

STATEMENT BY DONALD N. DEDMON  
MEMORIAL SERVICE  
MEMORIAL FIELD HOUSE  
NOVEMBER 15, 1970

Dr. Dedmon acknowledged the presence of Governor Arch Moore and the other guests on the platform:

Dr. Prince Woodard, Chancellor  
Mr. Robert Morgan, Attorney General's Office  
Mayor Robert Hinerman  
Mr. Nate Ruffin, Co-captain, Football Team

Mr. Mike Gant, President, Student Body M.U.  
Dr. Leo Jenkins, President, East Carolina  
Coach Mike McGee, East Carolina

PSALM 24

The earth is the Lord's, and the fulness thereof; the world, and they that dwell therein.

For he hath founded it upon the seas, and established it upon the floods.

Who shall ascend into the hill of the Lord? or who shall stand in his holy place?

He that hath clean hands, and a pure heart; who hath not lifted up his soul unto vanity, nor sworn deceitfully.

He shall receive the blessing from the Lord, and righteousness from the God of his salvation.

Lift up your heads, O ye gates; and be ye lifted up, ye everlasting doors; and the King of glory shall come in.

Who is the King of glory? The Lord strong and mighty, the Lord mighty in battle.

Lift up your head, O ye gates; even lift them up, ye everlasting doors; and the King of glory shall come in.

Who is this King of glory? The Lord of hosts, he is the King of glory.

My heart is full of grief as I weep with you. It is not easy to speak of the unspeakable sadness which consumes us all. Our sense of loss is overwhelming. Marshall is experiencing her saddest hour.

We cannot soon forget that horrible picture framed by the broken pines of a West Virginia hillside, but another picture comes to my mind which I know I shall never forget either -- a happy picture. It was the picture of your loved ones and mine, a picture which revealed the best that there is in man. There in a Fairfield Stadium dressing room a little over a week ago sat Marshall's players and paced Marshall's coaching staff. The invitation to speak to our boys greatly honored me and what I saw moved me deeply. Our coaches walked among the benches and had a quiet, private word with each. I never could have believed had I not been there how badly our boys wanted to win that day -- two openly wept, others were ill from the tension. There were white students and black students but they all wore the big green. The game marked a signal point in their life. Small in number but incredibly determined in spirit, they meant to win that final home game. And win they did -- magnificently! It is that picture I want to begin to recall this evening.

Marshall is better for having had them all!

Perhaps you, like I, would be comforted by the answer of Wernher Von Braun, Inventor and Space Expert, to the question: "WHY I BELIEVE IN IMMORTALITY" ↓

TODAY, more than ever before, our survival -- yours and mine and our children's -- depends on our adherence to ethical principles. Ethics alone will decide whether atomic energy will be an earthly blessing or the source of mankind's utter destruction.

Where does the desire for ethical action come from? What makes us want to be ethical? I believe there are two forces which move us. One is belief in a Last Judgment, when every one of us has to account for what we did with God's great gift of life on the earth. The other is belief in an immortal soul, a soul which will cherish the award or suffer the penalty decreed in a final Judgment.

Belief in God and in immortality thus gives us the moral strength and the ethical guidance we need for virtually every action in our daily lives.

In our modern world many people seem to feel that science has somehow made such "religious ideas" untimely or old-fashioned.

But I think science has a real surprise for the skeptics. Science, for instance, tells us that nothing in nature, not even the tiniest particle, can disappear without a trace.

Think about that for a moment. Once you do, your thoughts about life will never be the same.

Science has found that nothing can disappear without a trace. Nature does not know extinction. All it knows is transformation!

Now, if God applies this fundamental principle to the most minute and insignificant parts of His universe, doesn't it make sense to assume that He applies it also to the masterpiece of His creation -- the human soul? I think it does. And everything science has taught me -- and continues to teach me -- strengthens my belief in the continuity of our spiritual existence after death. Nothing disappears without a trace.

My heart goes out to you and you have all our prayers.