

Restoring the Language of Truth

By Jim Nelson Black

WHAT IS THE PURPOSE of a university? Since at least the 13th century, the idea has been to take promising young men and women in their prime learning years—roughly ages 16 to 24—to send them to a place apart, a place of study, free of the ordinary duties and demands of daily life, and to fill their minds with knowledge—truth, beauty, great ideas, history, rhetoric, and science. This was the basis of the trivium and the quadrivium in the Middle Ages. The hope was that by exposure to the greatest moments of our Western intellectual tradition, these young people would one day emerge intellectually formed, fully prepared to assume roles as leaders and contributors to the life of the nation.

For 700 years, this was the ideal, and, generally speaking, it worked that way. But what's become of that vision today? What changed? I wonder if you would agree with this author's assessment:

“It is not impossible for a student in today's university to wend his or her way through all of the requirements, ending in a blaze of glory and relief in the graduation ceremonies, without having received an education. This happens even in the best universities. Somehow they manage to graduate students who have no mental connections with the past, little knowledge of its literature, less of its great thinkers, scant ability to think for themselves, and for whom the prospect of writing a research paper is a matter for great consternation.” (David Wells in *No Place for Truth*)

Is there anyone who doesn't recognize this situation? But If we admit that this is, in fact, a valid assessment, we ought to be asking ourselves: What Happened? Has human nature changed so fundamentally, or did the academy one day decide that Truth doesn't matter? Or that all truths are the same?

Since the publication of my book *Freefall of the American University*, I've been addressing questions about campus mayhem at colleges all around the country. And while students in most of my audiences have few illusions about the dangers they face, or the degree to which indoctrination has replaced information in the classroom, many of the parents, community leaders, and fellow citizens who attend these lectures are, frankly, shocked by what they hear. All of which tells me that this is a story that needs to be told. But to do that, a brief look at the social and political currents leading up to this present state of affairs is in order.

Revolution & Reform

The story of what has happened to the universities is a story of revolutions — not a single revolution, but as many as three or four of them. The result has been a total transformation of the “academic enterprise,” and a radical realignment of the social, cultural, and moral sensibilities of the universities and the nation. The first revolution happened in 1884 when Charles Eliot, who was president of Harvard College at the time, launched a series of institutional reforms. Among them were the offering of electives to undergraduates, expansion of the science curriculum, and

dispensing with a tradition (dating back to the school's founding in 1636) that required chapel attendance for all students.

On that occasion (which happened to be the 250th anniversary of America's oldest university), President Eliot unveiled a new shield which bore the motto, Veritas — which is, of course, Latin for "Truth." But as the faculty began to implement this new version of a university, it became apparent to some that traditional ideas about Truth no longer seemed to apply. Science, they said, had given scholars new tools and new reasons to doubt the traditional view of truth, morality, social norms — and, most of all, the importance of religion.

As Professor Julie Reuben writes in her book, *The Making of the Modern University*, this would prove to be a major intellectual transformation which included "the marginalization of morality" and a frontal assault on "the language of truth." I'm sure that few of those involved understood just how revolutionary those changes would prove to be. But their influence would soon be almost universal.

The second revolution began in Europe in the aftermath of the First World War. By 1919, Germany was in ruins and there were many attempts to restore order and put the people of that country back to work. One such effort was the Weimar Republic, which was an attempt to blend an old-style monarchy with a modern socialist state. It was a dismal failure that led to the rise of Adolf Hitler as chancellor and dictator of Germany. That led, in turn, to the beginning of World War II. But that's not the revolution I have in mind.

The revolution that would impact the American university began with a group of intellectuals called the Frankfurt School of Neo-Marxists. Funded by a wealthy German socialist, these scholars were horrified by the failings of the monarchy and the bureaucracy alike, and they launched the Institute for Social Research in 1923 to come up with new ideas. This political "think tank" included some of the most influential radicals of the day, including Max Horkheimer, Theodore Adorno, Erich Fromm, and Herbert Marcuse, among many others.

They were all upper middle-class, and highly educated revolutionaries who believed that genuine social change demands violent resistance along with the dismantling of the economic and social establishment. They planned to pursue their goals in Germany, but the rise of Hitler's Third Reich in 1933 forced them to relocate first to Switzerland, and then, in 1936, to Columbia University in New York City. They were eagerly hired by major American universities—such as Columbia, Harvard, and Brandeis. And by the early 1940s, some of them migrated to California, where they were given professorships in the University of California system and elsewhere.

A Volatile Era

By 1949, Adorno and a few others returned to Germany. Herbert Marcuse, however, had found a new career as the poster boy for "class warfare" in America. By the mid-sixties, Marcuse was hailed as the spiritual godfather of the cultural revolution on America's university campuses. The ideology the European intellectuals had created was called "critical theory," which doesn't mean literary or social criticism for the sake of understanding or improving the system, but a critical and hostile attitude toward culture, politics, education, religion, race, and every other aspect of Western society. In other words, as neo-Marxist revolutionaries, their goal was the destruction of Western civilization as we know it and the emergence of a new socialist state.

Of all these radicals, Marcuse was the best known and most extravagant. In books such as *Eros and Civilization* (1955), *One-Dimensional Man* (1964), and *Counter-Revolution and Revolt*

(1972), Marcuse taught an entire generation of pampered young middle-class Americans to throw off the shackles of tradition, to “make love not war,” and to rebel against “authoritarianism” of every kind — whether it was their parents, their professors, or the leaders of the nation.

Influenced by Freud and others, Marcuse taught that sexual hedonism was the right and privilege of everyone, and that a truly just society would place no restraints whatsoever on sexual expression of any and every kind. I won’t go further with that line of thinking, but if you’ve seen films or documentaries about the sixties, then you know what I mean. Marcuse taught the Hippies of San Francisco to abandon conventional morality in favor of “sex, drugs, and rock ’n roll,” and they learned their lesson very well. Out of that movement came the revolution that we recognize today as the basis of the radical transformation of the universities. It was a violent and frightening time in America. Kids hopped up on drugs were doing crazy things, and many of them died. In the midst of all this we had:

1. The assassination of President Kennedy in Texas
2. Civil rights protests, and the impact of the 1964 Civil Rights Act
3. The escalation of the Vietnam War under Lyndon Johnson
4. Violent protests on campus by groups like SDS, the Weather Underground, the Symbionese Liberation Army, and many others — as well as ...
5. Lyndon Johnson’s vision of a socialist welfare state called “The Great Society.”

The atmosphere of fear and unrest in the land was accelerated by:

6. Riots and protests against the Vietnam War
7. Riots at the 1968 Democratic National Convention in Chicago
8. The emergence of student radicals like Mark Rudd, Tom Hayden, and Jerry Rubin — who took over college campuses and burned buildings
9. The rise of Richard Nixon as the most hated enemy of the Left
10. The assassinations of Martin Luther King, Jr., and Attorney General Robert Kennedy, and not least ...
11. Watergate

It was a tense and disturbing time. But here’s what I think finally happened. The Sixties Revolution faded away and the radicals went away. But as Roger Kimball says in his book, *The Long March*, they weren’t defeated by the police, their parents and professors, or even by their failures to bring about the Marxist revolution they wanted. They were defeated by graduation ... they had to leave the campuses and that life of prolonged adolescence and unrestrained revolt.

But they got what they wanted: They got college degrees without a lot of hard work. They got masters degrees and doctorates as well, and they put on their academic robes and became experts in history, sociology, political science, and many new disciplines dealing with race, gender, and class. In some cases they were passed through by professors who were too intimidated to demand much of them. But in the end, they bathed, got haircuts, got new clothes, got their diplomas, and got jobs on the faculties of major universities. They got their new Volvos, of course, and then they went underground to change the world by stealth.

Most Americans believe that when the riots ended in the mid-1970s, the crisis went away. But they’re wrong about that — it was just the beginning. The radicals of the Sixties Revolution became the “tenured radicals” who have been in control of our secular universities for the last

thirty years. Now the young men and women they've trained — who are equally dedicated to overthrowing the established order — have taken over the halls of ivy and are doing their best to radicalize their students in much the same way they were radicalized by the previous generation.

What success?

But this raises another question: Is it working? You be the judge: A study by the American Enterprise Institute reveals the imbalance between liberals and conservatives on university faculties today: At Harvard there are 25 liberals for every 1 conservative on the faculty. At Cornell it's 28 to 1; at Brown the ration is 18 to 1; at UCLA, 16 to 1; and at Prof. Ward Churchill's home base, the University of Colorado at Boulder, the ratio of liberals to conservatives is 23 to 1.

Just 3 percent of faculty in the Ivy League identify themselves as Republicans; 44 percent say the organization that best represents their views is the ACLU. Just 1 percent admit to being members of the NRA; and zero percent have any connection with the Christian Coalition. A recent survey by the *Chronicle of Higher Education* found that 47.9 percent of all professors at public universities identify themselves as Liberals, and 6.2 percent say they're on the Far Left, while just 13.8 percent say they're Conservative. However, the recent Rothman-Lichter-Nevitte Report found that 72 percent of college faculty nationwide are self-identified liberals.

When asked by a reporter why there's such bias in faculty hiring, Dr. Allen Zuckerman of Brown University said that bias has nothing to do with it. "I've been at Brown for thirty years," he said. "... political views, to my knowledge, have never entered into it ...". But is that true? A study by the Center for Responsive Politics in 2004 showed that, as a group, university professors are among the largest contributors to the Democratic Party. The biggest Democrat donors — ahead of corporations such as Time Warner, Goldman Sachs, and Microsoft — are (#1) The University of California System with donations of \$602,000, and (#2) Harvard University with donations of \$340,000 to Senator Kerry's 2004 campaign. Now, there are lots of honorable and decent Democrats, I'm sure; but when politics of any stripe invades the classroom, we've got a problem. And that's precisely what is happening to every secular campus in America, as the interviews in my book confirm.

A linguistics professor at Berkeley told *The New York Times* that the imbalance happens because conservatives aren't good candidates for academic positions. Liberals, he said, "believe in working for the public good and social justice," while conservatives are less intellectually motivated. Another infamous study from the Berkeley faculty, published in the *Journal of the American Psychological Association*, said that conservatives are less "integratively complex," with a tendency to see things (they said) "in black and white ways that would make liberals squirm." But here's the problem: In a study by the American Council of Trustees and Alumni, half of students surveyed said they only hear one side of controversial issues in the classroom. And they said their professors frequently use class time to push their own political agenda.

A Perceptive Analysis

In Chapter Seven of my book, I interviewed a student at UCLA who told me about a professor of political science who began his first lecture on the first day of class by saying, "If the dumbest man in America can be elected president, anybody can make it to the White House." The same professor later asked who had voted for Bush in 2000. When a couple of students

reluctantly raised their hands, the professor lashed out, “How could you be so stupid?!” thereby setting the tone for the rest of the term and making sure that this new crop of freshmen knew which way the wind was blowing.

Most students today are reasonably open-minded, but there ought to be a limit. A senior at UC Berkeley told the *New York Times*, “I’m glad to get the liberal perspective, but it would be nice to get the other side, too.” And she added that: “I’m really having a hard time finding courses my last year. I don’t want to spend another semester listening to lectures about victims of American oppression.”

This is the reality of what’s happening on almost every campus today: A steady drumbeat of anti-Americanism, race and gender hostility, and classes that focus on “oppression studies” of one kind or another. But for perspective, consider the following commentary from an e-mail sent to me by a student at San Francisco State University — which is one of the campuses radicalized by Marcuse and Theodore Adorno back in the ’70s. She wrote:

I spent three and a half years in the International Relations Dept. at San Francisco State, which is a virtual hate-America machine. I’ve heard the U.S. blamed for just about everything short of extinction of the dinosaurs. Nothing is too ludicrous for these people. There’s a high concentration of foreign students in this department — study abroad students, as well as first- and second-generation immigrants. In other words, kids from conservative backgrounds, who were raised to greatly respect teachers, whose parents have the highest hopes for them, being educated in the U. S., so they can get good jobs and become persons of status and esteem in the community. They most certainly did not come here to explore their gender identities or become permanently disgruntled malcontents.

They’re unlikely to suspect they’re being hoodwinked and even less likely to complain even if they do suspect. They’re already self-conscious about being outsiders and they don’t want to rock the boat. They’re easy prey for distorted American history lessons because they don’t have grandparents or other relatives to tell them stories about what it was like here, even twenty years ago. They’re being taught that Marxism is great and capitalism is bad so they can go home and wreck the economies of their own countries.

But What about Academics?

That’s a powerful statement, and very perceptive. But most of the audiences I address would be wondering by now about academics. Surely that can’t have changed! So how did the Sixties Revolution affect what’s being taught in the classrooms and lecture halls? Student radicals in the sixties said that history, literature, and all courses in the humanities were loaded with Western bias that favored the history of “dead, white European males.” So by the mid-70s, every campus in America had courses (and soon entire departments) that focused on history, race, gender, and class from a distinctly non-Western perspective. At McCloud State University in Minnesota, as just one current example, students in the Human Relations and Multicultural Education Department can spend their entire college career studying Ageism, Heterosexism,

Disability Rights, Diversity in the Workplace, Gender Issues in Education, Globalism, Xenophobia, Oppression Studies, and the like.

At Wesleyan University in Connecticut (founded in 1831 as a school for Methodist ministers) students can enroll in Pornography Writing of Prostitutes. At Bucknell students can study Witchcraft and Politics. Stanford offers a course called Homosexuals, Heretics, Witches, and Werewolves, and the University of Chicago offers Contemporary American Monstrosity. Until recently, the catalog description for English 317 at the University of Michigan, “How to Be Gay: Male Homosexuality and Initiation,” promised to help students understand “the formation of gay male identity.” Just what every parent wants their sons and daughters to know.

Admittedly these are extreme examples: There are still courses in history, literature, math, and science, to be sure. But because of the strong liberal bias of the faculties, these are no longer presented (in the vast majority of cases) as records of cultural achievement or models to be followed. As Dr. Dallas Willard of USC says in Chapter Ten of my book, no one learns the history of their discipline any longer. Instead they soon discover that America is an oppressive, racist, misogynist, imperialist nation, and that our entire history is one of shame.

David Carl, a student leader at Boston University interviewed in Chapter Three of my book, says that Howard Zinn’s book *A People’s History of the United States* is just about the only view of American history being taught on thousands of campuses today. With more than a million copies in print, Zinn’s revisionist history begins by calling Christopher Columbus a murderer, and “it only goes down hill from there.” Zinn freely admits his bias, Dave Carl said, because Professor Zinn (who teaches at that Methodist school) hates everything about America.

The hippies of Haight-Ashbury and the radicals at Columbia claimed that giving letter grades for student performance was a sign of an authoritarian patriarchy that had to be abolished. The universities didn’t do away with grades altogether, but thanks to Grade Inflation, the grades that students at most universities receive today have little to do with actual learning. In 2002, 91 percent of Harvard seniors graduated with honors, and fully half of all grades on that campus were “A” or “A-minus.” At one point, as Dr. Harvey Mansfield told me in his interview in Chapter Four, he proposed giving Harvard students two grades: One for the parents and the transcript, and the other for the students, giving them an honest appraisal of their performance in the class. That hasn’t happened yet.

Dr. Larry Summers — who resigned from Harvard in the aftermath of his suggestion that there may actually be legitimate differences between men and women — advised his faculty in 2003 to begin grading more realistically; but such things as Student Evaluations (which force professors to strive to be “popular” with students) and the idea that Truth is relative — who’s to say what’s true, after all? — are issues that were simply too weighty for change.

Today’s students are not getting higher grades because they’re smarter than students in previous generations. They’re no dumber, of course, but they’re no smarter either. In fact, a 2002 study for the National Association of Scholars reported that the average amount of knowledge of today’s college seniors is about the same as that of the average high school graduate in the 1950s, except that high schoolers in the fifties actually had a better grasp of U.S. History. Well, that’s understandable: 78 percent of the 55 top-ranked schools in this country no longer require students to take any history at all.

In fact, many universities have no required courses. Students can design their own degree plans and take whatever they like. Until recently there was only one required course on the sixteen campuses of the State University of New York: Multiculturalism — a course which programs students to reject the values and beliefs of their families, not to mention the Founding Fathers — and to come to terms with their own prejudice, racism, homophobia, and other cultural vices. (In fact, this is just a more developed form of Freshman Orientation, which in many places is simply preparation for life in a politically correct ghetto.)

When former Secretary of Education William Bennett surveyed college students about their knowledge of world affairs, he found that most of them couldn't name the Vice President of the United States, the Secretary of State, or their own congressmen. But they all knew that Yasser Arafat was the leader of the Palestinian people. When asked if they thought American culture was superior to Arab culture, 79 percent said they did not. When asked if they thought American culture was superior to *any* culture, 71 percent said No — and 35 percent of those said No in the strongest terms.

But the risks to college students aren't limited to ideology. Some of those risks are also physical and emotional. The hippies and the radicals of 1968 also demanded a hedonistic culture on campus and they got it. They got it then, and the radical sexualization has reached epic proportions in our own time. According to a survey by the Centers for Disease Control, upwards of 73 percent of today's university students are sexually active. On many campuses, "hooking up" is the fad *du jour*. That means having sex with anybody, any time, and almost anywhere, and students go out of their way not to know the name of the person they're doing it with. It's casual sex of the most dangerous kind.

This misguided "fad" only makes the next statistic more obvious: Half of that 73 percent already have at least one of the more than forty sexually transmitted diseases (STDs) that are rampant among young people today. Most of these diseases are mutations of gonorrhea and syphilis — which were the only known STDs when I was an undergrad — and most of these infections are also asymptomatic, meaning the individuals may not know they're infected until ten, twenty, or even thirty years later — when they find they're sterile and childless, or suffering from some incurable illness.

I've said enough on this, but I would be remiss not to point out that the CDC also reports that herpes and Human Papilloma Virus (HPV) are out of control on the college campus today, and HPV has been shown to be the primary cause of cervical cancer in women. For more on this, you may want to read Tom Wolfe's recent novel, *I Am Charlotte Simmons*, which could just as easily be a documentary.

A Revolutionary Climate

As I said at the start, the freefall of the American university began with a series of revolutions, and I'm convinced that we're in the midst of another one at this moment. It began on September 11th, 2001, when two aircraft struck the twin towers of the World Trade Center in New York City, and a third struck the Pentagon in Washington, DC, where I spend a great deal of my time.

I was in my office in Washington on that day, and we had a television on the Fox News Channel just outside the door to my office. I was working at my desk that beautiful fall morning when the first plane struck. One of my interns glanced at the TV and saw what was happening

and called me over. I joined him and several others watching those events unfold and we stood there in stunned silence as the second plane struck the second tower. As I wrote in Chapter Nine of my book:

The world watched in shock and disbelief as 3,000 men and women died in the deadliest assault to hit these shores in nearly 400 years of history. It was the face of multiculturalism gone awry, a sobering moment for every American as we considered the carnage, the prospect that this unprovoked attack was but a prelude to something worse, and the even more disquieting feeling that something awful was about to happen and we were powerless to stop it.

Further, I said, “The clash of world religions that Samuel Huntington had predicted in his 1996 bestseller, *The Clash of Civilizations*, was no longer theory but a visible reality.... It would take weeks, even months, to sort it all out, but for one hushed moment the din of controversy had subsided, and the flurry of accusations had not yet begun. America wept.” Now I want to say that what was “revolutionary” about that tragic day wasn’t the fact that we were attacked in such a way by radical extremists. What was revolutionary was the reaction of two groups that are central to my discussion.

The first was the Academy. At first, there was a period of adjustment, getting used to the idea that America had been attacked. We all witnessed the bravery of the police and fire fighters, and even the office workers and priests, who sacrificed their own lives trying to save others. We wept at the scene of men and women leaping from 100 stories in the sky to their death rather than be burned alive. And we all struggled to make sense of what had happened. But the avalanche from the Academy didn’t take long to begin.

- At Columbia University, in New York, Prof. Nicholas de Genova told an audience that “The only true heroes are those who find ways to help defeat the U.S. military.”
- At the University of New Mexico, Prof. Richard Berthold told students that, “Anyone who can blow up the Pentagon gets my vote.”
- At the University of Massachusetts at Amherst, Prof. Jennie Traschen said that the American flag is “a symbol of terrorism and death and fear and destruction and oppression.”
- Prof. Haunani-Kay Trask, a professor at the University of Hawaii, said, “Why should we support the United States, whose hands in history are soaked with blood?”
- And, as we now of course know, Prof. Ward Churchill of the University of Colorado referred in an academic paper to the 3,000 victims of 9/11 as “little Eichmanns” who were part of an evil capitalist enterprise and deserved to die.

Before long, the Academy was in full throat, raging against the decision of the President and Congress to pursue the terrorists in Afghanistan and Iraq. But here’s the last revolution I want to address: A large number of students on campuses from coast to coast were having none of that. As many of them told me in the interviews for my book, 9/11 was a watershed moment — an epiphany, if you like. A student at Tufts University said:

That’s what happened to me. I was a sort of moderate liberal before September 11th, but seeing that on television changed my mind about a lot of things. After that I stopped thinking about the world in idealistic terms and the way things ought to be,

and I started thinking more about the way it actually is. I realized that the way to improve the world isn't always the way people might wish it to be. It's not as simple as that.

And this is an attitude I've found everywhere I've traveled over the last two years. Students are beginning to realize that they've been tricked. They do love their country. They do want it to succeed. They do respect and admire the brave young soldiers who have volunteered to take the war to the terrorists rather than waiting for the terrorists to bring it to us. The lessons of class envy and hatred are being rejected. And conservative groups such as Students for Academic Freedom, Accuracy in Academia, the Intercollegiate Studies Institute, and Young America's Foundation are growing by leaps and bounds. They're the most exciting things happening on many campuses today.

Conservative groups have discovered a bonanza of student involvement, and one of the things keeping me busy these days is speaking to these groups on campuses around the country. More than 30,000 new members joined College Republicans in 2003 alone. And believe it or not, the University of California at Berkeley contingent was recognized in 2003 as "Chapter of the Year," boasting some 500 members. Polls show that college students are moving to the right on key political and social issues — from national defense to abortion. And this is the revolution that really terrifies the campus elite.

A lot of today's students are quiet revolutionaries: they just want that diploma, so they take notes, take the exams, and turn in the work without raising a ruckus. But they're not buying the liberal politics they're bombarded with day after day. Others, however, are just feisty, looking for trouble. A young woman at Yale told me, "I think 9/11 was really important, because it allowed conservative students to see what it's really all about. I think it made a lot of us more outspoken." And a student in medical school at the University of Texas told me it was the arrogance and one-sided indoctrination of his professors that drove him to look for Truth in other places — a search that eventually led him to become a conservative and a Christian.

The Challenge Before Us

According to the National Center for Education Statistics, higher education in this country is a \$200 Billion industry. More than 15 million students are currently enrolled in post-secondary education, with nearly 3 million faculty member on 3,700 campuses. What more and more parents are asking is, "What are we getting for our money?" What are parents and working students getting for their investment? And what's the responsibility of government, the funding agencies, the large foundations, and the American people for what's happening in our colleges?

To produce men and women who are truly "the best and brightest," to equip a new generation of citizens to respect their native land and to work for its — and their own — success and survival, the universities ought to be focusing on what's right with America, and working to overcome our failings through study and research and genuine concern for their students. We ought to be educating the next generation, not corrupting them.

To be a great nation, we can't afford to fill the minds of our young men and women with trash. We can't tell them to hate their neighbors and distrust their leaders and then expect them to live and work successfully in the modern world. We must educate them fully and wisely. We

must equip them to think and reason carefully, to live passionately, and to work patiently for the betterment of our world.

Every student ought to experience the joy of learning and the thrill of mastery. This has been the vision of every great university since the beginning of higher education. Why should it be any different now? But these things won't happen unless we're able to transform the universities into institutions dedicated once again to the pursuit of truth — to authentic scholarship and intellectual attainment. How that happens — if it happens — will be up to the next generation of leaders and teachers and high achievers. It's highly unlikely that the generation that gave us Woodstock will have anything to say about what comes next.

But those who still care about these issues, and who want to see the next generation rise to claim their own success, need to be asking themselves some hard questions. Are we bold enough to demand the kinds of changes that will be needed to get the academy back on track? Are we willing to put everything on the line to support the efforts to reform higher education, and to lend our voices to the call for academic standards that actually mean something?

There are many in the universities today — both secular and Christian, I'm sorry to say — who have a very different vision for America, and changing course will not be easy. It will take courage and persistence. It may even take a revolution, and if that is the case. Why not let that revolution begin here? Let it begin with us. Where better to begin the monumental task of restoration and renewal than here on the Christian university campus where we are — by our confessions of faith and our intellectual commitments — advocates and defenders of Truth?

The good news is that more and more people realize that here, on the Christian campus, is where truth can still be found. A recent study from the Department of Education reported that enrollment at the 130 schools in the Council for Christian Colleges and Universities increased by 67 percent between 1992 and 2002. People are looking for better answers than the ones they're getting from the secular schools. Another study at UCLA by the Higher Education Research Institute in 2004 reported that four of five incoming students say they are "interested in spirituality." Three-quarters of them said they were "searching for meaning or purpose in life" and 79 percent said they believe in God. What this ought to tell us is that the door is open, and we have what they're looking for.

History will judge us for the decisions we make, and God will ultimately decide if we were worthy of the trust we've been given. But in light of the magnitude of the challenges before us, and in response to what appears to be a unique opportunity at this hour, we must be ready to respond honestly and authoritatively to those who come to us seeking better answers than the ones the secular culture is giving them. We will need to be attentive to their concerns and alert to new opportunities. And I would encourage you to do all these things with an ear that is finely attuned to the language of Truth.

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