



BIOLA CELEBRATES ITS  
PRESIDENTIAL INAUGURATION

**Biola University**

**President's Installation Address "A Glorious Belief"**

**Barry H. Corey**

**November 2, 2007**

**John 11:1-44**

Thank you. What a week. Almost too much for a kid who grew up in Boston to handle.

It began with the Red Sox winning the World Series and now ending with...this.

But let the record show that today's pageantry is not about me.

This is a moment for all of us one more time to give God glory for who he is and for what he has done through Biola University for 100 years.

We stand in expectation for what is still to come.

Thank you Mr. Siefker and members of the Biola University Board of Trustees who I have grown to admire deeply. Paula and I are truly overwhelmed and humbled by your inviting us to Biola.

We are here because of God's calling on our lives.

Special thanks to Dean Dennis Dirks and members of the planning committee, Irene Neller's team in IMC, notably Victoria Trevithick, who were thoughtful of every detail. Joyce Brooks and Ann Shepherd...Joe Grossman and

his team. Brian Phillips and his craftsmen, and other teams from facilities to event planning to Bon Appetit, campus safety to the grounds crew and many more...your work in preparation for this weekend has not gone unnoticed.

And the music today! I am incredibly proud of our conservatory of music.

Thank you, delegates, who have taken the time to be here.

I want to especially thank those college and university presidents who have honored me and Biola by carving time out of what I know firsthand are very bloated schedules.

To you as Biola staff who serve loyally and competently, I am glad to be on the team.

Brian, Peg and Eva, thanks for guiding me patiently and repeatedly. You are a blessing to me.

Gary Miller, Wes Willmer, Carl Schreiber and Greg Balsano, your counsel and senior leadership are deeply appreciated. Biola has been blessed with competence at many levels.

God bless you, Gene and Judy TenElshof, for opening your mountain home for me to get away for a day this week to think and pray.

For our guests today, allow me the privilege of introducing to you the Biola faculty who demonstrate high levels of scholarship, a precision in teaching, who love our students, hold high the Word of God and are committed to the lordship of Christ.

It's an honor to work alongside you. Please stand.

Now, I want to recognize you students of Biola.

You breathe life into my work every day. Paula and I marvel at your servanthood, spirit and commitment.

Be brave and trust the Lord, work hard, dream large for what you can do as a follower of Jesus to make a difference for the good around the world. These are among the best years of your life. Savor them!

This entire community has poured out its grace on our family in many ways, but above all you have prayed for us and with us. A praying community is a gift beyond measure!

Finally, I would not be here were it not for many people over the years pouring themselves into my life.

Loving family. Godly parents. Mentors and teachers. Lifelong friends...many of whom are here.

And most of all, Paula, Anders, Ella and Sam. You are the joy of my life.

The last day we had like this was 25 years ago, October 8, 1982—a month before my 21<sup>st</sup> birthday—that day Dr. Clyde Cook was inaugurated as the 7<sup>th</sup> president of Biola University.

Dr. Cook, would you please stand... I want you to know how grateful I am for you and Anna Belle (have Anna Belle stand), for your quarter century of leadership, listening to the voice of God and leading from a position of integrity, godliness and wisdom.

An incoming president could not ask for a more gracious predecessor than you.

You have left huge shoes to fill as did all of our predecessors in this office, Richard Chase, Sam Sutherland, Louis Talbot, Paul Rood, William White and all the way back to R.A. Torrey, T.C. Horton and Lyman Stewart.

I read not long ago of a president going through the inauguration who had the same reaction as he would to a high society wedding: He'd rather elope.

I've felt that way a time or two over the past few weeks preparing this address.

Our 12-year old daughter Ella gave me her two cents worth, "Daddy, keep it short and tell lots of funny stories."

Thank you Ella, but I chose instead to do what we do at Biola, shaped by our heritage, modeled by our faculty and impressed on our students.

We're going to the God's Word.

We are people of the Word, with this conviction rooted back a century when leaders like R.A. Torrey declared, "I will follow the Bible wherever it leads me."

[prayer] Almighty God, you are awesome in this place. Be glorified above all else today, far above any institution or any mortal. May we be sure of your presence. Speak deeply to each one here through your Word. Holy Spirit, pierce our hearts. In the name of Christ our exalted Lord I pray, Amen.

As I've gone over the John chapter 11 story again and again in recent weeks, powerfully read a few moments ago and printed in your programs...

... I have come to believe that this passage has a lot to say to us today as we serve in the arena of Christ-centered higher education.

Lazarus, the one Jesus loves, is gravely ill.

His sisters Martha and Mary are nearing hopelessness.

When Jesus gets the news on Lazarus, he responds to his disciples: "This sickness will not end in death," but it's "for God's glory so that God's Son may be glorified."

Meanwhile, back in Bethany, the anxious sisters awaiting Jesus watch as their brother hovers near death.

Then, they realize, it's too late. Lazarus dies.

Mourners arrive. Grieving begins. Hope is gone.

Four days later, who shows up but Jesus?

Martha meets Jesus, and says in a blend of despair and loving trust, "Lord, if you had been here, my brother would not have died. But I know that even now God will give you whatever you ask."

Jesus soon assures her with these words, "I am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in me will live, even though he dies. Martha, do you believe this?"

Martha answered saying all the right things. "I believe you are the Christ, the Son of God, who was to come into the world."

It may have been but a few minutes or hours later when Jesus saw everyone weeping, and he also was deeply moved in spirit.

Then, in those two words familiar to every Sunday school child panicking to quote a verse from memory, Jesus wept.

And he came to the tomb, a cave with a stone laid across the entrance. He said, "Take away the stone."

"Lord," Martha shot back, "There's a bad odor in there. He's been there four days."

Then comes the signature statement of John 11, when Jesus said to Martha, this grieving, caring, responsible, loving sister of Lazarus and follower of Christ, "Did I not tell you that if you believed, you would see the glory of God?"

With the disciples who were following him, the crowds of mourners who were listening to him and the two sisters who were hoping in him, Jesus asks Martha: "Did I not tell you that if you believed, you would see the glory of God?"

Here's my question this morning: What does it mean for us as Christians and as a Christ-centered university in this new generation to reflect deeply on Jesus' question, "Didn't I tell you that if you believed you would see God's glory?"

May the Holy Spirit illuminate for us the profound truth that when we believe like Jesus asks us to believe, God's glory shows up.

When Jesus asks that question, he calls his listeners to believe with conviction that what he says is true.

In verse 27 Jesus asks Martha, “Do you believe I am the resurrection and the life?”

Martha responds with conviction in a creedlike confession that was theologically accurate and foundationally sound.

I believe you are the Christ.

I believe you are the Son of God.

I believe you have come into the world.

Martha believed with conviction in the objective truths of Christ.

Jesus is inviting her and the crowd to contemplate this question, “Do you believe who I am and that what I say is true?”

This is the same question for us today as a community of God at Biola on the threshold of our second century.

Biola at its center is a place that is marked by a belief in God as the source of all truth.

As we look at the cornerstone of this university with words that have weathered time, our commitment to the authority of God’s Word has held us firm, and this conviction must remain at the core of Biola’s vision to be an exemplary Christian university.

The documents read from 1913, “It should ... be understood that these buildings are not to be a monument to any man nor to any set of men, but are to

forever stand solely for the promulgation of the eternal truths of God's Holy Word."

If we get wobbly on the doctrine of Scripture, core underpinnings get knocked loose, and loosened convictions on biblical truth will be the early steps toward institutional drift.

Every kind of heterodoxy starts with unfaithfulness on the subject of Scripture and in a mischievous hermeneutic of the Bible.

I applaud the role of the Talbot School of Theology in its careful work of taking biblical fidelity seriously in our doctrinal statements and in the our faculty searches.

I exhort the office of the president, the Board of Trustees and the faculty to—with deep conviction—hold this community accountable to our fundamental belief in God's inerrant Word.

Gene Andre, I think you're here somewhere. Gene worked at Biola for many years as the director of the physical plant and facilities. A few days ago I was talking to Gene and asked him to pray for me as I was preparing what I needed to say today. Gene said, "You'll be okay. Just remind us that we're a school rooted in God's Word."

One of the special moments in my early days at Biola was when the chapel asked us to turn to the book of Colossians, and sitting right over there I watched as this gym filled with students dug into their backpacks or pulled from their stacks of books, this [the Bible].

So what if students are sitting on the floor with torn jeans and wild hair and pierced noses, living in a Face-Booked, You-Tubed culture?

What gives me hope is that I see students committed to the Bible who don't play fast and loose with Scripture, and they work hard to make God's Word relevant to their culture.

This is at the heart of who we are, embedded in our culture and deeply evident in our heritage.

Biola students I have great confidence that you, like generations of graduates before you, will leave here with conviction and with courage that God's Word is Truth and God's Word is transformational.

And you will not be alone as you do!

For what is happening around the globe today is staggering as hundreds of millions have made decisions to follow Christ, and take God's Word to mean what it says allowing it to speak into their lives and circumstances with a clarity and authenticity that is fresh and freeing.

These believers in places like the Sudan and Indonesia, Brazil and China are standing resolutely on God's Word without suspicion nor picking and choosing which parts to believe.

I got a letter last month from Rick Warren. Now, I've never met Rick Warren. Maybe I will someday.

He sent me a personal letter signed "Your friend, Rick." I like that. Everyone is so friendly in California!

Here's what Rick Warren wrote to encourage me at Biola:  
"There's one thing that never changes and that is the truth of God. Now more than ever, our people need to learn ... biblical principles ... to set the standard for building them into great, godly, good and global leaders to impact the world for Christ."

Did you hear that? "There's one thing that never changes and that is the truth of God."

Compare that statement to another statement also made last month.

At Columbia University Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad was questioned on his denial of historical realities, and he responded, "There's nothing known as absolute."

I wish I was there to ask him if he believed that absolutely. Think about it for a second.

Those in his audience who espouse relativism as their epistemology should have swallowed hard when they heard him parrot back *their* worldview, "There's nothing known as absolute."

Everything in our lives and all of creation fall subject to the revealed truth of God. That means we go against the grain and resist the tide that truth cannot be known absolutely.

We as Christians must take reason and science seriously, enabling us to affirm the truths of God and his creation.

We must defend truth to the skeptic with thoughtful and logical arguments, "always...prepared to give an answer

for the hope ... [we] have,” but I learned from my father a long time ago—a man of profound Christlike love—that we do so with “gentleness and respect,” incarnationally living out the Gospel walking not with a club but with a hoe. (1 Peter 3:15)

John 11:40 is a clear directive from Jesus that we be a people who believe with conviction in that which is true, taking every thought captive for Christ.

If God’s truth revealed through his Word and manifested in his creation is what we guard fiercely and is that which we as a Christian university believe as we move forward, is that enough?

I don’t think so.

When Jesus asked that question in 11:40, he was not only calling his listeners to believe with conviction that what he says is true. He was asking them to believe with **courage** for that which they have not yet seen.

Lazarus was still dead.

We believe with conviction on that which is true.

And we believe with courage for that which we have not yet seen.

John 11:40 calls us to believe with conviction *and* to believe with courage.

Martha says all the right things, doesn’t she? “I believe you are the son of God, the Messiah, the one who has come into the world.”

But when Jesus tells the people to “roll away the stone,” calling on those around him to become people of action, she wasn’t so sure.

“But Lord,” she said. “It’s been four days. Lazarus’ body is gonna smell!”

For those bilingual King James folks here, she said, “He stinketh!”

Martha was saying, “I believe, now help me in my unbelief,” reminiscent of a father’s words to Jesus when he stood helplessly beside his tormented son.

Jesus was communicating to Martha that he was far more than a theological concept to be understood or a thought to be mulled over.

He wanted to see his followers’ convictions mobilized into courage, even if it pushed them outside their comfort zones.

And Biola, that’s right where Jesus still wants us.

When the story shows Jesus troubled and weeping, it wasn’t just over the death of Lazarus, this friend he loved.

His despair and sorrow were for those around him struggling to muster up the faith in what Jesus could yet do.

Martha got it right, but not all right, for she could *not* see that something even more glorious was about to happen.

Jesus was about to do an amazing work in their community by raising Lazarus from the dead.

To do this work he called his followers to take their belief in who he was and to step out in courage believing in what he could yet do so that his glory would be seen.

And this is what those listening to Jesus did...not sure what was going to happen, they obeyed and rolled away the stone and when the dead man staggered out, they took off his grave clothes.

Jesus didn't do this alone. He called them to action as a community beyond their current frame of reference, and their actions took them into a place they never anticipated even in their highest moments of faith.

A.W. Tozer wrote, "The dynamic periods were those heroic times when God's people stirred themselves to do the Lord's bidding and went out fearlessly to carry His witness to the world...The miracle of God went when and where His people went; it stayed when His people stopped."

It was earlier in Jesus' ministry when the account says that, Jesus "did not do many miracles there because they did not believe."

From the strength of our convictions, we are called to move forward in courage. [pause]

A few years and about twenty pounds ago I had an annual physical, and my Welsh physician Dr. Price told me that I needed to exercise more to keep my cholesterol in check not to mention that he felt I was, well, chubby.

Now, he didn't actually say the word "chubby," but he made me stand on one of the scales you can't recalibrate like the one you tinker with at home...and he showed me the

chart of my weight in previous years...and I was standing there in front of the mirror wearing...well, you know what I mean.

I got the “chubby” message...high cholesterol, rising weight, an honest scale and a mirror.

He gave me some instructions, including developing an exercise routine.

I believed everything the good doctor said. He had the facts and I couldn't deny the numbers, or the mirror. As he told me I kept nodding my head... my flabby chin jiggling with each nod.

I went home and thought, I'm going to start running.

And when I do, I want to know the best way to run right. So I subscribed to “Runner's World.”

Every month that magazine came, I sat on our couch thinking, “I like this running thing. I get it.” But I never ran!

And do you know what? After a year I was a different person than the chubby man in Dr. Price's office.

I was now an *enlightened* chubby man out 25 bucks on a magazine subscription.

I understood and believed the concepts of running, but I had to get to a point, which I finally did, when got up early in the morning to lace on those running shoes that I had read about, and run.

Professor Tim Muelhoff reminded us last week in chapel of this same error: to think that a cognitive understanding of

something is the same as an experiential understanding.

The theological riches of John 11 point to a God who is worth believing in and who expects us to act courageously on our beliefs...

...what Clyde Cook declared in this gymnasium 25 years ago when in his inaugural address he said,

“Knowledge without action can be deadly. One of the great dangers in a place such as Biola is complacency—to know what to do and yet not to do anything...It is my dream for Biola,” he said, “...that our faculty, staff, students, graduates and board will be committed to...attempting great things for God.”

Friends, contentment with the status quo is poison to believing.

Remaining comfortable will atrophy our ability to speak with certainty to the world for whom Christ died.

The step from believing with conviction to courage is only about 13 inches, from the head to the heart...but it is a huge gulf to span.

You see, it's not merely grasping God, it's being grasped by God, the mind and the heart alike, with conviction and with courage.

And this glorious event was transformational in mobilizing Jesus' followers not just theologically to “get it.” It was far more than that.

If we as Christ-centered universities focus only on core convictions and refuse to pan the cultural and global horizons and take initiatives with the corresponding risks,

we will become sedentary and irrelevant.

If, on the other hand, we *only* pan the horizons and drift wherever winds of trend blow, we will fall into missional vertigo, foregoing those convictions that centrifugally hold us to our center.

As servants of this university, we must hold our mission in trust by believing with conviction.

As servants of this university, we must reach beyond our ability to grasp by believing with courage.

I urge us as a community of learning and formation that in the spirit of John 11 belief, we always look inward with conviction and always look outward with courage.

Our core responsibility at Biola is to move forward with confidence in our mission to provide biblically-centered education, scholarship and service preparing students in mind and character to impact the world for Christ.

My commitment to the Board of Trustees has been to build on the strengths of Biola and not to alter our mission and take us in a different direction.

We will go from strength to strength, grounded on the convictions of the past while envisioning stronger and ever more courageous ways to fulfill our vision.

Let me frame some of these priorities we will consider seriously, creatively and collectively as our aspirations for the coming years, moving forward with collaboration, grace, patience and resolve.

On these priorities, last month I commissioned task forces and editorial teams to reflect community input and to

draft affirmations and recommendations as we move us forward into Biola's second century.

I deeply appreciate the 21 men and women who are giving leadership to these teams, two-thirds of whom are from within the faculty.

By the Fall of 2008 I expect to present a refreshed plan to the Board of Trustees, building on the progress under Dr. Cook's leadership, which will map out our strategic initiatives over the coming years, initiatives pulling us beyond our current horizons.

I can only skim the surface today, but we will be going deep over the coming months with broad community input to give substance to these priorities.

Born out of our mission, our vision is to be a global center for Christian thought and spiritual renewal. And the goal of this vision is not our own prestige or renown or to bask in our gains. The goal of our vision is to see the glory of God.

First, as a *global* center we will be:

1. A university globally-minded: More than ever before, a distinctive which must mark those within Christian higher education for lives of service and leadership is that they are globally-aware. For this to happen, programs must be intentionally developed so that *every* student who receives a degree is intellectually and experientially a cross-cultural Christian. Every student! This is a watershed moment for Biola to build on our strong network of relationships cultivated over the years and to embark globally on bold initiatives and

collaborative ventures, grounded in the Great Commission. But we cannot allow this to be a one-way street when we talk about impacting the world for Christ. We must also ask the question, how is the global world impacting our own university life and thought?

2. As a global center, we will be a university of diversity: At the laying of the first cornerstone of Biola in Los Angeles in 1913, its leaders stated that “its doors [would be]...open every day in the year, and all people, without reference to race, color, class, creed, or previous condition, will ever be welcome to its privileges.” Now more than ever we must reinforce the expectation of Biola to attract and nurture a diversity representing different ethnicities and cultures across both faculty/staff and student populations. In so doing we are moving to become more than ever a university that reflects the breadth of God’s people across the country and around the world.
3. As a global center, we will be a university committed to the city: The urbanization of the world is a reality unfolding before us. Given our location and history with the city of Los Angeles and the globalization of the greater Los Angeles metropolis, we have a unique opportunity—a calling—to reconnect with the city in new ways. We have a lot to offer the city, and we have a lot to learn from the city. Let’s think anew about linking arms with churches and organizations in the many ethnic or underserved communities of greater Los Angeles. Let’s build on our inroads and become even more involved with the cultural influences of Los Angeles through music, media, film, commerce and the

arts and dream of new ways to be a shining light. Let's be people of the Gospel by re-envisioning our commitment to the city, and by so doing we will indeed be impacting the world for Christ.

Second, as a center for Christian thought we will be:

4. A university of educational breadth and depth: The tectonic plates are shifting in the world of higher education. Building from our strength and striving toward our vision, we must commit to new and strengthened educational ways with a sense of focus and urgency, asking ourselves, "do we understand these changes, and are we ready?" This means an openness led by good research to imagine new ways of fulfilling our time-honored mission through collaboration with other organizations, advanced learning technologies, accessibility for students and new degree programs to meet the changing educational needs of our constituents. Now with seven schools and a widening geographic presence, we will aspire toward healthy growth at the bachelors, masters and doctoral levels assuring that the breadth of our growth does not sacrifice the depth of our quality. This also means new and renovated facilities for our main La Mirada campus. With the profound talent in this university embodied in our faculty and students, they must be supported by commensurate buildings, laboratories and educational resources to correspond with their extraordinary giftedness.
5. As a center for Christian thought, we will be a university of faculty distinction: We are a teaching and research intensive university, and we must be intentional about

our commitment to be an intellectually stimulating environment. As we do we will attract and retain notable scholars and distinctive teachers to join this already leading community of professors. Our academic aspiration is that our students will excel in their understanding of God's Word, their integration of faith and learning, their knowledge, their critical thinking, their written and spoken communication as well as their professional readiness. As we strive toward an improved ratio of faculty per student, we will be assuring for years to come that quality of academics and access to professors will continue to be our hallmark.

6. As a center for Christian thought, we will be a university with a wide-ranging impact: In the spirit of courageous belief, Biola can be a laboratory for faculty to imagine, cultivate and launch far-reaching initiatives in any number of disciplines for the advancement of Christian thought. We must not be reluctant to think creatively and broadly, as entrepreneurs of fresh ideas backed by solvent plans to expand our resources beyond the bordering streets of this campus. As we help shape the ways in which men and women across the country and around the world form a robust biblical worldview, and through this witness for others to know Christ's saving grace, just imagine the impact on the arenas of business or music, science or literature, media or education, counseling or congregational life.

Third, as a center for spiritual renewal we will be:

7. A university characterized as a community of grace: Essentially, *all* of us here are in the student

development profession. Through our curricular and co-curricular programs, let's allow our mind's eye to see how we might develop our campus into more of an effervescent community as followers of Christ. We must continue to work toward this being a vibrant community where life on campus reflects the grace of Christ and the richness of the Christian university tradition. We will continually strengthen ways to enable students to develop as whole persons in heart and mind, but also in culture, acts of compassion and service, imagination, character, interpersonal skill, athletics and servant-leadership to prepare them as well-formed citizens, for life on the other side of their Biola experience.

8. As a center for spiritual renewal we will be a university of Christlike formation: Simply put, our goal is that we provide the support and direction for our students to lead them toward being more like Christ when they graduate than when they matriculate. This is huge as we contemplate how to create the space in all our lives to reflect deeply on intimacy with Christ and to allow the work of the Holy Spirit to transform us from the inside out. As we do this within our community, we must also expand our voice in helping the larger academy understand such learnings by advancing our programs and research in Christian spiritual formation.

In each of these areas, we will focus on strengthening the strengths of Biola as we strive toward our common vision of being a global center for Christian thought and spiritual renewal.

To those of you who work at Biola, you are an incredible

team. Your longevity and creativity, competency and energy, loyalty and prayerfulness are more of an inspiration than I can express. As we stand shoulder to shoulder and work in the spirit of open communication, we will walk with conviction and courage into our second century.

And I can't let this opportunity pass without saying that as we realize these aspirations, we will need the financial capital and endowment to enable Biola to enter this second century holding fast to our biblical convictions and leading courageously into new ways of fulfilling our time-honored mission.

We cannot grow like this through tuition income of students and families working hard to pay for college.

May God raise up men and women of kindred spirit who will invest resources into these priorities, all for the glory of God.

When the baton is passed to the next generation of Biola's leadership—should the Lord tarry as my father used to say—we have a responsibility to hand off a university that has understood and responded to the emerging educational and global realities unfolding before us, yet at our heart we will have remained steadfast on our core convictions.

John 11:40 begins with the words, "Didn't I tell you..."

*That's* how we keep Biola centered, safeguarding us from ideological drift?

The task of carrying out the biblically-moored mission of Biola to another generation is to be intentional on replaying those words of Christ... “Didn’t I tell you...”

Jesus said those words because he wanted to remind his listeners what he had told them before, lest they forget or get distracted from the main thing.

If we don’t heed this reminder with each generation, and if we lose as a community at Biola *and* as a culture the importance of these words “didn’t I tell you...”

...we will have, in recent comments by Chuck Colson, “severed the arteries...that transmit truth and virtue. Clearly the stakes are enormous, not just for the church but also for our culture.”

In 1908 a handful of leaders came together to believe in a way that brought glory to God’s name as they met on the corner of 6<sup>th</sup> and Hope Streets in downtown L.A. to establish The Bible Institute of Los Angeles.

Later mounted on the building were those two words fundamental to our faith, proclaiming prominently the timeless truth that...JESUS SAVES.

With each generation we need to recall the words of Christ, “Didn’t I tell you,” and recall ourselves to such belief, and to be reminded that 100 years later we’re still living on a street called Hope.

Why do we believe with conviction and courage? To see God’s glory. Period.

The story of John 11 takes us there...to believe and therefore see the glory of God.

In first century Jewish culture, after four days the body was not only dead, it was *really* dead, and there was no chance the spirit of life would return.

Jesus came on day four, when hopelessness for the crowds was set in stone, until Jesus said, “Roll away that stone.”

We don’t know who went forward in John 11 to roll away the stone of a smelly vault or to take off the death rags...the Scriptures don’t say...and I like it that way. Anonymity, humility, surrender.

But by the plural we know it was more than one who obeyed and acted without recognition.

Jesus said, I have not come to *be* served but to serve and to lay down my life. We go forth serving, wherever he calls us, that “they might see our good works” and... “glorify the Father.”

This past May during the stress of the presidential search interview process a student slipped me this note. I have kept in my Bible since, a reminder to me of the heart of God’s people at Biola and the life of leadership I need to live. Here is what he wrote:

Dr. and Mrs. Corey,

Thousands have been praying for you, none have taken this lightly. Welcome here. Please:

- Live simply that we may have an example to follow
- Give us Jesus
- Keep us urgent

- Ask for patience, especially within your first two years here
- Don't let us stay inside the bubble, take us outside for the Kingdom of God
- Eat in the cafeteria often, know your students
- Be hospitable
- Love us dearly
- Love one another before us
- Love Him so much more
- Fiercely guard what we stand for
- Do not glorify Biola. We do not need expensive pretty things, we want to be wise, practical, and to give it all to our Lord
- Remember beauty for ashes
- Be encouraged

Whenever I read that letter, I am reminded that leading *that* way will keep me from getting in the way of God's glory.

Whatever we do, including this convocation today which is not about Biola and is certainly not about Barry, we do it for the glory of God.

This convocation is about glorifying the Lord. The steps we take toward fulfilling our mission as a university in the coming years are about glorifying the Lord.

If we think we deserve any credit, we compromise God's glory.

In all we do, we must simply reflect and refract the glory of God.

And we do this on our knees, "kneel work," Louis Talbot called it, contemplating Christ's life so deeply that the closer we get to him, the more confident we become in our conviction and our courage.

If you believe, you will see the glory of God!

These are the words that Jesus speaks to Martha, and when he is done, in verse 41 Jesus begins to pray that those who will see what is about to happen might indeed believe.

And when Jesus finishes praying, glory shows up! The Bible says,

*Jesus called in a loud voice, "Lazarus, come out!" The dead man came out, his hands and feet wrapped with strips of linen, and a cloth around his face. Jesus said to them, "Take off the grave clothes and let him go."*

I remember as a boy an itinerant evangelist came through our town and preached the revival services at our church...

...and when he told the story of Lazarus, he told us that the authority of Christ was so powerful that had he not specified Lazarus by name, all of the tombs would have opened, releasing their dead to a resurrected life.

There is truth in the words of Christ. And there is power in the words of Christ. The truth leads us to conviction. The power leads us to courage.

When glory shows up revealed through the power of the exalted Christ, may our own agendas not obstruct that glory.

And this means we lead with humility and brokenness and surrender and repentance.

For if the object of belief is our own spectacular growth as a university, that's not God's glory, that's triumphalism.

If the object of belief is our academic surging up the rungs of some US News and World Report ratings ladder, that's not God's glory, that's pride.

And **even** if the object of our belief is our own self-contentment through acts of service to others, that's not God's glory, that's false humility.

When Martha and Mary and the crowds saw Lazarus walk out of that crypt shroud in strips of linen, Jesus did not want to hear them say, "Look, Lazarus is alive!"

He wanted to hear, "We have seen the glory of God."

I was struggling a few weeks back trying to explain to a friend in Boston what Jesus meant in this passage about seeing God's glory.

After I rambled on and on my friend Meirwyn began to tell me about going out in his canoe earlier that week.

He told me how that night he saw the autumn lily pads reflecting the moonlight like big silver plates. As he

paddled closer to the lilies, he heard a loud splash and knew at once it was the tail of a beaver pounding the water to ward him off.

Meirwyn stopped paddling and looked around for the beaver. Then he told me he saw a trembling lily pad and then next to it another and then another, all in a row.

And he thought, “There’s the beaver! There it goes,” following the trail of trembling lily pads.

Even though he never saw the beaver, when Meirwyn heard the splash and saw the trembling lily pads, he could say with confidence, “There it is! There’s the beaver!”

When students go out from Biola to the streets of Santa Ana and set up clinics for those who have no homes and no healthcare, you’re looking at a trembling lily pad. But what you are in fact seeing is God’s glory.

When we listen to the outstanding performances of Biola’s conservatory or marvel at the endurance of a cross country runner...these are just trembling lily pads. What you are really seeing is God’s glory in the arts and in athletics.

When two roommates are in conflict with one another and they talk and pray through a resolution...just trembling lily pads. These roommates have really seen God’s glory.

When our graduates see their business as ministry and seek to build biblical principles into corporate culture...

...or when a psychology student grapples with contemporary issues of justice while reading Plato’s *Republic* and

senses a calling to start a counseling practice in the inner city...

...or when a couple graduating from Biola is called to an unreached people group to tell them of Jesus' love...these are all just trembling lily pads. What you are truly seeing in these lives—if you believe—is the glory of God.

When Biola students produce films that grapple with the tragedy of sin and the redemptive work of God's grace. Just a trembling lily pad.

Or even when you walk around Biola and see the quality work of those who mow and repair, who manage and advise, who schedule and support and clean, these are trembling lily pads revealing God's glory through their work and lives.

When on Sunday nights students crowd into Calvary Chapel to open their hearts for God to lead them deeper into holiness as we are seeing this year, it's the glory of the Lord filling that place.

Something special is happening at Biola, and I have to believe it is the glory of God at work as we honor him through our steadfast convictions to his Word despite pressures to tuck and run...

...and he will reveal his glory in greater and more wondrous ways as we believe and act with courage.

I am overwhelmed at the capacity at what will happen when over 5,000 students, God's daughters and sons, resolve to believe with conviction and courage in what God can do in their lives for the sake of his glory.

And I look forward to the years ahead serving alongside our Board of Trustees, faculty and staff moving Biola forward with conviction and with courage. What a team we can be as we live in the realm of great expectations for century two.

“Didn’t I tell you that if you believe you will see the glory of God?”

As we begin this second century, let us resolve to be a community that believes. For as we do, God’s glory going to show up in this place in ways that will revive our hearts and call us to new challenges and courageous ideas in service to our world.

This is our legacy, Biola.

During the depths of the Great Depression, Louis Talbot—president of Biola—raised the sights of those he led who were facing foreclosure over an insurmountable debt on their building in downtown Los Angeles. He said,

“We are thankful to God that [this community] is anxious to do exploits for Him who has done so much for us. The Son of God calls us to follow Him in a great adventure. He says, ‘Go forward.’ Our reply shall be: ‘Arise, let us be going.’”

Let us arise and go forward.

And as we do may we, a bunch of sinners fallen short of God’s glory and resurrected by his grace, see the glory of the Lord who is high and lifted up as his presence fills this temple. The glory of the resurrected and exalted Christ.

The glory of the Spirit of God who, at the very words of Jesus, quickened the mortal body of this dead man Lazarus, breathing life into death, hope into hopelessness, courage into fear.

When Clyde Cook took over the presidency from Richard Chase in 1982, Dr. Chase told him, “Clyde, the best years for Biola are yet to come.” And Dr. Cook lived in that expectation, and indeed they were. A few days before I stepped into this new position, Clyde Cook told me the same thing. “Barry, the best years are yet to come.” And I will likewise live and lead in that belief.

May the days ahead be days of glorious belief for Biola as we see God work through us in ways more wondrous than we can imagine, a foretaste of the day when all God’s people from every tongue and tribe and nation will gather together around the throne and understand wholly what John the Revelator saw when he...

“...heard the voice of many angels, numbering thousands upon thousands, and ten thousand times ten thousand, singing ‘Worthy is the Lamb, who was slain, to receive power and wealth and wisdom and strength and honor and **glory** and praise!’ Then I heard every creature in heaven and on earth and under the earth and on the sea, and all that is in them, singing: ‘To him who sits on the throne and to the Lamb be praise and honor and **glory** and power, for ever and ever!’”