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Interview with Barry C, Black : Reflections on Calling

Barry C. Black
United States. Senate

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INTERVIEW WITH BARRY C. BLACK REFLECTIONS ON CALLING

Rear Admiral Barry C. Black, USN (Ret.), is the 62nd Chaplain of the United States Senate. He is the first African American and the first Seventh-day Adventist to hold this office. Prior to coming to Capitol Hill, Chaplain Black served in the U.S. Navy for over twenty-seven years, ending his distinguished career as the Chief of Navy Chaplains. Chaplain Black is an alumnus of Oakwood College, Andrews University, North Carolina Central University, Eastern Baptist Seminary, Salve Regina University, and United States International University. In addition to earning Master of Arts degrees in Divinity, Counseling, and Management, he has received a Doctorate degree in Ministry and a Doctor of Philosophy degree in Psychology.

On January 18, 2014, Rear Admiral Barry C. Black came to Andrews University to speak for the Graduate Student Consecration Service at the Howard Performing Arts Center. While on campus Admiral Black was interviewed by Shirley Freed and the Graduate Dean, Christon Arthur.

Interviewers (I): I think the first thing we should say is “Thank you for letting us interview you, and thank you for coming to Andrews.” Clearly, today already you have inspired our students and faculty a lot with what you have given us. But I think it would be good if you could just summarize what it means to be a chaplain of the U.S. Senate.

Barry Black (BB): I think to be a chaplain of the United States Senate is to have a front-row seat to human history. You have an opportunity of seeing the unfolding of your nation’s history, up close and personal. You have the opportunity of watching the unfolding of God’s loving providence in your nation’s history, and in its interaction with the world. And you have the opportunity of actually making input into what is happening in terms of your nation’s history. I teach a Bible study for senators every week, and I’ve been doing so for over 10 years. That’s an amazing opportunity to shape the ethical, moral, and spiritual fitness of key players in American history. The legislative branch is

what is mentioned first in the Constitution before the other government branches.

And so to have the opportunity of teaching the Word of God to these lawmakers, that's just a front-row seat to what is going on. The people that I interact with during the day are on the television news networks in the evenings. So that front-row seat is an amazing privilege.

I: Okay, let's talk a little bit about you as a leader. Do you see yourself as a leader? And how can you help us understand what leadership means, when you don't have a leadership position as such, and people might expect something different from you as a chaplain than if you were in some kind of formal position in leadership?

BB: Well, at the end of the past fiscal crisis, Senator Harry Reid said something at the beginning of his morning remarks that startled me. He said that Admiral Black has made as significant a contribution to resolving this impasse as any member of Congress. I was startled by that because, you're right, I don't have a position of authority; my responsibility is nonpartisan and nonsectarian. People expect me to be apolitical. And yet here was the majority leader saying that the contribution that I had made was as significant as any other lawmaker. And I think what he was hinting at is that leadership is influence. It has little to do with positional authority. That's because most people know when the "emperor is naked." Most people know who the real leaders are. And many times the real leaders are leading from the middle, and sometimes leading from the rear.

So for me, leadership is the mobilization of people toward shared objectives, by using your influence. And that was what I had the privilege of doing, by continuing to teach my Bible studies to the senators, continuing to have my interaction in the prayer breakfast each week, and praying each morning. I had the privilege of literally framing the day. The first comments that are uttered each day in that chamber come from the mouth of the chaplain. So that's influence. And that's what leadership is all about. When David shows up on the battlefield in 1 Samuel 17, he's not even in uniform. He's a teenager, and yet his influence makes him the true leader.

I: That is a wonderful example of leadership. Can you, in retrospect, think of a particular bill, or a discussion, or something within the Senate, that you could have on your own controlled, based on how you react to and relate with the senators?

BB: Hmm. . . . I can see the way this discussion is going. Well, I won't mention a bill, but I will say that I have had lawmakers come up to me and say, "I want you to know that what you said in the prayer has influenced the way that I'm going to vote."

You can't ask for more than that. Our lawmakers are usually dealing with right versus right conundrums. Right versus wrong problems are easy to solve. We have two parties for the most part, two parties that have different philosophical undergirdings. So you have two colliding stories. If I can get lawmakers to have ethical reasons and evidence for the way that they think and vote, I think that I am doing my job. I don't care how you vote. I want to know that you've got ethical reasons and evidence for the way you're voting, particularly if you are dealing with the right versus right conundrum.

I: So what would be your counsel for people who are in a similar position in the sense that they are leading from the middle, or even the bottom of the stack? That's the majority of us, the majority of the time.

BB: Hmm. . . .

I: How can we live our lives in a way that we don't get an institutional squeeze, but that in fact we are functioning with that integrity that says, "This is where we need to be going," or "let's at least think about this?"

BB: Well, the first thing I would say to a person like that is, "Make sure you have pure motives." Jeremiah 45:5 says, "Seeketh thou great things for thyself. Seek them not." What is my motivation? The second thing that I would say is,

I think the Lord will bless if you follow that strategy of pure motives, of focusing on serving.

"Focus on serving." When I am serving, I've got to listen. 1 Corinthians 4:1 says, "Think of yourself as a servant of Christ and a steward of the mysteries of God." So my motives are pure. I'm focusing on serving, even if I have to wash the feet of my disciples on the night on which I am betrayed. The third thing I would say is, "Strive for faithfulness instead of success." 1 Corinthians 4:2 says, "Moreover it is required of stewards, that they be found faithful."

To me the greatest example of that is Joseph, who blooms where he is planted. And you can see in retrospect, God preparing him for preeminence. First he is in charge of Potiphar's home. Then he is in charge even in the prison. He is faithful. He doesn't complain. He blooms where he is planted.

I think the Lord will bless if you follow that strategy of pure motives, of focusing on serving. I love Matthew 20:26: if you want to be great, learn to be the slave. Make faithfulness the *sine qua non*, make it the litmus test for your motivation. So there is no winning or losing here. The question is, “Am I faithful?”

The commendation in the parable of the talents in Matthew 25 does not say, “Well done, good and successful servant.” We get the same commendations. Faithfulness is what God is judging. I think you will find that God has a way of working things out. The final thing I would say is, “Trust the law of sowing and reaping.” Genesis 8:22 says that “as long as time shall last, there will always be seed time and harvest, summer and winter.” Galatians 6:7 says, “God will not be made a fool, you reap what you sow.” And 1 Corinthians 3:6 says, “I plant, Apollos waters.” So you’re planting and watering, knowing that there are four kinds of soil out there. Some seed will fall among the thorns, some will fall on the wayside, some will be taken away by the birds. But I keep on planting. In the words of Galatians 6:9: “Do not become weary in well doing because at the proper time,” or as the Authorized Version puts it, “in due season,” you will reap. Not your grandchildren and your great-grandchildren, but you will reap, if you faint not.

I: It seems to me that from the moment I saw you up front this morning, and the choir was singing “The Lord Is My Shepherd,” you just went into an incredibly meditative mode. Your eyes were closed. I watched you, and I thought, “Oh my, he knows Who he is connecting with.” I thought at that moment, “What is going to come out of this man’s mouth is going to be really powerful, because he is connecting with God.”

And I think as I’ve gone through the day, that’s been my wonderment—the depth of your connection, and the realness of it. I have been wanting to hear from you about it. All of us, but especially people in leadership, make a mess of everything if we’re not connected with Christ.

BB: Uh-huh. . . .

I: So is that a long, long, long journey that you’ve had? Is it recent? How have you maintained it? How do you have what you have today? I think it’s what we all covet.

BB: Well, it’s a long journey. I was delivering a speech for a secular conference and Dr. Delbert Baker, the president of Oakwood University, was the one who introduced me. He said, “Barry, I know all about your background. But what can you tell me that I don’t know, and maybe the people don’t know,

and would like to know?”

Most people don't realize that for my entire life I have been in passionate pursuit of God. My mother was baptized when she was pregnant with me. She asked for the Holy Spirit to anoint her unborn child. So I was different from the start. I used to hide in the church so that when the people would leave and lock up, I could be in the sanctuary and pray. I felt more comfortable there. A kid, you would think, would be afraid in a big, dark place like that. I wasn't. It has been a passionate pursuit. I accepted Jesus at 10. I had Him speak to me through nature at 16. I was walking under the rural skies of Pennsylvania, seeing what looked like a fireworks display. I had never seen the stars before; you don't see the stars in the inner city. I heard God saying, “Okay, Barry, I think it's time for us to ratchet it up a bit.”

I was Oakwood University's first student missionary. I was working nestled in the mountains of Peru. Again there were the stars. So nature was doing its magic on me.

If you told me that I would be praying without speaking for two hours a day, I would not have believed it.

And then having my steps ordered, having this encounter with the Holy Spirit, an experience that is empirical. The Holy Spirit has taught me that prayer is more listening than speaking. One day I stumbled into it. I was driving for an hour. I knew I was going to drive for an hour. And I said to God, “Look, we're going to be together for an hour. No radio, no DVD players, CD players, or anything. If You got anything you want to say to me, I'm listening.”

I was listening and driving when He downloaded on me. There was a problem that I had given up on. I just couldn't solve it. God said, “I was wondering when you were going to stop saying, ‘Listen Lord, for your servant speaketh,’ and start saying, ‘Speak Lord, for your servant is listening.’ You know that problem you've given up on? I just want you to understand the difference between My thoughts and your thoughts. Here is the solution.”

Just a simple and lucid answer! I mean, I had a problem that I had wrestled with for five years. He just cancelled it out! When I pulled up to my job, I rushed in to write it down, so I wouldn't forget the download. On the way back home, I said, “We're going to be together for an hour—You got anything to say to me? I'm listening.”

That has been special. No one told me to do that. I stumbled into it. That has been sweet. I mean, I didn't know that prayer could be that way. If you told me that I would be praying without speaking for two hours a day, I would not have believed it. I mean, I couldn't jog without an MP3 player. I didn't know how to listen. I mean, I do the speaking stuff too, but for two

hours a day, I am listening. Blaise Pascal, the French mathematician and philosopher, said that most of the problems of the world are because people cannot spend an hour alone in a room by themselves. We just can't take it. We have to have something on. So I think a leader has to learn how to listen. One of the best books written on leadership was written by Richard Nixon. It's called *In the Arena*. It is special. It has one-word titles: Speaking, Thinking, etc. In his chapter on Thinking, he talks about successful people he knew, leaders, who would go into an office, sit down, with no paper or pen, and think for an hour. To some extent, this is what you are doing when you pray.

Fulton Sheen was another great leader. In the 1950s he had an Emmy award-winning show called *Life Is Worth Living*. When he was a young seminarian in his twenties, he read in Luke where our Lord said to His disciples, "Could you not watch with me one hour?" He made a commitment to God, saying, "I will spend a holy hour in Your presence each day." And that is essentially what he did. He was the author of 60 books, most of them written, as he describes it, "in the presence of the blessed sacrament." He had a two-bedroom flat in Manhattan with one room to sleep in and one room to pray in. He died during one of his holy hours. That's where they found him.

I: Let's talk about motivation. Passion. I get a sense that you are a passionate person, but what's at the core? What motivates, what drives Barry Black?

BB: I think the core of my passion is reverential awe. I stand in awe of God. I have accountability to Him, I know that. I'm very sensitive to His leading. I was in a situation where I was wrestling with a sin. I had made the decision that I was just going to go ahead and do it. I was talking to God about it: "Look, nobody is perfect. I'm just tired. I've been battling this for over a year." The week that this premeditated transgression was to be committed, my mentor, Bob Mole, a Seventh-day Adventist chaplain, died. We had the memorial service and I was afraid to dishonor the memory of my friend and the God who had given me the gift of such an amazing mentor by committing a premeditated transgression on the week of his death.

There are limits. The Devil picked the wrong week. And that was enough to get me through that season. That was my way of escape. I was good to go after that. I had no more problems with something that I had wrestled with for over a year. Reverential awe!

Solomon ends his book, with Ecclesiastes 12:13, "Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter, Fear God." That's reverential awe. "Keep his commandments, for this is the whole duty of humankind. For God will bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing, whether it be good or whether it be

evil.” We must remember the blessings of God in our lives. Joseph said to Mrs. Potiphar, “Your husband has put me in charge of everything, lady. I mean, I administer everything. The only thing off limits is you. That’s the only thing I don’t control. Have you lost your mind? My God has blessed me with that kind of support. How, then, can I do it?” The reverential awe.

Our God is an awesome God. We should sing, “What a mighty God we serve! Angels bow before Him, heaven and earth adore Him.” So, that’s the core of my passion. It is an awe that is rooted in love. John 14:15 says, “If you love Me, keep my commandments.” 2 Corinthians 5:14 says, “The love of Christ controls us.” I don’t want to let Him down.

One day I was signing books. I had signed over 300 books, and I looked up and there was a line that looked like there were still over a hundred people in line. My hands were starting to cramp. I started complaining to the Lord: “Lord, I have a plane to catch, and there are still so many people in line.”

The Holy Spirit said, “You know, if it’s too much for you, I can arrange to remove you. You don’t have to worry about signing a lot of books. We can make it happen. Do you realize how many people would love to be the chaplain of the United States Senate?” Why would I complain about the pinpricks, what Paul calls “our light afflictions which are only for a moment”? So what motivates me is that reverential awe, rooted in love.

I: I work in leadership development. We have trained and graduated about 170 doctorates now. The students come from all kinds of religious backgrounds. In fact, someone in the U.S. Army just graduated. I have a little confession: I feel like we don’t think we ever know what we are doing. I think we’re always asking ourselves, “What should we be doing in our education for our people, so that when they graduate, they will be graduates who will bring glory to God in their own way? What kind of experiences can we give them, so that it’s not just books? Help me think about that.

BB: Well, I think the first thing I would say to you and your colleagues is to acknowledge that leadership is a gift; it’s one of the gifts of the Spirit. If you look at 1 Corinthians 12, Romans 12, and Ephesians 4, you will see the list of the gifts of the Spirit. You will find leadership listed among the gifts. Now granted, some are five-talent leaders, some are two-talent leaders, and some are one-talent leaders. Because one aspect of leaders is influence, I think we all have leadership capabilities. We’re a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a distinctive people. So you must acknowledge that. You must know that you may be training LeBron James. You are going to be showing him how to hold the basketball.

This guy brings a package that I can't even touch, okay? So acknowledge that, and let it humble you. Secondly, remember the wonderful line in the book, *The Prophet*, by the Lebanese-American poet, Kahlil Gibran, writing in 1923: "You give but little when you give of your possessions. It is when you give of yourself that you truly give. For what are your possessions but things you keep and guard for fear you may need them tomorrow? And tomorrow, what shall tomorrow bring to the overprudent dog burying bones in the trackless sand as he follows the pilgrims to the holy city?" Give yourself.

Marcus Aurelius was taught by the great Stoic, Epictetus. He was taught—and he talks about it in his book *Meditations*—that philosophy becomes viable only if I live it; only if I show people how to live it. Too many teachers never let us see them outside of the classroom. Too many teachers never let us see how these ethereal pontifications apply to their lives.

I think a great deal of leadership is caught more than taught.

Probably the greatest impact on my life was by a leader. Dr. Earl Meriel Nathaniel, the head of the Psychology Department at Oakwood University in 1966, was from Trinidad. Brenda and I showed up at Oakwood University in 1966. He let us share his life. We saw him in the classroom, but he was the first teacher who invited us to his home. It was the first time I saw the *Britannica Great Books of the Western World*. I was able to go through his library. He took us on Sabbath walks. Even with our testosterone raging, he had faith and trust in us. He wrote plays, and had us participate in them. He exposed us to literature. He had the play, Christopher Marlowe's *Tragic Life and Death of Dr. Faust*. I played Faust. So here was an individual who gave himself. I don't even remember the courses I took from him, and yet, my vocabulary, what I like to read now, my outlook in life, was influenced by the way he lived his life. One reason I got two doctorates is because I was inspired by the fact that he had two doctorates.

I think a great deal of leadership is caught more than taught. I took a leadership class in my Ph.D. program where the teacher said, "We're going to be giving oral presentations, but I'm going to ask you to do something for me. Don't read them. I just want you to get up and talk to the class about your research." We were trembling, but this was one of the greatest training exercises for us. We discovered that you can talk without a note, that you can remember, that a mother does not forget the names of her children. "I want some of this stuff to come out of you, okay?" the teacher said. I don't know if he realized what he was doing in terms of training me for leadership. But I tell you, there have been numerous opportunities—even in this interview—where the ability to think on my feet is something that I learned from him. He did

not read from a manuscript like many professors did, particularly the ones that wrote the textbook.

So those are just some of the suggestions. Give of yourself. Aquinas talks about this. He said, “Students must bring something.” If a student does not bring a work ethic, if a student does not bring a hunger for knowledge, you can’t get blood out of a turnip. But the teacher has to bring something. And Aquinas says, “The teacher brings himself/herself, and the willingness to be transparent.” Quite frankly, not very many Ph.D.s would say, “We don’t know.” There’s a beautiful transparency that students need to hear, so they don’t become legends in their own minds, thinking that because they have a certain formula they are God’s gift to mankind. No! No! That kind of modesty, that kind of transparency, is not transformative.

One final thing. The Bible says of Jesus that “He called twelve, that they might be with Him.” It’s as if He said, “Let’s hang out together for a while.” Then they started asking questions: “Can You teach us to pray? We think there is a causal connection between Your power and all that time You spend in prayer. Could You teach us how to do that thing You do?” They “caught” that stuff. Many times they were lecturing Him, you know? They actually thought they were smarter than Him. When Jesus told His disciples that He would have to die, Peter said (in Matthew 16), “It’s not going to happen on my watch—over my dead body!” He argued with Christ. In verse 16 of that chapter, Christ commends Peter. But only seven verses later, in verse 23, Jesus says, “Get thee behind me, Satan.”

I: You have spoken glowingly about the persons who have had great impact on your life: your teacher at Oakwood University when you were a freshman, and a professor at the Ph.D. level who was transparent. Stephen Covey says that one of the seven habits of effective leaders is to begin with the end in mind. I play chess, and it’s the end game that wins most chess games. Being sort of morbid, why don’t you put it in perspective? If you envision your funeral, and envision the person who is going to eulogize you, what do you want them to say? Leadership is about legacy. What value is left in legacy? What do you want us to remember?

BB: I’m a big fan of Covey, and had breakfast with him one morning at a conference that we were both speaking at. We had a wonderful interaction. It was very informative.

I would like somebody to say what Paul said in 2 Timothy 4:6-8: “I have fought a good fight, I finished my course, I kept the faith.” I don’t think it gets much better than that. One of my favorite preachers, Charles Spurgeon, the

great British preacher, had this engraved on his tomb: “I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith.”

I’m a little different in that I think eternal life has already started for me. 1 John 3:1 says, “Behold what manner of love the father hath bestowed on us, so we should be called the children of God.” Verse 2 states: “Behold, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be, but we know that when He shall appear, we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is.”

In John chapter 11, Martha says, “I know my brother will be raised in the resurrection.” In verses 25 and 26, Jesus says to Martha, “I am the resurrection and the life. Those who believe on me will never die.”

You see, I am a believer. Now I don’t know what He means by that. But I think that He means that eternal life begins for us in the here and the now. All respect to Stephen Covey, whom I believe is a brilliant man, but who cares what they say at my funeral?! I want Him to say, “Well done.” Most of the language at funerals is hyperbolic at best. Let’s face it. One kid said to Mommy, “Can I go look again? ‘Cause they aren’t talking about Daddy.” It’s hyperbolic at best. But if God says “well done” it will all be worth it.

I do a spiritual mentoring class in the Senate. I have my students write their obituary. I think it’s a good exercise because if I want somebody to say, “He was a good family man,” then I got some stuff I need to be doing right now. If I want somebody to say, “He was a great scholar,” I need to maybe start writing something.

Then I have them, based on the Covey model of beginning with the end in mind, ask themselves, what would you attempt if you knew you couldn’t fail? Really. What would you try if you knew you couldn’t fail? I tell you one thing, in 2016, a lot more people would be running for the presidency. But we often don’t stretch ourselves in that way. And when you do, you are creating the objectives that leaders should create. If leaders are asking those questions, they are transforming their leadership capability. George Bernard Shaw said, “I hear you say ‘Why?’ Always ‘Why?’ You see things; and you say ‘Why?’ But I dream things that never were; and I say ‘Why not?’” Those are the kinds of questions you need to ask; the “why not” questions.

I: Throughout the day, and for sure again here, you quickly quote literature and Bible texts. Your memory seems to be very sharp. How important is that to your leadership? And how can you help folks who would like to have more?

BB: One, I think that memory certainly is a blessing. I think that it is something that can be strengthened. I think there are tricks to the trade.

I was at a meeting here in the seminary in the 70s. I still remember Walter

Nelson, a seminary student. We went on an outing, and there were about 35 or 40 people. As we came in, we were introduced to one another. As we were leaving, we were standing by the door, and Walter called each person by name—not just first name but by their full name. So I asked him, “What kind of magic trick is this? I heard the same names that you heard, and yet you can make the connection.” And he talked to me about how he did that. So it becomes important.

You're in a zone and you feel the presence of God. You feel Him using you. The enemy is well aware of the impact of your ministry.

Dale Carnegie, in his book *How to Win Friends and Influence People*, said that a person's name is the sweetest sound. To be able to remember their name is important. It also comes in very handy in interviews, when you can draw from what you have studied. It also helps with meditation in the Word. I've often thought that if I were a POW, a prisoner of war, I could entertain myself with Scripture for all of my waking hours. I can. I know enough Scripture that I can recite it, probably, continuously for twelve hours if I had to. And when I recite it, it is as if I am hearing it for the first time.

There is value in hearing it. “God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in the time of trouble, therefore should not we fear, though the earth be removed, though the mountains be carried into the midst of the sea, though the waters thereof roar and be troubled.” You see, you're hearing it in your head. And it has that same transformative impact on you. So, I think good memory comes in handy. Knowing good literature is also a useful tool. I find myself asking, “How did they do that?” How do you write a sentence that to displace one word cannot improve the beauty? “To be or not to be, that is the question.” You try to change one word of that, and you can't, you know? Try to say that better. I mean, these are monosyllabic. How do you say that better? And so I marvel at the magic of literature that can take words and use them in such a lyrical way.

I: That's great. And I think along the same line, it's also the humorous side of you. Like when the third microphone got to you today. And you said, “God really wants you to hear this.” I mean, I was cracking up. And I thought, “Now that's leadership.” When no matter what's going on around you, you still stay focused and connected so that you can keep on going. You speak about this in a humorous way so that everybody lightens up, and it doesn't become this disastrous moment. To me, that's leadership. How do we learn that? How did you learn that? Is that a natural thing?

BB: That's not learned. That's the Holy Spirit. When I preach in the zone, you know. Basketball players talk about being in a zone where you don't think you can miss. You're in a zone and you feel the presence of God. You feel Him using you. The enemy is well aware of the impact of your ministry.

There are sermons that I've heard that I can recite verbatim, ones that changed my life. Harold Cleveland, one of the great Adventist ministers, came through Oakwood University in my sophomore year, preached a sermon, *A Beautiful Gate, but a Lame Man*. I know that sermon. I remembered it. It had that kind of impact on me. I mean, I was never the same after that.

D. J. Williams, another preacher, came through and preached a sermon called "We Are Moving Toward Daybreak." So moments like our worship experience today, I know from my own personal experience, can be a life changer. We talk about being a world changer but it starts with being a life changer. If half of the folk who stood today take seriously their commitment to ask God for the gift of the Holy Spirit—Wow! It's huge! From my little efforts. That's just amazing to me. It's just amazing.

I: Okay, one last question. I think that in leadership, probably one of our biggest challenges is to be in a relationship with people who are really different from us. So how do you do that? I was reading last night that it's your responsibility to meet with and to welcome people to the United States from all the religious leaders from different parts of the world. This made me think about our work and how there isn't a place where we can function where everybody is thinking and believing in the same way. We have these amazing contrasts in basic beliefs. How do we lead in that kind of environment?

BB: Several times I have had the opportunity to talk with President Clinton. Each time I talked with him, I noticed he has this knack for making you feel like you are the only person on the planet. Of all the people I have met, I have never talked with anyone who draws me in so much as to be totally absorbed with what I'm saying. And this is the President of the United States. And I ask myself, "How does he do that?"

Talking to God about this, He helped me see that when I develop the ability to see His image in every human being, then the differences just aren't there. For me they aren't. We're members of the same human family. I stop seeing differences. I think one of the things that helped me in my upward mobility is that I celebrate my ethnicity, but I don't think of myself as African American. I know that I'm an African American. But I'm not in the room thinking, "I'm the only African American in this whole room." In fact, many times when the speaker would say, "I wonder what Black people think about that," I would think to

myself, “I wonder what Black people—Oh yeah, I am Black.” (CHUCKLING)

So when you learn to see the image of your Creator in folks, you don’t see a difference. You begin to see the family resemblance. And that connection transcends all that other little stuff. It really does. We’re going to get new bodies anyway, so what difference does it make.

I: Well, thank you so much. Do you have any last words? Do you have any last comments about Christian leadership?

I think in terms of Christian leadership, we have permitted the secularists to outgun us.

BB: I think in terms of Christian leadership, we have permitted the secularists to outgun us. They have been far more strategic in their approach to accomplishing their objectives than we have. And we have a power that they don’t have. And we really need to tap into the power, and get very serious about the war. Because that’s what it is. We are

at war, yet we act like nothing is going on.

So my challenge to you would be, as Patrick Henry said, “Why stand we here idle?” The war has actually begun. That’s what we need to do: go to war.

I: Perfect. Thank you so much.