

Democrats, liberalism helping everyone

Corey Ford
guest columnist

I am sure most of you have heard the story. It is one of those stories told to you in Sunday school when you were just a child. I write of the Parable of the Lost Sheep.

Oh, yes! Among tax collectors and "sinners," Jesus tells us of a shepherd who leaves his flock of 99 sheep to search for the one missing. The shepherd sacrificed the security of the whole flock just to retrieve the lost sheep.

Although a wall separates church and state, South Carolina and America should follow this example. Unfortunately, many citizens today exclude and divide themselves. Misunderstood Christian beliefs often generate a climate susceptible for separation. Followers of the religious right encourage advantages for selective schools, enhancing only wealthy students in districts with an affluent tax base. Some Christians favor legislating morality as a means of upholding only their principles. Conservatives discourage racial,

ethnic and sexual diversity, claiming diversity disintegrates America's value system.

In the past election, conservatives bashed Democratic candidates by implying liberals were "evil" and "un-Christian." Being a liberal or democrat simply does not mean one acts immorally or irresponsibly. Liberalism means serving and providing for all South Carolinians and Americans, not just a privileged few. Under democratic principles, our nation entitles every citizen to an equal education, personal choice and tolerance of opinion, and the inclusion of all into society.

After years of neglect, education in the state of South Carolina currently lies in a state of despair, and the Democratic Party possesses a plan which could revamp our schools. Unlike Republicans who want to aid private schools through school vouchers, Democrats believe public policy should support public education for every child instead of giving up on his or her potential. By increasing revenue through a lottery, the state can equalize more

funds among poorer counties. In turn, this policy will provide the opportunity for all to receive a quality education.

Also, accepting different beliefs about personal freedom among individuals is a core characterization of the Democratic Party. Despite passionate cries from the religious right, the founding fathers did not create the United States based on Christian principles. Even so, conservative Republicans push for restrictive legislation which divides Americans on many personal issues.

On the other hand, Democrats realize an absolute consensus on personal values can never be reached. People hold different beliefs regarding personal decisions such as alcohol consumption or methods of raising families, and individuals themselves should decide their own actions, not the government. Despite the improbability of unanimity, Democrats welcome anybody's beliefs and appreciate the diverse range of principles.

Furthermore, just as Democrats appreciate diverse beliefs, they also appreciate the diverse groups God creat-

ed. Conservatives believe diversity (ethnic, racial and sexual) destroys any possibility of assimilation into American culture, therefore they strive to exclude many minorities, women, gays and lesbians with attacks on affirmative action and hate-crime legislation. However, diversity strengthens our understanding of our differences, and it gives us the opportunity to learn how to work together despite them. The Democratic Party serves as an open-minded institution which includes even the "outcasts" and "sinners" society possesses.

Maybe that is why I like this parable from Luke's Gospel so much. Luke always defended the underdog. In his writings, Luke shows how Jesus uplifted women, the poor, prostitutes and all other groups society had cast out.

Hopefully, the election victories of Jim Hodges and Fritz Hollings will give the state the positive leadership it needs in order to seek social justice.



The Washington Post

Student becomes donor ... finally

All I wanted was a sticker that said, "Be nice to me. I gave blood today." For a first time donor, it was my chance to show the rest of the world I finally weigh enough to become a blood donor. To some, this might not seem like such a big deal, but for me it was a highlight



SARA LADENHEIM
columnist

of my day. As my friend and editor, Jenn, and I approached the friendly table where representatives from the American Red Cross were smiling and handing out clipboards to perspective donors, I was totally excited. I was ready to prove to the world that the former 98-pound weakling Yankee editor finally gained enough weight to give blood—

thanks, I believe, in part, to the carrot cake from the Grand Marketplace.

For someone who waited her whole life to gain weight and look healthy as opposed to scrawny, this year has been a paradox for me. This year's blood battle was supposed to be my chance to show the world that I could compete with those Clemson girls and actually give blood.

The staff from the Red Cross was exceptionally friendly and helpful. As we waited for our turn to be called, Jenn and I pondered where our blood would go and how much a pint of blood really meant to the body. Our turns were called, and the detailed questionnaire was administered. Then came the moment of truth. It was my turn to donate.

My phlebotomist was an expert needle administrator. She raved at how my veins were so "wonderful," and how I was doing excellent. In all, it took 16 minutes for my cells and plasma to be passed on to needy hemophiliacs and surgery patients.

As I finished, I was overwhelmed by the excitement of the moment. I had

actually done it. I had actually given blood. For some people, excitement comes from skydiving or bungee jumping. My moment was my blood.

As I approached the "canteen," I spoke with the fraternity boy who offered me a soda and a t-shirt. I heard Jenn calling my name, so I walked toward her. Suddenly, a strange feeling overcame me and I had to sit down.

I sat on top of her backpack and asked if she had anything to drink. I was then incredibly hot, and I couldn't see anything. The next thing I remembered I was on the floor, and someone was yelling my name and throwing freezing cold water on me.

Jenn told me my lips turned white and she had to catch me before I hit the floor. I realized then that my glorious effort to help mankind was in vain, literally. After an hour of shaking and drinking lumpy orange juice, I was finally ready to apply my sticker. All in all, I missed a test, got soaking wet and scared my editor to death. All this just to be able to say that I was a donor the year Carolina beat Clemson at something.



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