

## THE WATERHOLE

DENNIS KINLAW

PALCON – 1981 - POINT LOMA NAZARENE COLLEGE

It has been a great privilege for me during these summer weeks to have the chance to be in five of the eight PALCONs. I have always had a wholesome respect for the Church of the Nazarene. About ten years ago I began to get acquainted with some of your leadership in Kansas City. My first, close introduction was with B. Edgar Johnson. I watched a man with incredible gifts and genuine Christian humility. I began to find that he was not as exceptional at first as I thought he was -- that you have a lot of leadership like that. I remember I used to introduce B. Edgar as my favorite bureaucrat -- in fact, maybe the world's best bureaucrat. I then went on to say that the world doesn't need anything more than it needs good bureaucrats. He's an incredible person. I found the same thing is true of Mark Moore. You are privileged to have leadership like this. The body of Christ is the richer because of their gifts and their consecration of those gifts. I'm a better person for the association.

It's been a privilege to be among your college campuses. Any college campus has a special interest for me. I have spent 13 years in the presidency of a Christian liberal arts college. Over those years I've come to feel that there is nothing in the kingdom of God today that is more important than our Christian liberal arts colleges. I taught in Asbury Theological Seminary before I crossed the street to Asbury College. When I got the call and the Lord said, "Go," I felt like, "Well, that's alright. It's a step down. I'm moving from graduate work and theological training to liberal arts. That's an inferior role but if that's what God wants, that's His business not mine."

As the years have passed, my conviction has been that the most important thing in the educational world in this country today and outside our country is the colleges like Point Loma. Just let me say I found with great interest that the outpourings of the Holy Spirit that have taken place on American campuses have primarily occurred not at the theological level or in the Bible schools. The great outpourings of the Holy Spirit have been in the liberal arts colleges, not where students were spending all their time in theology or Scripture but, where they were studying Biology, Astronomy, Ancient Philosophy, History and English Literature. I found that it's at the college level that most of the decisions are made that determine what theological education is really like. I've said to some of my friends that it is sort of like owning the waterhole if you run the colleges. Because there is where the major decisions are made and where your leadership is determined. If God has His way in your liberal arts colleges, I don't worry about your Seminary. If you lose the battle here, I think you may lose it everywhere.

One of the things that has disturbed me over these years is that I'm convinced that Americans don't realize how pricelessly privileged we are to have Christian liberal arts colleges. I wish I had nothing else to do and I could talk about this because I've become a bit of an evangelist on this. One of my favorite dates in Christian history now is one that you don't know about. It was 1642 and a college president like Bill Draper (except he was only 30 years of age) pulled together his board of overseers with seven laymen and seven ministers. He said, "We've been in operation now for six years and we're graduating our first graduating class. Shall we give them A.B. degrees?" The college was a little institution called Harvard and the president was a fellow named Henry Dunster. You never heard his name before but he's one of my heroes. And those seven clergymen and those seven ministers who were overseers of the college gave degrees to its graduates. That was the first time in human history that a degree had ever been

granted without permission of either the Pope or the Crown. Somebody has said the most serendipitous arrogation of power in human history. If you have any friends that are Harvard graduates, kid them a little and ask them if their degrees are legal. And ask them, "Who gave Harvard the right to grant degrees?"

All of us are indebted. We are indebted infinitely more than I find most of us have any concept. The end result was that when the revolutionary war was over a little over a hundred years later there were seven degree-granting colleges in this country - Harvard, Yale, Princeton, William and Mary, Dartmouth, Brown and King's College which later became Columbia. Nobody gave them the right to do it. They just went ahead and did it. The end result was that when the founding fathers of the United States discussed the question of whether they should establish a Federal University and establish a governmental educational program -- James Munroe, John Maddison, Thomas Jefferson, George Washington, the Adams brothers -- congress acted to do that and then backed away from that. That was evidence of the high regard in which they held those seven institutions. One of the rare things in human history developed. You know about the wall of separation between State and the Church, which is spelled out or based in the first amendment. But are you aware that there has been in the United States a wall of separation between Church and State? I never heard an educator discuss it. In fact, I've never heard anybody else discuss it. But now what difference does it make? Let me illustrate. And I don't have time to go into it so just let me tease you a little.

I'm a United Methodist. Methodism began in Britain. It began under the leadership of a rather sophisticated man by the name of Wesley. Are you aware that there has never been a Methodist college in England that could give an A.B. degree? Never. There isn't one today. Now let me ask you - what chance would the Nazarene church in Phineas Bresee's day have had

of becoming the force in American society that you have become if you could never have built your own college? Oh, you can build them anywhere else in the world, but they can't grant degrees because the Crown and the Pope still have the power in most of the nations of the world if they are to be granted. There is not a Point Loma College in all of Europe. There is not a Point Loma College in all of Canada. There is not a Point Loma College anywhere in the world except where Governments have been weak enough that missionaries could get one going and grant degrees before people found out what was taking place. There is one nation in South America today where there is the possibility of one developing. Now, does it make a difference? Yes, it makes a difference!

The head of the Salvation Army, the General of the Salvation Army, told me - he said, "Our students, by the time they finish high school being Sallies are so conscious of their religious difference that they have a minority complex and they want the best degrees they can get. So they go to the universities. When they finish at university we have either lost them or wish we had." He said, "We send a few of our young people to Asbury. For every ten we send we get eleven back." (It's usually a Methodist that we lost en route.) And he said, "What is interesting is that when we get them back, they are more committed to our theology than they were when we sent them. We'd like to send more."

These institutions are the production line for Christian leadership of the world. If you will go to . . . well you can go around the world today and check the missionary force. You will find some that are graduates of secular or state institutions but do you know who makes up the great mass of the missionary force of the world? I was in one country and about every other missionary that I bumped into, if it was a Presbyterian he came from Wheaton (and the Presbyterian Church was strong there), and if he was a Methodist he came from Asbury. The

great predominance of the missionary staff that I met came from the Christian colleges of this country. I don't know what the figures are in your institutions but for over ninety years two out of every seven students who ever attended Asbury College (which is a liberal arts college and until ten years ago we didn't have a straight Bible major) has ended up in full-time service. Over the last ten years it's run from thirty to forty percent annually. It dawned on me one day that these colleges are simply production lines for Christian leadership. There's no other nation in the world that has them. You ought to give them all the support you can give them because if we loose them, we will become as sterile Christianity-wise in this country as many of our other friendly nations in the world are.

We have a great freedom. One of the things that troubles me is I find very few educators who realize the uniqueness of our situation. I love the fact that the United States government, the most powerful government in the world, still doesn't have the power to accredit an A.B. degree. When we accept the transfer from West Point or from Berkley we don't accept their credits because there is a private enterprise organization in this country, five of them in fact, who say, "West Point does fairly good work. You ought to accept their credits on condition that they'll accept yours if your student transfers back." I like that. For God's sake let's not loose what we've got. I find that very few people who realize it. Keep your colleges strong. Give them the financial support they need. Send them the students they need. Pray for them. Give them the kind of support they need and keep these colleges. Remember old Henry Clay Morrison used to say, "Keep the chapel platform hot and it will solve most of your problems."

Let me tell you one more story. May I? I'm a close, personal friend of Billy Graham - I've talked to him twice in my life. One time was when I didn't realize it was a privilege - because it was 1940 and nobody knew any more about him than they did about me in those days.

The other time was in his home. Gracious. Choice opportunity. There were a couple of us, Clem Coleman (Some of us know Bob Coleman and I had something we wanted to talk with him about. Bob knows all these important people and so he got us in.) When I got my chance I looked over at Dr. Graham and I said, "Dr. Graham, why is it that you refuse to speak on a Christian college campus?" His mouth dropped and he looked like a kid who had been caught with his hand in the cookie jar. Because he won't. One of his appointment secretaries told me, "That's funny Dennis, we didn't think anybody knew that." Some of us had just tried and hadn't succeeded so I jumped to the conclusion and tested him and found I was right. He got real still and finally he looked back at me and he said, "Well Dennis, I'll explain to you why. I'm afraid of your students." I just read in the newspaper a few weeks before, I think about three, that he'd spoken at the University of Michigan, and I knew that he speaks fairly consistently at Yale, so I looked back at him and said, "You're afraid of our students?" He said, "Yes." I said, "I notice that you speak at the University of Michigan and you speak at Yale. Aren't you afraid of their students?" He looked back at me and said, "Heavens no. I can go to the University of Michigan and speak on John 3:16 and I'm ten miles ahead of anybody there." He said, "I can come to Asbury and speak on John 3:16 and afterwards some kid walks up to me out of a sociology class and says, 'Yeah, I know that.' Give me the sociological implications of that, Dr. Graham." And he said, "I'm done before I start."

I have had an opportunity of ministering some with inter-varsity and have the highest regard for Inter-Varsity and Campus Crusade. I once thought that they would train the intellectual leadership of the church for tomorrow. I don't believe it anymore. They'll train some. You know why? The problem? Such students are not forced to integrate their faith. You see, the Campus Crusade kid goes into a psychology class, memorizes enough to make his A,

walks out having studied psychology under an atheist, sits down in the student union building next to a kid, pulls out his 'Four Spiritual Laws' and says, "Friend, do you know that God has a wonderful plan for your life?" He never connects the two things because he goes to Campus Crusade, one, two nights a week, and it's separated from his academic program. A kid comes to a Christian college and sits in a biology class at 9 o'clock, deals with evolution and at 10 o'clock goes to chapel and they read Genesis. The professor who taught them biology leads the morning prayer. He walks out of chapel and goes into a psychology class and reads B. F. Skinner. There is no protection. It dawned on me one day that at Asbury, three days a week, there's not a class that is more than four and one-half hours away from a confrontation with God. There is no way that you can separate your religion and your learning. Thus the possibility of integration occurs in these little institutions in a way that is not found anywhere else in the world. We ought to make them the best we can make them! You don't know what you've got.

We are a member of the Christian College consortium and the Christian College coalition. There are thirteen schools in the consortium. There are forty to almost fifty in the coalition. That coalition represents the evangelical colleges of this country. There are 67,000 students in the colleges of the coalition. You have eight colleges. You know how many students you have in those eight colleges? You have 12,000 students. Which means you almost have one out of every five in the best of the evangelical institutions of this country. I don't think you knew that. Now what I want to say is "What a responsibility!" Now you can go the way the rest of this country has gone and you can lose it. Or, you can hold these institutions. Give them your best and you can make an impact on tomorrow.

You know what I think? It's sort of like that stream that comes out of the temple in Ezekiel 47. It wasn't too impressive 1500 yards out but by the time you got out another fifteen

and another fifteen and another fifteen you'll remember it was stream that swept the countryside. Everywhere it went it left life, it left health, and it purged that which was evil and turned that which was bitter into the sweet. You've got it. You own the waterhole. Take care of it.