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Oral Roberts

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QUEST FOR THE WHOLE MAN

Address by President Oral Roberts to the First Class at O. R. U.

September 7, 1965

You young men and women who have enrolled today are our first class. As your president, I salute and congratulate you and extend to you my warm, personal welcome.

You have been carefully selected from among some of America's top young people. You have in coming to O. R. U. pledged yourselves to join with us in what I consider to be the most exciting and revolutionary quest in modern times—the quest for the whole man.

In the history of the human family there has been only one completely whole man. This was Jesus of Nazareth. This solitary life, this Word made flesh, this incarnate Son of God, has been the inspiration and foundation for this university. Our concept of the whole man derives from His life and from the example He left us. Combining what we know about Him with the most modern techniques of higher education, we have brought into being this new university and through it we reach for wholeness. Many in education have spoken of this dimension. Van Humbolt, one of the greatest of the German educators, said, "The end of man... is the most complete and harmonious development of his powers to a complete and harmonious whole."

Wholeness is a way of life here. It's something you can get—it's something you can become. It's yours and it's waiting. It's not going to come to you. You will have to lay hold of it and take it. You will have to go in and get it.

Here you can come out a whole man. You can leave as the whole person God intended you to be. You can go anywhere in the world with any people in the world under the worst conditions. You will be able to prove yourself. You will be able to think, believe, act and function to the maximum.

Here you can reach for excellence and find it. In today's world you cannot get through without it. If your muscles are flabby, you will have to toughen them. If you have been sheltered, you will have to make adjustment to the outside world. Competition is furious out there. To make the grade you will have to call forth every resource of your inner and outer man—in short, you will have to stand up on the inside and be able to take the offensive.

What am I trying to say to you? I am saying that while others are reaching for a ride to the moon, you reach for a whole life. I am asking you to get the vision of wholeness and reach it by making every effort to develop your spirit, your mind, and your body; and to help to start a unique trend toward sanity and achievement in this exploding civilization.

You want to be a whole person, but how, you ask? The greatest tool is desire. And the second is that which takes hold of desire—motivation. The third is right atmosphere. The fourth is knowledge applied with God-given wisdom. These tools are in the administration and faculty members of this university. They are also in you. What we must do with them is to recognize that they are here, put our hand to them and go to work in a cooperative venture. No one has it all or knows it all. We are a team here. We want you on that team. It's not the third team or the second team; it's the first team. It's brash, it's cocky, it has stars in its eyes; but it's humble, too, and dependent on God.

WHAT KIND OF UNIVERSITY IS O. R. U. ?

What may you expect here?

O. R. U. is a daring new concept in higher education. It was planned to be from the beginning—one that would be able and willing to innovate change in all three basic aspects of your being—the intellectual, the physical and the spiritual.

Plato said, "The direction in which education starts a man will determine his future life." Your start here is in the direction of a whole man. You have already displayed some of the qualities necessary to attain that goal. You have shown a certain amount of courage or you wouldn't be here. You have shown a certain amount of ambition by enrolling in a school of high academic standards. Of the 3,900 high-school graduates who either made application or asked for information, we accepted for this first semester only you 300. You know the world is changing and you want to help it change... for the better. You can help it change for the better by becoming a whole man, for a truly educated person is one who is developed in all areas of his being.

FIRST - There's an education here for your mind, for without the development of your intellect you cannot be a complete person.

Thomas Huxley said, "Education is the instruction of the intellect in the laws of nature, under which I include not merely things and their forces, but men and their ways. . . into an earnest and loving desire to move in harmony with those laws." Solomon said, "As a man thinketh, so is he." A fundamental reason for your being here is that you want to engage your mind in an earnest study of your world, a discipline of genuine inquiry, in learning to think and reason, and in making something of yourself that will benefit mankind.

My own definition of the marks of a truly educated person includes those of knowing how to write and speak the English language expertly, to read well, to think clearly, and to make value judgments based on reason, common sense and inner perception.

Another mark of the educated person is his willingness to do what he doesn't want to do. You may find yourself taking certain classes you don't particularly appreciate. Here is a golden opportunity to grow. In a world which no longer seems to place a high priority on self-discipline, it is well to keep in mind Huxley's statement:

"Perhaps the most valuable result of all education is the ability to make yourself do the thing you have to do, when it ought to be done, whether you like it or not; it is the first lesson that ought to be learned; and however early a man's training begins, it is probably the best lesson he learns thoroughly. "

All my life in reaching for excellence, I have found that I have had to do many things that I didn't want to do, that had to be done. I have learned that once you make up your mind, you can do this as a normal part of your life.

To develop your intellect fully, learn the art of asking questions. Someone said, "The art of asking questions is what makes little children obnoxious and adults geniuses." Learn to ask why, how and what.

Our Master had acquired the art of asking questions even at the age of twelve. He fascinated the doctors by His ability to ask questions of them, and to answer theirs. He was a student of the natural world. He was a reasoner and He made excellent use of logic. The dialogues He carried on with people of His day are remarkable in their perceptive use of logic. He understood the

profound principles of psychology and made great use of them. We often hear Him described as a great teacher. Let us remember that He was a student, too.

Throughout His lifetime He probed, questioned, reasoned and sought answers wherever there was something to be learned; to be done; to be changed. He never accepted the status quo; He always believed there was something more, an even greater revelation. He challenged the conclusions others reached and expected an open mind to prevail. He wanted men to be free in thought and to keep the inquiring mind always. He placed no limit on the revelation of truth and none shall be placed on it here. For was He not the One who said, "Ye shall know the truth and the truth shall set you free"? You and I know that Jesus Christ is ultimate truth Himself.

The Apostle Paul said, "Let this mind be in you which was in Christ Jesus." The mind that questions, that reasons, that learns, that grows, that develops—that is the mind that you want formed in you while at O. R. U.

Our distinguished Executive Vice-President, Dr. John D. Messick, is the chief designer of the academic program of the University. It is the creative ideas of this Holy Spirit-filled educator that give such great promise to your intellectual enlargement. Aided by our extraordinary young architect, Mr. Frank Wallace, and some forty experts, Dr. Messick and these men have created the Learning Resources Center, which is the educational center of the campus. The Learning Resources Center has under one roof four and one-half acres of floor space equipped with the most advanced technology to help you learn that has yet been designed. At its center is the library.

A mark of a great university is a great library. O. R. U. is dedicated to its library because it is dedicated to you. Here you have at your fingertips access to an informational and retrieval system which will speed up your study. Ultimately, whether you are in your dormitory room, or in a learning station in the Learning Resources Center, you will have push-button access to the vast volume of knowledge existing in the world today.

One thing that makes a university live is its capable and wide-awake faculty. God has impressed upon the hearts of many excellently trained and dedicated men and women to share responsibility in bringing forth this unique expression in higher education. This is a distinguished faculty. Fifteen hold doctor's degrees, four have completed their work on the doctorate, three are still in process of completion and eleven have the master's degree, for a total

of thirty-three. The teacher-student ratio this first year is 1 to 10 which will provide the most personal relationship between you and your professors.

YOU ARE A PERSON HERE, NOT AN IBM CARD! In my opinion one of the greatest reasons for the universal unrest among college students today is that too often they are treated as numbers instead of people. I consider our ministry to be "person centered." This is a university that cares and you must never forget that in the occasional moments of loneliness or discouragement which may be ahead of you. We care.

In addition, we offer our students work on C, B, and A levels. This means much more interest and work for our faculty, but it enables you to proceed toward your degree at your own speed, that is, as long as you are moving forward and not backwards.

We are dedicated to the search for truth and wisdom. Our academic slogan is "to study truth and to direct that to a worthwhile mission."

Hear this and hear it well. We know that you are not here to "goof off." We know that you realize that life is too exciting, your potential is too promising, and your opportunities on this campus are too unlimited to waste your time and ours. Therefore, I suggest that at an early date you get to know your dean, your professors, your counselor, your campus minister and doctor. They are interested in you. And they share with me a tremendous concern for your success. You may as well know that just as you have put your neck out to join us in this daring adventure, everyone of our faculty members has considered his duties here not as a job, but as a calling from God.

And please don't put any halos around any of us; we are fallible beings; but we're trying.

You made up your mind to enroll, you followed through, you are on campus, you are ready to go. All right. Open up your inner self to the joy that is before you and get off on the right foot by learning to study immediately. If you failed to develop good study habits in high school, tell your counselor about it. Don't be afraid to do this. He wants to assist you. Remember, too, you are an adult now and at O. R. U., we will treat you as an adult. You have a big job ahead of you. Learn and learn some more. Truth and knowledge are here. But you must take them. You want to graduate with your head up and with a light in your eye.

Try not to become simply an encyclopedia when you use your mind to store facts. Try to get at the root of the matter, discover the key issues. Exchange your ideas with your professors, with other students. Ask questions designed to let fresh air in on the subject. Analyze, crystalize, come to important new conclusions. Be willing to change when new information moves in.

And what you do learn — apply. Learn to gear it to meet the needs of people.

It is our earnest desire and purpose to make O. R. U. not only tops academically, but a foremost university in the formation of character. Character is spiritual and moral fibre of vigor especially instilled by self-discipline and commitment to principle. This, of course, rules out cheating in every form because cheating cheapens your character and weakens your moral fibre. I believe that no person rises above his personal integrity and no one can truly fail when he has it. Let me emphasize that while we are innovators in educational techniques, we are definitely old-fashioned when it comes to Christian morals and character. We respect the integrity of each student and you will want to earn that respect.

SECOND - There's an education here for your body, for that too is essential to your development as a whole person.

Here again Jesus is our great example. He personifies health and vitality. He never knew a moment's illness and looked upon sickness and disease as His mortal enemies. He took long walks and kept Himself physically fit, and He was interested in the health of others. Oftentimes the Gospels read, "And he healed them all," or "he healed every one." In the Acts of the Apostles, He is described as "going about doing good, healing all who were oppressed...." The common people heard Him gladly. I believe they heard Him gladly because His healing made an entrance for His words. This is the way I came to know Christ. Dying with tuberculosis, and being a stammerer from childhood, I had a personal encounter with the Man from Nazareth who healed my wasted body, my stammering tongue, my sin-sick soul, and restored my life. Then in a peculiar way He let me hear His voice to share with Him in His ministry of healing for the whole man. I have endeavored to be faithful to this calling. The spirit of this calling will be carried out on this campus. I have often seen, as have many other clergymen, and many medical men, that the body and mind and spirit are tied together.

We are going to expose you to the most exciting health program you have ever known. One designed to beautify and strengthen the physical house that your inner man lives in.

The Health Resources Center is more than a gym for sports and physical exercise. It is the hub of teaching the anatomy of health. The Department of Health Resources is under the direction of Dr. James Spalding, a Christian medical doctor who has the baptism with the Holy Spirit. His concept of the whole man, from both the medical and spiritual standpoint, has greatly influenced our approach to meet your needs. Dr. Spalding will direct a health program designed to contribute toward the development of your entire person. We believe that your four years on this campus is the best time to learn positive and effective ways to develop health attitudes and health habits that will benefit you throughout life. Here you will learn to appreciate and take care of your wonderful body.

Every student will participate in intramural sports. Every student will be directed in healthful walking habits. The faculty will also take part in our walking program. Physical fitness will be stressed. A clinic for examination and individual instruction in personal health is an integral part of your education here.

You will want to bounce with vitality, bubble with joy and erupt with laughter. The Bible says, "A merry heart doeth good like medicine," and "the joy of the Lord is your strength."

Eat well, but learn good eating habits, and avoid abusing your body by overeating. Play hard but with a purpose of building muscle tone and vitality. Develop good sleep habits and learn the value of sound sleep. Think health, act health, exude health. Live abundantly.

This will mean that a business or profession hiring an O. R. U. graduate will get a man or woman with physical vitality and stamina — a person who, because he knows how to take care of his body, can be on the job and can feel good while he's on the job.

The Apostle John writing in his third epistle said, "Beloved, I wish... that thou mayest be in health...."

THIRD — There is a unique opportunity here for an education or development of the inner man, for the most important part of you is your spirit.

No one can or will attempt to force that kind of education upon you. For even God will not force a person against his will. But we do plan to make it available to you on a unique scale. We believe that the whole man can never be developed without the training of his spirit. Here you are considered to be a trinity—a spirit, a mind, and a body. You are a spirit made in the image of God, you have a mind with a free will, and a body in which your inner man lives.

Present day universities which concentrate wholly on the mind fail to see that the mind does not exist independently of the spirit or the body. You can function to the maximum only as you become a "whole" person, with spirit, mind and body working harmoniously together.

O. R. U. has a well-defined program of academic excellence. You are a witness to the fact that it took a quality of excellence on your part to get in. Along with excelling in the education of the mind, we are equally determined to add the other two dimensions of your body and spirit. Along with your academic progress and your physical fitness, we expect you to be open to the creative activity of the Holy Spirit in your inner man, indeed, in your whole person.

Toward this end, every professor at O. R. U. is qualified to help you develop in the inner man. He is available to counsel and pray with you. In addition, we are instituting a Department of Spiritual Life. The Director is Tommy Tyson, B. D. , a Methodist evangelist baptized with the Holy Spirit, who was given this appointment jointly by his Bishop and O. R. U. Tommy Tyson will not seek to take away a student's understanding and background. Instead, he will contribute to his training, experience and understanding by relating the concept of the whole man to him.

The Department of Spiritual Life is elevated to the same level as the academic at O. R. U. I cannot overemphasize its importance on this campus. A sad commentary on higher education today is that some students (in fact, in our way of thinking, most of them) get out of college having had very little or absolutely no exposure to spiritual development. A direct result is that they are all too often left at sea for a period of years; and many times they arrive in their thirties and forties, and even in their later years, without realizing that this vital dimension in their life is lacking; and therefore, they have the painful task of beginning to develop the spiritual side of their life at a late date — and most of them never do. This is the most costly waste

of human resources our society has to cope with today. It is our nation's, our world's most serious problem. When the inner man is changed, our world will have peace, and not one minute before.

Admittedly, this is a difficult area in which to work. It is not fashionable to teach college students to develop their spiritual life. Many university educations leave students virtually undeveloped in this most meaningful part of their existence. Indeed, some seriously damage what Christian convictions students may have had. Is it any wonder that students leave college bewildered and sometimes embittered, into a world bereft of ultimate meaning? With Kant's servant they say, "Sirs, you have destroyed my God." They go forth into society as "angry young men" rich in intellect and knowledge, but poor indeed in spirit. This is one of the major reasons America today bears all the earmarks of spiritual decline and moral decay, and is, as Toynbee has said, in the "ebb-tide of civilization."

The world doesn't need more college students to wave flags, carry placards, halt traffic, and riot against law and order. What our civilization needs is for you to make your spiritual development a normal part of your education and your life. I pray through this development you will build your life pattern.

Your spiritual development includes a new birth through repentance and faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, a constant cleansing of your inner self from sin, the baptism with the Holy Spirit in the charismatic dimension for empowerment and personal edification, a manifestation of the Gifts of the Holy Spirit through you for meeting needs of others, a personal witness of your Master to your fellow man, and a daily application of Christian principles to the demands of daily life.

In this way you can learn the meaning of your own life and be in a position to make a worthwhile contribution to help man solve his problems. In this way you can become a part of the answer and not a part of the problem.

Problems exist to be solved and through our problems we can make progress. But not without spiritual insight and personal faith. We hope to enable you to go from O. R. U. able to avoid the indecision, the frustration and the inner conflicts that threaten your life as a whole person and your world as a whole world. It is heartening to know that you can cancel out the so-called "barren years" through the development of your inner man.

At this point I would like to say something about the first graduate school of the University, the Seminary. It is currently housed in this building. An entire new building complex is planned for the Seminary at a later date. Ministers and other professional Christian workers will be trained for service in many different denominations and other service areas throughout the world. The Dean of the Seminary is my esteemed colleague and lifelong friend, Dr. R. O. Corvin, one of the world's foremost authorities on the life of Christ and a leader in the field of higher education. We are honored to have Dean Corvin to head the Department of Religion and Philosophy in the undergraduate division of the University. You will gain new insights into the meaning of your life and that of your world through these dedicated scholarly men.

Our program at O. R. U. includes wake-up time to good music, a positive message from the Department of Spiritual Life, tone-up exercises, walking, bicycling, good food, challenging studies, regular chapel services, Sunday-morning campus worship, Sunday-afternoon vespers, and a "stand-up-inside" attitude for spirit, mind and body. It's exciting to be alive and a part of this program.

And let me say this, I can never adequately express my gratitude to the members of the Board of Trustees of O. R. E. A. , Inc. , and the members of the Board of Regents of O. R. U. for their unselfish and dedicated labors in bringing this university into existence.

Young ladies and gentlemen, the business and professional world is looking for you. They will be waiting outside these doors for you to be graduated. They will have lucrative offers in their hands. They want college graduates to come and work not only for them, but with them; to devote their time and efforts toward becoming valuable partners, rather than having them constantly working out very serious emotional problems caused by their failure to become a whole person.

With your enthusiastic cooperation, I think I can safely point out to the leaders of industry and the professions that O. R. U. graduates can make thousands of productive years available to our society, because while on campus they learned to avoid needless years of "let-down" in their personal lives because the way was pointed toward the concept of the whole man.

I think you can emerge as the world's most wanted college graduates. Why not? A healthy body that you know how to take care of, a trained and disciplined mind that never settles for less than excellence, governed by an invincible spirit of integrity, inspired by a personal relationship with a living God, and driven by an irresistible desire to be a whole man to make a troubled world whole again! Yes, you will be in demand.

Now, with all your vital energies, let's get to the task together!