

RETROSPECTIVE



LISA KLEIN SURDYK
1965-2009

IN RETROSPECTIVE

“I’m not afraid of death because I know Jesus. I’m not really afraid of the dying process because I know the end likely will come quickly and because drugs will keep me comfortable. I do worry about people I love and the pain and sorrow and sense of loss they may experience. Yet, a passage of scripture that comes to me over and over again these days is Philippians 4:19, where the Apostle Paul wrote: “And my God will meet all your needs according to His glorious riches in Christ Jesus.”

God is good.

God is good in life.

God is good in death.

God is good when life is going well

And when we experience joy.

God is good when life is very difficult, even agonizing.

God is good when we go through deep sorrow.

God is good when we enjoy good health.

God is good when we are very sick or feel extreme pain.

God is good when we have abundant resources.

God is good when we don’t have enough resources.

God is good and God is trustworthy, and God loves us

And will never leave or forsake us because of

Jesus’ life, death and resurrection. So I can rejoice.

-Lisa Klein Surdyk, 2009

A REFLECTION ON THE CONTRIBUTIONS OF DR. LISA KLEIN SURDYK

*by her friends and colleagues
at Seattle Pacific University*

The daughter of Seattle Pacific University (SPU) alumni, Lisa herself became an SPU alumna with a bachelor's degree in economics in 1987. She entered doctoral studies in economics at the University of Washington, completing her PhD in 1991 whereupon she returned to SPU as a faculty member in the School of Business & Economics. She was in her 19th year as a professor at the time of her death.

Lisa was active in service to the school and university and to her church and community providing leadership on several important initiatives and committees. Lisa was known by many in Christian business education for her active involvement in the Christian Business Faculty Association, serving as chair of its board in 1996-97, and for being the second recipient of the Richard C. Chewing Award for her contribution to the integration of faith and business in 1999. She was also a member of the American Economic Association, the Western Economic Association International, and the Association of Christian Economists. But, among us she will be remembered most for her passionate commitment to her students, her colleagues, and to the integration of faith in all of life.

She was known to say "I am a teacher" when asked what she did, not "professor" or "scholar" or "servant"- even though she was all of those. (She had over forty publications and presentations including articles in the *Journal of Biblical Integration in Business*, *Christian Scholar's Review*, *Journal of Psychology and Theology*, *Research on Christian Higher Education*, and the *International Journal of Finance* and was named SBE Scholar of the Year in 2003.)

She loved teaching, or more aptly, she loved nurturing her students - another garden for her. Teaching didn't just come naturally to Lisa, but through intentionality, hard work, and deep respect for her craft she became very good at it. She read books, attended Master Teacher conferences and teaching symposiums, met with advisers and mentors, and experimented on improvements to both her classroom style and content. She received the SBE Teacher of the Year Award twice, in 1997 and again in 2009. The award has been renamed in her honor.

Students were drawn to Lisa because they knew she cared for them. They experienced her welcoming warmth as well as her fierce dedication to learning well. She had high expectations, matched with great patience and gentleness. She became mentor, confidant, ministry role model, counselor and friend to them. She had a keen sense of humor, though students didn't get to see it very often.

Teaching helped her persevere through these past three years of cancer treatments. She met her fall classes, without much indication of the effects of her disease and treatments, until just two weeks before her death.

As a colleague Lisa was a mentor and model, especially to new faculty - sharing life, family, and faith well beyond school connections. She even taught one colleague how to deal with students fighting in the classroom - really! She was a valued co-author for several of us.

There was no doubting that Lisa loved God. Her teaching and scholarship consistently reflected her interest in examining economics through the lens of her faith, especially as it

related to caring for the poor. Likewise, her teaching was regularly seasoned with prayers, scriptures and theological insights that she would bring to bear on her material. Stewardship and Sabbath were additional focal points for Lisa. Unfortunately she wasn't able to complete a book project on Sabbath economics – an economics of abundance, not scarcity, turning economics on its head so to say. Indeed her final e-mail, sent to a dear colleague the night before her death, was an

affirmation that Hebrews 4 – about the Sabbath rest for God's people with the writer's exhortation that we should make every effort to enter that rest – meant so much to her.

We hope to honor Lisa by teaching and mentoring well and by living the life God has given us as a whole. We hope to join her in God's rest in both the now and the yet to come.

MEMORIES OF LISA SURDYK

Richard C. Chewning

My memories of Lisa begin before there was a *JBIB* or any serious discussion of such a publication. In fact the CBFA meetings when she first attended were probably no larger than a hundred or a hundred and twenty-five faculty. We were a relatively small organization, rather informal, and in the early stages of emphasizing the presentation of our individual scholarship in the open forums we now employ at the annual meetings.

I attended Lisa's first public presentation of her scholarship at a CBFA meeting. In the back of my mind was the notion that these "public disclosures" of the presenter's thinking were opportunities for those of us in the audience to *encourage* and not *pick apart* the unfolding efforts. I spent some minutes with Lisa after her presentation telling her how much I enjoyed her evident work at integrating biblical principles with her scholarship, asking a few questions, and

offering two or three thoughts that might be useful in her subsequent reflections on her subject.

Her openness to me encouraged me. As a consequence I attended every presentation she subsequently made at the meetings, and continued the "after presentation" times with her, including her 2009 CBFA presentation. Her integration of biblical truth and scholarship continued throughout her life. Her modeling of this integration will be greatly missed.

My greatest joy was watching Lisa mature over the years while maintaining her humility. She lived out what is for me one of the best characteristics of the CBFA – it is a group you can join when you are an inexperienced but aspiring scholar and receive kind and honest support and encouragement while you grow in your wisdom and ability to articulate your thoughts in a Christ governed way.

TRIBUTE TO LISA SURDYK

Sharon Johnson

Lisa Surdyck was one of the earliest contributors to the *Journal of Biblical Integration*. Her article, “Making Connections: Integrating Christianity and Economics,” was published in the inaugural 1995 issue of the *JBIB*. She combined the instincts of a scholar with the sensitivities of a committed Christian. Scholarly precision and Biblical passion do not necessarily rest together easily – there is an inherent tension that pulls us one way, then another. Lisa navigated the faith-integration journey with grace and skill. All of us leave “tracks” behind. Paul mentioned this to Timothy in his second letter to him: “2 Timothy 3:10-11: 10: Now you followed my teaching, conduct, purpose, faith, patience, love, perseverance, 11 persecutions, and sufferings, ...” While our scholarship does matter, and Lisa demonstrated considerable scholarly ability, there is no better tribute I could offer than these additional words of Paul to Timothy: “2 Timothy 4:7: I have fought the good fight, I have finished the course, I have kept the faith...”

Might such be said about each of us when our personal and professional journeys have reached an earthly end.