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Uncommon Sense

Providing Clarity, Promoting Intelligence

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Issue: # 021

February 14, 2012

Greetings!

Today is Valentine's Day. I hope all of you take some time today to let your loved ones know that you truly do love them. If you are married or are in a serious relationship, obviously you will want to make an appropriate expression of that love. But I would suggest that, within the bounds of what is appropriate for a given relationship, you may wish

to express your feelings in some way to your closest friends as well. If you have children, you may make their day by letting them know how much you love them. And if you happen to see someone who appears to be less-than-lovable, and who thus may not receive much acknowledgment on Valentine's Day, you may make a huge impact on their life with a word of kindness or encouragement.



I have written this issue of Uncommon Sense with the intent to make an impact on you. Happy Valentine's Day!

OK, let's get started!

Warm regards,

Ara Norwood



How to Thrive When Disaster Strikes - Part 2

Last month I talked about the importance of storing water and I gave you a tip on how to do so. Now I want to supplement that advice with a tip involving food. Storing food may be one of the smartest life insurance policies you could invest in.

Here's the bottom line: you need to store up food just in case you find yourself in a situation where you need it.

There are several ways to do this. You can go online to places like WiseFoodStorage.com, FoodStorageMadeEasy.net, or you can pick up some tips from the LDS Church who are the real experts on these matters, and see what they have to offer.

You can also store food methodically by purchasing a few extra cans of a given product (say, chili, or soup, or corned beef hash, to name a few simple examples) each time you go grocery shopping. When you get home and put away your groceries, place the extra cans someplace different

from your everyday food storage. Make sure the extra cans are placed in an environment that is not too hot. You want the temperature to be mild. Periodically you want to rotate



some of the extra food storage into your day-to-day food supply so that it won't spoil or expire. Do that consistently and you'll find yourself on safer ground.

Now, I am well aware that some of you may be scratching your heads, wondering why I'm harping on this. You may think that the odds of you being without food are about zero, and that even if something extreme did happen, you believe the U.S. Government would jump in and save the day. If you think like that, consider this:

In 1996 I was in Manhattan doing business. To be more precise, I was inside the World Trade Center. I recall walking out of the North Tower after my business meetings had concluded. I remember looking up at the twin towers

and thinking those towers were so massive and seemingly indestructible. If someone had asked me what I thought it would take to level both towers, I would have replied that nothing short of a nuclear bomb could wreak such havoc on these structures. And yet, on the morning of September 11th, 2001, I watched in shock and amazement as first one, then the other, came crashing down. The unthinkable became reality.

It is possible the same could occur with the food supply. Or, considering a less-extreme scenario, imagine if you were out of work for a prolonged period of time due to injury, sickness, or a weak job market. Doesn't seem so far-fetched, does it?

Be wise. Use good judgment. Store some food.

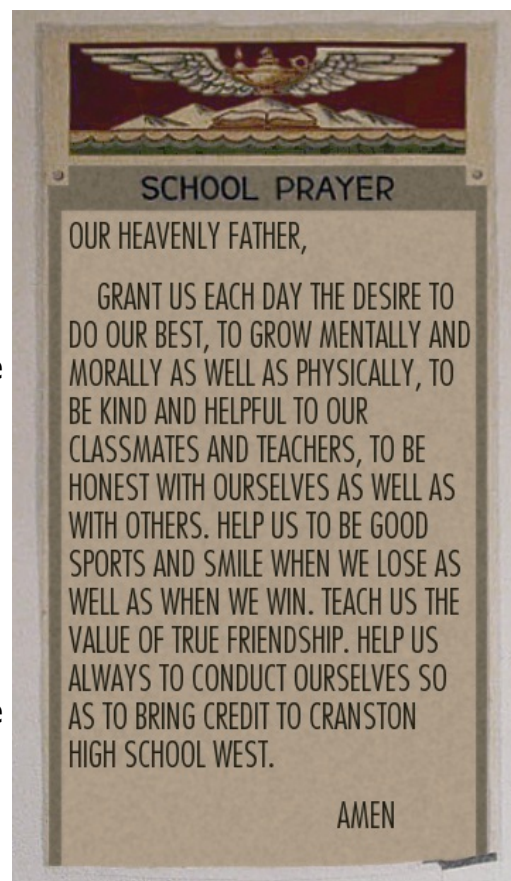
Leftism and Atheism: Not-so-strange bedfellows

Not everyone who is a Leftist is an atheist. And not everyone who is a conservative (i.e., Right of center politically) is a believer in God. Yet atheists who are also conservative are an anomaly. Thus, it is safe to say that the typical atheist is, to whatever degree he or she is in possession of a coherent political philosophy, invariably a Leftist.

What should happen when a single, solitary Leftist Atheist finds herself in a public school with a decades-old tradition of posting a non-denominational prayer that begins with the words "Our Heavenly Father"? The prayer was written by a 7th grade student some 49 years ago and has been posted at Cranston High School West, in Cranston, Rhode Island, ever since. The prayer itself does not name a specific religious sect, and were it not for the opening salutation addressing "Our Heavenly Father" and the closing word "Amen" one might not know the writer had religious proclivities. The prayer (seen below) reads like something out of a Boy Scout manual or a classic self-help treatise.

Not a word about

baptism. Not a word about fasting. Not a word about Christ. Not a word about scripture. Not a word about faith or repentance. Not a word about the Ten Commandments or the Golden Rule. And no one has had a problem with it until 16-year-old Jessica Ahlquist, a self-described outspoken atheist, decided to partner up with the ACLU and sue the school in federal court.



Returning to my question, using (un)common sense and good judgment, What should happen when a 49 year old tradition that no one is forced to pledge allegiance to, no one is forced to recite on threat of death, annoys a single, solitary atheist?

In other words, if you've got a school with a student body of 1,642 students, and one of them is bothered by the presence of the words "Our Heavenly Father" and "Amen", what does one do? Does one ignore the 1,641 students who wish to maintain the tradition? Does one tell the solitary student to toughen up, considering she represents only six one-hundredths of one percent (0.06%)?

Well, when you have a Leftist legal pit-bull known as the ACLU clamoring for an expensive lawsuit, and you have a Leftist federal judge who imagines that any fleeting reference to anything non-secular is an endorsement of a specific religion, you side with the one student, and you basically spit in the face of the 1,641 other students and all the other faculty and administrators - as well as all of the alumnus going back to at least 1963. Essentially, when you're a Leftist, you award disciples of Leftism regardless of what anyone else thinks of the matter, and regardless of who you hurt, or how many you hurt.

In the world of the Left, the question of whether to satisfy one Leftist Atheist against the desires and time-honored traditions of hundreds - even thousands - of other people

who do not share your Leftist ideology, is a no-brainer. So the ACLU won the case and the federal judge ruled that the school must remove the School Prayer. [Jessica Ahlquist](#) is thrilled. Everyone else is outraged.

That's what Leftism does. It poisons virtually everything it touches.

Shameless Plug

There are signs the job market may be looking favorable in some sectors. If you are in need of a quantum improvement of your résumé, you may benefit from my eBook, *Crafting a Winning Résumé*, which you can order by [clicking here](#).



From Ara's Journal

I spoke with a dear friend yesterday whom I've known for about 15 years. She informed me she was recently diagnosed with Lupus, a very serious disease that can be fatal. She wonders how she will get through each day.



Another friend, age 41 just gave birth to a beautiful baby girl. She is unmarried but is in a two-year relationship with the father, whom she lives with. She expressed grave fears at his recent ranting about having to give up his surfing time to watch his daughter every once in a while. My friend wonders if the writing is on the wall.

And yet another person I know is, as I type this, spending her second consecutive night in jail. It is her first time in such a place, and she was arrested just yesterday and now has a felony on her record. She can't make bail and has no idea what her future may hold for her.

I am sad for all of these people, and countless more that I could elaborate on. Many people face a painful, difficult, uphill battle - sometimes through no fault of their own, other times due to poor judgment or bad decisions.

It would be easy for me to sink into a state of despair. Easy, but unhelpful, for them or for me.

I sense that to the degree that I maintain poise and

perspective, I can lend strength and grace to those whom I love and grieve with. Sometimes I sense they need advice and direction. More often they just need to know I'm there and willing to simply listen. On some rare occasions they need their space to sort things out without either my input or my presence.

Although I'm not one who generally favors slogans, it's hard not to embrace this one that comes from a Protestant Christian perspective: "There, but for the grace of God, go I."

The World of Words

Building Your Power of Expression

Tangential, adj.

Pronunciation: tan'jen ch əl



Meaning: While many stumble when trying to pronounce this word in a sentence, it's a wonderful and elegantly descriptive word to add to your arsenal of words. The basic meaning refers to the divergence from a previous course of thought, as in abruptly picking up on a theme that is off-topic. It has the secondary meaning of something that is peripheral or extraneous to the subject at hand.

Usage:

- *Your comments about North Korea are somewhat tangential to your earlier remarks about Israel's vulnerability.*
- *I know it's tangential to our current discussion on road improvement, but I think we should also consider improving pedestrian overpasses.*
- *Don't hesitate to discard tangential ideas in favor of more direct ones.*

Subscribers, the Special Report "11 Ways to Beat the Odds" is now complete and has been sent out. If you have not received it, please communicate that to me via email (ara@aranorwood.com).

For more information on my work, follow me on Twitter ("Ara Norwood"), or on Facebook (keyword "Leadership Development Systems") or via my website: www.aranorwood.com

Sincerely,

Ara Norwood
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