



The antidote to doom

Words from an old Beatles tune keep rattling around my memory chambers these days: “I read the news today, oh boy....” News has gotten scary. During my morning shave, it’s all I can do to keep from cutting my lips off every time I hear the sound of that jingly prelude signaling the news. “Yikes,” I worry to myself. “What today?”

But lucky me: I work in a laboratory where we are creating a powerful antidote to doom. My genetic predisposition to worry stands no chance against the stunning promise I encounter in the lives of our students and alumni – folks like Kristen Shields and Andrea Palpant, whom you’ll encounter in this issue.

Two days ago I received an e-mail from an alum whom I particularly enjoyed during her student years. She spends her days laboring in a highly selective M.B.A. program at Emory University because she feels “the clear call of God” to bring truth and grace to the business world. She wondered if I might know someone to mentor her in Atlanta. I connected her with a ’92 grad who marches daily to CNN having packed her lunch with the fishes and loaves of Christ’s high values. They’ll surely fortify each other.

Earlier that day I sat in my office with

a 2004 grad who wrapped up our conversation by characterizing her new job with the comment, “Building an organization that will enlist millions of people to fight against the most deadly disease in the world is a bit daunting for a 22-year-old, but I’m ready.” Even HIV/AIDS had better not take this opponent lightly.

When I hit the laboratory, even after “I heard the news today, oh boy,” I put my money on hope and optimism. I’m neither a good enough writer nor a good enough prophet to describe the impact that our students will have, and are already having, on the world. But I know of no better investment than in these lives.

Yesterday at a cross-country meet, a parent who knows our son said to me, “I hear you have a couple of weddings coming up next summer.” Yes, we do. As I gave this mom the update on our older daughter at Princeton Seminary, our son at Cairo’s Evangelical Theological Seminary, and our younger daughter at Pepperdine University, her husband (still reeling from the idea of those two weddings) began clutching his wallet in a show of empathetic solidarity.

But we all agreed on one thing: Planet Earth offers no better investment than the future of our children. I suppose wiping out our savings or mortgaging our homes or getting to know our loan officer on a first-name basis can be done out of duty, but hope is a better and truer motive. Is there anything better with which to vacuum our bank accounts than the future of our children, a future that will

give so much more than it takes?

We have hope, folks, bright hope. We hope in our children, but we hope also in the God who guides them. My future son-in-law came over late the other night to watch a football game we had taped. Because his dad had inadvertently told him the halftime score, he suggested we fast forward to the second half. “It changes the way you watch the game when you know what’s coming,” he observed. Yes, it does.

Those of us who embrace historic Christianity claim that we “know what’s coming.” Genesis reports, “In the beginning, God...,” and Revelation shows us that God is also at the end. So the question becomes, does knowing what’s coming change the way we watch the game? Does it change the way we *live* the game?

The students of Whitworth College, and other Christian students around the world, have been appointed the agents of “thy Kingdom come” at a pivotal time in history. The next 50 years boggle the mind with promise and threat. But those years could not be in better hands. Our students’ hands will steward the years with truth and grace. Our God will guide their efforts with the same scarred hands that have already written the last chapter with truth and grace. And we, thanks be to Christ and his young servants, need not wring our hands. Hope abounds!