

TRANSCRIPT OF
A SPECIAL EVENTS DOCUMENTARY ON
THE FAMILY OF GOD FOUNDATION

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Radio Free Europe

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Division of
Free Europe, Inc.

Telephone: ...

March 25, 1971

Mr. Vern E. Grinsley
The Family of God Foundation
Box 347
Berkeley, California 94701

Dear Mr. Grinsley:

I want to thank you very much for the excellent program on Youth and Religion Today which you prepared for us.

I am enclosing a transcript of the program which I had made up for distribution to our various broadcast departments to facilitate their translation and adaptation of this material for our youth and religious programs.

Please give my thanks and best regards also to your co-workers and let me wish you every success in your endeavors. I hope, also, that I will be able to call upon you in the future for similar materials.

Yours gratefully,

Horst S. Petzall

Horst S. Petzall
Director of News

HSP:vi
Enclosure

SPECIAL EVENTS

Youth and Religion: Vern Grimsley

This is a program recorded for Radio Free Europe by Vern Bennom Grimsley of The Family of God Foundation.

The program explains the attitudes of students toward religion in American society and the work of The Family of God Foundation, which talks to students on campuses such as the University of California at Berkeley.

The tape includes actualities of students at Berkeley discussing religion.

March 25, 1971

TIME: 30:00

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ANNOUNCER: Question Number One:

In your talks with college students, what seemed to be the principle concern of young people today as far as religious beliefs are concerned?

MR. GRIMSLEY: American young people today are reasking the oldest questions of all. Who am I? Where did I come from? And, where am I going? What is the meaning and purpose of life?

Students with whom I speak on the famous Berkeley campus very often give the impression that they are deeply troubled. Many feel their souls to be besieged cities. Many have sufficient sophistication about political and economic affairs that they doubt whether final lasting solutions to this planet's problems will

originate from that region of life.

Much more than his institutions, man himself is the problem. We need a renaissance of attitude, for men and women to think of each other in new ways. Students recognize this.

One young man on campus said, "Life is a lone actor on an empty stage, listening to the clapping of a single hand."

But the good news is that by faith, he can find that encompassing him and even within him is his divine and everlasting friend, his faithful companion. By longing for the higher realities of truth, beauty and goodness, he can discover this. He can enter into the fullness of the realization that in fact all men are brothers under one infinite and loving father, God.

Now to some of you listening, perchance the name "Berkeley" may signify a strange aspect of American life. I've never seen or studied any of the news reports which you receive for comparison. But Berkeley is just across the bay from the city of San Francisco. Statistically, this area has a higher percentage concentration of young people than any other major urban area on earth. As such, and given the upheaval which young of most nations seem to be encountering, we often see unusual manifestations of what we regard as a genuine searching and questing after spiritual truth.

The University of California at Berkeley is a symbol across America for student rioting and a plethora of movements, most of which burn brightly for a year or so and then fade into oblivion. It's quieter now than it has been in those turbulent years beginning in 1964 when the first serious campus violence broke out. Even now, however, a visit to the area around the Student Union Building, if it's not raining and sometimes even then, will find one or

more crowds being harangued by speakers on any topic of interest. Often the speakers are grossly heckled.

It was into this atmosphere that I've been proclaiming what I and now an increasing number of young people regard as a message that will transform human lives: the fatherhood of God and the brotherhood of man. The basic teachings of Jesus of Nazareth.

There is a great thrill in talking with students about their religious beliefs because this usually involves their personal self-concepts. For the questions, which Jesus raised, pertained not to a mere intellectual assent to a body of dogma or belief, but rather relate to the sum of man's whole personality: mind, body and spirit, to the service of the highest that he can conceive--the will of God for his life, worship of God and unselfish service for man.

ANNOUNCER: Question Number Two:

Do you find religious beliefs among America's young increasing or decreasing?

MR. GRIMSLEY: It's difficult to assess whether religious beliefs among America's young are increasing. But I can definitely state that religious interest is increasing.

For example, in the year 1969, the University of California, Psychology Department conducted a survey of entering freshmen and found that 86 per cent of them said they were attending the University on the personal quest of finding a meaningful philosophy of life.

Students here on the Berkeley campus don't really mind telling a person exactly how they

feel about a matter. And while they often roundly reject the religious institutions of their upbringing, many are deeply interested in a vital and living relationship with God. As a trend, their concern is not with any body of dogma about Jesus, but rather to find an experience--that same relationship with the Father that Jesus, himself, experienced. They are not, and indeed, they should not be satisfied to stand outside in the street with their noses pressed against the windowpane watching the festivities within, but rather should boldly enter in, wave their flag, blow their horn, and rejoice that the fellowship of the Father and the will of God are open to all who dare to accept it.

The exciting aspect of this adventure is that the final step must be taken alone. No one can do it for you. This dedication may be the quietest event of life, yet it must be undertaken enthusiastically and wholeheartedly.

America's young, as never before, feel the desire for liberty from restraint of any kind. But the fulfillment of these desires ends in sadness when the individual yields to the temptation to use his liberty explicitly for self-indulgence and self-gratification. For this path inexorably ends in frustration and isolation.

But when this same desire to strike out on the highways of life is ennobled and spiritualized by an individual's dedication to God and the service of man, the potentialities are veritably boundless; and, increasingly, young people in this country are discovering spiritual exhilaration of that spiritual quest.

ANNOUNCER: Question Number Three:

What seem to be the principle doubts expressed?

MR. GRIMSLEY: First and most fundamental is the doubting whether spiritual things are real at all. As illustration of this, here is a portion of an actual conversation I had with a student outdoors on the Berkeley campus:

(CUT OF ACTUAL CONVERSATION: SOUNDS OF SHOUTING IN THE BACKGROUND)

MR. GRIMSLEY: This is Vern Bennom Grimsley on campus at the University of California at Berkeley.

STUDENT: I just don't believe that all this was created by some spirit. I think scientists have proof on how--our creation and the universe's creation and the creation of the earth that are much more satisfying to me. I found this much easier to believe than the Bible.

MR. GRIMSLEY: So you think that God did not create everything.

STUDENT: I don't think that he even exists.

MR. GRIMSLEY: He didn't do much creating then?

STUDENT: He created nothing.

MR. GRIMSLEY: You say the reason you think that God does not exist is because it's possible to account for the universe and explain everything that exists without God.

STUDENT: Well, that's one reason, and I've seen no proof of God except for everybody jumping around with their Bible and screaming and yelling, and building huge buildings and collecting a big bender from them.

MR. GRIMSLEY: What about the design of the universe? --the cleavage properties of minerals, the atomic structure of the elements and so forth. Does it seem too incredible to have been just an accident possibly?

STUDENT: It isn't an accident. You know--it's an accident but it isn't really an accident. It sort of is like the way things happened. All the atoms created, and all the dust swirled around and created planets, and the gases created the stars.

MR. GRIMSLEY: If you were walking along the street and you came across a transistor radio and took the back off of it and looked inside, and it was designed; it had 9 or 10 transistors; it had batteries and all the rest. You turned it on and you were able to get a radio station with it. Would you be inclined to think that that just happened, or would you be inclined to imagine that it probably was designed and was manufactured?

STUDENT: Oh, it was designed and manufactured. I wouldn't think it just happened.

MR. GRIMSLEY: You think that an atom might be more complex than a transistor radio?

STUDENT: Yes.

MR. GRIMSLEY: Would you think therefore that the atom might have been designed and created?

ANNOUNCER: This has been Vern Bennom Grimsley on campus at the University of California in Berkeley.

(END OF CONVERSATION ON CAMPUS AT BERKELEY)

MR. GRIMSLEY: Many of the other doubts which I encounter on campus at the University of California at Berkeley are founded upon the absence of a distinction between the spirit of religion and the institutional structure which has attempted to foster it over the centuries--which is like confusing the shoebox with the shoe.

It is not fair to blame Jesus' religion, I believe, for errors which have been perpetrated in his name. The central truth of what Jesus was talking about is

that every man, woman and child can experience a new and altogether higher quality of life by entering into the relationship with the Father that he was born to enjoy. The saddest doubts are expressed by people who can't believe that this new way of life is really available. Some people have such a low opinion of themselves that they can't bring themselves to believe that they are literally loved with an infinite and altogether affection. How sad it is for children of the King to be sitting in rags and ashes when their birthright entitles them to a glorious and noble station in life, as sons and daughters of the living God.

ANNOUNCER: Question Number Four:

Do you see a change in the established practice of religious faith in the United States?

MR. GRIMSLEY: First let me cite a Gallup poll which found that 97 per cent of the American population say they believe in God, in the existence of a God. Also according to the Gallup poll some ten years ago, only 14 per cent of the population under the age of 30 said religion was losing its influence on their lives. But ten years later, 63 per cent of those under the age of thirty declared that religion was losing its influence on them. This represents one of the most swift and dramatic reversals of public opinion ever recorded. But this statistic refers to organized religion.

The statistics definitely reflect change and on the surface a dismal one perhaps for religion. But in fact, I feel these statistics reflect a metamorphosis, a transformation, a disinterest in formal religion coupled with a new awakening of interior and personal spiritual needs.

Sometimes when students on the Berkeley Campus tell me of their disgust with organized religion, I jokingly suggest that we begin or organize an unorganized religion meaning just that. The personal living as the son of God and a brother to man--this would be crucially relevant to the world today. A nationwide Gallup poll taken the day Senator Robert Kennedy was shot revealed that the public at large blamed--and I quote--"a disregard for God and religion"--end of quote--as one chief factor in the rising tide of violence and crime in the United States of America.

From the ancient Assyrians mankind learned how to build libraries and postal systems; from the Babylonians--astronomy; from the Egyptians we learned surveying, from the Persians--international coinage; from the ancient Phoenicians--a written alphabet; from the Greeks mankind learned music, drama, architecture and philosophy; and from the Romans--the making of bridges, roads and laws. But from Jesus of Nazareth and other great spiritual teachers, mankind has not yet learned the ways of peace and brotherhood. And, until we do, the rest that we have learned will matter very, very little.

Therefore, our work--The Family of God Foundation believes that all mankind are one vast family; this world our home. We sleep beneath one roof, the starry sky; we warm ourselves before one hearth, the blazing sun; upon one floor of soil we stand, and breathe one air, and drink one water, and walk the night beneath one luminescent moon. The children of one God we are and brothers of one blood.

The established practices of religious faith in the United States will thus, I believe, evolve away from institutionalism and toward the personal and

and experiential aspect.

ANNOUNCER: Question Number Five:

Can you describe to us briefly the mission of The Family of God Foundation as you see it and how it's carried out in practice?

MR. GRIMSLEY: We passionately believe that a worldwide spiritual renaissance is urgently needed, and indeed is already dawning upon this perturbed planet of ours. The teachings of Jesus rather than merely the accumulated teachings about Jesus possess the power to initiate this crucial rebirth of spiritual values. Jesus' proclamations: the Fatherhood of God and the brotherhood of man; be you perfect; do unto others as you would have others do unto you; return good for evil; love the Lord your God with all your heart, mind, soul and strength; love your neighbor as yourself--these are life-changing and world-transforming teachings. It is our mission to proclaim these tremendous truths.

There are now six workers involved in the various phases of The Family of God ministry. All the co-workers support themselves through outside jobs and do the work of the Foundation in their off hours as volunteers.

Let me quote from our federal Foundation documents: "The Family of God Foundation is dedicated to proclaiming the teachings of Jesus, the fatherhood of God and the brotherhood of man, and the worldwide family of God. We believe that changed individuals make a change world. That only a spiritual rebirth of each of the individuals on this planet will permit us to live and work together for the actualization

of a better world. The Family of God Foundation believes that only transformed men can create a transformed world. That only better individuals can fashion a better society. That only advanced citizens can architect an advanced civilization. That men were born to live as children of one God and brothers in one family--the Family of God."

ANNOUNCER: Question Number Six:

Do you have any future plans for expanding this work?

MR. GRIMSLEY: Yes. The international extension of this work will require the acquisition of more co-workers, spiritual teachers and global radiobroadcasting facilities.

With the advent of Echo No. 1, the first communication satellite launched back in 1960 by NASA, a worldwide space network became a practical possibility for the near future. TELSTAR satellite designed by Bell Laboratories, orbited in 1962, is capable of broadcasting, for example, 600 voice programs across the world at once.

Advanced religion, we believe, must plan to make use of these new and challenging systems of planetary communication. The Family of God Foundation intends to do just that to bring about the spiritual renaissance.

We're constantly seeking the Father's guiding will. It was this effort to know what God had in mind for each of us that led us into this work. To the best of our ability, we will continue to follow the inward guidance of the Father as we proclaim to the world that each person can do that as well. Our understanding of the

Father's will is that we expand our programming and our ministry to a global scale.

ANNOUNCER: What led you and your associates into this work? If possible, please supply a little background about yourself and your associates in this connection.

MR. GRIMSLEY: My associates and I have been led into this work primarily through the passionate conviction that this pirouetting planet of ours vitally needs a spiritual renaissance, a transformation of human motivations through the discovery of divine meanings and values. That all mankind are sons of God and brothers in one worldwide family of God. In my own case, I simply prayed that God's guiding will would lead my life into whatever work the Father would have me to do, and thus the broadcast began.

As for my co-workers, let them tell their stories themselves. First, Nancy Grimsley, my wife.

MRS. GRIMSLEY: I went into this venture with Vern as we sought and slowly found the work we wanted to do in this world for the Father God. I have been, to a certain extent, aiming towards something like this throughout my life.

The theme of one spiritual summer camp I attended, profoundly impressed me. It was a biblical passage: "Here am I, send me." I thought then that was a fine offer to make to the Father, and I still think so.

MR. GRIMSLEY: Next, David Gray.

MR. GRAY: My decision to join in this work also took place over a period of years. I have had an educational experience in which I was led to become a college professor, an assistant professor in political science, under the belief that by doing this I could advance an understanding of truth in the students that I would come in contact with, which I had sought

all my life. But I had also become acquainted with this work and had known Vern in college, and I decided--having had the experience of meeting and counselling with college students--that the most urgent need that this world has is for a spiritual renaissance, and that the intellectual work that I had prepared myself to do would have to be done in this connection. Because today so much of the intellectual life is distorted by lack of spiritual perspective, I don't in any sense feel that I've abandoned the intellectual calling but rather placed it in a new and higher light.

MR. GRIMSLEY: Thank you. And now, Bettina Gray.

MRS. GRAY: As the others have said, I too never had any one particular moment of revelation when I was tremendously moved to decide I wanted to dedicate my life to serving God.

It seems to me that this has always been my desire. From my earliest memories, I have felt that somewhere in the world there was a specific mission that God had in mind for me to do. As a teenager, I had my times of fluctuation about my beliefs. But the one thing I always knew down deep inside of me was that though I might not have the most true and the most real concept of Him, God was there. And, if I tried hard enough, I would begin to know Him as He really is.

As I grew in my understanding of God, I grew in my conviction that he had a specific service in mind for me. It was in following this conviction that I married my husband, David, and together we moved to California to

assist our friends, Vern and Nancy, with their work for The Family of God Foundation.

MR. GRIMSLEY: Thank you. And finally our newest co-worker, Harry McMullan.

MR. MCMULLAN: Greetings. One of my first deep thoughts occurred when I was a teenager. I decided then that the worth and meaning of a person's life consists in what he can do of a helpful nature for his fellowman. Based on this, I developed a keen interest in politics, for I thought that men would be most helped by wise, effective and efficient government.

Becoming associated with The Family of God Foundation symbolized a change of attitude which had been long developing--that the greatest single problem this planet faces is a crisis of attitude. I now believe that the most effective way to help men, even politically, is to contribute to a spiritual awakening in their hearts and minds toward a dedication to supreme and eternal values. My substrative motivations are the same, but I now see that lasting change must come from within where Jesus said the kingdom of heaven is, rather than the attempted enforcement of governmental rules to compel men to live properly. When men's hearts are transformed by the love of God and of man, we can be certain that our other seemingly insurmountable difficulties will melt away like mist before the rising sun.

MR. GRIMSLEY: Thank you. Additionally, another associate, Richard Keeler in New York, is in charge of our finances. As it must be clear by now, each one of us shares a commitment to God and His will for this world, that men might live in peace and joy in living love for God and man.

ANNOUNCER: And finally, Question Number Eight:

Do you feel that in a world of fast-moving change and increasing technology and materialism there is

a need for reaffirming basic beliefs, and how can technological facilities such as radio be used to best advantage in this connection?

MR. GRIMSLEY: Radio and television, which has been described as vast wastelands, are in fact wasted vast lands. Their prodigious potentials are but sparsely and sporadically utilized for truly worthy purposes. We believe that modern mass media must be more meaningfully and idealistically employed than at present. The Family of God Foundation intends to do just that.

Our Foundation believes that to broadcast in the public interest does not necessarily mean to broadcast only what interests the public. Too much contemporary radio and TV is aimed merely at the lowest common denominator of mass thought. The Family of God broadcast represents an attempt to utilize mass media for higher purposes than commercialism and entertainment. If the same mass media which are so energetically and so successfully employed in propagandizing the virtues of mouthwashes, toothpastes and headache pills were powerfully employed to proclaim great spiritual truths, imagine what a different world this could become.

Why use radio? Well there are more radios in this country than automobiles, telephones and even bathtubs, statistically. And according to the new Standard Encyclopedia back in 1965 there were over 300 million radios in the world. I quote: "Radio broadcasting reaches millions of listeners in every country and has a larger worldwide audience than all other means of communication combined."

Our message is one given 2000 years ago:

"God is your Father, you are His children, love one another." The medium: radio, the result of man's striving to know God's universe. It is time man used every resource available to know, to understand, and proclaim the world-transforming truth that God is our creator-father. He loves us. We are all his children and we are long overdue to begin behaving that way.

Technology is powerful. The face of this planet bears its marks, some beauties, some blemishes. Technology is growing stronger because men are learning to work together and pool their knowledge and resources. Think of the number of individuals who had to work in harmony to achieve the launching of a moon rocket, or even the production of an ordinary transistor radio. Technology, the muscle power of emerging world civilization, must be directed by intelligence in order to accomplish any work, whether that work be for good or for evil, just as individual's muscle power is useless to him when his mind is dim or disoriented. Furthermore, if the work of technology is to be for good and not for evil, the intelligence which directs it must be in turn subordinated to good purposes. The highest of all good purposes is the will of God for this world and for the individuals in it.

In our troubled and fast-changing world we, the earth's people, must find an anchor to hold us firm against the treacherous currents and undertows of tempestuous times. Our young people are especially crying for stability. The search of the young is a search for a constant. As Jesus taught, the ultimate constant is God. For men to realize God's love for them, the love of a father for his sons, is for men to find a unifying and stabilizing force in their lives. For men, then, to see other people as God's children too, as their own spiritual brothers, is to give men a rational approach to facing change with a vigorous and

happy attitude. When we love one another as our Father's children, this world takes on a whole new perspective. Living love--the love of the First Father for each of us--and the resultant acknowledgment of others as our brothers changes lives; and changed lives can create a changed world.

Technology and science are not inconsistent with a God-created world. Though our concepts about the world change, God is not changing. In reality, we are only perceiving more and more of God's beauty and greatness in creation. When man's perspective is focused on understanding and knowing God, science becomes another means of enriching our understanding of our creator and our expression of love for each other as sons and daughters of the living God, as brothers in the worldwide family of God.

There is dawning upon this planet
a spiritual renaissance
which is ultimately destined
to make more differences in this world
than any war which has ever been fought,
any governmental, political,
social or economic upheaval
in all of human history--
and you, if you will, may be part of it.

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of proclaiming the teachings of Jesus-- the
Fatherhood of God and the brotherhood of
man, the worldwide Family of God.

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