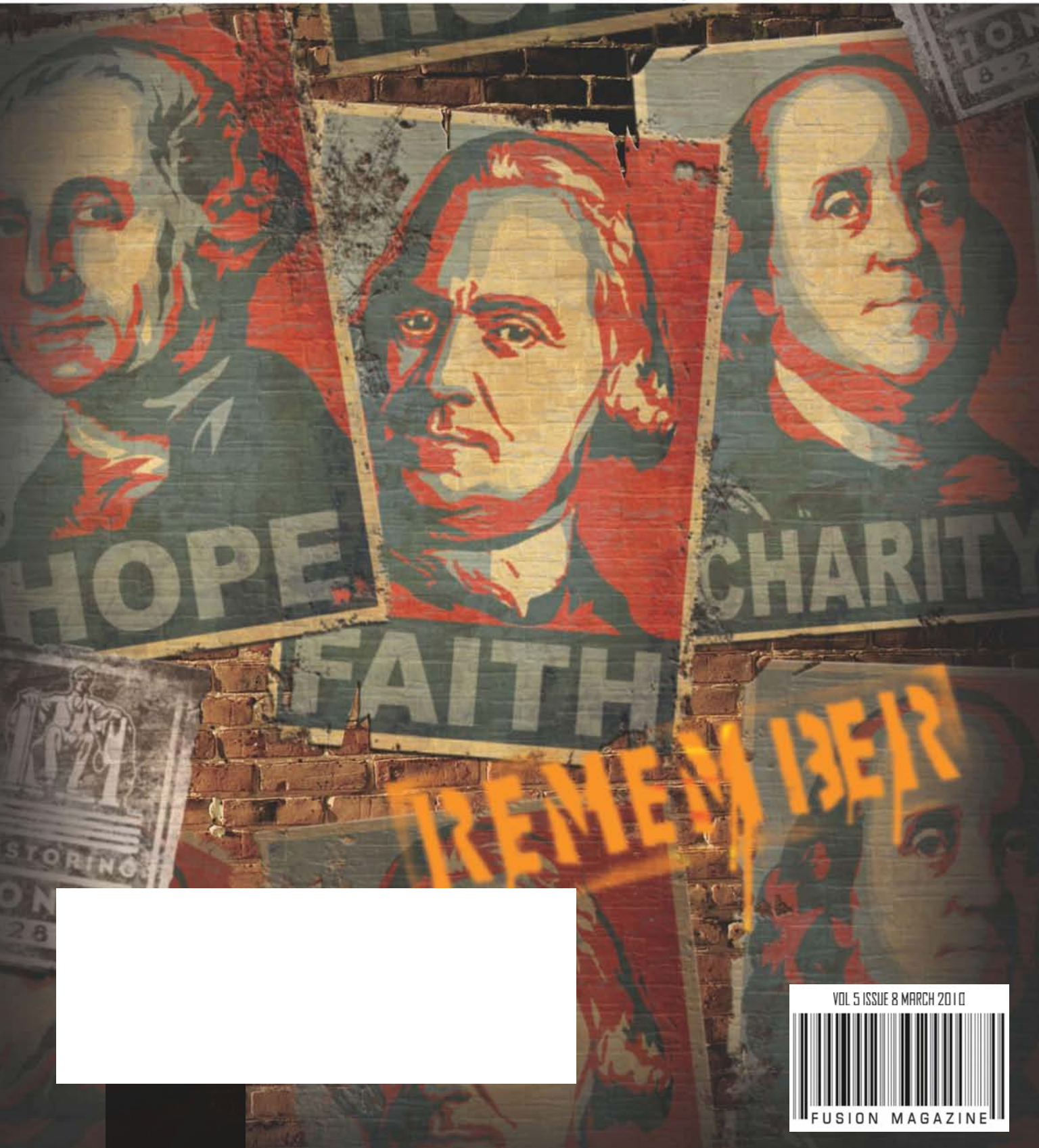


Glenn Beck's

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Perfect Circles

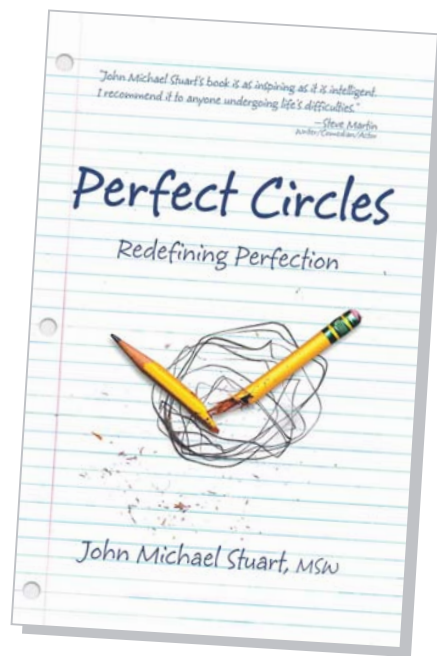
*Recently, I read an inspiring book called **Perfect Circles, Redefining Perfection** by John Michael Stuart. Stuart was born with Cerebral Palsy, a neurological condition that has impacted his coordination. In his book, he challenges all of us to view our adversities as opportunities for growth and personal development instead of defeat. His life stories become our stories, as we discover the healing power of perspective and as we deal with what appears to be standing in our way. His story reaffirmed what I long thought: That if you live your life with honor and truth, you can achieve anything. Here is an excerpt from **Perfect Circles**.*

Get Up Off the Floor

In 1977, a law was passed that would allow those with disabilities to attend the same schools as those without disabilities — or at least the noticeable disabilities. After all, we all have disabilities of one kind or another. Neither I nor my friends had any concept of what it would be like to attend a “different” school. Even though there were many changes, one thing would remain the same. We would still be riding the short bus that only carried the disabled kids. We had been riding this small bus for years and thought nothing of it. Like a limousine, we had door-to-door service. What may have seemed like a perk in having a disability now became another emotional hurdle.

As the short bus pulled onto the school campus, there would be hundreds of students racing around before the first bell rang. There were no wheelchairs or canes and everybody seemed to be walking unassisted. Some people would have to clear the way to make room for the small bus to drop us off. One select group of kids would always be waiting to pound on the bus, yelling, “cripples, retards.” I remember looking out the bus window and seeing all the kids who had (what I thought at the time) what I didn’t — a normal body. I wished so much that I could be transformed into one of them. At the time, I think I would have traded places with anybody: The geek, the football player, the guy with the purple Mohawk — just to be able to fit in. I would have been virtually anybody — except who I was!

The emotional pain got so severe that, as the bus pulled onto campus, I would get on the floor so as not to be



seen. Bill, the bus driver, was understanding and would wait until most of the kids went inside before making me exit the bus. This avoidance behavior seemed to only mask the problem. The real pain remained my shame of being different.

One morning, when I was crouched on the floor of the bus, Bill provided me encouragement that would help me begin to change how I would see myself and others. He stopped the bus, turned around, looked straight down at me and said, “John, you’re just as good, or maybe even better, than any of those kids out there! Stand up! Be confident and make some friends! And remember, not everyone is going to like you. That’s just life.”

These challenging remarks of encouragement triggered the insight or

“Majestic Moment” that would plant a seed to a more expansive view of who I really was. This made it possible for me to start down my path of self-acceptance.

The bus driver’s encouragement didn’t act like a magic wand, making me into the most emotionally secure human being on planet Earth — instantly popular and self-confident. But it did trigger the moment, when insight came, that I needed to get up off the floor of that bus and start to accept my life and its challenges.

The words “that’s just life” remain echoing through the forefront of my mind, not as a cue to just roll over and take what life dishes out, but to accept what is and then find a way to move beyond. It was at that moment I absolutely knew it was up to me to decide whether or not to take action on this insight that had the potential to change my entire outlook on life. My self-esteem gradually grew as I took the action that would start my journey out of self-pity. A week or two later, I let others see me get off that short bus — disability and all.

Each day, I had to resist the temptation to get back on the bus floor by keeping the bus driver’s words of encouragement running through my mind. I had to stand up for myself! No matter how emotionally painful, it was my only alternative. Eventually, I realized there were only a couple of inconsiderate kids who were calling me names. It dawned on me that the rest of the student body might possibly be willing to accept me as a friend — if only I would give “them” a chance. Little did I know that, at that stage in my life, I needed to accept myself before I could be accepted by others. 🌟