



Coast Guard News

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What Are You Living For? — by Pat Williams

Even if you're not a longtime "New Man" magazine reader, you'll probably recognize **Pat Williams** as the guy who won three NBA draft lotteries for the **Orlando Magic** that landed Shaquille O'Neal, Penny Hardaway and Dwight Howard. Between his duties with the Magic as their Senior Vice President, his motivational speaking, his prolific writing and his 19 children, Pat Williams is one of the busiest men in sports. This week he got together with us to discuss his latest book, "**What Are You Living For?**"

New Man: You've written a lot of books over the years. What inspired you to write this one?

Williams: I had a speaking engagement two years ago in Texas. One of the coaches at the local high school sent me an e-mail, and in it he commented on my speech. At the end, he asked me: "What are you really living for? What is important in your life?" And it got me thinking.

As a young man, I was chasing the four pursuits: fortune, family, power and leisure. Most people chase them all their life—like Solomon in Ecclesiastes, who chased them to the extreme. In the end, he said that none of it fulfills. It's just dust in the wind. I discovered this as a successful young baseball executive, at the age of 27. Even though things were going well, I realized that this was it. And I thought, there has to be more than this.

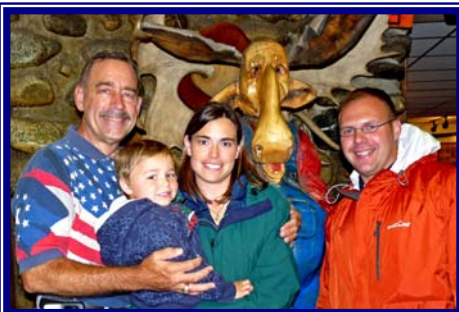
New Man: You also talk about four pursuits that last. What are those?

Williams: First, pursuing your character. Your honesty, your integrity, your responsibility, your courage, that old-fashioned stuff. Really, that's what's going to be our legacy. That's how we will be remembered.

Second is your influence. You don't have to be a super athlete or a movie starlet or president to be influential. We all have our own sphere of influence. People are watching us every day. In our family, our workplace, and among our friends, every action we take leaves an influence on somebody.

Third is parenting. Nothing is more important when we leave this life than our role as a parent. Our children won't remember us as a lawyer or a businessman, they will remember us as Dad (or Mom). Did we really take this role of parenting seriously? Did we do everything we could to invest in their lives and those of our grandchildren?

Fourth is your faith walk. That was the turning point in my life, when I understood that I needed something I couldn't provide myself. The claims of Christ were presented to me through the Four Spiritual Laws booklet. A young singer named Sandy Johnson handed me a booklet, and I had never heard of the love of God in Jesus before. Even though I went to church my whole life, I had never heard this. I was too busy to listen.



SK1 Sean & Jenny Hoffert holding son **Colin** with **Vic Primeaux** following breakfast at one of Anchorage's favorite dining spots. Colin was diagnosed with leukemia in the summer of 2008 and has been undergoing treatments at Seattle Children's Hospital and now at Providence Hospital in Anchorage. Sean, hoping to pin on his CPO anchors soon, is assigned to ISC Kodiak where he and Jenny and their three young children live in off-base housing ... and frequently are blessed to enjoy support from extended family also living on Kodiak to include Jenny's parents, retired **CAPT Jimmy & Joy Ng**.

In February of 1968 at the age of 27, I was ready to listen. Just to realize that God loves me and has a plan and purpose for my life and all lives. To realize that I was a sinner, even though I was a "clean" liver—I didn't smoke or drink or cuss. And then to realize that if I received Jesus by faith, Christ would come into my life, take residence inside of my heart and change me. And so I made that decision. In my case, it was a very specific date—3:45 p.m., February 22, 1968, Spartanburg, S.C.—in the office of the owner of our team. I collapsed in his arms and said, "I'm ready." I'm living proof that you can have an instantaneous conversion. Many people don't believe in that, but I was living one way one minute and had a complete reversal—a road to Damascus experience.

So the pursuit of that faith life is the pursuit that lasts. It allows us to have abundant life in this world and eternal life in the next world. That's a pretty good deal. Our mind-set in this life is that we have to pay for everything. But people have to understand that it's just a gift. It's so hard to get that sometimes.

New Man: You've been around a lot of rich and successful people in your life. What are some real-life examples of people who seemed to have it all but remained unfulfilled?

Williams: I tell the stories of Josh Hamilton and Pete Maravich in the book. In baseball and basketball, they could not have been more successful. Both got deep into drugs. Josh Hamilton is now one of the top stars in the game, but a few years ago he was a dead man walking. And Maravich was a gifted player but a struggling human being. They got to that point where they were at rock bottom, and finally the Lord got through to them. They responded to Him and made a decision to receive Christ and started on the way back. Josh is now one of the elite players because he had time to come back. Maravich converted after his retirement. He did die young, but that last three years of his life he was an absolute Apostle Paul.

There are many Hamiltons and Maraviches out there who may not have gone all the way down the well, but there are many who have had great success and

have tried to find the answer in their career, in fame, in a needle, in a drink or in the rush of a night club, and the more they search the more frustrated they get. That comes back to the question in the title of the book, "What are you living for?" We need to ask that question every day. This book says if you're living for those first four things we talked about, you're going to be unfulfilled. If you're living for these other four, you will be fulfilled. It won't be easy, but in the end the world will stand and applaud and God will welcome you home with those six magical words, "Well done, good and faithful servant." That's what we're living for, those six words, and the four pursuits will allow us to hear them.

New Man: A lot of Christian men (and women) know these things but still fall into the traps of living for wealth or pleasure. How do we avoid them?

Williams: The tricky thing about the four false pursuits is that there's nothing wrong with them innately, as long as they don't become your God. But so few of us can handle them and get the right perspective.

There's nothing wrong with having a career. I'm pursuing my career right now. And let me just say this: I need money. I have grandchildren and kids in college. Fame: my life in sports has provided a certain measure, but I want to use it the right way. Kurt Warner and Tim Tebow are famous, but they use it to influence others. There's nothing wrong with power either, if you can use it to help the world. And nowhere in the Bible does God say He is against pleasure. He just doesn't want us to abuse it, seeking pleasure in the wrong way. There's nothing wrong with the pursuit of these things, but if that's the only reason you're living, that's when you end up at a dead end. It comes down to balance, perspective and moderation.

The other message for Christian men (and women) is this—we're never there. We can be right on target, but you've got to deal with this issue every day. We can't rest on our laurels and say, "I'm home free." The reason is very simple, because we have an Adversary that Peter tells us is like a roaring lion. He's not going to prevail in the end, but he's very smart, very cagey, and relentless in his pursuit of us. He knows where we're weak and he's always working on those weak points. We all have soft spots, we've got to really be heads-up all the time. You can't let your guard down as a believer.

Note: The words of Jesus Christ spoken to His disciples say it so well: "If anyone would come after me, he must deny himself and take up his cross and follow me. For whoever wants to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for me will find it. What good will it be for a man if he gains the whole world yet forfeits his soul?" (Matthew 16:24-26)

Masthead photo of the recent Air Station Kodiak change of command ceremony. CAPT Andrew Berghorn was relieved by CAPT William Deal with RADM Arthur Brooks, then-17th District Commander, officiating. CAPT Berghorn has become the Liaison Officer at Navy Flight School in Pensacola, FL, and RADM Brooks has assumed duties as Deputy Commander of the Coast Guard Operations Command (OPCOM) in Portsmouth, VA

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