

Religion and Politics

By Ronald L. Dart

Just to refresh your memory, the first amendment to the Constitution of the United States, reads as follows:

Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; or abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press; or the right of the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the government for a redress of grievances.

History and experience are important

What do you think it was that so impressed this idea upon the minds of the founders? Obviously, it was a combination of experience and history. Their most recent experience with the English Parliament and King George III had impressed on everyone's mind the importance of being able to speak one's mind publicly. To argue, to persuade. It had been a rough and tumble time, and the English didn't understand the issues well at all.

Thinking about this, my mind turned to Barbara Tuchman's book, *The March of Folly*. It is a remarkable book in which she

defined folly as the pursuit of policy contrary to self-interest. She looked at several historical instances of folly and one was, as she put it, when England lost America. I read portions of it again and came across some interesting ideas surprisingly relevant in today's political climate.

Concerning George III, the monarch against whom the Americans rebelled, she said, "Strong prejudices in an ill-formed mind are hazardous to government, and when combined with a position of power even more so." She went on to deal with several areas that concerned the colonists:

"A weakness of England's government was a lack of cohesion or of a concept of collective responsibility. Ministers were

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appointed by the crown as individuals and pursued their own ideas of policy often without consulting their colleagues. Because government derived from the crown, aspirants to office had to find favor and work in partnership with the king . . ."

That didn't work out too well. Tuchman outlined the different individuals in government, and

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Why Plan Your Estate? . . .

If you don't have a plan for your estate, *the government does*. You've worked hard for the wealth you have accumulated, and you, not the government, should decide how your real and personal properties are divided. The tax advantages from good estate planning can also be sizable. Learn how your gift to CEM is one of the easiest ways to show your support for the values we represent, and to preserve those values for the future. Call 1-888-BIBLE-44 and ask for our *FREE* Estate Planning brochure that will provide you with valuable information you can only get from an attorney or tax advisor.

Recapturing Your First Love

By Lenny Cacchio

Do you remember what it was like when you first realized you were in love? Do you remember what it was like to walk hand in hand on a cool spring evening sharing your hopes and dreams, looking forward to the future with excitement and perhaps a bit of trepidation?

But the years go by and the monotony of daily living dulls that first excitement. The flush of first love gets buried in the world of earning a living and building a life. Petty annoyances of life can steal our joy, and it's hard to get it back.

Our lives as Christians can be that way too. I get reminded of this every time I meet people who are new to the faith. So often they virtually bubble over with joy and with eagerness. The Word of God is a grand new adventure, and no amount of study is too much, no sacrifice too great.

But with time that first love can wane. The excitement is gone, family and neighbors reject the message, we sin and disappoint ourselves and our heavenly Father. We become disillusioned with other Christians and we sink into the rituals of the faith without recognizing our slow slide into mediocrity.

We don't know where the feeling's gone, and we just can't get it back.

In the first century there was a church in Ephesus. This was a strong, solid congregation. They knew God and his Word. No one could deceive them, although many apparently tried. But this church

had a problem. The passion of the newness had waned decades in the past. They had lost their first love (Revelation 2:1-4).

Jesus was not about to let them drift into an oblivious comfort zone without first giving them an instruction or two on how to get it back. He offered a three point plan to recapture the first love, and it works, whether it be the love of your life or your love of the Lord. You'll find it in verse 5 of Revelation 2.

1. Remember. Remember what it was like at the beginning. Remember the things you did and the joy you had while doing them. Recall the excitement of the early days. And once you have grasped again that elation of those days, go to step 2.

2. Repent. Admit that you have left the course. Admit it to God and your loved ones. Make a determined effort to turn around, to change your current patterns of behavior and begin to do what you once did in the beginning.

3. Do. Do those things that you did in the beginning. Attitudes often follow action. Remembering and repenting are good, but they aren't enough. Go back and do the things that matter. Take those walks in the park again. Share the special times. Recapture the excitement of learning and growing. Show the extra respect. Be on your best behavior.

First love: it really is more wonderful the second time around.

Christian Educational Ministries

Statement of Cash Flows
For the Three Months Ended
July 31, 2009

Receipts:

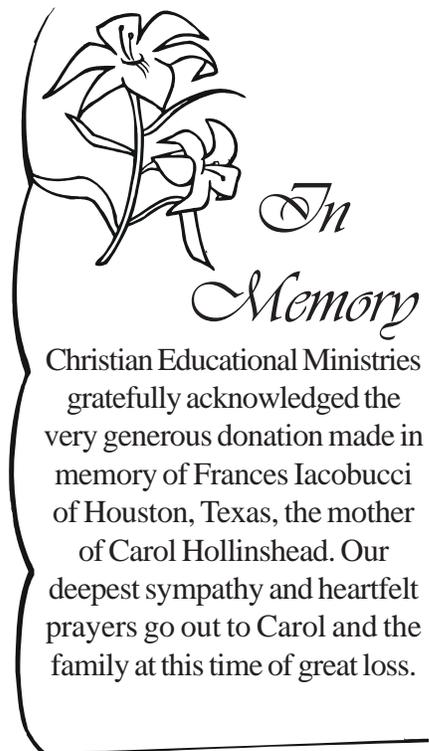
Contributions	\$293040
CEM Bookstore	33610
Summer Camp Tuition	8990
Other Income	2218
	\$ 337858

Expenses:

A/V Supplies	\$ 4774
Occupancy	8053
Office & Adm. Expenses	9799
Mailing Expenses	6417
Postage	17749
Printing	12624
Radio Expenses	185305
Telephone & Utilities	4605
Youth Services	10645
CEM Bookstore	8023
Employee Benefits	25550
Wages & Payroll Taxes	88365

Total Operating Expenses 381909

Decrease in Fund Balance (\$ 44051)



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pointed out how their blindness on too many important issues created a climate for disaster. Concerning the notorious Stamp Act:

“Americans reacted widely and strenuously. Because the act not only required a stamp on all printed matter, and business and legal documents, but extended to such things as ship’s papers, tavern licenses, and even dice and playing cards, it touched every activity in every colony. . .”

The Americans knew that taxation was a form of restriction when applied to communications. Are we even today becoming aware of an attempt to use taxation to gain control of the content of talk radio? As Barbara Tuchman observed, “While other dynamics of conflict were present, nothing raises tempers like money, and taxation was the Americans’ most vibrant issue.”

Tyrants don’t respond well to criticism

Freedom of speech and the press had played a huge role in the success of the revolution, and no one had any thought of ever giving it up. But the founders had a strong sense of history, and most were well acquainted with a simple and quite obvious fact. Tyrants don’t like criticism and will use whatever means come to hand to control it. Thus, for a society to remain free and democratic, freedom of speech and the press were not negotiable. I have a feeling that many of the founders were also aware of the long history of the abuse of power and the control of criticism.

Once in a while, someone takes me to task for talking about politics when I am supposed to be teaching the Bible, but people in government have been trying to run this con for a very long time. “Let’s keep religion and politics separate,” they say. But the Constitution says: “Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof.” But what if the free exercise of religion involves speaking against immorality in government?

Who was in Jeremiah’s Judgments?

Let me pause for a moment to clarify something. The very first definition of politics is this: The art or science of governing. When Jeremiah went down to the city gate to preach, what do you think he was talking about? Was he an evangelist calling on people to be converted? Yes, I suppose he was. But if you read the prophet, and you notice where he went to preach, he went to the city gate. That was where the judges, princes and governors sat to judge the people. What was the dominant theme of his message, and who was included in the judgment pronounced? The people? Yes, but he didn’t stop there. He got a little frustrated with his audience on at least one occasion.

Having given it his best shot with no results, Jeremiah said (with some exasperation) “These are only the poor; they are foolish, for they do not know the way of the LORD, the requirements of their God. So I will go to the leaders and speak to them; surely they know the way of the LORD, the

requirements of their God. But with one accord they too had broken off the yoke and torn off the bonds” (Jeremiah 5:4-5 NIV).

It isn’t easy being a prophet in any generation. But Jeremiah had only begun to learn how hard it eventually would become. He and the other prophets had been tasked with speaking truth to power, and power never reacts mildly. Those in power use every means at their disposal to silence critics. Nothing has changed, and we are just starting to see history repeat itself.

I discuss this at some length in an important program titled *Religion and Politics*. I will be happy to send you an advance CD of the program if you will just check the box on the enclosed card and return it. Let’s do what we can while it is day. The night comes when no man can work.

You’re Making a Difference!
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in this is that so many of these voters are Christian in name only. An individual who tries to live according to the Commandments of God and attempts to emulate a Christ-like character are not often encountered these days. I wish I could count myself in that group but cannot as of yet. The political power that could be realized if only all these “Christians” could be of the same heart and mind of Jesus ! Mr. Dart, thank you so much for your programs/ministry. You are the only minister I am aware of who speaks clearly and plainly. And you also believe that the Sabbath was never abolished, which is a sign to me of just how much knowledge and truth the Lord has imparted to you” (MB).

A Wonderful Gift

By Paula Hughes, JD

In the words of a familiar television commercial, “Friend, when was the last time you volunteered to help at the Feast of Tabernacles? Well, that’s too long!” Maybe you are one of the many who volunteered to serve at the 2009 Feast of Tabernacles. If so, we want you to know how grateful we are for all you did to make it truly successful. But for those of you who never got around to volunteering, do you think you could feel more warmth, more satisfaction in your soul than you do right now, having just returned from the Feast? It may surprise you, but you can satisfy your soul even more by volunteering to help in even the smallest way. You may not want or be able to help every day—that’s okay, the volunteers in the Festival Association will find a place and a way for you to help. There are as many different serving opportunities as you can imagine. To name a few: help with YEA classes; activities such as the Pie and Ice Cream Social or the Family Picnic; Youth Day; seminars; music; logistics such as loading, unloading, setting up and cleaning up; ushering; the Variety Show; or something entirely new and different.

Fill your heart with the joy that comes from serving others. Please contact Heather Holmes at holmes_hl@yahoo.com while the Feast is fresh in your mind and in your heart, to make sure that you will be contacted next year when the call goes out for volunteers. Helping others is a gift that keeps coming back to you.

You’re Making a Difference!

What Our Listeners Are Saying

“Thank you for all the help you are giving us. This year we will have your last year’s FoT sermons on first and Last Great Day via video played at our FoT in Collingwood, ON. All your sermons from CEM are most of them viewed at our Sabbath services. All of them are duplicated and sent to those who are in remote areas that we have on our mailing list. I will download the sermon from the link you supplied and put it on a CD. Thanks again so much. Wish you and CEM a Happy Trumpets and Atonement and a wonderful FoT” (L).

“I’ve finally thought of a way that my knowledge base and CEM/BTW’s needs mesh! Not sure if you know it, but I am a statistician by profession and doctoral training. Analyzing data, making projections, dealing with research methods & surveys, communicating results and analysis, etc., is what I do. If you would want to entrust the raw data you get back from your FoT Survey, I would be more than happy to volunteer my time to analyze the data professionally and give you a thorough reporting. If you are interested, please just let me know” (G).

“Good morning, I pray that all is well with you. . . I am sitting here 1:48am listening to Ronald Dart’s sermon, which I must say is awesome! My question is simple: As I read about the events in Ft Walton Beach, Florida—does this event have a price tag? I would love to bring the family (wife and three kids: Boy-3, girl-7, and my son-8). Please advise, and sorry for the shortness of words, but I know you are busy and with all due respect I value your reply and time” (JY).

“Mr. Dart, Have just finished listening to today’s program, a civilization dying, and opposing evil # 1&2. I feel as you do that abortion is an abomination and a scourge/curse upon our nation. It is evil enough to destroy unborn children due to a suspected mental/physical handicap. But to abort unborn babies just because they are female, or simply not wanted, is legalized murder. I believe you called it a form of contraception. I have said for years that the vast majority of the abortions in the U.S. are nothing but very late contraception. You stated correctly that there are enough Christians in this country to make a difference in the quality of leaders voted into the political offices of our nation, if only they would. I’m afraid the loophole

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*That the man of God may be proficient
and equipped for every good work.*