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**Folder Title:**  
Liberty Commencement, Lynchburg, Virginia, 5/12/90

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<b>G</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>5</b>

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(Smith/Blessey)  
May 3, 1990  
9 A.M.  
JERRY

PRESIDENTIAL REMARKS: LIBERTY COMMENCEMENT  
LYNCHBURG COMMENCEMENT  
SATURDAY, MAY 12, 1990  
2:00 P.M.

Dr. Falwell, distinguished guests, ladies and gentlemen.

Thank you, Jerry, for that introduction. And to all of you for your generous reception. Seven years ago, I was privileged to give the Commencement Speech at this magnificent university. ((Then, as now, it was good to know that if it takes divine intervention to save my remarks, help was close at hand.)) //

Today, I'm honored to be invited back. ((Even though I know this isn't quite what Dr. Falwell has in mind when he preaches about the Second Coming.)) And in the spirit of the occasion, I want to make two vows.

First, I will be brief. After all, you've worked and studied for four long years. And now comes the difficult part: Listening to a Commencement Address. // ~~The second vow is my~~ promise to refrain from talking about a miracle that occurred in my life. Barbara says people are tired of hearing that I caught a fish. //

((You know, looking around this beautiful campus, school has changed a lot since my days as an undergraduate. The students are so much younger. // Can't understand it. // And so much smarter. // That I can understand. // Nowadays, with computers,

ringing an apple to the teacher (a wholly different meaning.)) //

This afternoon, I'd like to talk about what has not changed since I, too, received a degree: America's mission to lend a hand, tend a wound, and help the less fortunate. // At home, we term it community service; abroad, volunteerism. It embodies the belief that life means nothing without a cause larger than ourselves. //

Lafayette was your age when he wrote of America: "What charms me most is, that all the citizens are brethren." He was back of the mission of volunteerism. // As when I talk of "a thousand points of light" -- that vast galaxy of voluntary associations of people and institutions working to solve problems in their own back yard. // Check any history book: Americans measure life not by what's in our bank account -- but by holding ourselves to account for the well-being of our community. //

Think of the pioneers who tamed a wild frontier -- clearing forests and building towns. They helped those for whom the American Dream seemed like an Impossible Dream. // Of the teachers of a century ago -- ill-supplied; paid less than \$30 a month; often boarded in small homes with large families -- who knew the future lay in children, through education. They mirrored service to Nation, and neighbor. // We salute the teachers of today. You can help enrich education - education enrich our lives.)) //

1, next, Clara Barton -- she, too, was a pioneer. Or the Marshall Plan, termed by Churchill "the most selfish act in the history of man." Or heroes from Johnstown to the ...  
 And for more than 200 years we have freely accepted, as Dwight D. Eisenhower said, "whatever sacrifices may be required of us." //  
 The reason: In a world with so much emphasis on imports and exports, America reveres the biggest export of all -- generosity.

Our generosity, of course, is grounded in religion. We know that political values without moral values cannot sustain a Nation. ((A little boy put it best with this simple prayer: "God bless mother and daddy, my brother and sister. And, oh God, do take care of yourself, because if anything happens to you we're all sunk.)) // Like that boy, we believe that God summons us, as the Book of Micah says, "to do justly, and to love mercy." // Put simply, we can honor Him by showing that any definition of a successful life must include serving others. // ((And in that spirit, let me again say: We can honor God by supporting a Constitutional Amendment restoring voluntary prayer. I believe now -- even more than when I became President -- we need the Faith of our Fathers back in our schools.)) //

Two weeks ago, in an address to the National Prayer Breakfast, I referred to this when I said, "America is not only divinely blessed. America is divinely accountable." // Yes, we enjoy rights like the freedom of expression, equal protection under the law, and to think, dream, and worship as we please. Rights our ancestors secured for us -- and which form the essence

of America. // But to do God's work, we must carry them to every corner of the earth -- making them the message of America. // [ So over the past year these rights -- America's inheritance -- have traveled to Hungary and Nicaragua, Bucharest and Berlin. ]  
 Endorsing the respect for human dignity which forms the very core of democracy. //

Look at Poland, that citadel of conscience. Or East Germany, holding that Nation's first multi-candidate elections at the local or Republic level. Around the world people are demanding the liberty that is religious and intellectual, economic and political. Now, through volunteerism, let us move beyond that fight to win the crusade for justice, equality, and hope. Refuting those who speak of a "Me" Generation." And thus build a cathedral of the spirit -- showing that, yes, ours is the "We" Generation. //

Already, you here at Liberty have led the way. Doing the deeds that make headlines not in the national magazines, but in the local weekly. // I think of \_\_, who assist \_\_. Or \_\_, enhancing \_\_. Or show you give one scholarship annually to every foreign Nation -- talk about an academic United Nations. Or the sixty individuals who this spring went to the Soviet Union. Or how each undergraduate is required to do community service. // Deeds perhaps not as dramatic as the profiles in courage of Leipzig, the Gulags, and Tiananmen Square. But which embody the same sense of sacrifice -- the knowledge that only 'We,' not

of America. // But to do God's work, we must carry them to every corner of the earth -- making them the message of America. // [ So over the past year these rights -- America's inheritance -- have traveled to Hungary and Nicaragua, Bucharest and Berlin. ]  
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Use us

Already, you here at Liberty have led the way. Doing the deeds that make headlines not in the national magazines, but in the local weekly. // I think of \_\_, who assist \_\_. Or \_\_, enhancing \_\_. Or how each undergraduate is required to do community service. // Deeds perhaps not as dramatic as the profiles in courage of Leipzig, the Gulags, and Tiananmen Square. But which embody the same sense of sacrifice -- the knowledge that only 'We,' not "me," can define a successful life both for the individual and the Nation. //

This selflessness can take many forms. For example, subjugating self to team. ((I notice that Liberty is ranked

number two in the National Debate Tournament. Then, of course, there's your football squad. Though it seems to me Liberty has a slight advantage. If your opponent's fans start doing the wave, Jerry Falwell can part it.)) // *clay comes in*

Next, selflessness can be shown by ~~simple~~ respect for human beings. ((In that sense, it's a good thing Liberty students are so well-disciplined and well-behaved. Just think of the food fights you could have had with seven loaves and fishes.)) //

Whatever the form, Americans historically have found ways to "love thy neighbor." It's like the story that manifests Yankee ingenuity. ((A mother told her son, "I have a pretty good idea that you skipped your piano lesson and played baseball." // The son said he hadn't. The mother said, "Are you sure?" // The son replied, "Uh-uh. And I have a fish to prove it.)) //

See what I mean? Americans can not be deterred: That's why we're Americans. // Our challenge is to find new ways to meet old needs. As the founders of the Mayflower Compact did, demanding religious freedom. Or the pioneers who pushed back the wilderness. As millions of Americans have in the last year from Hurricane Hugo in South California to the earthquake in Northern California. Providing light at the end of the tunnel -- a rainbow through the clouds. // *At home, only you*

At home, let's serve as tutors at inner-city schools. Or candy strippers at the nearby hospital. And so reject those who wish a new Gilded Age of mindless self-aborption. // Let's enlist in the Office of National Service, which our

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*Use the same  
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Administration formed last year. Serving at day-care centers, or homes for the elderly. And so join what Edmund Burke called America's "little [but mighty] platoons" -- groups, and individuals, involved in the cause of helping others, and thereby America. The cause of democratic ideals. //

Yet our generosity cannot be only for America. Democracy entails rights at home. It also demands the responsibility to help those abroad. So let us use the freedoms with which God has blessed America. Reflecting the spirit of such programs as the Peace Corps, People to People, and UNICEF. Programs which mirror the Golden Rule: Do unto others as you would have them do unto you. // Let us build on them through values as old as the Scriptures -- values like kindness, civility, self-denial, courage. And thus combat, internationally, the issues we face at home: Issues like hunger and health care, indigence and illiteracy. //

Here at Liberty, students have founded a special program to help the impoverished of Kenya. I salute you. As I do the sixty individuals who this spring went to the Soviet Union. And this entire University for giving one scholarship annually to each foreign Nation -- talk about an academic U.N. // And in countries from Panama to Poland, volunteer programs from other American universities are summoning "lightness against the dark." Let us increase these programs which can truly "Do unto others" -  
- even as the Good Shepherd has done unto America. //

((You know, Sam Rutigliano speaks of a telegram he received before a big game from an alumnus. It read: "Remember, coach. We're all behind you -- win or tie.))" Community service can put America behind the battle to beat poverty and despair. Aided always by the God who is our secret weapon, and our shield. // If we truly believe the teachings of the Sermon on the Mount, we must use what has been given to us -- education, freedom, the right to shape our lives -- to give back of ourselves. In a more peaceful world, where we hope armies can become smaller, we must mold a world where the armies of volunteers can become bigger. //

Let me close by saying: I have no doubt that we will. For we Americans are restless, seldom satisfied. We're not afraid to ask questions. We keep searching for answers. ((Questions like these that have been phoned to the White House. "We're taking the poll, do you watch 'Family Feud?'" // "Why does the President use the word 'thing' so much?" // And my personal favorite: "What is your response to the allegation that the White House does not play enough polka music?" // You have my word: We do -- we will.) //

But it's an answer that I'd like to end with: An answer to the question of what we can do to help our fellow man. It came in a letter from \_\_, a \_\_-th grader from \_\_. In it, he wrote: ". Then, he concluded: " ."

Community service can realize those words -- not only for this generation, but future generations. So let us join hands,

and link hearts, as "On Onward Christian Soldiers," we further the work of God, and man. Through the adventure of community service that shows the true meaning of "A thousand points of light" -- casting their glow on America, and illuminating the darkest corners of the world.

Thank you for this occasion -- for what you have done, and are doing. Good luck, my most heart-felt congratulations, and God bless the United States of America.

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(Smith/Blessey)  
May 3, 1990  
11 A.M.  
JERRY

PRESIDENTIAL REMARKS: LIBERTY COMMENCEMENT  
LYNCHBURG COMMENCEMENT  
SATURDAY, MAY 12, 1990  
2:00 P.M.

Dr. Falwell, distinguished guests, ladies and gentlemen.

Thank you for that introduction. And to all of you for your generous reception. Seven years ago, I was privileged to give the Commencement Speech at this magnificent <sup>school</sup> university. ((Then, as now, it was good to know that if it takes divine intervention to save my remarks, help was close at hand.)) //

Today, I'm honored to be back. ((Even though I know this isn't quite what Dr. Falwell has in mind when he preaches about the Second Coming.)) And in the spirit of the occasion, I want to make two vows.

First, I will be brief. After all, you've worked and studied for four long years. And now comes the difficult part: Listening to a Commencement Address. // My second pledge is to refrain from talking about a miracle that occurred in my life. Barbara says people are tired of hearing that I caught a fish. //

((~~You know~~, looking around campus, I am struck by the changes since last I was here. New name. This beautiful new stadium. Five times as many students. // And it got me to thinking how college itself has changed since my days as an undergraduate. The students are so much younger. // Can't understand it. // And so much smarter. // That I can

understand. // Nowadays, with computers, bringing an apple to the teacher has a wholly different meaning.)) //

This afternoon, I'd like to talk about what has not changed since ~~like you~~ I received a degree: America's mission to lend a hand, tend a wound, and help the less fortunate. // We term it community service or volunteerism. It embodies the ~~idea~~ belief that life means nothing without a cause larger than ourselves. //

Lafayette was your age when he wrote of America: "What charms me most is, that all the citizens are brethren." He was speaking of the mission of volunteerism. // As I am when I talk of "a thousand points of light" -- that vast galaxy of voluntary associations of people and institutions working to solve problems in their own back yard. // Check any history book: Americans measure life not by what's in our bank account -- but by holding ourselves to account for the well-being of our community. //

Think of the pioneers who tamed a wild frontier -- clearing forests and building towns. They helped those for whom the American Dream seemed like an Impossible Dream. // Or the teachers of a century ago -- ill-supplied; paid less than \$30 a month; often boarded in small homes with large families -- who knew the future lay in children, through education. They mirrored service to Nation, and neighbor. //

Next, recall Clara Barton -- she, too, was a catalyst of caring. As was the Marshall Plan, termed by Churchill "the most unselfish act in ~~the~~ history of ~~man~~." Or heroes from Johnstown

(Smith/Blessey)  
May 4, 1990  
8 A.M.  
JERRY

PRESIDENTIAL REMARKS: LIBERTY COMMENCEMENT  
LYNCHBURG COMMENCEMENT  
SATURDAY, MAY 12, 1990  
2:00 P.M.

Dr. Falwell, distinguished guests, ladies and gentlemen.

Thank you for that introduction. And to all of you for your generous reception. Seven years ago, I was privileged to give your Commencement Address. ((Then, as now, it was good to know that if it takes divine intervention to save my remarks, help was close at hand.)) //

This afternoon, I'm honored to be back. ((Even though I know this isn't quite what Dr. Falwell has in mind when he preaches about the Second Coming.)) And in the spirit of the occasion, I want to make two vows.

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computers, bringing an apple to the teacher has a wholly <sup>new</sup> different meaning.) //

Today, I'd like to talk about what has not changed since I received a degree: America's mission to lend a hand, tend a wound, and help the less fortunate. // We term it community service or volunteerism. It embodies the belief that life means nothing without a cause larger than ourselves. //

Lafayette was your age when he wrote of America: "What charms me most is, that all the citizens are brethren." He was speaking of the mission of volunteerism. // <sup>Community service, And so</sup> As am I when I talk of "a thousand points of light" -- that vast galaxy of voluntary associations of people and institutions working to solve problems in their own back yard. // ~~Check any history book.~~ Americans measure <sup>SUCCESS</sup> ~~life~~ not by what's in our bank account -- but by holding ourselves to account for the well-being of our community. //

Think of the pioneers who tamed a wild frontier -- clearing forests and building towns. They helped those for whom the American Dream seemed like an Impossible Dream. // Or the teachers of a century ago -- ill-supplied; paid less than \$30 a month; often boarded in small homes with large families -- who knew the future lay in children, through education. They mirrored service to Nation, and neighbor. //

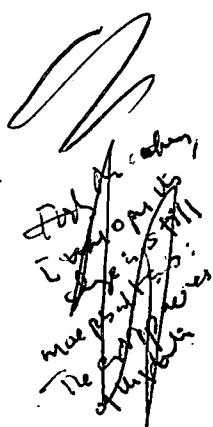
<sup>Remember</sup> Next, recall Clara Barton, <sup>?</sup> she, too, was a catalyst of caring. As was the Marshall Plan, termed by Churchill "the most unselfish act in history." Or heroes from Johnstown to the Salvation Army. For over 200 years we have freely accepted, as

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Dwight Eisenhower said, "whatever sacrifices may be required." //  
 The reason: In a world with so much emphasis on imports and  
 exports, America reveres the biggest export of all -- generosity.

~~Our generosity, of course, is grounded in religion. ((A  
 little boy put it best with this simple prayer: "God bless  
 mother and daddy, my brother and sister. And, oh God, do take  
 care of yourself, because if anything happens to you we're all  
 sunk.)) // Like that boy, we believe that God summons us, as  
 the Book of Micah says, "to <sup>act</sup> do justly, and to love mercy." //~~  
 Put simply, we can honor Him by showing that any definition of a  
 successful life must include serving others. //

~~Two weeks ago, addressing the National Prayer Breakfast, I  
 referred to this when I said, "America is not only divinely  
blessed. America is divinely accountable." // Yes, we enjoy <sup>the right</sup>  
<sup>and</sup> rights like freedom of expression, equal protection under the  
<sup>does</sup> law, ~~and~~ to think, and worship as we please. Rights our ancestors  
 secured for us -- and which form the essence of America. // But  
 to do God's work, we must carry them to every corner of the earth  
 -- making them the message of America. Showing the old respect  
 for human dignity central to today's new democracy. //~~

Here at Liberty, you have shown what that new democracy  
 means. It means, first, the <sup>understanding</sup> knowledge that man needs <sup>freedom</sup> the liberty  
 that is religious and intellectual, economic and political. But  
 moreover, that man must move beyond <sup>freedom</sup> liberty to win the crusade  
 for self-respect. Refuting those who speak of a "Me" Generation.

Showing that ours is the "We" Generation. Through deeds that make headlines not in the national journal, but in the local weekly. //

This new democracy can take many forms. First, we can show it through such Biblical qualities as kindness and courtesy.

((In that sense, it's a good thing Liberty students are so well-disciplined, and well behaved. Just think of the food fights you could have had with seven loaves and fishes.)) //

New democracy can also be exhibited through finding fulfillment in a common effort. ((Liberty is ranked No. 2 in the National Debate Tournament. Then, there's your football squad. Though I think Liberty has an advantage. If your opponent's fans start doing the wave, Jerry Falwell can part it.)) //

Most of all, new democracy can be evidenced through the volunteerism which finds modern ways to meet timeless needs. As founders of the Mayflower Compact did, demanding religious freedom. Or the Sodbusters, who pushed back the wilderness. As millions of Americans did last year from Hurricane Hugo in South Carolina to the earthquake in Northern California. Providing light at the end of the tunnel -- a rainbow through the clouds. //

I think of Liberty's \_\_, who \_\_ -- he encapsules the new democracy. Or \_\_, enhancing \_\_. Or each Liberty undergraduate ~~required to~~ do community service. Their tales can make as great a difference as the profiles in courage of Leipzig, the Gulags, or Tianamen Square. // They show the value of what I call "one-on-one concern." Proving that only "We," not "me," can define a successful life both for the individual and the Nation.

Today, then, let me challenge Americans nationally to do what you are doing locally. Serve as tutors at inner-city schools, candy strippers at a hospital. Helping those without food to eat, or a place to sleep, or those dying with AIDS. // To me, Liberty University means "Do unto others." So let's help not merely colleagues but strangers -- stemming their desperate aloneness to make them feel needed and loved. // Whatever your future job, sound a call to action. If you're a lawyer, ask the firm to do pro bono work. If a teacher, volunteer for counseling. Remember: Individually, we can change a life.

Collectively, we can change the world. // So organize your peers. Enlist in the Office of National Service, which our Administration formed last year. Serving at day-care centers, homes for the elderly, or shelters for addicts. And so join what Edmund Burke called America's "little [but mighty] platoons." //

~~Yet new democracy can't be limited to America. So abroad, too, let's use our rights to meet responsibilities.~~ In Germany, students quote Jefferson. Their image of America is not of dollars, but democratic ideals. // We must uphold those ideals -- and then move beyond the human liberties which over the past year have traveled to Hungary and Nicaragua, Bucharest and Berlin -- much as they first blessed America 200 years ago. Not only through wonderful programs like the Peace Corps and UNICEF. But through the generosity and engagement that can help combat, globally, the same issues we Americans face: Issues like hunger and health care, indigence and illiteracy. //

Here at Liberty, students have begun a program to help the impoverished of Kenya. And this University gives one scholarship annually to each foreign Nation -- talk about an academic United Nations. I salute you. Yet I challenge you, too. // Support volunteer programs from other universities which truly "love thy neighbor." Ask employers to send books, fax machines, and copies of the Constitution to peoples yearning for freedom <sup>across the globe,</sup> ~~from Poland~~ to ~~Panama~~. In Romania, a woman took from her purse a worn copy of a magazine. She'd carried it for five years. On its cover was a picture of the Declaration of Independence. Let us increase volunter efforts to summon "lightness against the dark".

Let me add: I have no doubt that we will. For we Americans are restless, seldom satisfied. We keep asking questions -- and searching for answers. ((Questions like these that have been phoned to the White House. "We're taking a poll, do you watch 'Family Feud?'" // "Why does the President use the word 'thing' so much?" // And my personal favorite: "What is your response to the allegation that the White House does not play enough polka music?" // You have my word: We do -- we will.)

Yet it's an answer that I'd like to close with: An answer to the question of how we can help our fellow man. It comes from Melanie Hart, 8 years old, a second-grader in Florissant, Missouri. As the Bible says, "Out of the mouths of babes." //

Melanie sent me a letter which said, "My favorite food is pizza, hamburgers, and broccoli (with cheese). The foods I don't like the most are cooked carrots, baked beans, and asparagus."

Yuck!" // Moreover, she enclosed a poem which she asked me to give to President Gorbachev at our meeting later this month. A poem about the need for God's children to understand each other -- and which ended with these words about a cat and a dog. "They came face to face, and talked for a while. They both became friends. And left with a smile." //

Melanie, I will give President Gorbachev your poem. I'm sure he'll like the picture you drew on it -- of American and Soviet flags. And as we talk, I'll think of how the new democracy can lead to understanding. And how community service can form its heart. //

In a more peaceful world, where we hope armies can become smaller, we must mold a world where the armies of <sup>people helping people</sup> volunteers can become bigger. Using what has been given to us -- freedom and opportunity -- to give back of ourselves. // Through the adventure of community service, we can show the true meaning of "A thousand points of light." Joining hands, and linking hearts, to further the work of God, and man. //

Thank you for this occasion. Good luck, my most heart-felt congratulations, and God bless the United States of America.

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