollected, deliberate, and subject ever to the voice of God and the conviction of duty in every step we take. Many persons have not that poise and recollected spirit. They are drifting at the impulse of their own impressions, moods, the influence of others, or the circumstances around them. No desire should ever control us. No purpose, however right, should have such mastery over us that we are not perfectly free. The pure affection may be an inordinate affection. Our work itself may be a selfish passion. That thing that we began to do because it was God's will, we may cling to and persist in ultimately, because it is our own will. Lord, give us the spirit ever controlled by Thy Spirit and will, and the eye that looks to Thee every moment as the eyes of a servant to the hands of her mistress. So shall Thy service be our perfect freedom, and our subjection divinest liberty. (A. B. Simpson, Days of Heaven Upon Earth)