

The Academy Perspective

Vol. 4, No. 4

January 1995

Vada Lee Barkley, Editor

PASSING THROUGH THE WATERS

by Vada Lee Barkley

My first recollection involves literal deep water. Riding with my grandmother and my two-year-old cousin in the back seat of a Model-T, I almost panicked as the car stalled in a creek and water began to swirl around our feet. I was only three years old, but I still remember the water on the floorboard and Grandma's telling us kids to stand on the seat. I have no idea how we got out. What an introduction to automobile transportation!

Across my seventy-five years, I've had a number of figurative deep water experiences. I won't bore you with mine. You've had enough of your own. In fact, few of us would argue with Job's conclusion: "Yet man is born unto trouble, as the sparks fly upward" (Job 5:7). We've all heard, and probably said, "My favorite scripture is "And it came to pass." Thank God, it didn't come to stay.

A few years ago Art and I attended a conference on "Emotional Problems of the Elderly". Sponsored by the OU Health Sciences Center, the conference was designed for psychologists and psychiatrists. (How we got there is another story; it had to do with my book SURVIVE AND THRIVE AFTER FIFTY-FIVE).

During a coffee break after the session on Panic Disorders, I said to the consultant, "The main difference I notice is that when I used to get an ache or pain, I'd think, O that'll be gone by morning. Now, I think, Am I going to

have to put up with THIS for the rest of my life?" The expert said, "Now that's Panic!"

In the fall of '93, when Art "began to fall apart" (as he put it), turbulent waters rose steadily with each dreadful diagnosis. Pernicious anemia drained him of color; Parkinsons disease shook his once artistic hands and fingers. Heart valves showed some blockage. The waters crested the last week of September when we got, within three days, two dreadful verdicts--cancer and congestive heart failure.

On a Saturday morning, as I hung clothes on the patio line, I broke into tears. "Lord," I cried, "I can't go through this by myself."

I'll never forget his response: "You won't have to, I'll go with you." He reminded me of a promise: "When thou passest through the waters, I will be with thee; and through the rivers, they shall not overflow thee: when thou walkest through the fire, thou shalt not be burned; neither shall the flame kindle upon thee" (Isaiah 43:2). Though not audible, that Voice is familiar to every Christian.

As we enter 1995, we can cash in on that promise. Thank God, it has NO EXPIRATION DATE. It applies to whatever deep waters we may pass through.

THANKS FOR THE CHRISTMAS CHECK

"I bought a new radio/cassette recorder and batteries." -- Vada Lee

NEXT MEETING--January 16

Speaker: Maurine Dickerson

TENNIS AND THE GAME OF LIFE

by Mendell Taylor

I was teaching a class in "Evangelism." One of the assignments was to write an evangelistic sermon. I thought each student was called to Christian work of some type. I asked one student which field of Christian service he was planning to enter. He gave me this surprising answer: "Not any. I cut chapel so much that I had to take a course in religion to graduate, and this is the course I picked. I am here on a tennis scholarship."

Then I asked him what he would do to meet the assignment of writing an evangelistic sermon. Then he replied: "I have been wondering about that and have not come up with an answer as of now." I said: "I think we can work this out together."

I came up with the suggestion that we can make life a game if we apply the principles which are operational in the game of tennis. We decided there were three basic rules in tennis, namely: (1) The game starts with the score love all. (2) The game proceeds by someone serving. (3) The ball must be kept above the net and in bounds or you lose the game.

His face brightened with enthusiasm as he exclaimed: "I can show how life can be played as a successful game when the three principles are applied, in this manner: (1) We must love all or everybody. There is to be no room for hatred, or hostility, or [Cont. p.2--Tennis]

[Tennis -- Cont.)

bitterness, or resentment. Our hearts should be flooded with Divine love. We should love everyone regardless. (2) We must be on the alert to serve others. When we find someone who is hurting we will help heal that hurt. We make real progress as long as we keep serving. (3) As the ball is kept above the net, and in bounds to be a winner, we must have certain moral values that regulate and discipline our lives if we are winners in the game of life."

In this sermon, he preached himself under conviction and he became a radiant Christian.

It is my prayer that each of us will apply these principles to our lives in 1995, so we can make it a winning year in every way.

UPDATE ON ELBERT AND ESTHER

All their children and grandchildren joined them for a Christmas celebration in Colorado. Surprisingly, travel conditions were good.

They returned to Bethany for a few days after Christmas. Then they left for Houston, where Esther had an appointment to begin tests at the M.D. Anderson Cancer Center on January 3rd. They may get to come home within a few days, or they may not--depending on what the doctors decide after the tests.

They certainly need our prayers. Their faith is strong.

CHRISTMAS GREETINGS FROM SPAIN

[Excerpts from Bill and Juanita Porter's Christmas greeting.]

"We are thankful for the victories the Lord has given in the few months we have been here in Spain. . . . The Lord has helped us with some existing problems and we're glad for that.

". . . the people in our churches are very sweet . . . They have accepted us with open hearts as we work toward some changes. One church has been reopened. There are now active Sunday Schools in each of the churches. That goes for an active NWMS and NYI as well.

"The Southern European Evangelistic Conference was held near Madrid recently, with representatives from Portugal, France and Italy, as well as our Spanish Nazarenes (and visitors/workers from Argentina, Uruguay, USA & England). One afternoon we were able to squeeze in a good District Assembly.

"It will be special to be with Jerry & Toni, Amy & Bill, for a few days this Christmas. We continue to pray for God's miracle in Amy.

"Fee & Little Teresa will also be there, along with Fee's parents and uncle, John and Fee are expecting their #2 (child) and our #4 (grandchild) in May. Grandma says Amen.

"Of all the things that we have found in places where we've worked and the places we have visited, the greatest and most valuable have been the wonderful friends that we enjoy, not because of who we are but because of WHO HE is."

Cantley and Syble George visited Bill and Juanita some weeks ago. Just another example of wonderful friendships spanning the decades since BNC/SNU days.

ART'S CHUCKLES

There's always free cheese in the mouse traps, but the mice there are not happy.

Old truck drivers don't die, they just can't make the grade.

Love of money is the root of half of the evil in the world; and the lack of money is the root of the other half.

Nowadays the rising generation retires when the retiring generation rises.

There is no child so bad that he can't be used as an income tax deduction.

Don't worry when you stumble; remember a worm is about the only thing that can't fall down.
