

The Academy Perspective

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Vada Lee Barkley, Editor

THE BLAST HEARD AROUND THE WORLD

by Vada Lee Barkley

As Mother's Day approaches, hundreds of our friends and neighbors have empty arms and aching hearts. Their grief provokes anger, fear, sympathy, and prayers from all over the world. What happened? Everyone knows. Why? Only God knows. We're all seeking answers. Both Bible and our Constitution offer some clues.

When God created man, He chose to take a risk. Though warning of dire consequences for disobedience, He deliberately gave our first parents freedom of choice. Heartbroken, no doubt, when Adam and Eve sinned, God, nonetheless, cursed the earth. That curse involved sorrow and death. Death is inherent in the curse.

Basing their beliefs on scripture, our founding fathers also took a risk. They vowed to protect our freedom. Frightening as it is, the right to bear arms is guaranteed by the Bill of Rights. An alarming number of disgruntled citizens use that provision to include STASHING arms, as well. Thank God, President Clinton and Newt Gingrich are promising legislation to allow our justice department to ferret out these groups.

In addition, our Constitutional rights often provide loopholes for even the most dangerous perpetrators of dastardly crimes. In the current investigation, for example, efforts are hampered by certain Constitutional rights. With justice thwarted, the fear of punishment is lacking.

The Bible says, "Because sentence against an evil work is not executed speedily, therefore the heart of the sons of men is fully set in them to do evil" (Eccl. 8:11). Governor Frank Keating has vowed to ask for legislation to remedy this problem.

Finally, and no doubt the primary reason for this tragedy, is found in the Bible. "The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked: who can know it?" (Jer. 17:9).

Our hope lies in the fact that after Good Friday -- the worst that man can do -- God gave us EASTER.

ART'S CHUCKLES

The things money can't buy are wonderful, but the things money can buy aren't bad.

You will always stay young if you live honestly, eat slowly, sleep sufficiently, work industriously, worship faithfully, and lie about your age.

Everybody wants to eat at the government's table, but nobody wants to do the dishes.

The computer is a great invention. There are just as many mistakes as ever but they are nobody's fault.

OFFICERS FOR '95-'96

President -- Vada Lee Barkley
Vice-President -- Don Beaver
Secretary -- Evelyn Downs
Treasurer -- George Cargill
Member-at-large-Milton Sonnevik

PROGRAM FOR MAY 8

The May 8 program will feature four Academy authors who have had a book published. Paul Gray, Mendell Taylor, Dick Howard, and Vada Lee Barkley will talk about his/her book. Virjeane Bayles is in charge of the program.

FALL MEETING

During the summer we will be appointing committee chairpersons, committee members, and callers. Academy meetings will begin again October 13--unless you are notified otherwise.

MEMBERSHIP

We have received \$470 in membership dues for '95-'96. Those forty-seven, plus four who paid double last year and three who joined after January 1 this year, makes a total of 54 paid up members at this date.

If you haven't done so, please get your dues to George Cargill or bring them to the next meeting. Since we donated to the SNU President's Scholarship Fund and the Special Assistance Fund, we need your dues.

RE-VALUING OF AMERICA

by Elbert Overholt

The Reading-Discussion Group met for their final session on Monday, April 24. Bennett's chapter on separation of church and state was discussed along with culminating ideas on "re-valuing America."

Bennett does a good job of identifying the problems associated with the loss of values in the United States. He has included a number of good suggestions for revaluing American lives. I have summarized some of these ideas coming from the discussion as well as additional thoughts for your consideration:

1. There is a need for distinguishing between separating government from a state church and the impossibility of separating the people and their government from essential religious and spiritual beliefs and practices. Valuable character traits come from within and cannot be separated from the individual.

2. Prayer is an appropriate part of school life. We need to emphasize the fact that prayer is not illegal and encourage school officials to exercise their responsibilities to educate without omitting essential elements of the process.

3. We have a tendency to operate with a mind set that often errs. We should be open to all truth and not accept any idea unless it is based on sound principles. To obtain the mind of Christ is our ultimate goal.

4. We should constantly guard against the acceptance of bad means to serve good ends. It is easy to substitute legalism for sound principles. The far right may be using unsatisfactory means to reach toward positive goals.

MOTHER

by Wini Howard

If I could speak to you today, I would try to express my deep gratitude for all you did for me when I was growing up. Little did I appreciate or understand the contribution you were making to my life. I have had to become a mother, and even a grandmother, to realize what a great job I now believe you did. I just automatically thought children were to be lovingly cared for and protected from harm by their parents. I certainly was!

Now I know, this does not happen without any effort. It is a full-time assignment. And you cared for us (my sister and me) in such a loving way. It has taken me many years to realize the price you must have paid to be a good mother, an involved pastor's wife, and even a working-woman during the Depression. You always had such a calm and understanding way about you that I accepted all you did as if I deserved it.

Now I know I didn't. I have tried at times past to thank you on Mother's Day. Again, on this special day, may I send my "thank you" heavenward!

5. We need to actuate our faith and consistently replenish it. Living abundantly is the best way to meet obstacles.

6. We should make conscious effort to remain positive, lighten up, and insert good humor into our lives. (Art's Chuckles help here!)

7. Because an issue seems delicate and even taboo within some circles does not mean it should be avoided. If basic principles are involved, we should not be silent. The ever-present question is, "What is basic?". Personal, intense pursuit of the truth should always be there. The truth will set us free.

MEMORIES OF MOTHER

by Edith Payne

The only way to really express my memories of Mother would be to write a book -- a big one. But because space is limited a few lines will have to suffice.

I was fortunate to have Mother into my older years, and I learned to appreciate her more every year. Her last few years were full of pain, and yet she was always cheerful.

Mother was a remarkable woman. Born and reared on a farm in Wisconsin, she married a Norwegian merchant marine who later became a minister.

As a missionary to Norway, Mother had many adjustments to make. To us as children Mother was the pillar of strength. The fact that she arrived in Norway not knowing a word of the language didn't seem a problem to us. In later years I have realized what heroic adjustments she had to make.

As she learned the language, she also taught me to read English even before I started to Norwegian school. And our American heritage was always kept alive. A Bible story was read from Elsie Egermeier's Bible

Story book every morning and then we had prayers.

After Mother and Dad came to Oklahoma in 1955, Mother took care of my children while I worked. Her influence on their lives can not be measured, and our memories of her loving care will be with us the rest of our lives.

NOTE:

If any of the above indicates a possible goal for you or the Academy please let me hear from you. We need discussion but we also need action.