



"Fair peace becomes men; ferocious anger belongs to beasts."  
—Ovid

**29-May-09**

## *The Absence of Love*

On Tuesday, April 14, 2009, crowds gathered in Bingham Hall, a University of North Carolina-Chapel Hill educational building, filling the seats with college students, professors, and members of the community, waiting to hear Congressman Tom Tancredo speak about illegal immigration and the proposed DREAM Act (Development, Relief and Education for Alien Minors Act). Having been invited by the campus organization, "Youth for Western Civilization," the Colorado lawmaker came to explain to the predominantly liberal campus and community why he opposed such an empathetic bill. After Tancredo was escorted into the packed hall, the ears of the audience were anxious to hear the Congressman's critique.

However, they were not able to hear him. They were not able to hear anything but the angry voices of protesting students standing in the aisles, filling the corridors of Bingham Hall, and even gathering outside the room's windows. Stomping their feet in a violent rhythm, the crowds all chanted in harmony, "Shame on you!" So many protestors tried to fill the lecture-hall that campus security had to dismiss the overflow-students from the hallways in an attempt to retain order. But, filled with zeal for their cause, the students refused to leave until pepper spray released outside of the room forced them.

Meanwhile, Tancredo leaned against the desk in the front of the hall, grinning slightly and shaking his head, as if such behavior was not at all surprising. After security was forced to use extreme measures, the cries of the protestors diminished enough to allow him to speak. "This is a free-speech crowd, right?" Tancredo asked with a smile. The

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Congressman got in nearly two minutes of uninterrupted speech before two female students unraveled a long banner reading, "No one is illegal," which hid Tancredo. The protestors raised their voices again with even greater fervor.

Attempting to quiet the crowd, the vice president of the Carolina Hispanic Association told the protestors, "We are the children of immigrants, and this concerns us. So we would at least like to hear what he has to say if you want to hear what we have to say." This attempt, however, failed. Tancredo offered the protestors the floor if they would let him speak afterward, but they replied with expletives and more name-calling. Security finally removed the banner, but the disorder turned to chaos when the sound of breaking glass boosted the tension and a brick with an attached note lay only feet from the Congressman. One member of the audience remarked, "Throwing bricks through the windows of those you don't like—does that sound familiar?"

At this, Tancredo's bodyguards escorted the Congressman from the lecture-hall to safety, and the protestors sang songs of victory. Outside of Bingham Hall, nearly two hundred protestors continued their demonstration, chanting infantile couplets of pride and warning: "Shut it down!/No racists in our town!" "Yes, racists, we will fight!/We know where you sleep at night!"

This debacle at UNC is outrageous, a shameful mark on the university as a credible institution and an embarrassment for American culture. Sadly, as upsetting as it is, it is not a surprise. This successful demonstration, only one among many that occur all over the U.S., is the consequence of America's moral decline—namely a lack of respect—and egregious hypocrisy.

The protestors were students with left to far-left leanings. Despite being proud members of the "tolerant" party—the same party that advocates "dialogue" with even the self-proclaimed racist, Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad—these students were filled with and expressed an intense hatred. Their actions belied the truth behind the crowd-pleasing jargon political liberals employ to attack conservative ideals. Ironically, while they would give Ahmadinejad a platform to express freely his hatred of Jews and Israel, Tom Tancredo was silenced because he opposes a bill that would reward illegality.

Beyond the political implications, the protest exemplified the lack of respect many in our culture have for others, and a particular disrespect toward those with whom one disagrees. In a recent essay, "What Has Happened to Deference?" John Ritenbaugh described how our culture's general lack of respect shows in our daily actions. Many today think etiquette and courtesy are unimportant conventions, yet discarding them leads to even more disgraceful actions, as displayed at UNC. The protesting students

showed an utter lack of respect toward their guest, as well as those who wanted to hear Tancredo's speech. Because the protestors did not want to hear it, they would allow nobody else to hear it either.

The protestors' behavior was inexcusable, even criminal. It was also ungodly, even Satanic in its uncontrollable rage over the opinion of one man on a piece of legislation. For Christians, this event presents a warning and a question. If [the world](#) will treat itself with such hatred over a legal disagreement, what will its hatred toward Christians and Christianity look like? We are also forced to consider how we treat those with whom we disagree.

[Jesus](#) warns in [John 15:19-20](#): "If you were of the world, the world would love its own. Yet because you are not of the world, but I chose you out of the world, therefore the world hates you. . . . If they persecuted Me, they will also persecute you." The near-riot at UNC is a scary reminder of what we face. God's laws and values are antithetical to the world's, and in the future we will have to endure the same hatred, name-calling, and accusations as Tancredo did, but we can be sure that the world's hatred for us will be even more intense and universal. Are we close enough to [God](#) to endure?

Further, the protestors' utter contempt for Tancredo was born out of their quarrel with him, but this should cause us to consider how we treat those with whom we disagree. Disputes cause separations in personal relationships as well as in church organizations. How much damage is done in our relationships due to a simple lack of respect or love for others? The New Testament shows that the apostle Paul frequently had to deal with schisms and disputes among the brethren (I Corinthians 1-2; Galatians 5, etc.).

Paul fought against discord by reminding the brethren that the church is united in Christ, and that He *requires* His followers to show love to each other ([Ephesians 4:13-16](#); [Philippians 1:9](#); [John 13:34-35](#)). As the world's hatred toward us increases, our love for each other must remain and grow. The protestors' hatred reminds us of the potentially destructive combination of arguments and disrespect. We must be careful to remember Christ's warning in [Matthew 5:21-22](#), that hatred is equivalent to murder, and instead, diligently practice His commands to love, not just our brethren, but our enemies as well ([Matthew 5:43-48](#)).

- Staff

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*From the Archives: Featured Sermon*

## [Of One Accord](#)

by John W. Ritenbaugh

Observing that more controversy exists about the counting of Pentecost than for any of the holy days, John Ritenbaugh suggests the confusion may be a function of the works of the flesh (Galatians 5:19). Confusion, separation, and division have been our legacy since the Garden of Eden. The major reason for Christ's ministry was to put an end to the quarreling and division, enabling us to be one with the Father and with each other. Three of God's festivals (Passover, Atonement, and Pentecost) have a direct bearing on the principle of unity. As we individually strive to become unified with God, believing in His authority and His doctrines, we will ultimately become unified, in one accord, with our brethren. It is our individual responsibility, enabled by God's Holy Spirit, to follow those things that were revealed by God through His apostles, keeping God's Commandments, rather than following our own inclinations or private agenda.

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## *From the Archives: Featured Article*

### [Our Spiritual Marathon of Hope](#)

by Staff

During the spring and summer of 1980, Terry Fox pursued his "Marathon of Hope" to raise money for cancer research, running in effect 143 consecutive marathons. His experience contains similarities to a Christian's life, and we can extract lessons that apply to our long journey to God's Kingdom.

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