

Liberty Alum Offers Hope During University's 'Stormy Transition'

I've thought about this picture (below) quite a bit over the last several hours. It was taken in 1973, when a young Jerry Falwell Jr. attended one of Liberty University's very first football games alongside his dad, Jerry Falwell Sr.

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– Tré Goins-Phillips (@tregp) August 25, 2020

So many people I know, including my mom, attended Liberty when Jerry Sr. was still alive. Each one of them speaks so fondly of the elder Falwell, his larger-than-life personality, his tender spirit and his unwavering commitment to BHAGs (if you know, you know). Without his fervent prayers, immovable trust in the Lord and uncompromising work ethic, Liberty wouldn't be here today. Jerry Jr. had a front-row seat to all of that, where he watched—with his father's hands on his shoulders—Liberty Mountain come alive.

As a student, I remember hearing so many people say, "I wish Jerry Sr. were alive to see this." The truth is, he did see it; he saw Liberty's success when no one else did. And he taught his oldest son to see it too. For that, I will always be grateful. I'm thankful for the vision Jerry Jr. carried forward, for the work he did to make his father's reality a reality for the rest of us. That nearly 50-year-old sepia photo reminds me of all I have to be grateful for.

Johnnie Moore, who served as a senior vice president and

Liberty's campus pastor when I was a student, told CBN News and Faithwire that Liberty "would not exist without the Falwells." It has become so much more, though, in the years since its founding in 1971.

"The brilliance of its original mission and vision is that, long ago, it transcended the influence of them," Moore continued, referring to the Falwell family. "Liberty is an institution designed to thrive for the cause of Christ today, and for generations. I am sure members of the community—past and present—will pray and will work together to ensure that Liberty's best days are ahead."

That old sepia-tone photo also reminds me of how susceptible we are to ourselves—how quickly we can fall if we take our eyes off the true compass, Jesus. Our hearts are so deceitful (Jer. 17:9), we have to daily choose to put to death our fleshly desires (Col. 3:5). And what a difficult task that is for all of us.

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