

## A Christian Failure

From Ronald L. Dart's Program Notes

"Last fall, the University of Delaware required 7000 students living in dormitories to attend training sessions, floor meetings and 'one on one discussions' about the university's approved views on politics, race, sexuality, diversity, and environmentalism."

- This statement was astonishing. Since when are universities, centers of learning, scholarship, "training" students on the "university's approved views"?
- Does this mean that views the university doesn't approve are not welcome?
- What if I am working on a degree in architecture? Why do I have to hear the university's views on sexuality?

What was going on there? (I say it *was* going on, because the University abandoned the program after it came to be a focus of considerable dissent and bad publicity—it was a truly bad idea). What was going on is the inevitable result of the loss of any objective moral standards of right conduct.

Christians may hold views on these issues that are consonant with their belief system. But when you take away any basis for morality, you have to replace it with something. So what begins to

happen is that an ersatz religion moves in to take its place.

It was a long time ago when George Will first wrote about our "Civil Religion." It seemed to be a new idea at the time. But greater understanding came as it emerged into the light of day.

- The civil religion is, quite naturally, in competition with Christianity which it sees as a rival.
- Judaism and Christianity had this sort of rivalry at different times in their history, but Christians and Jews in this country have reached something of an understanding.
- Islam and Christianity have this rivalry big time.
- And as Christianity is systematically driven from the

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university and the public square, it is leaving a vacuum which has to be filled by a different faith, a different "ism."

- The name being attached to this new civil religion is secularism.
- And it is nowhere nearly as tolerant as Christianity.
- Christians, believing fervently in liberty, are quite willing for people to believe or disbelieve.

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## *We Want Your Heart . . .*

. . . The Bible says that where your treasure is there will your heart be also. CEM needs dedicated people with a heart to serve God and to get the Gospel out as effectively as possible. Time is short! Things pointing to the end-times are speeding up. This is no time to let up. CEM needs to warn people and be the support group they need so desperately. The time could come when we can no longer speak the truth so freely. We must act now! For your convenience, you can go to your bank and set up an automatic withdrawal every payday from your bank.

## Personal Evangelism, Part One

Taken from Ronald L. Dart's sermon notes

In our tradition, we've never given personal evangelism its due. We tend to think in terms of paying and praying, and leaving evangelism to the ministry. We may have fallen into the trap of thinking of personal evangelism as not being very efficient. In other words, what can I do by myself? I can't reach very many people. I can't accomplish very much by myself. It's far better if I just support this organization and let them go out and preach the Word, while I pray for them. I'll encourage them as they do it. I don't have to get involved.

But let's give this new approach serious thought. Have you ever heard of Joe Gerard's Law of 250? It's an interesting and striking sales concept. Joe Gerard was a car salesman, a very successful one, making in the neighborhood of \$200,000 a year just selling cars. Think about that for a minute. He may have known a thing or two about selling, but will his concepts work with personal evangelism?

While Joe was working for a funeral home he noticed that the numbers of people who were signing the registry for the family was about 250. He asked one of the other fellows who had been there much longer about his figures. He confirmed that about 250 people, on average, would come through the funeral home to pay their respects, or at least send flowers. On another occasion, he was talking to the caterer at a wedding who confirmed that the number of people they

would usually prepare for at a wedding was about 500—250 for the groom's side and 250 for the bride's side. In other words, the average person's sphere of influence is about 250 people.

What does that mean in terms of personal evangelism? If we have a crowd of 900 people, and we multiply that 900 by 250, it comes to a whopping total of 225,000 people who are the primary contacts of our group of 900. If we wind up with 2000 people at the Feast of Tabernacles across the country, that represents a cool half million primary contacts of people. The numbers of people involved can be absolutely phenomenal. Have we fallen prey to thinking too small? Have we fallen short of fulfilling our responsibility with personal evangelism?

Some studies have been done on this subject of contacts: How many people do you know, and who knows who in America? When you think about that, the speed with which information can travel along the proverbial grapevine begins to make sense. The speed with which bad news can get around can be astonishing. The reason bad news works that way is because it is interesting, and has more currency in human relations. So you will tell more people about it. And every one of them tells at least as many people as you did.

You'd almost think there was a miracle involved in the spreading of information. No miracle; it's just the

people you know telling the people they know. Imagine if you will, 2000 dedicated people, with an organization behind them, with backing of radio, printing press, CDs of sermons you can actually give to people and a website loaded with information. Imagine what 2000 dedicated people can do with a message. It's exciting to see a lot of people who want to spread a message! You put that kind of power together, it's remarkable what can be accomplished.

Let's bring this down to you— young and old—and what you can do. Can you do something like this? Can you send somebody you know a personal letter with a thought provoking cut-out article? You can ask him whether he has heard about this. About a month later, you contact him again. Tell him he has been on your mind. Ask how things are going, and send another article with a comment that s/he might enjoy reading this. It doesn't cost but a few cents and some of your time. Could you do the same thing with Facebook or Twitter? Send a link to the daily *Born to Win* radio broadcast, and tell your contacts why they would enjoy the program. No one should be nervous or reluctant to do this type of personal evangelism. Who knows who might one day be baptized because you decided to take action? This has enormous possibilities. Direct mail, personal contact, social networking. It's simple. Now let's go do it!

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- But secularism is showing an intolerant streak which was unsuspected by many.

Intellectuals, who naturally infest universities, are now casting about for ways to restore some set of values for students. The problem is, they have little objective basis for these values.

At least Christians have the Bible which they see as a revelation from God of right and wrong values and conduct. Intellectual secularists seem to have as a primary value that there is no God and no need to take account of his instructions. Never mind that the Bible has a long history of human experience behind it, whatever you may think about Divine revelation.

While pondering all this, an op-ed appeared by John Leo—*Splitting Society, not Hairs*. It was four years old. After evaluating what he had to say, a lot of people were still in denial about the deep rift that was developing in society at large. The more polarized American society becomes, the more we see intellectuals explaining that this polarization isn't real—it's just the swordplay of media and political elites. Each new bundle of evidence saying "we're deeply divided" is closely followed by some prominent commentator saying, "No, we're not."

Last month, the Pew Research Center released a major survey of today's political landscape. The title of the study said it all: *Evenly Divided and Increasingly Polarized*. Andrew Kohut, director of Pew, told why the anger level was so high that if the demonstrators of 1968 had felt like this, "there would

have been gunfire in the streets."

On the other hand: "Not so," wrote Robert Samuelson, one of our best and most balanced columnists. He thinks the polarization of the 1960s was much worse, while stridency today is in large part an attention-grabbing strategy adopted by commentators, academics, and advocates. This would not seem to account for the upsurge of bitterness and angry rhetoric, though the appearance of two polarizing presidents in succession is clearly a factor.

Ah yes, Clinton and Bush, polarizing presidents. Samuelson may be confusing cause and effect. Both presidents were as accommodating as you will ever find. Clinton tried triangulation, moving to the center, to get things done. Bush worked well with Democrats in Texas. And it was long after Leo wrote this piece that Bush vetoed his first bill. The polarization was in the country. What we saw with Clinton and Bush was merely a manifestation of the divisions.

John Leo continued: Behind the smoke and fire, Samuelson thinks, most Americans are tolerant, moderate and in broad agreement on many issues. That was the conclusion of the chief spokesman for the no-polarization argument, sociologist Alan Wolfe of Boston College. After a broad study of middle-class Americans, recounted in his influential 1998 book, *One Nation, After All*, Wolfe concluded that the culture war is "being fought primarily by intellectuals."

John Leo was not convinced, even then: Is this really so? If polarization is essentially confined to a small numbers of actors

clashing swords in front of klieg lights, why do polls show that the number of centrists and swing votes are dwindling? Even then, the political center in this country was getting narrower and narrower. Today, the center is like a balance beam. One misstep and you are on the floor.

Leo goes on to point out the growing polarization that pits secularists against religious people. In the 2000 senate race in New York, two-thirds of secularists voted for Hillary Clinton and two thirds of religious people voted for Rick Lazio. This kind of split showed up in House races around the country in 2000, says Louis Bolce, an associate professor of political science at Baruch College in New York City. The Pew study shows that the most religious states vote Republican, the least religious go Democratic. And wealthiest. Look at the blue state/red state maps. The blue states are those with the highest incomes.

Don't confuse cause and effect here. The Democratic party isn't causing secularism any more than the Republican party is causing religion. Something else is going on. More and more, religiously committed people tend to vote Republican, largely because of "the increased prominence of secularists within the Democratic party and the party's resulting antagonism toward traditional values." That's the judgment of Bolce and his Baruch colleague, Gerald De Maio, in *Our Secularist Democratic Party*, an article in the conservative intellectual journal, *The Public Interest*.

That was interesting in view of

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a remark by Thomas Sowell: In reality, Democrats are the only good reason to vote Republican. Among my Christian friends, their political alliance is beginning to be ABD: “Anything But Democrat.”

They aren’t that happy with Republicans, but far-left Democrats are beginning to scare them. To illustrate, Leo makes this observation: The gap started opening at the 1972 Democratic convention that nominated George McGovern: a third of the white delegates were secular, compared with five percent of the general population. By 1992, the year the culture war is said to have broken into the open, 60 percent of first-time white delegates to the Democratic convention were secularists or nominally religious people who said they attend services five times year or less.

The Republicans became the traditionalist party almost by default—it had less to do with Republican efforts than the impact of secular progressives on the Democratic party. Many secularists in the Republican party are leaving to vote Democratic. The most intensely religious Democrats are heading the other way.

Did John Leo understand at the time some of the implications of what he was writing? Looking back four years, it may have seemed

apparent that the significant cause of the polarization in the country was the developing attempt of secular progressives to convert the country to their faith.

Christians, being by religious bent more tolerant, have found themselves being crowded out of the public square. Some are beginning to wake up and realize that they also have an obligation to convert the country to their faith. So don’t look for the national divide to be healed by any new leader we elect. What a Christian has to look for is a leader with backbone.

Accommodation is not really an option in this brave new world. It is a shame it took President Bush so long to realize this. None of this is new. It has emerged in societies before ours, and the results have not been encouraging.

Are we going the way of ancient Rome? Learn how the Apostle Paul saw this pattern in Roman society, as the rot was becoming more apparent. But, more importantly, you’ll learn from this crystal clear message how and why God’s wrath is being revealed from heaven and will continue to be if we don’t repent. The Bible says we’ll be destroyed because of a lack of knowledge. Don’t fall prey to being without this knowledge. This is a most important message you need today—right now! Order your CD of the *Born to Win* message, *A Christian Failure*, today.



*In  
Memory*

Christian Educational Ministries gratefully acknowledges a generous offering made in memory of Jackie Carnes who recently passed away.

She is the sister of Shirley Armstrong and Mollie Antion and the daughter of the late Roy and Pearl Hammer.

Guy Carnes, her late husband, was the principal of Imperial Schools for a number of years.

They had three sons, Rod Carnes, Randy Carnes, and Rickie Carnes. Please keep this family in your prayers.

Jackie will be greatly missed.

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proficient and equipped for  
every good work.*