



# SHIELD OF FAITH

"Take Up the Shield of Faith" - Paul

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Wednesday July 3, 2019

*Therefore I tell you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat or drink; or about your body, what you will wear. Is not life more than food, and the body more than clothes? — Matthew 6:25*

## **Break Away ... Learn the News**

I encountered this idea early in my deepened commitment to Christianity. I was about twenty years old. Randy Stewart was mentoring me.

I had recently radically dedicated my life to Jesus Christ. Randy gave me a bible and took time on a regular basis to meet with me and answer my questions about it. I still have that Bible somewhere. It is all marked up. The New Testament fascinated me. The verse above was one that captured my imagination.

It is easy to want to not worry about your life. We all want that. The radical essence of this idea is the faith that is called forth. It is a faith that accepts, even celebrates, the material world as it comes to us ... as it is given to us by God.

Jesus tells us not to worry about food, drink, body or fashion. He asks profoundly, "Is not life more than food, and the body more than clothes?"

I ask you, dear reader. What do you think? Is it?

Someone once observed, "To be content with little is difficult; to be content with much, impossible."

Fyodor Dostoyevsky in *The Brothers Karamazov* wrote, "The world says: 'You have needs -- satisfy them. You have as much right as the rich and the mighty. Don't hesitate to satisfy your needs; indeed, expand your needs and demand more.' This is the worldly doctrine of today. And they believe that this is freedom. The result for the rich is isolation and suicide, for the poor, envy and murder."

Two more quotes:

"The things you own end up owning you. It's only after you lose everything that you're free to do anything."  
— Chuck Palahniuk, *Fight Club*

And lastly, "I am losing precious days. I am degenerating into a machine for making money. I am learning nothing in this trivial world of men. I must break away and get out into the mountains to learn the news" — John Muir

*Column continues on the back*

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Paulie and I will depart Washington County, Maine in a few hours. We will spend the day in Hancock County's Jewel, Acadia National Park and Bar Harbor. The weather is perfect ... cool and sunny.

We've been returning to Mt. Desert Island every year since our honeymoon thirty seven years ago. It is always a delight, no matter the weather.

The oligarchs of late nineteenth century America loved the island. They invested heavily in making it enjoyable for body and soul. The island features carriage trails that the federal government has assumed responsibility for maintaining. We've walked or biked most of them over the past few decades.

Appreciation for nature was bred into me by my parents. My mom's father was Commissioner of Parks and Recreation for Maine during the 1960s. My dad earned his degree in forestry, loved fishing and took my brother and me camping during our formative years. Their love for Theodore Roosevelt's "hidden spirit of the wilderness" is a gift they passed on to me. I'm very ... very ... thankful for that.

It has helped me, perhaps more than anything else, to avoid the trap John Muir references above. I haven't degenerated into a machine for making money. Muir went further declaring, "I am learning nothing in this trivial world of men. I must break away and get out into the mountains to learn the news."

I called a friend in Augusta yesterday. We snatched five minutes on the phone. We are both very busy. He was blessed by hard working and successful parents and lived a somewhat charmed life as a local businessman. Now retired he told me that he must turn the television news off because it so disgusts him. I'd say he is "learning nothing in the trivial world of men."

With all information and entertainment now being filtered through the hate speech grid forced on everyone by Big Gay it is becoming impossible to learn anything in the trivial world of men.

Thank God He renews and infuses His creation with real news. More and more people are turning to cultivated gardens like Mt. Desert Island and the Rangeley Lakes region (where I was this past weekend) for the news. Everyone knows that the ratings for lamestream media are going to hell. It will be a delight to spend time later today with good people nurturing their souls by properly responding to the question posed by Jesus Christ.

"Is not life more than food, and the body more than clothes?"

Amen.