

LifeStyle: Christian Perspectives

**1978 CHRISTIAN LIFE COMMISSION
SEMINAR
PROCEEDINGS**

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FOREWORD

The Christian Life Commission's 1978 national seminar on **LIFESTYLE: CHRISTIAN PERSPECTIVES** drew 597 registrants from 26 states to hear and enter into dialogue with 17 widely diverse, highly competent program personalities.

The addresses from this meeting are provided in this printed form primarily as a reportorial service to seminar registrants. The speakers prepared these addresses for oral presentation to a live audience. Therefore this material should not be judged as if it had been carefully written for formal publication in book form.

It is hoped, nevertheless, that these printed addresses will enable both those who were present for the seminar and many who were not present to profit from the distinguished speakers who addressed themselves to some of the important issues affecting **LIFESTYLE: CHRISTIAN PERSPECTIVES**.

Special acknowledgement and thanks are due the Christian Life Commission staff persons who worked long and hard to make this seminar: Floyd A. Craig, Mrs. Gaye Eichler, Mrs. Jean Elledge, Mrs. Jamie Etheridge, Harry N. Hollis, Jr., Mrs. Faye Russell, David Sapp who served as the dean of the entire procedure, William M. Tillman, Jr., Mary Elizabeth Tyler, David Wilkinson, and John A. Wood.

We hope these *Proceedings* may substantially enlarge the impact of the 1978 seminar on **LIFESTYLE: CHRISTIAN PERSPECTIVES**.

FOY VALENTINE, Executive Secretary
The Christian Life Commission of
The Southern Baptist Convention

LIFESTYLE: CHRISTIAN PERSPECTIVES

Foy Valentine

Lifestyle.

The word is unclear. Hazy. Imprecise.

It may be spelled as a single word, or it may be hyphenated, or it may be written as two words.

Lifestyle is a word not yet gestated.

Gradually, however, lifestyle has come to refer to the way of living which is chosen or assumed or drifted into or accepted by an individual or a group or a class. Charles Reich helped popularize the term and give it a morally negative meaning when he wrote in *The Greening of America*, with a naive and pantheistic romanticism, that we are now moving into an era of new consciousness characterized by ". . . a liberation that is both personal and communal, an escape from the limits fixed by custom and society, in pursuit of something better and higher. It is epitomized in the concept of 'choosing a life style'; the idea that an individual need not accept the pattern that society has formed for him, but may make his own choice . . . [with] . . . a new sense of existence in the immediate present without fixed points . . ." (pp. 363-364).

We reject Reich's lifestyle of so-called "freedom" as worse than bondage for to exist without fixed points is, by definition, to be lost. We likewise reject the immoralities which are often associated with the term lifestyle as reference is made to a life-style of "open marriage," or the lifestyle of "swinging singles," or the freewheeling lifestyle of the rich and powerful who will sell the poor for a "pair of shoes" (Amos 2:6) in Hong Kong or Calcutta or Lagos while using \$100 bills for "walking around money" in Washington or New York or Houston.

In this seminar we mean to position ourselves against all lifestyles that reflect the moral rot of our time. We mean to strike the swine of immorality a mighty blow across the snout to make it flee squealing at the top of its lungs. We mean to hammer away at those lifestyles which reflect the values of the obscene deities and false gods and profane idols that undermine family life, support racism, degrade sex, defile the environment, pollute the airwaves, trample human rights, and deny the Lordship of Christ in every area and relationship of life.

While we seek to maintain a compassionate sensitivity to human beings with their legitimate needs including those needs for which solace has been sought in morally aberrant lifestyles, our clear goal in this seminar is to provide a forthrightly Biblical and vigorously Christian witness to the lifestyle world. This seminar will seek to provide some windows on that lifestyle world so that we do not expect completely to agree with everything that every speaker says. In inviting speakers, we do not invite just the people with whom we are in complete agreement but also some shakers and movers with whom we may strongly disagree. In this respect, The Christian Life Commission continues a dialogue in which we have long been engaged and of the value of which we are quite convinced. We beg you, therefore, not to read too much

into what you hear or do not hear on this program. We all know the whole picture cannot be painted in forty-eight hours. We mean for the bottom line to be support for a lifestyle that reflects complete conformity to Jesus Christ as Lord.

Lifestyle issues are not primarily sociological or generational or technological or geographical or philosophical but theological and moral. In this seminar we are not concerned about hem lines or hair length or music volume or food preferences. We understand that there is no redemptive word in style. There is no word from the Lord in fads, pop movements, effete tribalism, affectations, age-of-Aquarius vibrations, creeps, in-things, out-things, fashion, culture, or counter-culture. It is equally unproductive for the church either to dance around the golden calf of lifestyle, conceived in this limited way, or to spend our energies in trying to smash it to smithereens, mix it in the water, and make the world drink it.

As Christians, we are concerned about a total lifestyle that reflects conformity to Christ. We are concerned about a right relationship to God that issues in right relationships with others. We are concerned about a substance that produces style.

Lifestyle as we perceive it and propose to deal with it in this seminar, God willing, is relevant not only to theology and morality but also to politics. Individual sin has corporate consequences. Personal prejudice is sin; so is institutionalized racism. Personal greed is sin; so is multi-national corporation profiteering. Personal lust is sin; so is corruption of the political process for profit and power. Personal waste is sin; so are the unconscionable cost overruns of the military and the military suppliers. Personal murder is sin; but so is this nation's skyrocketing, indiscriminate, as yet unchecked sale of weapons of war and death to nations around the world. Personal gluttony is sin; but so is planned obsolescence, corporate opulence, and advertising designed to produce over-consumption. God's message has been too long privatized: we seek to public-ize it, to highlight its social dimensions.

We do not mean to be just a voice crying in the wilderness. Coming at the whole idea of lifestyle from the perspective of Christian commitment, we seek to shore up our personal Christian positions, affirming the rightness of any lifestyle wrought out under the vigorous discipline of the Lordship of Jesus Christ. We seek to highlight the importance for the church of an authentic witness in public life. We seek to strengthen our personal commitment to a lifestyle that honors Christ and helps others and we seek to help the church project into public life the pressure for public righteousness which will help to bring about systemic change. We believe the church ought to be both the model and the instrument for the political presence of the gospel in the world.

So let our concern for lifestyle in Christian perspective be perceived as judgment on sin, concern for sinners, and a passionate hungering and thirsting after righteousness, private and public. To that end we have dedicated our efforts in preparing for this meeting and to that end, as best we can for the next forty-eight hours, we dedicate this seminar itself.

IMAGES OF THE FUTURE: A PERSPECTIVE ON CHRISTIAN LIFESTYLE

Leighton Ford

A little over two years ago our teen-aged son Sandy had open heart surgery for a very serious heart problem. You can imagine how his mother and I felt when a few weeks later he took part in a speech contest on the topic: "Tomorrow's Promise." I shall never forget his opening words:

"Tomorrow's promise," he began, "is it really a good promise—or is it a nightmare?"

Today it is clear to all observers that we have arrived at a critical point in history, both for world society and for the church. We are torn between promises of a glorious tomorrow and nightmares of a world in its death throes.

The critical moment. Are we at a moment for renewal in the church and world culture, or in a time of gathering strength to prepare us to weather a great and perhaps final storm? Will the communications revolution and the transportation explosion continue to carry the gospel all over the world village—or trap the church in totalitarian systems made possible, even necessary, by technology? Will FUTURE SHOCK blow the mind of the church—or shake it loose from its conformity to fallen culture?

Secular futurologists are now telling us in an almost unanimous chorus that there is no positive future for mankind except through a religious transformation of human consciousness. W. W. Harmon, of the Stanford Research Institute, suggests that world society has now reached the same rock-bottom awareness an alcoholic comes to before joining alcoholics anonymous: it knows that another technological fix will be useless; it knows that it is sick and radically helpless to change; and it is ready again to call upon a power higher than itself for deliverance.

What a moment for the Christian church to offer a source of courage and renewal! But what scenario does the Christian church offer for the future? One fatal scenario would be that of cultural accommodation. Someone suggests that soon we'll walk into the department store and see "Born Again" perfume next to "My Sin" on the counter! What if the evangelical movement buys its way into major influence in American society at the cost of its own integrity? What if it becomes numerically broad but spiritually and theologically shallow? What if Christians gain the driver's seat in American society, only to discover that the car is really driving them!

But is there another possible scenario—one in which the Christian church is increasingly renewed by the growth of biblical Christianity, and begins to function as salt and leaven to preserve and transform parts of world society? Our defensive mind-set in this century has conditioned us to doubt this prospect. In the same way, Jonah may have doubted that there was any purpose in calling Nineveh to repentance! But the future of Nineveh was absolutely bound together with the question of whether or not Jonah was willing to be faithful and effective in his prophetic calling.

During this century some of us have unconsciously

come to view the church as a sort of spiritual bomb-shelter or a castle from which we send out occasional raiding parties to win a few more "castleites" from the decaying world. Unfriendly critics might say the church is better compared to a sponge, drawing in contaminated water and squeezing it out as dirty as ever. Sometimes I think our churches look like gunboats taking potshots at the world along the shore and sometimes trying to sink the other boats! But is it possible that the professing church is potentially a great reservoir of living water, dammed up by weakness and impurity, which could be purified, channelled and released to make the wilderness bloom again?

In order to get a good perspective on Christian lifestyles today, we need to have an adequate view of the present state of the church. Let's consider first some signs of Christian progress and then some troubling features on the horizon. In terms of the growth of the church, America has not been quite the secular disaster we imagine in our mind's eye. Peter Wagner notes that in 1776 only 7% of United States citizens were church members. This had risen to 20% by 1850 as a result of the second evangelical awakening; to 36% by 1900; and at present approaches 60%. Wagner comments that "more Americans attend church in an average week than attend all professional baseball, basketball and football games combined in the average year!" Billy Graham's return visits to three major cities last year drew more than twice the attendance that his previous crusades did in those cities. You and I are so close to the scene that we may fail to recognize that in the last two centuries in North America one of history's greatest "people movements" toward Christ has been taking place—with all the potential and all the problems of deepening and vitalizing a people movement.

The recent studies of public opinion researchers like Andrew Greeley and George Gallup confirm this image. Gallup's 1976 report on world religion concludes that the United States is the most religious nation in Western industrial society. Neither Gallup nor Greeley assumes that this implies vital Christianity. Yet, Gallup's 1976 study electrified media observers by indicating that 34% of American adults testify to the experience of being born again. Gallup is currently establishing a center of religious studies in Princeton to monitor the spread of religious renewal. Very shortly he will begin the publication of "Emerging Trends," a newsletter pinpointing the growth of vital Christianity. Could the effect of this be to remove bushels off candles and lift the work of God into even clearer visibility in the news media? Could we also expect a restraining influence on American culture, as advertisers accurately perceive the grass-roots sentiment among consumers who are increasingly outraged by cultural decay?

We must also admit that the coin has two sides. One side shows signs of hope; the other shows great roadblocks to a true awakening.

First of all, there are massive contradictions in our society between the renewal which is supposed to be going on in the church and the corruption visible in our culture. There is still growing violence in our city streets; and increasing theft and alcoholism in our suburbs. The continued spread of drugs and pornography shows the presence of organized crime under the surface of society; and this, in turn,

may argue for corruption in the police and in local governments. On the national level, Congressional leaders have yet to show that they can transcend local interests and political infighting to resolve the energy crisis and other problems crucial for the future of mankind.

One welcomes the trend in America back to basic values. Yet much of our society flies blindly in a kind of value vertigo. Like a pilot who has lost his bearing and will not trust his compass, corporations profess commitment to the welfare of the human community, but actual behavior often still reflects an overriding concern for maximal profits. The average consumer seems content to go along with this as long as the material standard of living is high; even if it means ignoring the locked-in underclass and a billion hungry neighbors around the world. Large segments of the advertising industry are geared to creating covetousness and ready to sponsor anything the public wants in the media, no matter how high the level of sex and violence. The media leadership, in turn, are ready to pander without restraint to the interests of the advertisers and the tastes of the public. It is not surprising that radio, television, films, and records form an efficient system for propagating non-Christian values. Currently we can observe a strong attack on the family and traditional sexual morality either in the raw crudity of "Soap", or, more dangerously, in the deceptive sentimentality of movies where young people move in and out of serial relationships with no visible damage.

Popular culture does not reflect a very substantial influence of religious renewal. The mood of the 1970s is still one of unrestrained hedonism and the unceasing proclamation of human potential. Writer Tom Wolfe has characterized the 1970s as "The Decade Of Me."

We Christians are sharp critics of liberal captivity to humanist culture. But the disconcerting fact is that the same egoism we deplore in society is not missing in our own circles. There are some uncomfortable questions we need to ask ourselves.

How often do we present Jesus as an additive to the good life, not an alternative, or offer the cross as an escape from guilt and death, hiding the fact that it is also a call to die with Christ?

Why is there an absence of the deep conviction of sin and repentance which has marked past religious awakenings?

Why is the ultimate concern of some "converts" still success, or at least security, within the American system rather than the Kingdom of God?

Why do we not produce more lay leaders like the Tappan Brothers of the last century, merchants who channeled their wealth and energy into the causes of social reform and world missions?

Has our Christian world developed its own "starmaker machinery" which constantly tempts ministers and church leaders to do the right things for the wrong reasons? Have power-tripping and empire-building rebuilt the world in the heart of the church as we conform to the competitive structure of the American success-system?

There are many other hindrances to the full revitalizing of the Christian movement. Some of us have a defeatist attitude about abuses in culture which leads us

to grit our teeth and tolerate them rather than to shoulder the responsibility of changing them. Others are storing up a deep anger about these abuses which is beginning to break forth in ugly and repressive attacks on cultural decay. Already a counter-attack to evangelical growth is appearing in books and articles calculated to tear down evangelical credibility. Note the recent *Saturday Review* article on "The Jesus Mania," subtitled "The Mean Streak in the Born Again Movement."

When these attacks appear we should listen with great care, remembering that even the devil's accusations can pass onto us at second hand the insight of God into our vulnerable areas. If we are ever going to drive back the influence of secular humanism, we may have to emulate Gideon and first smash the idols in our own backyard.

But should we even be looking for a positive future? Is it disloyal to our theology even to allow for the possibility of renewal because the Lord's return is very near?

During the last hundred years the hope of Christ's imminent coming has been a powerful stimulus to evangelism and world missions. A similar hope is driving much of our evangelistic work today. Sometimes Christians have drawn the conclusion that it is unnecessary or inconsistent to do anything else except evangelize in view of the lateness of the hour—that we should not attempt cultural or social reform because this would only be trying to rebuild the world's sinking ship. But this outlook was not characteristic of the evangelical tradition during many periods of its greatest expansion.

Evangelicals of all millennial persuasions were "liberation theologians" during the nineteenth century; working for the abolition of slavery and other forms of oppression at the same time that they were evangelizing the multitudes. Lord Shaftesbury, the greatest social reformer of the nineteenth century, was a fervent premillennialist who expected the return of Christ at any moment. And yet this was his attitude toward the future and the relief of social evils: "When I feel old age creeping upon me and know that I must soon die—I hope it is not wrong to say it—I cannot bear to leave this world with all the misery in it."

A study of the classical evangelical tradition shows that leaders in all millennial camps were working together to expand the rule of Christ on earth to the widest possible circle among the nations before his bodily return. They were convinced that Jesus Christ was King of Kings and that "of the increase of his government and of peace there will be no end" (Isaiah 9:7). They sought to be constantly active and watchful, remembering his own words: "The Son of Man is coming at an hour you do not expect . . . occupy until I come."

It seems to me that one of the most pressing issues with regard to a Christian lifestyle is to think through a biblical approach to the future in which biblical believers can close ranks today. Since the exact time of Christ's return is not known, believers must live with a sense of urgency, realizing that the end of history may be very near. But since his return may be delayed, the church must continue to plan and work for a future on this present earth which could still last a long time.

Since we do not know exactly where we are in God's

timeline, do we not need to be prepared for several alternatives?

One biblical image of the future which we need to keep in mind is the picture of the two great beasts in Revelation 13 and 14. They represent the all-controlling power of totalitarian government and the false religious system which supports its rule, personified in the Antichrist. Robert Heilbroner and other sober, secular prophets have warned us that the experience conveyed in this image might be very close in our future. It could be that the response to the gospel visible in our country and around the world now is simply an ingathering to prepare and strengthen the church for great tribulation. The phenomenal growth of religious counterfeits, some of which embrace and promote every goal of Christianity except the divine Lordship of Christ, could foreshadow the coming of a final Antichrist. The fascination of both capitalist and communist societies with the occult and paranormal phenomena could foreshadow the appearance of a great counterfeit religion equipped with signs and wonders. In case this is to be our future, we need to be critically on the alert, prepared for hardship, and careful not to be taken in by pseudo-Christianity.

But there is another image of our future which the classical evangelicals of the seventeenth, eighteenth, and nineteenth centuries held before them. This was a vision of completing the reformation and reviving of all the fragments of the body of Christ. It was a vision of the extension of the gospel to the ends of the earth.

Dr. Richard Lovelace, a historical theologian of church renewal, has observed that the present movement of renewal closely resembles the second evangelical awakening in England and America in the opening decades of the nineteenth century. Dr. Lovelace notes that, as this awakening developed, evangelicals engaged in five waves of renewing activity:

First, a wave of evangelism, transforming formal churchgoers into vital Christians and sweeping multitudes of new Christians into the church.

Second, a wave of writing and publishing Christian literature and Bibles to nurture these new converts.

Third, a wave of strengthening Christian universities and schools and establishing new educational institutions.

Fourth, a wave of what was called "The Reformation of Manners" reversing the tide of sexual looseness and other forms of cultural decay.

And fifth, a wave of social reform, contending against obvious forms of social injustice such as slavery and the oppression of the poor.

What message does this analysis have for us now? We seem to be in the opening stages of what could be another great religious awakening. Already we see the second waves in our own experience, as large numbers of new converts and ministerial candidates are entering churches and Christian schools and Christian books top the bestseller lists. God may be doing something new and unique in our experience—but are we not responsible to aim for the same maturity in this awakening as in the past?

Let's ask ourselves: what could happen if the present surge of evangelical renewal is deepened and matured by the Spirit of God?

Could we see a future in which Christians unite across the lines of stress that threaten to shatter us apart? One such stress line today is the authority of Scripture. I see little future for the Christian church other than the morass of skepticism and relativism of our world unless we know that we have a sure and certain word from the Lord. It is absurd for us to talk about Christian lifestyles if we have no norm by which to judge what is and what is not Christian. The exact way we formulate the authority of Scripture is not the most important thing. I would suggest the wording of the Lausanne Covenant, that "Scripture is without error in all that it affirms." Could we see Christians join in affirming that "all Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, so that the man of God may be equipped for every good work" (II Timothy 3:16, 17)?

Could we see a future in which renewed life in the churches leads into new dimensions of evangelism to reach the 80 million unchurched Americans and the millions of merely nominal churchgoers? Could we see millions of believers learning that the Spirit of God has gifted each one uniquely to be a bridge to Christ? Could we see thousands of churches—especially the smaller ones—learning the dynamics of biblical growth, and thousands of other new churches being planted? Could we see mass campaigns and mass media programming being tied in carefully to the personal communication outreach of the churches? Could we see evangelism in the wholeness of the gospel and the fulness of the Spirit truly demonstrating the power to make disciples? Could we see evangelicals challenging critical issues like those of homosexuality and the teaching of values in education; engaging in "power encounters" as Elijah confronted the false prophets, so that these encounters become evangelistic moments similar to the "power encounters" missionaries experience among primitive peoples? Could we see the church becoming a community of such beauty and excitement that increasing numbers of Jewish onlookers conclude: it is too good to be a Gentile monopoly?

Could we see a future in which the faltering American educational system is injected with a new source of vitality from thoughtful Christians? Could we see a change modeled first in our own institutions? Could we see our Christian colleges and seminaries shaped not so much by secular models, as by the vision of becoming communities of disciples, where involvement of people with people counts as much as intellectual achievement? Could we see them holding up the image of excellence not as success in the secular society, but servanthood in the Kingdom of God? Could we see Christian citizens raising basic questions about the values implicit in public education and humbly yet boldly insisting that our public schools demonstrate, not neutrality but accountability, in the values they hold and teach?

Could we see a future in which cultural depravity is no longer tolerated as an inevitable feature of modern life with evangelicals taking up the weapons of prayer against pornography and the sexual revolution, drugs and crime, and emerging from prayer to form voluntary citizens' organizations to fight these products of cultural decay?

Could we see a future in which large numbers of evangelical Christians help to sharpen the conscience of

society as happened in the second evangelical awakening, both through their example and their political impact? This would not likely happen by our agreeing on a party-line Christian answer to each issue, or even always agreeing on what are the most pressing issues. But could we see believers at the grass-roots level of the local church being taught that Jesus Christ is Lord both of our personal and family lives and across the whole spectrum of human affairs? Could we see informed evangelical leaders meeting frequently to pray and seek from Scripture the mind of Christ on certain pressing social problems and covenanting together to act and teach so as to stir the conscience of the Christian community? And could we see our churches recognizing that a call from God to civic involvement may be as holy a calling as that of being a missionary?

Could we see Christians in business praying and working not only to evangelize their colleagues but to change the values by which their businesses operate? Could we see American business life, if not "born again," at least turned in new directions through the influence of concerned Christians? Could we see America's economic muscle loaned voluntarily to the work of development throughout the poor and hungry "fourth world"?

Could we see a future in which American evangelicals join with their brothers and sisters in Asia, Latin America, and Africa to forge a new partnership in world mission? Could we see the American churches' great resources of finance and experience, Christian education, and communication tools made available with no strings attached to our evangelical brothers and sisters throughout the world? Could we see our own inner lives enriched and replenished through the spiritual vitality which they share with us? Could we see a new wave of missionary effort as thousands of new cross-cultural evangelists are sent out from America and Korea and Nigeria and Brazil to proclaim Jesus Christ "so that all the nations might believe and obey him" (Romans 16:26)?

These are some of the questions I think we need to ask about Christian lifestyles today. In these short days we may hardly begin to grasp the answers. Many of us may not live to see the answers. If the Lord spares me, by the year 2000 I'll be nearly 70 years old. But my son who gave that speech on "Tomorrow's Promise" will be nearly 40. What kind of future will he have seen unfolding?

Professor Donald Michaels, of the University of Michigan, says, "Live in the future now." He means that by trying to foresee the future we may see some alternatives for the present. But Christians are the only people who really can live in the future now. Other people can think about the future, worry about the future, plan for the future, fear the future, discuss the future. But only God's people can live in the future. We Christians live on the borderline of the "already" and the "not yet," of "this age" and "the age to come," and that is because in Jesus Christ the future has already invaded time and has grasped our lives. The Lord of the future has sent His Spirit into our hearts as a down payment and a foretaste, a share of that future which already belongs to Him. So may God help us to live in that future now—the future of the Kingdom of our Lord who has already come and who is coming again!

And may He stir us to act, believing as Abraham Kuyper once said, that there is not a "thumb-breadth of the universe" about which Christ does not say, "It is mine!"

UNITED STATES FOREIGN POLICY AND THE AMERICAN STYLE OF LIFE

Howard H. Baker

For an East Tennessee Republican, this is an awesome experience; and for a Presbyterian to boot, there's no chance for me to escape with my skin intact. I thank you for the opportunity to share a few thoughts, to conserve about ten minutes or a little more of this program for a more informal segment to try to answer your questions, if that is suitable, and to give you some insights and ideas about where I think this country is now and where I very much hope it may yet go.

It is axiomatic, I suppose, that every public official at one time or the other in his or her career has suggested that the particular time in which they served is probably the most difficult, sometimes the most irksome, sometimes the most complex, and almost always sometimes the most frustrating period in the history of the republic, the county, the city, or the state, as the case may be. My wife has promised to needlepoint a sampler for me. On it, it is going to say, "Someday, someone's going to bring me a problem that has a solution." But nobody has yet.

Now in a way, every politician and public servant is right when they say that their time is the most difficult time in the national existence or in terms of the evolution and development of local governing opportunity, because as we grow and evolve as a civilization, as we come to understand our social responsibilities and to exercise our social conscience, we are aware of an ever-increasing range and spectrum of problems that confront humanity. Some of them are as old as civilization itself; some of them are more recent, but always, almost, more complex and difficult and yielding with greater resistance to rational, sensible, and moral solutions. It seems to me that in that view the government of the United States of America in its constitutional form, its structure of democratic representation, of elected representatives, of chosen magistrates responding to the will of the electorate, trying to resonate to the combined expression of the desires and dissent of the people of this nation is better suited to realize the potential of this growing new social conscience and this understanding of the complexity of mankind's problems than any other form of government in the history of civilization and certainly more than any other government in the world today.

I believe that the American system of self-government is uniquely suited to the challenge of these times. I believe that our young generation is better suited to cope with the problems of our era than any other generation in the history of civilization. Our young people now are better educated; they are more aware; they are more participatory than any other young generation in the history of the republic. So I think that the combination

of the growing new strength in the citizenry of this country, the leaders of tomorrow, combined with the heightened, sometimes the newly awakened social conscience of our present society, combined with the institutional advantages of the American system, that this country of ours is uniquely and especially suited and indeed charged with the responsibility to try to identify and deal with today's problems and those that will face us in the future—particularly, my friends, in the field of survival, in the field of foreign policy and national defense. And that's the subject I'd like to talk about, if I may, for a little while today.

It is also axiomatic that the first and primary, the fundamental, responsibility of the structure and organism of government is to try to protect and defend the freedom and the liberty, in fact the existence, of its citizenry. And nothing is more important, therefore, than maintaining a sane, sensible, and moral system of policies that will guarantee us against threats from abroad, not only the threat of the physical destruction of this nation but the threat to our system of self-government. Both threats are abroad in the land at this time. Both threats exist to such an extraordinary degree that it is not an oversimplification to say that we possess such awesome weapons and such terrible opportunities to incinerate ourselves by a nuclear holocaust that the enhanced social awareness, the improved intelligence of our young generation, the relevance of our governing system are providentially important to our efforts to try to meet and deal with these problems. We only just barely have an opportunity to meet those challenges and I firmly and devoutly believe that it is providential that this nation of ours should be so equipped and so endowed with the talent of our young people, of a system created with such foresight, and a political system that is so sensitive.

I believe that it is our special responsibility to recognize that we have that obligation to serve not only for the moment at hand but as trustees for the survival of this nation and these liberties in the future. I happen to think, as well, that we are involved now in the evolution and development of a new foreign policy for the United States. I am frankly telling you that I don't know yet what that new foreign policy will be. I am fairly sure it will not be certain other things.

For instance, I am sure that we will not content ourselves for very much longer with the foreign policy that is based essentially upon the forward-positions defense theory. It's a good theory and it has served us very well for the last hundred years. It is the idea of keeping harm as far away from our shores as possible. It served us when we protected the world and made it safe for democracy in World War I. It served us well in our effort to protect once again the Western civilization as we know it in World War II in our fight against facism. It even continued to serve us, I believe, in the beginning stages of the cold war, the confrontation between the Soviet Union, or international communism and the United States or the free world, as we called it. But you know with the Korean War. I think that the forward-positions defense theory began to loose some of its vitality. By Vietnam it was clear that some other technique for structuring the defense of the United States was probably going to have to be examined. We could no

longer defend ourselves just by putting our strength through the Asian crescent in the Pacific or behind the shield of NATO in the Atlantic and content ourselves that we had done as much as we should do as a moral nation to protect ourselves and our institutions. It became clear with the advent of the intercontinental ballistic missile that the trajectory time of thirty-odd minutes, from say Moscow to Washington, deprived the forward-positions defense theory of much of its validity.

So these are some of the things that I believe our new building and growing foreign policy will not be. It will not be based on those cornerstones that served us well in the past. As I said a moment ago, I am less clear on what they will be. I am fairly sure on a few things, though, that are evolving and may yet develop. For instance, I am sure to my own satisfaction that America is gradually coming to the realization that it must decide where it will make its stand. It can no longer do so in bulwark along the Asian crescent or in NATO in Western Europe. But we have to decide where the real vital national security interests of this country are involved. Take the Panama Canal, for instance.

Many people suggest that we ought not to sign a new treaty with the Republic of Panama because there's the real danger of a communist takeover in the Republic of Panama. And I can't assure you that there's no risk of that. All I can tell you is that if you're going to have a face-off with communism, do it with Russia, not with Panama. All I can tell you is that if you're going to try to reduce the probability of a communist takeover in Panama, it should be done, I believe, by reducing the level of antagonism in the host country, that our primary objective should be to protect and defend that Canal for the use of the United States and other nations in free and lawful pursuit of their objectives, not as a chattel possession of the United States.

I'm like a man in the desert starving for a drop of water to hear applause for that long. And I thank you for it.

I think it's just as well that we take an account of the fact that there are forces at work in the world that we have to counter and that we must be resolute in our determination to defend against them. For instance, we must not fail to observe or to realize the great potential for mischief in the fact that the Soviet Union is engaged in the greatest arms buildup of any nation in the entire world since before World War II. The rate of increase in the expenditure of the gross national product in Russia for arms is as great as the rate of increase in Nazi Germany in the thirties. And I don't know, my friends, what the Soviet Union has in mind. I'm not one of those who thinks that conflict between the Western World, particularly the United States, and Russia or international communism is inevitable. I not only think it is not inevitable, I think it is virtually unthinkable. but I also think I must take account of that fact. Whatever their motives, they are engaged in an enormous buildup of weaponry in the Soviet Union.

Nothing is more fundamental to the Christian tenets and beliefs than that we must try to beat our swords into plowshares. At the same time, we must preserve the

opportunity in the matrix for morality, in our case, for Christian development. I see absolutely no prospect that our Christian beliefs or any theological or religious undertakings could prosper in a world in which international communism did, in fact, reach a position of dominance. And while the United States is clearly as strong now militarily as the Soviet Union, if the trend lines continue very much longer, if the expenditures for the Soviet Union continue for another year or so and the United States trend lines continue as they are for another year or so, sometime in the late 1970s or the early 1980s, by all means, the Soviet Union will be the dominant factor in that equation with which we dominate the balance of tyranny. My friends, we simply must not let that happen.

So whatever the new foreign policy of the United States must be, it seems to me that it must evolve in the direction of flexibility, determining, ascertaining, and acting on the best interests of the United States in a realistic way free of the precedence of the past as that is necessary, free of the emotionalism of the moment, and based on the realism of the particular situation, and a determination to keep this country so undoubtedly strong morally, economically, and militarily that we never have to realize an imbalance in that terrible equation in our lifetime. And it pains and distresses me to say it, but I fear that the only way we can preserve the value of that equation, the parity or equality of military strength between the United States and the Soviet Union is probably to devote a significantly increased share of our national resources to the armed forces of the United States. There is only one thing wrong in that respect and that is SALT.

I have always supported the concept that we should have and in fact did support the ratification of the first strategic arms limitation treaty. It was an historic document that placed such limitation on strategic weaponry between these two super powers, and we are now engaged in the negotiation of SALT 2. I must confess to you that I'm concerned about it. While no treaty has been submitted and while protocol which is now being negotiated between the parties has not been formally submitted to the Senate, I am concerned that in its present form, it may have a destabilizing effect on that mutual power, military power between the United States and the Soviet Union. But if we have any chance at all to avoid the next step in escalation, it must be based on a satisfactory SALT agreement, in my view and judgment. But that SALT agreement must be based on the undoubted continuing strength of the United States to defend itself and the rest of the free world in our pursuit of liberty.

I have a strong feeling that the United States has only just begun to realize her potential and her greatness. I have a fixed idea that our young people will bring us a strength and vitality of self-government that we will marvel at in our old age—you and I. I have an idea that the fine tuning of the system of government will continue to improve on the responsiveness of the public system to the collective judgment of an enlightened electorate in the years to come. I have the strong view that the free market system, the free enterprise system, the right of the individual to prosper according to his or her efforts within the framework of a humane society, has only just begun to suggest the

good things of life that can be created and equitably distributed, not only in this country but throughout the world. I have a notion that in another century, a hundred years or less from now, that historians will recall that it was sheer folly that anyone would seriously contend that a totalitarian system such as communism could ever compete with the brilliance of a free market system intelligently administered. I have a notion that all of these things will come about, the Lord willing, if we do our part, if we participate fully in the decision-making process, if we involve ourselves in the daily life of this country, if we immerse ourselves in politics, if you please, in the sense that you express the range of your ideas so that they are heard in the councils of government.

I have an idea, my friends, in closing, that the foreign policy of the United States will be evolved and developed along those lines of taking account of the factors that I have described as dictated by the collective genius of the people of this country. I have an idea that those who think they have the answer to all of the problems of the age overlook the fact that the people will finally make their judgments, and you will do that through the channels of politics. So you see, I'm a politician. I'm a Tennessean, and to all of you who are not from Tennessee, welcome. I'm a Presbyterian and I have a strong belief in the predestiny of mankind, but I also have a strong belief that the Lord intended us to do our best, and don't you ever shy from it. Thank you very much.

CHANGING LIFESTYLES FOR WOMEN

Carolyn Weatherford

This month in Birmingham an event took place that underscores the reality of changing lifestyles for women. A section of the Birmingham Public Library, designated as The Southern Women's Archives, was dedicated. Four women were installed into a sort of southern women's hall of fame. The criteria for selection included that the women be living, that they had made great contributions to the civic, social, or civil rights of women, and that those contributions in turn had brought about human rights for all people.

One of those four women was Rosa Parks. Does her name ring a bell for you? She was a household name word in 1955. Tired from a long day's work as a seamstress, Mrs. Parks climbed aboard a city bus in Montgomery to ride to her home. Too weary of life to struggle to the back of the bus, she sat down at the front. When she refused to give up her seat to a white male passenger, Rosa Parks was arrested and jailed. Her action sparked a black boycott of Montgomery city buses that lasted 381 days.

Today Rosa Parks has been recognized in Alabama for her "act of courage which signaled the beginning of a nonviolent revolt in which black people rose up and began to destroy the barriers which had bound them since slavery."

In a sense, women's lifestyles began to change at the same time. American women had been struggling for a

reflected glow from his wife's outside successes became aware of the remarks from others related to his manhood and his personal value.

Then the devastating years of the Great Depression turned the energies of men and women toward survival. Following closely were the years of World War II, and as the men marched off to fight the "war to end wars," women found themselves thrust into jobs previously held by men. The war ended, the men marched back home, and their women returned to full-time domesticity.

The modern women's movements began as a sudden, long overdue, pent-up, personal reaction to the image of women that had been painted through the years. There was a strange discrepancy between the sexy blonde who walked into the living room via television to proclaim, "You've come a long way, baby," and the dumb housewife who tried to decide which soap to use in her new washer, and the reality of the woman who sat watching them. It was not possible, in the 1960s, for women to watch television as various groups of people marched and protested against living in America in anything less than full human dignity and equality, and not to finally say, "Me, too."

Who Were The Women?

The protests came from kitchens, offices, and nurseries. They came from blondes and brunettes. They came as an almost unanimous reaction. With spirited enthusiasm the women demonstrated across the nation, and legal barriers to equality began to fall, one after another.

These were the women who previously were described as "a submissive wife whose reason for being was to love, honor, obey, and occasionally amuse her husband, to bring up his children and manage his household. Physically weak, and formed for the less laborious occupations, she depended upon male protection. To secure this protection she was endowed with the capacity to create a magic spell over any man in her vicinity. She was timid and modest, beautiful and graceful, the most fascinating being in creation. And part of her charm lay in her innocence." (*The Southern Lady: from Pedestal to Politics* by Ann Firor Scott, The University of Chicago Press, 1970)

These were the women whose image had been reinforced by evangelical theology. A young Alabama lawyer wrote a sociological analysis of the antebellum South, asserting that women should content themselves with their "humble household duties." Pulpits repeated the injunction that women should keep silent in church. One minister was quoted, reflecting a general attitude that prevailed: "Women need the hope and prospects of religion more than the other sex to soften the pains of living and help them bear with patience and submission the inevitable trials of life, among which he suggested might be a husband of acid temper."

Slowly, but with determination, the women began to upset the image.

At the beginning, there seemed to be a clearly-defined woman's movement. Women from all walks of life participated in varying degrees and for different reasons. There is not a woman's movement today, but there are many movements, each with its own major emphasis or goal. Some women are fighting the

voice in the life and work of their country for years. The right to vote had been given to them legally in 1920. The 19th Amendment changed a good many things for women, but it only partially modified the culture. A number of difficulties remained in the way of women's full participation in public life. One major obstacle that the amendment did not overcome, in addition to the demands of home and family, was widespread male opposition. Even the man who enjoyed the Equal Rights Amendment; others are crusading for its passage in three states yet needed for ratification. Some women are lobbying for abortion, while others are lobbying against it. Various organizations have splintered over different viewpoints; particularly among middle-class white women there has developed a total dissatisfaction with women leaders who seem to be man-hating, family-destroying, and radical feminists.

Because there is no one movement any longer, we might tend to overlook a basic fact. Beginning in the early 1960s the drive of women toward equality has helped to change the lives of men and women and the way they look at family, job, and sexual equality.

How can I begin to deal adequately with changing lifestyles for women? So many changes apply to men and women. Some changes are good; some are disastrous. Nevertheless, the changes are evident, and I shall list some that I consider major, without attempting to evaluate.

Changes In Lifestyle

The opportunity to choose. For years women knew that no matter what their internal needs for achieving might be, those needs had to be satisfied within the bounds of domestic life. Now a woman can choose. She can remain single, and this will be an acceptable lifestyle. She can enter many vocational fields, providing economic support for herself and possibly dependent parents or other family members. Or, she can carry and still be employed, developing her own double career in addition to homemaking. Or, she can marry and enliven her life with myriad volunteer activities. Or, she can marry and fit into the traditional pattern of domesticity. This is a major change in lifestyle. Through years of schooling, women have not been educated, generally, to make these kinds of choices. But, then, how can one compare the pain of having to choose with the pain of having no choice?

The traditional image of family. Folks who know tell us that the growth of the single-parent family is a major trend. Approximately 45% of children born in 1976 will have lived with a single parent before he is 18 years old. Between 1970 and 1976 the number of divorced mothers with children increased by about 40%. Since 1950, female-headed families with children have increased more than 250%. This change in lifestyle has affected women, but it also has affected the way of life for all kinds of folks. These families comprise 41% of all poverty-level families, and this creates new demands and stresses on all public services. (*The Futurist*, February, 1978)

Postponement of marriage/parenting. Although the majority of women expect to marry, many are delaying it. In 1970, 12% fewer 20-year-old women had been married than in 1960. With the lowering of legal bar-

riers to contraception and abortion, with the easy availability of these, and with a widespread attitude that having children is not necessarily good for the world, married couples often decide not to have children at all or else to delay their arrival. The number of single females is doubling in the ages from 18 through 34. While in 1960 there were 3,284,000 of these, the projections for 1980 are that there will be 6,759,000. Among the married women who are delaying parenthood, the changed lifestyle is notable. Women who were born in the 1920s, on the average, bore their first child at age 21 years and 7 months, and had their last child at age of 31 years and 8 months. The current trend indicates that on the average a mother is 24 years old when her first child is born, and 27 years old when her last child is born. Thus, the average child-bearing years have been reduced from ten years to three years. ("Some Observations on the Woman's Revolution," by Orrin D. Morris, HMB, SBC) Mothers who work are also returning to work sooner after the births of their children. The "old" average was to wait about five years. The current trend is to return in less than a year. This changing lifestyle has tremendous implications for family life, for public and private schools, and for child care.

Women in the job market. Already more than half of all women in the age range from 20 to 64 either hold jobs or are looking for work. More than 5 million women are now employed in blue-collar jobs, 18% of this category. The number of women in major professions has also dramatically increased. Only 4.7% of the lawyers and judges were female in 1970, a figure which doubled by 1977. During the same period, women physicians increased from 8.9% to 12.8%, and female bank officials and financial managers grew from 17.6% to 24.7% of the total. This change in employment lifestyle has affected the education of women students. Women now must be trained in management skills, in business, in decision-making, and in supervision. With 400 women now sitting on corporate boards of directors, as compared with only 20 just 5 years ago, curricula development must acknowledge the presence of women. How this change has affected labor is indicated by the statement of an executive in Georgia Pacific Corporation, a Portland, Oregon, wood products concern, where now half of its credit managers, along with 15% of its sales force, are women. He said, "Five or six years ago, where would you find a woman who could talk to customers about grades and specifications of lumber and plywood?" (*Time*, November 28, 1977)

Women in politics. As a political power potential, women make up 55% of the total population 18 years old and above. Yet, women are just beginning to see a definable role for feminine politicians and women voters. The number of female legislators doubled since 1971 to a total of 685. Ninety American cities with populations of more than 10,000 have women mayors. More than 7,000 women now hold elective office, double the number 5 years ago. Nationally, the picture has not changed significantly with only 17 women in congress. Of the 301 people President Carter has appointed to major jobs, only 13% are women. As voters, women in Alabama have organized the Alabama Women's Campaign Fund. The organizers contend that the

Alabama legislature is not responsive to the needs of women, and the fund has been established to support those candidates who will address themselves to human rights. While the fund will contribute to both men and women, the group does hope to encourage more women to run for political office.

Change in media. National television networks have made noticeable changes in advertising and in the employment of women. ABC has hired a consultant to set new standards for commercials, to change or eliminate, that insult women. The dreary, dumb housewife may soon be as rare on television as the "step-and-fetch-it" black face. Magazines for women have changed character in recent years, acknowledging their effort to sell to the 40% of women who today work outside the home as well as in it. Quick and easy menus, home-decorating in a hurry, coping with conflicts between family and job—these are topics to which the magazines address themselves. At the same time, the quality of home making projected for the woman who has chosen to be a full-time homemaker has risen to that of a woman with a complex, adventurous task, worthy of her full-time commitment. Newspapers have changed their women's pages, in many instances, to "living" pages with features reflecting the reality of women on the move.

Change in attitudes toward housewives. Today there is greater sensitivity to the role of the homemaker. With 35 million women in the United States who do not work outside their homes, there is a growing concern for providing benefits for these women. "But I'm just a housewife" no longer is a demeaning statement. Spiritual leaders are recognizing the need for strengthening the role of parents in the home.

Change in the feminine moral climate. Unfortunately, many of the changing lifestyles reflect the attitude that "Now I have the right to be as bad as the men," rather than "Now I have the right to become as good an influence for good as the men." In a ten-year period, women's share of total arrests jumped from 12% to 33%. Sociologist Jessie Bernard believes that women have been left high and dry psychologically through the struggle for identity, and that because of severe emotional deprivation, mental health of women has become the number one public health problem in the United States. Alcoholism among women is grim. From 1958 to 1974 Gallup surveys indicated an increase from 45% to 61% of adult American women who drink. The proportion of young women who drink is substantially higher, and rising sharply. In the 1950s, 61% of college women said they drank; in the 1970s, 73% admitted to drinking. In the 1960s, 25% of high school girls drank; in the 1970s, 69% are drinking, according to surveys.

Changes in religious circles. Many books are being written, many seminars are being conducted, and many heated discussions are being held about the changing lifestyles for women in the church. In a survey of 389 Southern Baptists, Clay Price found that a majority favored ordaining women for some areas of service, while most disapproved of women in pastoral roles. That change is in store, however, was indicated, with two-thirds of the respondents saying they felt that attitudes toward women will change significantly in the next 25 years. At the present time, the big change is that the question is being debated. Only recently

has there even been a question about whether or not Southern Baptist women can experience a call from God to serve in some positions in the church. Other changing lifestyles, however, have brought about noticeable changes in churches. Because of the growing female work force, participation in church activities, particularly those traditionally conducted during week days, has diminished. Woman's Missionary Union decreased in membership for 10 years in the 1960s and early 1970s before beginning to increase slowly. The increase can be accounted for, to a large extent, by flexible meeting schedules and simpler programming. Volunteer ministries in the church, traditionally carried out by women, leadership in youth activities, and visitation are functions of local congregations that have been, and will be, severely cut back. At the same time, this generation is outstanding in its need for a vital, responsible relationship to Jesus Christ. Changing lifestyles for women speak to changing lifestyles within the church organizations in order to meet the needs of today's woman.

So What Ought We To Do?

The church, as a fellowship of believers, has a message for women today. The church has the responsibility, God-given, of bringing non-Christian women into this fellowship by introducing them to Jesus. "Let every woman in our country have the opportunity to hear and accept the Gospel" is a part of Bold Mission. To the Christian woman, the church can give strength and direction for coping with the changes that have been thrust upon her in this day.

Engage in raising the consciousness of women. Women need to recognize their own personal worth in the sight of God. After being educated from early childhood to regard themselves as inferior creatures, some have to be retrained to accept their responsibility as children of God. No one loses when a woman realizes her full potential before the Lord.

Develop women in leadership. Although many congregations have a predominance of women members, few women hold responsible positions on decision-making boards and committees. In 1977, in Kansas City, 1,053 people were named to committees, boards, and so forth, of the Southern Baptist Convention. Only 114 of these were women, and Carolyn Weatherford was four of those women! With only 8 of the 52 members of the committee on boards being women, it is unlikely that the percentage will change greatly in 1978 in Atlanta.

I am not speaking of women becoming deacons and preachers. We waste a lot of time debating the merits of this idea, when that is not the basic question. More basic is whether or not God calls women to serve him through his church. I do not know very many women who feel called to the pastorate nor the diaconate. I know many who feel that God has called them to significant areas of leadership which are not readily open.

New significance should be attached to the volunteer programs in the church. Many women still want to be full-time homemakers. For them the service ministries of the church can provide fulfillment if they do not become just busy work. Erma Bombeck tells of hiring a baby-sitter so that she could give volunteer service to a mother's day out program, only to learn that she was

caring for her baby-sitter's children so the baby-sitter could give her time free from her children!

Minister to women in their needs. Women are faced with learning to cope with current pressures, foreign to their prior experience. How does the newly promoted managerial woman deal with the power of her position, when she has never known power? How does the homemaker who has joined the work force to help get the children through college know when to compromise and when not to compromise in possibly conflicting roles of mother/wife/employee? Christian women need help in choosing which of the myriad voices claiming their attention should be heard and acted upon.

Spiritual leaders can also provide support for women who are thwarted in what they believe to be God's will and purpose for their lives. Does God call women today? Many believe so. Some feel that this call involves ordination, and they struggle. I have a friend who twenty years ago began her struggle toward ordination. Finally, she was ordained to her work as a chaplain to students. But she's an embittered woman, limited in her service now by the poisoned attitudes developed in her struggle. Was it worth the price she paid? Women need to anticipate the cost; then they need help as they pursue their goals toward becoming what God has called them to be. It is in the church that the Christian woman should find her help in discerning the difference between self-made ambition and God-given leadership.

Produce unity, not disunity. One of the most moving passages in all the gospels is John 17. Jesus prayed to the Father for all believers "that they may all be one." Today we can help remove the barriers that prevent oneness and unity in Christ Jesus. Women in the church cannot be considered adequately apart from men in the church. God made us with a need for each other and with capacities to meet those needs. We are commissioned with the same gospel message, and we fail our Lord when we fail to make full use of every gift and every opportunity to share the Good News. The power of the Holy Spirit is imparted to both. He has shown us all the more excellent way. That way leads to unity and harmony, where "there is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus."

MAN AS MALE AND FEMALE

Paul K. Jewett

We are gathered here to discuss life style from a Christian perspective. My particular assignment is to probe the bearing on our life style of the fact that God has given us our humanity in a fellowship of male and female. Obviously my topic is much larger than my time. Therefore, leaving aside all other considerations, I shall turn directly to the question of the proper relationship of the sexes as this question is illumined by biblical revelation. This question, in my judgment, is the fundamental question.

We read in Genesis 1:27, "God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them." It is surprising, is it not, to find these two thoughts, our likeness to God and our

sexuality, associated as they are in this text? As Emil Brunner once observed, it appears incredibly naive to couple these two affirmations together. In the whole history of man's understanding of himself, this statement occurs nowhere else than here in the Bible. Surely this would teach us, it seems to me, that the male/female character of our existence is significantly related to the very form of our humanity as in God's image. The theologians, however, like the philosophers, have traditionally thought otherwise. While admitting that the affirmation, "God created man in his image," is immediately followed by "male and female created he them," they have seen no significance in the fact. That man is male and female, has been assumed to have nothing to do with his being in the divine image. Human sexuality has been understood not in terms of God's creating us in his image, but rather in terms of the command in Genesis 1:28 to be fruitful and multiply.

This assumption has been reinforced by the traditional understanding of the second creation narrative found in Genesis 2:18-23. According to this traditional view, the woman is created, as the Apostle Paul says, from and for the man (I Cor. 11:8-9), and is given to the man as a helper especially in that work where he really needs her, namely, procreation. Thomas Aquinas, citing the Scripture that it is not good that man should be alone (Gen. 2:18), infers the necessity for the woman's creation to assist man "... not indeed as a helpmate in other works, as some say, since a man can be more efficiently helped by another *man* in other works, but as a helper in the work of generation."¹ To the same effect, Luther declares,

Men are commanded to rule and to reign over their wives and families. But if a woman, forsaking her position (*officio*), presumes to rule over her husband, she then and there engages in a work for which she was not created, a work which stems from her failing (*vicio*) and is evil. For God did not create this sex to rule.²

Given these assumptions about the creation of woman, it goes without saying that in the great hierarchy of being, or, as some popularizers in our day like to put it, in the great "chain of command," man is subordinate to God, and woman is subordinate to man.

So far as the Old Testament is concerned, it is beyond all doubt that this relationship of super- and subordination, at the sexual level, informs the life style of God's ancient people, and that in a profound manner. The culture of Israel was patriarchal through and through. Although the redemptive grace of God, as revealed in the covenant, embraced women along with men and contributed much to their social as well as personal redemption, nonetheless, women lived in the shadow rather than in the light of life in the Old Testament. The Old Testament world was a man's world. A daughter remained under the authority of her father until she came under the authority of her husband. And this authority of the husband was very clear. She was "given" to him in marriage, and she became his purchased possession. When Boaz purchased a field from Naomi, he also purchased Ruth to be his wife (Ruth 4:9-10). Hence the tenth commandment,

¹ *Summa Theologica*, First Part, Q.XCII.

² As quoted in *What Luther Says*, by Ewald M. Plass (St. Louis: Concordia, 1959), p. 1458.

which proscribes coveting, lists a neighbor's wife along with his house, manservant, maidservant, ox and ass, as among those possessions which one shall not covet.

These patriarchal assumptions about the authority of men over women, reflected in the culture of Old Testament Israel, became even more pronounced in post-exilic Judaism. In the synagogue, an institution traceable from the third century B.C., there was increasingly a tendency to segregate women from men. And in the great temple that Herod built, unlike that of Solomon's day, women were excluded from the court of the men. Josephus (*Antiquities*) uses the same word to describe the women's court in the temple (which was fifteen steps below that of the men) that the Greeks used for the harem. After the destruction of the temple (A.D. 70), synagogues were built so that men and women (who were veiled) would have no physical contact while gathered as a congregation.

Such lack of visibility in the physical sense led inevitably to the curtailment of the woman's participation in worship. While any man in the congregation might be asked to read the Scripture, such reading was forbidden to the woman. She must preserve a strict silence "for the sake of the honor of the congregation."¹ Concomitantly, a contempt for the female emerges in Judaism. "Were the words of the Torah to be burned, they should never be handed over to a woman." While this contempt is not found in the New Testament, Christian women are to keep silent in the churches after the analogy of the synagogue, according to I Cor. 14:34-35.² Under no circumstances, therefore, may a woman assume the teaching office, with its implication of authority over the man (I Tim. 2:11-12).

Obviously such a rigorous view of sexual hierarchy affects life style. Whether it be for good or ill, no one can doubt its effects on the way in which we live out our lives, the way in which we relate to each other in the home, in the school, in the business world, in the state, and indeed in the church itself, as is evidenced by the ongoing discussion and debate over the ordination of women to the sacred office of ministry.

Since we are gathered here to talk about life style, it is evident that this question of sexual hierarchy is relevant to our agenda. But since we are here to talk about life style from a Christian perspective, it is equally evident that we must seek to evaluate the position which assumes male headship and female subordination in the light of biblical revelation. We are not free simply to cut the Gordian knot of difficulty by striking out on some new tack and dismissing hierarchy altogether in the name of some contemporary egalitarian model of a classless society. Even apart from Christian revelation, such an approach is unthinkable, social structures would disintegrate into anarchy and chaos, were mankind to seek to live by a purely egalitarian model.

¹ Megilla 23a (Baraita), as quoted by J. Leipoldt, *Die Frau in der antiken Welt und im Urchristentum*, p. 55.

² We assume the authenticity of this passage, the text being secure enough for all practical purposes. (In the current critical edition, it is given a B rating by the editors.) I have associated this injunction to female silence in the Pauline churches with the synagogue usage of first century Judaism as the only plausible historical explanation. The popular notion that the women of Corinth were given to excessive chatter, and so constitute some sort of special case, is without evidence of any kind and quite alien to the text which is obviously laying down a rule to be followed "in all the churches of the saints" (v. 33b).

Furthermore, the Christian vision of reality is hierarchical in a very fundamental way, as can be seen in what may be called the hierarchy of grace. By the hierarchy of grace, we mean that, according to Christian doctrine, God is the source of all authority (Rom. 11:33); that the Son of God voluntarily humbled himself as the Messiah and Savior (I Cor. 15:28), becoming obedient to his Father in all things (Phil. 2:6-8); that because of this obedience the Son has been highly exalted in his Messianic office and made Head over all things to the church (Phil. 2:9-11); and that for this reason all Christians are subject to him who is the Head, freely confessing him as Lord and Savior (Rom. 10:9). This hierarchy of God, Jesus the Christ, and the Christian believer, to which Paul appeals in his argument in I Cor. 11:3, is, we submit, at the very heart of the woman and the woman subordinate to the man is another matter. To establish *this* position, theologians have historically appealed to certain statements in the writings of the Apostle Paul. However, in doing so, they have become increasingly aware of problems with this procedure. Indeed, some aspects of the Pauline defense of sexual hierarchy have been problematical for the theologians from the time of the Reformation.

At the beginning of my address, I noted our limitation of time, a limitation which I must now invoke to excuse the cursory manner in which I shall seek to establish, not the hierarchy, but the complementarity of the sexes as equal under God, while acknowledging the hierarchical view of reality as a whole to which biblical revelation commits us. In order to give the steps in my argument clear definition, I shall simply note them as points 1, 2, 3, etc.

1. We may accept the Old Testament as divine revelation without considering the patriarchal social structures of Israel's life as normative for the people of God in all places and in all ages. We should not absolutize patriarchy any more than we should absolutize monarchy. Both patriarchy, the rule of the father as head of the family, and monarchy, the rule of the king as head of the nation, were recognized as *an* expression of the divine will in the Old Testament. But to absolutize either is unwarranted. To appeal to the divine right of the man over the woman is like appealing to the divine right of the king over his subjects. To be sure, the king, as the "Lord's Anointed," ruled in Israel as God's vicegerent, symbolizing the theocratic fatherhood of God. Yet there are other forms of the state consonant with the divine will, indeed even more so, than is monarchy. And by the same token there are other forms of the social order more consonant with the divine will than is patriarchy.

2. The understanding of the second creation narrative, found in Judaism and in Christianity, whereby the woman is thought to be subordinate to the man because she was taken from him and made for him, does not rest on secure exegetical grounds. Subordination does not follow from derivation. The man, in the same narrative, is said to have been formed out of the ground (Gen. 2:7), but no one would suppose he is subordinate to the ground because taken from it. Furthermore, even if one were to take the narrative in Genesis 2 literally, so as to postulate a temporal priority in the creation of the male, there is nothing in the thought of temporal priority that entails superior worth

or position. In the first creation narrative, animals were created before man, yet this does not imply their superior position over man.

Furthermore still, the narrative does not describe the woman as man's helper in some particular way, as the bearer of children (St. Augustine) or the keeper of the home, to speak of the two most common feminine stereotypes. Many women have borne children and kept homes in past generations, and many will continue to do so in the future. And this has always been and always will be the will of God. But it is not the will of God for every woman by definition. To say that childbearing is "what she was made for," that "the woman's place is in the home," in an exclusive way that bars the woman from the larger partnership of human life, is an arrogant male conclusion that the text does not warrant. The text simply describes the woman as "the helper fit for him," i.e., fit for the man, "corresponding to," "equal and adequate to" the man. She is "the help of his like," to translate literally, or, to paraphrase in the words of Delitzsch, she is "a helping being, in whom, as soon as he sees her, the man recognizes himself." The word for "helper" in Gen. 2:18, 20 is never used elsewhere to designate a subordinate. In fact, it is sometimes used of God himself, who is man's help in time of need (Ps. 146:5).

Furthermore again, as God takes counsel with himself before making man (Gen. 1:26) and thus commends to us the dignity of our nature as human, so he takes counsel before making woman in particular (Gen. 2:8) and thus commends to us the dignity of her nature as female. We can only conclude, therefore, that when the narrative in Genesis 2 speaks of the woman as made from and for the man, the intent is to distinguish her from the animals by implying her essential likeness to the one from whom she is taken. *Her superiority over the animals, not her subordination to the man, is the fundamental thought of this text in the immediate context.*

3. Interpreting the second creation narrative in this way makes it essentially congruous with the affirmation in the first creation narrative, which is simply that God created man in his image as male and female. As for this fundamental affirmation with which we began our discussion, even though it may not require us to *equate* our being in the divine image with our being male and female, surely it does not allow us to ignore the intimate relationship between these two thoughts. Since being in God's image and being male and female are brought together in one and the same sentence, these must be closely related in meaning. Granted that our sexual polarity is the basis of our powers of procreation, it does not follow that our need for procreation is the ultimate meaning and basis of our sexuality. Genesis 1:27, by associating our being male and female with our being endowed with the *imago Dei*, suggests rather, as Karl Barth and others have pointed out, that as God is a fellowship in himself (Trinity) so, in an analogical way, man is a fellowship in himself; and the fundamental form of this human fellowship is that of male and female. Man, in other words, is not man in isolation but only in fellowship. (It is not good that man should be alone, Gen. 2:18.) And such a view of man's creation as male and female implies a theology of sexual partnership, rather than of sexual hierarchy.

4. Sexual partnership is implied, not only in the original creation ordinance, but is revealed also in the ministry of Jesus. Much has been written about Jesus and women, some of it scurrilous (Brigham Young), some of it sentimental (Ernst Renan), but there can be no doubt about the fact that our Lord talked to women and about women with complete freedom and candor. And his relationship to women, considering the culture of which he was a part, was positively revolutionary. His life style in this respect was so remarkable that one can only call it astonishing. He treated women as fully human, equal to men in every respect. No word of depreciation about women, as such, is ever found on his lips. And women in his presence sensed the difference somehow. Here was a man who violated no proprieties, yet broke through the barriers of tradition and custom in a way that put them completely at ease in his presence. This helps explain why it was that early in his ministry (the Galilean period) mention is made of a group of women disciples who accompanied him on his preaching mission along with the Twelve, a phenomenon which Joachim Jeremias has called "an unprecedented happening in the history of that time."

These women were last at the cross and first at the tomb, and to these women Jesus first appeared on the morning of his resurrection, making them the initial witnesses to that central event which is the basis of all Christian preaching. Reflecting on these things, Dorothy Sayers observes:

They had never known a man like this man—there never had been such another. A prophet and teacher who never nagged at them, never flattered or coaxed or patronized; who never made arch jokes about them, never treated them either as 'the women, God help us!' or 'the ladies, God bless them'; who rebuked without querulousness and praised without condescension; who took their questions and arguments seriously; who never mapped out their sphere for them, never urged them to be feminine, or jeered at them for being female; who had no axe to grind and no uneasy male dignity to defend; who took them as he found them and was completely unselfconscious. There is no act, no sermon, no parable in the whole gospel that borrows its pungency from female perversity; nobody could possibly guess from the words of Jesus that there was anything "funny" about woman's nature.¹

5. In the light of Jesus' radical break with the Jewish attitude toward women, we can understand why there is something of a dialectic in the thought of the Apostle Paul. Paul was both a Jew and a Christian, a rabbi of impeccable erudition who had become an ardent disciple of Jesus Christ. And his thinking about women—their place in life generally and in the church specifically—reflects both his Jewish and his Christian experience. The traditional teaching of Judaism and the revolutionary new approach implied in the life and teaching of Jesus contributed, each in its own way, to the apostle's thinking about the relationship of the sexes. So far as he thought in terms of the new insight he had gained through the revelation of God in Christ, he thought of the woman as equal to the man in all

things, the two having been made one in Christ. In this new Israel of God, this new humanity which he is creating by his Spirit, there is no room for the thought that the female is subordinate to the male, and therefore ought to submit to his authority because she is a woman. Rather, in Christ there can be neither Jew nor Greek, there can be neither bond nor free, there can be no male and female, declares the apostle in Galatians, the great epistle of Christian liberty, the Magna Carta of our humanity (Gal. 3:28).

Undoubtedly in all three of these pairs—Jew/Greek, bond/free, male/female—the apostle thought preeminently in terms of the man-to-God relationship rather than in terms of the man-to-man relationship. But it is important to notice that the theological "breakthrough," if we may so speak, which we see reflected in Galatians 3:28, had social implications even for the apostle. He saw these implications clearly enough in the first instance (Jew/Greek). Accordingly, when Peter came under the influence of certain strict and scrupulous brethren from the Jerusalem church who would not accept dinner invitations from Gentile Christians in Antioch, Paul withstood him to his face (Gal. 2:11 ff.). He did not say, as those from James were trying to say, that the Jews and Greeks are one as to their personal salvation and enjoy a "spiritual" fellowship in Christ but that in other respects such as eating, things remain as they always have been—restaurants must be segregated, since Jews cannot eat with Gentiles. He rather insisted on complete social integration.

In the second instance (slave/free) his vision was not so clear. Paul politely hinted to Philemon that he should set his slave Onesimus free, but he did not confront Philemon on the slave issue as he had Peter on the issue of Jews and Gentiles eating together. In a similar manner, in the great struggle for abolition in America, while it was the truth as it is in Christ which led to the abolition of slavery, churchmen for the most part did not take the lead. Many followed only from an ignominious distance. Some even defended slavery on "biblical" grounds. These spokesmen for the church emphasized the God/man relationship. They left the fight for abolition to others and concentrated on getting the souls of slaves saved. After the event, of course, the Christian community forswore all defense of slavery, though some parties in the church today, by their judicious silence, are still impeding the struggle for freedom and social justice for the disinherited.

As for the third instance in our text (male/female), here Paul was more cautious still in the implementation of his own Christian insight. He even reminded the women in Corinth that they must always remember that they were created for the man's sake, and if they were married, as he told the married women in Ephesus, then they must show reverential respect for the man who was their husband. Yet this reverence of the wife is counterbalanced by the love of the husband. Though he may not have been the first to say that a man should love his wife, the apostle gave this affirmation unprecedented depth: "A man should love his wife as himself, yea, even as Christ has loved the church" (Eph. 5:25). How many rabbis had ever said that a man should love his wife as Yahweh loved Israel?

And the magnificent affirmation that in Christ there is no male and female (Gal. 3:28) was for the apostle

¹ Dorothy Sayers, *Are Women Human?*, p. 47.

not merely a matter of theory. He acted out this truth in a most remarkable way for a former rabbi. He began to implement this insight, even if he did not implement it thoroughly, in his own life and in that of the church. Whereas in rabbinic usage a woman was designated only as the wife of a certain man, Paul greets women by name in the Roman congregation: Tryphaena, Tryphosa (Rom. 16:12), Julia (16:15), and Mary (16:6), commending the last for her diligent labors. Not only does he mention Priscilla along with her husband Aquila, but he even names her before her husband.¹ In fact, the apostle, who has been maligned as a misogynist, greets by name no less than seven Christian women in Romans 16, a cover letter carried by Phoebe, a woman whom he calls his sister and warmly commends as a servant of the church at Cenchrea (16:1, 2). As a rabbi, Paul would hardly have deigned to address a group of women when no men were present, yet he did so in Philippi without a moment's hesitation (Acts 16:13). Even less would he have acquiesced in a woman's importunate invitation to abide in her house, yet he accepted Lydia's invitation, it appears, without the slightest scruple (Acts 16:15).

In all this, one can hardly fail to see how far Paul had moved in his pilgrimage from Judaism to Christianity. In fact, the letter to the church at Philippi, a church which began with the conversion and baptism of a prominent woman and her household and which met in her house (Acts 16:40) must be considered along with the letter to the church at Corinth if one is to have a balanced view of Paul's attitude toward women. If his correspondence with the Corinthian congregation reflects his Jewish background, as one who had worshipped in the synagogue, his letter to the Philippians reflects a more liberalized view of the place of women in the Christian church. While it is true that the apostle addressed this church as constituted with bishops and deacons, all of whom presumably were males (Phil. 1:1), one can hardly reason that he simply used Lydia's conversion and hospitality as a means of establishing a bridgehead with men in the community. Women evidently played a prominent part in the Philippian church, not only at its inception but also as it grew and developed. Two of them are mentioned by name, Euodia and Syntyche, whom Paul calls his "fellow workers who struggled with me in the spreading of the gospel." These the apostle exhorts "to be of the same mind in the Lord" (Phil. 4:2). Though he does not disclose the nature of their misunderstanding, his appeal to them in a general letter to the church indicates that it was not simply a private affair. Rather, the difference between them threatened the unity and well-being of the whole church. It may have related to matters of belief, worship or ethics reflected in their views as expressed in the gathered assembly, the same assembly in which his letter would be read. In any case the apostle treats them as having preeminence in the church, and so implies their right to express themselves as leading members of the

¹ This same Priscilla with her husband, Aquila, instructed the eloquent Apollos, a Jew "mighty in the Scriptures" in "the way of God more accurately" (Acts 18:24-26). While granting her the evident learning and ability implied in this incident, scholars have greeted with erudite indifference and condescension Harnack's suggestion that she was the author of Hebrews. They have preferred Luther's suggestion that the book was written by Apollos, her pupil

congregation. To the same effect is the mention by Luke of "chief women" who were prominent among the apostle's converts in Thessalonica and Berea (Acts 17:4, 12).

There must have been something about Paul's gospel and the way he expounded it which made an impact on such sensitive and gifted women. And what could it have been but the profound worth which they perceived they had as *persons* to the Saviour he preached? We may conclude, then, that while Paul went all the way in living out the truth that in Christ there is neither Jew nor Greek, he by no means denied in his life style the implications of the further truth, that in Christ there is no male and female. Here he made only a beginning, to be sure, in implementing his insight, but it is high time that the church press on to the full implementation of the apostle's vision concerning the equality of the sexes in Christ. Thus the church will become a fellowship of men and women like that revealed to us in the life of our Lord while he lived among us—too briefly—in this sinful world. And thus the church will model a life style that, in this respect, is truly Christian.

A CHANGED LIFESTYLE

Charles W. Colson

I knew we'd have trouble with this machine tonight because we always have trouble with recording devices. You know I have often discovered that the hardest part of a talk is just getting started, getting acquainted with the audience. For twenty years of my life I never had any difficulty because I would simply go around the country and begin, "Fellow Republicans." Now, you can't do that many places, anymore. I can't do it, anyway. Just before I went to prison, I changed my lifelong party registration from Republican to Democrat. No kidding! The truth of the matter is I couldn't stand to see a Republican in prison. When I couldn't begin, "Fellow Republicans," I could always begin, "Fellow citizens." But I had seven months of free room and board and a postgraduate course in government, a little sabbatical, and lost my civil liberties and so I can't begin, "Fellow citizens." But isn't it beautiful because we are all one in Jesus Christ that I can come here tonight and say, "Good evening, my brothers and sisters."

I appreciate what Neal had to say because Neal Jones has had a tremendous and profound impact upon my life. Addressing the subject that you've asked me to talk about this evening of "A Changed Lifestyle," if I have learned one thing, it is the absolute indispensable ingredients when someone comes to Christ of being nurtured, helped, fed, loved, cared for, and taken exactly where he is. And one of the first Christians that I encountered in my walk with the Lord was Neal. His teaching, his faithfulness, his gentle caring, and his love have helped to bring me to the point where I am tonight. And, an hour from now you can decide whether he's done a good job or not.

I also am honored to be here because I have been an admirer from afar of the writings of Foy Valentine and of the work of this Commission, as you will gather from

what I will share with you tonight. It is your work and your calling and your concern that I share very deeply.

You have asked me to address the subject of the impact of my conversion on my lifestyle. I would love to be able to satisfy the typical Christian stereotype and say to you that now that I am a Christian, now that I have walked from the darkness into the light, that I experience every day joy, that I smile perpetually, that I throw my hands up in the air and say, "Whoopee, I'm saved," and I've got a bumper sticker on the back of my car, "Hallelujah," and I don't know any moments of depression, and God blesses every single thing I do. But that isn't the way it is. That I feel joy and fulfillment and contentment is a truth, but it is only part of a much larger truth. As a Christian I have come to realize that the life of following Jesus Christ is one that is really complex. It is not as simple as, tragically, I think so many of us present it to the world, it seems.

I never knew what it was to share suffering and that's what compassion means. Because I could sit in the White House, I could read about all that was going on in a distant war and I could feel it because I had friends who were there, but I never knew what it meant to really feel the hurts and the burdens of another person.

God has done many things in my life in the past five years. I sometimes think that in the transformation of Chuck Colson, from the White House hatchet man who was quoted (although I never said it) that I would run over my own grandmother if necessary, to the born-again Christian, dramatic as that may appear to the world, a much more dramatic transformation has taken place in my life over the past five years. For one thing, I used to have a lot of fears, believe it or not, the White House tough guy, the Marine captain. Many fears, and I find that God has been slowly removing each one of them. In fact, so much so that a few months ago I received a questionnaire mailed from Yale University from a group of students who write for the *Yale Daily News*. It was a questionnaire addressed to celebrities and names in the news and they said, "What is it that you fear in life most?" It came across my desk, it was a little mimeographed questionnaire. We receive hundreds of letters in my office, and so I was going to throw it away, and then I just said to my secretary, "Just put down that because of Jesus Christ, I don't fear anything." And, she sent it back in the mail. I'd forgotten about it totally. A few months later, someone in Ireland sent me an Irish newspaper, the front page of which the banner headline said, "Everyone has something to fear but Colson." It was an AP story picked up by the *New Haven Connecticut* and run around the world. As I read it, I realized that, yes indeed, God has dealt with fear in my life, but there was one other characteristic that he still had a lot of work to do on and that was arrogance. In truth, I do have a fear, and it's an overriding fear in my life. It's a fear of the Lord, and a fear that somehow I might embarrass him.

I think if I had to single out one particular characteristic, one particular quality of the Christian life that has been coming home to me day in and day out as I have traveled, and I will explain to you in a few minutes why, in and out of penitentiaries all across this country, it's to walk inside those places where I never wanted to go back in and to feel that choking

sensation in my throat and that weight lifting in my stomach as I hear the clanging of the gates and feel my fingers and palms moistening. Because I remembered what it was when I heard that cold steel clang behind me once before in my life, and to meet head-on the stares and faces and the deadness of eyes and the looks of the people who have absolutely no hope, who feel that society doesn't care for them, that the world has turned its back on them, that they have been rejected all of their lives, and indeed, they continue now to be rejected—that nine percent of all people who commit crimes are caught and only two percent of whom are sent to prison. Here they are, the scapegoats, the symbols, the lost sheep of our society. And I look at them, and I meet their eyes, and I feel inside that sense of hopelessness and frustration.

I think Jacques Ellul perhaps summarized so eloquently what Christian compassion is really all about and why it is so essential to those of us who are called by the Lord to be his servants; that we really can experience that kind of feeling. Jacques Ellul in a book which many of you have read entitled *The Presence of the Kingdom*, writes:

... until we have wrestled with God till the break of day, like Jacob; that is, until we have struggled to the utmost limits of our strength, and have known the despair of defeat . . . our so-called 'confidence' in God, and our 'orthodoxy' are nothing less than hypocrisy, cowardice, and laziness. When we have really understood the actual plight of our contemporaries, when we have heard their cry of anguish, and when we have understood why they won't have anything to do with our 'disembodied' Gospel, when we have shared their sufferings, both physical and spiritual in their despair and their desolation, when we have become one with the people of our own nation and of the universal Church, as Moses and Jeremiah were one with their own people, as Jesus identified Himself with the wandering crowds, 'sheep without a shepherd,' then we shall be able to proclaim the Word of God—but not till then! (*The Presence of the Kingdom*, pages 140-141).

Commitment—that word has taken on a whole new meaning in my life. I was a loyal Marine Corps officer, a loyal aide to the President of the United States. I would have been prepared to die for my country in war. I would have been prepared to carry out the orders of my Commander-in-Chief, unless they violated my conscience so that I could not serve him. And I thought I knew I was what maybe many of you have read about Chuck Colson being, a fiercely, loyal, partisan advocate. It's true, I was; and I thought I knew what it was to be part of a cause greater than myself. But I had no idea what commitment means when we talk about commitment to the Lord Jesus Christ and commitment to one another as he calls us to it; to offer your life, your treasures, your reputation, everything that is dear to you and to lay it aside and to stand naked before God Almighty and say, "Here I am, your child to serve you."

I suppose I have a lesson that many people never have in their lives. If you read my book *Born Again*, you know about my last month in prison which was about the lowest point of my life ever. You know, people think when you accept Christ, when you become a Christian,

it's all beautiful. Life is just a bed of roses from then on. Everything is just smooth sailing. Well, I accepted Christ in the summer of 1973, all by myself, sitting up on the Maine coast, having been helped, as many of you know from reading my book, by an old friend of mine I was in business with and counseled for, and from that point on, everything was downhill for eighteen months. I was the object of ridicule when my conversion became public. Suddenly I found myself with mail piling up on my desk. All through the period when my conversion was all over the headlines, while I was keeping all of the cartoonists of America clothed and fed, the mail would say, "If you are now really a Christian, you'll tell the world what a rat Nixon is." That mail we put on one side of my desk. And on the other side of my desk we'd have all the mail which would say, "If you are really a Christian, now you'll go out and defend our great President." I kept looking at those two piles growing on my desk. That as much as anything led to my decision to plead guilty and to go to prison.

I spent seven months inside a stinking, rotten hole where you try to sleep at night with the stale odor of the open urinals at the end of the dormitory, men getting up and down and banging their lockers; smoking and noise, and just utter, pervasive bitterness and despair everywhere—seven months of that. Then in my last month in prison have everything taken away and be stripped—to learn that I had been disbarred in my home state of Virginia, after going to law school four years at night to earn a law degree—it was a bitter pill to take. The other three men who were in prison with me from the Watergate, Jeb Magruder, John Dean, Herb Kalmbach, names you'll remember, all were released by the judge who had sentenced them—Judge Sirica. I had been sentenced by Judge Gezell, and he wasn't about to follow suit and do what another judge did; so there I was alone in prison.

My wife used to come up with Mo Dean and with Gail Magruder and visit on weekends. We'd all become very close even though we'd once been bitter antagonists during the Watergate. I was sitting on my little bunk one night and feeling sorry for myself when I received a phone call from my lawyer who said, "Chuck, are you ready for a tough one?"

"I've had all the tough ones, go right ahead."

He said, "No, your son Christian is in jail for a narcotics offense."

I never felt lower or emptier or more abandoned in my entire life, or more helpless or frustrated. Because there I was in prison, in a place where in my wildest dreams I never thought I would be, and then had a son in jail—a good kid who had never been in a day's trouble, but was bitter over what had happened to his dad. His old car broke down; and he needed a little money. He did a stupid thing and bought some marijuana to sell it. I knew I couldn't be with him. I had tried to get a furlough when my dad died while I was in prison and because I was such a celebrated figure, I couldn't get it; so I knew there was nothing I could do. I couldn't be at my son's side.

The next day I received another phone call from one in the little prayer group that really took me in when I became a Christian—former Senator Harold Hughes, who was still a United States senator then, former

Congressman Graham Purcell from Texas, Doug Coe, a Christian layman with the Fellowship in Washington, and a man by the name of Al Quie who was a beautiful Christian brother who served in the Congress of the United States for twenty years. It was Al Quie on the phone. I'd gotten a little angry at God the night before; I don't mind admitting it. I'd been staring out through the barbed wire and kneeling beside the dirty bunks and saying my prayers and I said, "God, I know I'm supposed to praise you in everything, but how can I praise you? I have been disbarred. I'm still in prison while other men are out, and now my son is in jail." And the next day Al Quie called (one of the most respected men in Washington). He was having trouble talking. He said, "Chuck, your brothers have been meeting, and we've been praying. We know what you are going through, and we know how much your family needs you; so today I am going down to see the President of the United States, Gerald Ford, and ask him if I can come in and serve the rest of your prison sentence." That is commitment! When Christ said, "Love one another as I have loved you," he died for each one of us and my brother was prepared to die, to throw over his entire career because he had made that kind of commitment for me. That night I was in prison, but I was free. I could praise God. I knew the reality of Jesus Christ because he had to live in Al Quie in order for Al Quie to make that kind of commitment to me. It was humanly impossible. Only through the power of prayer could that happen. As you know from my book, two days later I was set free by the judge because of what had happened to my son. But I had been freed by the Lord two nights before.

Well, once I stood in awe of man's power, of the office of the President of the United States, of hearing "Hail to the Chief" played, of coming down the ramp of Air Force One, of feeling that exhilaration of being able to call up a cabinet officer and tell him what to do (of course, he never did it), but today I stand in unspeakable awe of the holiness of God. At night, every night, (and I share this with you because I know we're all family and I'm not here to preach to you but simply to share with you what God is doing in my life) I get down, and I fall on my knees and I say, "God, forgive me, because today at least a hundred times I failed you. I didn't live up to really what you want." And I start a new day, thus praying that I will have the strength and the courage to live just a little bit closer to the person of Christ and what he demands and expects. And then I pray that I can just make a little bit of progress each day, to really deny myself and bear the cross that Christ tells us to bear. As I've studied and reflected on the glory and the majesty, and the holiness of God, I can remember Job saying, "Behold I am insignificant; what can I reply to Thee? I lay my hand on my mouth" (Job 40:3).

I guess for me the most radical transformation is to discover what it really means when the Apostle Paul says that we are not to be conformed to this world but to be transformed by the renewing of our minds. I was one of those fellows who understood lots of things about the nature of government and the nature of man. I had a lot of comfortable prejudices. I enjoyed them. I think everybody likes to have a few prejudices. It helps us to get rid of all of our emotion—you know, to have certain things that we're so sure of that the rest of the world has

to be wrong. I'd built up a lifetime worth of such prejudices.

I found out that when Paul is talking about the renewing of our mind, he is talking about shedding, getting rid of, just destroying all of those old humanist myths, those bankrupt presuppositions that man travels with all through this life, and start fresh; to come before a whole new set of values and standards and things by which we live.

I suppose, looking at my background, I would realize that I'm a man who served my country, who really believed that America was a chosen land, and that I was part of a chosen people living here. But the more I find myself in the Word of God, the more I am exposed to what Christ is really commanding me to do, the less I can feel allegiance to any political institution or any man-made structures, the more I can feel part of what kingdom God is building on this earth. And I find myself but a sojourner here in this land that I love and this country that I love. I find myself an American second and a citizen of the Kingdom of God first. That's hard for me. That's coming a long way.

But the renewing of the mind, I find, is as vital as any part of the renewal that each of us knows that we go through when we are transformed from our old, unregenerate self in a follower of Jesus Christ. I keep reading all this Christian literature that tells me how to lose fat with God, and you can tell I don't read much of that. But I read about all the things you can do to renew your body. You know sometimes I think when I look at all the books that are published, that we are going to have a super race of athletic Christians who are running around jogging. But the call that we have upon us from the Lord to really take and strip away—that hurts. It's like burning, searing flesh sometimes to strip away all those old prejudices and assumptions and just begin fresh with the values that Jesus Christ implanted upon our hearts.

I have discovered, too, that there is a cost in being born again, and that what we proclaim to the world is often a very cheap form of grace. I discover in the three or four hundred invitations that come into our office monthly that for at least one or two or three, the person inviting me has already announced that I have accepted. I discover when I arrive in the city that four or five additional stops have been planned on my tour that I didn't know about before I got there. I find out I'm due in two places at once. I have to keep reminding myself that the Lord tells us to take up the cross and follow, but he also tells us that no burden will be too heavy. But I am finding out that to be a Christian and to feel, to emphathize, as the writer of Hebrews says, that Christ became man so that he could feel the hurts and temptations of man, that as we begin to suffer and struggle with the hurts and temptations of all of mankind around us, it is a heavy burden indeed. It is tough being a Christian, and let's not go around telling people that it's any bed of roses nor any easy life.

A few of my comments about Christian celebrityism, I'll save for later. I've tried to read as much as I have time to do in the last couple of years. Of all the things I've read, the one that may be best summarized as to how I feel is the beautiful poem that Dietrich Bonhoeffer wrote when he was in prison. I guess I can identify with him because I know something about the split personality syndrome of being the so-called

Christian celebrity who was put up on a platform and can never slip and make a mistake and I also know something about what it is to live in a prison cell. Bonhoeffer wrote this beautiful poem, many of you may have read it, "Who Am I?"

Who Am I?

Who am I? They often tell me
I stepped from my cell's confinement
calmly, cheerfully, firmly,
like a Squire from his country house.
Who am I? They often tell me
I used to speak to my wardens
freely and friendly and clearly,
as I thought it were mine to command.
Who am I? They also tell me
I bore the days of misfortune
equably, smilingly, proudly,
like one accustomed to win.
Am I then really that which other men tell of?
Or am I only what I myself know of myself?
Restless and longing and sick, like a bird in a
cage,
struggling for breath, as though hands were com-
pressing my throat,
yearning for colours, for flowers, for the voices of
birds,
thirsting for words of kindness, for neighbourli-
ness,
tossing in expectation of great events,
powerlessly trembling for friends at an infinite
distance,
weary and empty at praying, at thinking, at
making,
faint, and ready to say farewell to it all.
Who am I? This or the Other?
Am I one person to-day and to-morrow another?
Am I both at once? A hypocrite before others,
and before myself a contemptible woebegone
weakling?
Or is something within me still like a beaten
army
fleeing in disorder from victory already achieved?
Who am I? They mock me, these lonely questions
of mine.
Whoever I am, Thou knowest, O God, I am
thine!

It was just three years ago when I was released from prison. Those of you who have read my book know that my wife and I enjoyed a private life before we went to the White House. As a matter of fact, in the White House I think I accepted a total of two social engagements; gave only two interviews to the press the entire time I was in the White House. I spent four years of being there in that center, that hubbub of government activity where men think all the power in the world is, and then two years caught up in the biggest political scandal in a hundred years in America, and then seven months in a federal prison. That day I was released and those gates closed behind me, and my wife drove me home, I just wanted from then on to stay around my house and to sleep. I was exhausted.

I learned what Bonhoeffer wrote from prison as well that the actual exhaustion of trying to stay awake and

alert so that you don't atrophy from too much sleep and from simply wasting and rotting in a prison cell. I wanted to walk out in the woods. I wanted to feel those things Bonhoeffer talked about that he was longing for after three years in prison. I wanted to be out where I could smell the flowers and look at the birds and be with my family and know God has blessed me. I hadn't realized it, but in the years I practiced law—I had a very successful law practice—I could afford to stay home for maybe even a year just to be with my family. I wanted to put prison totally out of my mind. I wanted to forget I'd ever been in a prison, but it wasn't that easy.

I began to wake up in the middle of the night, and I could still see the faces of those men that I had left behind, and strange as this will sound to you, the men I had come to love, part of a little prayer group. Because the people in prison, believe me, but for the grace of God could be anyone of us in this room. We have a stereotype of prisoners. They have horns; they chase their kids around; they don't eat with a knife and fork. It's nonsense. You get there; you find accountants, businessmen, gas station attendants, honest people, housewives, somebody runs over a kid with a car one night after having too many drinks. You find exactly the same kind of people you will find in any collection of people anywhere else in society. I'd come to love those people. I saw them in my dreams. I lived with them all again; their faces just crying out for help. I'd find I'd wake up in the middle of the night, and I couldn't go back to sleep.

So, the very first trip that my wife and I took was to go back to Maxwell Prison where I had been incarcerated so that I could visit with my little prayer group. Then I began to wake up more and think about the men, and then I began to really anguish for them, and then I began to talk with brothers in my prayer group, to talk with Neal, and to ask, "What can be done to help these people in prison?"

I wanted to go back and practice law. I had a couple of very good offers in business, very attractive offers, but somehow they just didn't seem to move me. And the dreams continued. Then one morning I woke up with an experience that I have never had before, and I have had nothing quite like it since. As I looked into the mirror and began to shave that morning, I saw it. It was just as if it were laid out in a picture, in vivid detail, in color. I was to go into the prisons and somehow pick out Christian inmates who were leaders in those prisons and walk them out through those gates, bring them out into freedom, and let them live in a Christian family; let them live in fellowship outside of that prison, to really have the love of Christ, to be taught to be disciples, and then to go back into that institution. It lasted but a flash. It was just a matter of seconds. But it was just so impossible a dream that I remember throwing cold water all over my face, thinking this just can't be. This is impossible.

I immediately called my friend, Harold Hughes, who was then out of the United States Senate. For those of you who do not know the story, Harold Hughes and I were once mortal political enemies. We stood on absolute opposite sides of the political fence. Right after I had accepted Christ I met a young man, Doug Coe, whom I mentioned to you a few moments ago. Doug

Coe used to come by my office at night, and we would study the Bible together, and we would pray together. One night Doug said to me: "You know, Chuck, I'd like you to meet Senator Harold Hughes. He's a wonderful Christian." I said, "Meet Senator Harold Hughes?" I mean, there we were in the middle of the Watergate. He was a liberal Democrat. He was up on Capitol Hill firing mortar shells down at the White House and I'm one of the defenders of Mr. Nixon firing the shells back, and this fellow wanted me to get in the same room with him.

Well, I can say this now that I am in Christian service; I figured he was one of those pastors, you know. They never have to do anything practical or meet a payroll. He didn't know anything about the real world, putting a fellow like Hughes and me together. I've learned a lot. So I said, "Sure, I'll meet him." Then one day we met. We met at Congressman Quie's home. I sat there that night timidly telling the story of how I'd asked Christ into my life and feeling very foolish because I'd never told anyone the story before. Harold Hughes, for those of you who do not know him, is a great big, burly man, about 280 pounds. He was an alcoholic, a recovered alcoholic. He was a truck driver who worked his way up after he recovered from alcoholism. God really rescued his life. Then he became governor of his state; then United States senator. Harold Hughes is one of those fellows that even when he is smiling and in a good mood, he looks kind of mean and angry. He sat across the room while I was telling the story and about ten minutes into the conversation, he stood and he slapped his hand against his side and he said, "I've heard enough." Then he started across the room toward me. I was just a little bit nervous. But then he threw his arms around me, and he said, "I love you, brother, and I'll stand with you anywhere." So he did all through that dark, ugly time in our history.

And so he was the first man I called. And Harold Hughes came right over to my house, and I immediately told him what had happened, and we had some prayer. Harold then went into the bathroom and threw cold water all over his face. We both knew it was impossible, but if God is in it, all things are possible.

Well, both of us having been in politics, and I think there is a lesson in this for each of us, did what anyone in politics would do, we went right up to Capitol Hill. The first man we saw was Senator James Eastland, soon to retire, Chairman of the Senate Judiciary Committee; respected man, wonderful, courteous, marvelous gentleman, and he sat for two hours, listening while we talked about the horrors of the prison system. I told him everything wrong in the prison. He sat there, sort of twirling his cigar and listening, nodding attentively and very interested. He gave us a very polite hearing, and we went away and nothing happened. We went back to other congressmen and other senators, and we told them what we wanted to do and asked for their help. Would they please help us; would they get behind us; would they call the Attorney General; would they write a letter; would they support us? Nothing happened.

We were in some despair. One day we were at Fellowship House; we were in a prayer session, and we had been studying together. I think I said to Harold, "You know, Harold, we should go right to the man that runs the Federal Bureau of Prisons and tell him what we want to do." Harold said, "Well, if God is in it, why

not?" We had our secretary call Norman Carlson's office (he's the head of the Federal Bureau of Prisons), and we made an appointment to see him. Washington is very protocol conscious, and when Carlson's secretary said, "What do Mr. Colson and Senator Hughes want to see Mr. Carlson about?", we had already primed the secretary. We knew that she would be asked that question. We simply had her say, "Jesus Christ in the prisons." She did, and we got the appointment anyway.

We walked into Norman Carlson's office. He's a man who worked his way up from guard right to the top. He's the number-one jailer in the United States. And for one-half hour, I sat there telling him everything wrong with the federal prison system. Now, mind you, he is the top man. He has to go to the Congress every year, once a year, and tell them what a super job he's doing, how fine the Bureau of Prisons is being run. I mean, how else do you get another hundred million dollars? That's the way the government works. And there I was, sitting and telling him everything wrong; and if only he'd give us a chance to go in the prisons and take people out, we'd really show them what Christ could do in the prisons that he couldn't do.

I expected at any moment that this big guy was going to stand up and say, "There's the door. Go." I kept looking over at Harold Hughes, and he had his head down. He was praying. I figured that's the only reason we survived. When I finished, there was an awkward pause and Norman Carlson looked at me and said, "Mr. Colson, I have a question to ask you." He said, "My wife and I were out at the Terminal Island Federal Prison just a couple of weeks ago. We were there on a Sunday morning and we went to chapel. At the end of the service the chaplain asked if anyone had any prayers. At the back of the chapel, it was dark and I couldn't even see the man's face, but an inmate stood up and prayed for me and my wife. Why did he do that?"

I said, "Mr. Carlson, he prayed for you and your wife because he's a Christian. He is taught to pray for those in authority. I prayed for the warden every night in prison."

And Norman Carlson said, "Yes, but I'm the man keeping that inmate in prison."

I said, "Yes, Mr. Carlson, but he prayed for you because he loves you."

Moments later in that conversation, Norman Carlson said, "All right, Mr. Colson; all right, Senator Hughes; I'm going to issue an order today giving you permission to go into the prisons anywhere in the United States, any federal prison. You pick the inmates you want. You take them out. You go ahead."

The significance of that story, my brothers, and I am sure you understand it was not Chuck Colson, Christian celebrity; it was not Harold Hughes, United States Senator who succeeded in prying open the doors of the prison in a way that they have not been opened in a hundred years in the United States. It was the prayer of an inmate in brown dungarees, powerless by the world's standards. He can't vote; he can't go home at night. But in the back of a darkened prison chapel, he prayed, and God heard the prayer of a faithful man and used it to touch the heart of the man who runs the prisons of the United States. That is the paradox. That is the way God works. That's what's wrong when we put people up on

pedestals and say, "Isn't this great, this wonderful celebrity. We can show you the latest evidence that the Word of God is true;" as if we need it, as if we have to be so insecure as to constantly prove to ourselves that, yes, God is in the business of changing lives. It is the powerless, the weak, that truly God can work through because in our weakness we know his strength.

God uses each of us, not just the people we exalt; not just the people we lift up and hold out to the world. God looks to people just like the man in the back of that prison. I tell that story every place I go around this country, hoping that man will come forward and say, "I was the man who prayed." I still can't find that man and no one knows where he is. The Lord knows where he is. But to this day he doesn't know what his prayer did.

But I just share with you a little story of what happened afterward. Everything I do ends up in the press, for better or for worse. As soon as we received permission to start taking men and women out of prisons, we assembled our first class of twelve. Then in the *Washington Post* was this story, "Colson to Bring Ex-Convicts to Washington." You have never heard such a stir in the neighborhood where Fellowship House is located. It happens to be a nice part of town, a nice neighborhood, lots of embassies around, lots of lovely, big old homes. A neighborhood association was formed. There was more stir than I guess there had been since Nazi subs were sighted in Chesapeake Bay in World War II. Tommy Corkran, the FBI brain truster, was retained as a lawyer. He called me up. He threatened lawsuits. We were really concerned whether we could bring these inmates to Washington. Senators were calling Norman Carlson to complain.

Well, we picked our twelve inmates; ten men and two women, brought from different institutions around the East. The way we handled the problem with the neighbors was that we invited the neighbors down the first day that the inmates were there. Of course, the inmates coming out of prison were dressed up like this; some of them better than this. They were all up having lunch with everyone else who was in Fellowship House. We brought up the complaining neighbors and we stood at the door of the dining room and we said, "Now in that room you will find twelve convicts from federal institutions. Can you pick them out?" Nine out of ten picked a congressman. Even at that point in my life I have to say to you that this was an experiment.

This was something I wanted to begin because God had opened the doors so miraculously for us to get into the prisons. I still hoped that it would be something that perhaps could be a model maybe. As I looked around, as I studied, as I read, as I talked to people around the country, I saw how little was being done in terms of outreach into the prisons. You know, in Matthew 25, the Lord tells us that on judgment day how we will be judged: "I was sick and I was in prison and you visited me not." It is a Christian's duty to reach out. It is a mission field to go into those prisons, but for me it was still an experiment, still something I would see if it worked, see what would happen.

I must tell you, we took the first group of inmates up to the United States Senate. They met with a United States senator who is a beautifully committed Christian brother, Senator Lawton Chiles of Florida. Another

senator walked in his office while twelve convicts were sitting there, dressed just the way we are tonight. I suppose it was the first time that twelve convicts, at least knowingly, had assembled in the office of a United States senator. Another senator walked in, and he happened to be a senator whom we had worked on in the Fellowship long and hard to bring him to a profession of faith in Jesus Christ, and we had never been able to get him. We, of course, adopt man's strategy. Man's strategy is: Billy Graham comes to town. You send Billy Graham up to see this senator. You put Mark Hatfield on the senate floor and you tell him to go over and sit and talk to this guy and witness to him. But this fellow had never budged. This day this senator walked into Lawton Chiles' office; didn't know who was there. Lawton Chiles said, "Sit down." He sat down in the middle of the convicts. For ten minutes he didn't know who they were. Then he discovered they were prisoners, and of course, he felt for his wallet immediately.

I happened to be with that young senator the next day out in the western state where he's from. I don't use his name because I feel that he ought to tell his own story whenever he wants to. I was at a prayer breakfast with the governor of his state, and before I was to speak, that senator stood up and said, "You know, yesterday I walked into a colleague's office. . . ." He told the whole story. Then he told how impressed he had been by the faces of those inmates, by their commitment, and by the depth and intensity of their feeling about Christ. He said, "I went home last night and I told my wife. The one thing missing in our life is what those men and women had yesterday." And he said, "Last night my wife and I prayed and asked Jesus Christ to come into our life." That is the way God works; to take the weak things of the world to shame the mighty; to take the base things of the world to shame the lofty.

Well, a year and a half ago, after we had by then disciplined maybe sixty prisoners, we were trying very hard to get inmates out of an institution up in Oxford, Wisconsin, an institution where no inmates had less than a ten-year sentence. We were constantly being rebuffed by this warden who was very tough. He simply wouldn't let us have the men we wanted. So, one day, I am sure to get us off his back and to get rid of us, he said, "Okay, if you fellows are so convinced that with your Jesus Christ you can do so much, I'll give you an opportunity. Why don't you just move into this prison and come on up here and live here for a week. I'll open the prison to you, and any men you want can come out. I'll open the whole place. You can have the run of the place for a week." I'm sure he thought that was going to be the end of us, but I've learned that you wait on the Lord, right? I waited ten seconds and said, "Yes, we will be there."

We took a team inside that prison in Oxford, Wisconsin, and had one of the most exciting weeks I've ever spent in my life. We insisted that people come from the community around us. Twenty of them came and they stayed with us that week. Three ex-convicts from our staff and two pastors taught, and that week ninety-three men came out from that prison, a prison of a little under 500. The Muslims sat all by themselves, ten of them over in one corner, never uttered a word till the very last day when we were explaining the significance

of the communion that we were about to take together. We ate together; we taught; we shared; we had small groups; we had counseling. So, the very last day, we didn't put any pressure on anyone, but the very last day we explained what communion meant. And then we asked if anyone had anything they wanted to say. And at that table in the corner where the Muslims were sitting, one black man stood up and he said, "I've been all my life looking for something," and he said, "I never thought it would be in prison that I would find it, but I have found it this week. It is love. It is Jesus Christ."

Twenty-five men that morning, without any pressure at all, no altar calls, no singing, nothing, came forward and gave their lives to Christ in the most meaningful communion that I have taken part in in a long while in that room with men, women, all colors, all shapes, getting up after we had had communion together, embracing one another. Truly, the love, the spirit, that flowed through that prison was something beyond description.

The prison system of America has been an abysmal failure. Four out of five crimes in America are committed by ex-convicts. When that man or woman goes out that prison door with \$25, a bus ticket, and a guard that says, "See you in two weeks," there is an eighty percent chance that guard will be right; that inmate will be back. And yet, what we have seen is when we reach out in love, one Christian reaching out to another, one Christian extending Christ's love, the hand of love and understanding and compassion to someone who has felt rejected his entire life, we see what God's transforming power can begin to do inside that prison; do what no institution, what no amount of money spent on building new fortresses or new programs coming out of psychiatrists and psychologists can ever achieve. God is in the business of changing lives, yet only those of us who have Christ in us have the courage to go out and to live that gospel, to live it day in and day out and to reach out and touch others in their point of need, whether it be their human needs, their spiritual needs; but to embrace them exactly as the Lord Jesus Christ embraced those that he came across in his own earthly ministry.

The challenge, my brethren, and it is one which in my life God has called me to is the prison, and each of us is called differently, is to live that gospel fully and boldly and to walk into the world. The worst news for the world was the day that Luther left the monastery, Bonhoeffer writes, and it is true. If we will walk out and boldly proclaim our faith and then demonstrate it to a doubting and disbelieving world, there is no limit to what God can do through us, absolutely no limit.

It was just a year and a half ago, while sitting on the Oregon coast in a friend's home, that my wife who had been so reluctant about my doing this realized that this was a call that God had made on my life. So, whatever it meant, she and I together made the decision that this would be my life and that I would offer up to the Lord everything I had to follow him into those dark dungeons and holes known as American prisons where men and women live like animals live in a zoo; and where they have so little hope to ever return to be part of society, to be accepted. But we know, you and I, what the church can mean in their lives.

Our mission, I emphasize, is not to create a new,

para-church group in America. I don't believe that you could create a para-church group that would ever be able to touch the lives of all those who are incarcerated, who need to be reached—300,000 men and women in dark, concrete holes at this very moment. Our mission which God has called us to is to bring the gospel of Jesus Christ to these people through the local church, through example, through teaching, through enabling, through leading, through instruction.

Wherever we go, in any community, we refuse to go into a prison unless the local churches are involved with us, unless we have committees of people from those churches. We insist that they come in and be part of the weekly training program. We do not have a staff. We do not want a staff. My most fervent prayer is that we will be able to call the churches to action as the Lord Jesus Christ calls us to action in the prison, and that in five years I can go back and fold up, close up those doors, and go smell those flowers and watch those birds that I wanted to do three years ago when I got out of prison, and I mean that in the depths of my heart.

I'm not trying to build a ministry that ends up as a monument to its founder. I am trying to simply encourage and call Christians to a deeper commitment where we will really evidence our faith to a world that doesn't believe us because where there are swollen bellies, our word sounds increasingly hollow, but that by our deeds, we can earn the right to be heard.

As I was coming down in the elevator with Neal, I said it would not be a sermon or preaching because this is the family, and I look upon you as family, and I know that we join together in a common goal and with common prayers, but I'd like just in closing to share with you a dream that I have. I know that Leighton Ford struck the theme this afternoon that I have tried to strike in many speeches, and that weighs so heavily upon my heart. One-third of all Americans say that they are born again. Born again has become tragically something of a cliché. I must bear some responsibility for this, because, I guess, when my book first came out my publisher told me nobody will know what that means except in the South. He said, "Don't use that title." But after the book came out and a fellow from Georgia was running for office and said he was born again, suddenly, there it was splattered all across the headlines and magazine covers, and tragically it has become, I suspect, something of a cliché. I imagine that a pollster said, "Are you born again?" Now it has become fashionable. Something you wouldn't have talked about in polite company before, now becomes sort of your mark of distinction so people would say, "Yes." I'm not sure that one-third of the American people know what it means to be born again.

And here we are with people professing openly their faith in Jesus Christ and yet we see a continuing deterioration and destruction of our society all around us. Five hundred thousand teenagers will receive abortions this year. One out of five Americans are in Bible study and prayer groups meeting at least once a week, and there is moral decay all around us. We do not see God's transforming impact in our society even as we see God's transforming impact in the millions of lives of people coming to a saving knowledge of Jesus Christ. Church attendance is up for the first time in seventeen years after a decline and yet Gallup can still conclude that

"religion is not greatly affecting our lives." The secular world seems to offer abundant evidence that religion is not greatly affecting our lives.

My dream, my prayer daily, is that Gallup will not be able to write any more that religion is not greatly affecting our lives, because the Christians in this country and around this world will be bold enough to stand against the culture to speak prophetically against injustice and wrong wherever we see it; to have enough concern to go out and live the gospel out in our lives; to meet human needs and suffering wherever it is.

You know, six days before he died, John Wesley on his deathbed wrote a letter to a man by the name of William Wilberforce. It was one of the most eloquent letters I've ever read. It is the last written document of John Wesley. It begins, "Unless God has raised you up like Athanasius to be *contramundum*"—against the world—"surely you will be beaten down by men and devils. But if God be for you who can be against you? Oh, be not weary in well doing." Wesley hardly knew Wilberforce, but he had heard about him.

William Wilberforce was a young member of Parliament who was born into his job in the House of Commons. He was a member of the aristocracy; had prestige; belonged to the right club; went to Oxford, Eaton; did all the right things. He was a young English gentleman who would sit up all night and play cards, drink with the boys, but one day he came face to face with the living Christ and his life was transformed and he had the boldness, the rashness, the temerity to stand up on the floor of the House of Commons and to say, "I am a Christian and the slave trade is wrong. It offends my Christian conscience."

He was shouted down by the men in the Parliament; laughed at; one man to stand against the establishment of the British empire. Eight million pounds sterling and revenues to the British empire, five hundred ships, thousands of jobs were involved. I've read some of the speeches that were given on the floor of the Parliament. You can take out Liverpool, and sailing ships, and you could simply substitute any military base in the United States and hand it to a senator today, and it's exactly the same kind of speech you'd hear on the Senate floor. "You can't possibly abolish the slave trade. Look what it means in revenues."

The only argument, as a matter of fact, that was going on in England at the time, was whether or not you would take black bodies and pile them next to each other like logs, in which case half of them would die before they reached the Western Hemisphere and they would be jettisoned over the side to be eaten by the sharks. But it didn't matter because a black had no standing to sue because a black was not a person. A black was a chattel. So it didn't matter. He couldn't be charged with murder. Or, was it better to give him enough room to breathe and therefore get more bodies there. Which was more economical? That was the debate.

Wilberforce stood alone. His commitment was to Christ; his commitment was to a small band of men who joined together and began to meet daily. They moved their homes together. We were talking at dinner tonight about building the family in the church, building that sense of community, of oneness. They actually moved into the same section of London so they were

known as the Clapham sect. They lived in a section of Clapham. They prayed three hours daily. It was a regular discipline. One man, very wealthy among the nine, gave seven-eighths of his income to the work. For twenty years they persevered with defeat, after defeat, after defeat. But with that letter always before him, Wilberforce knew that if God was for him, who could be against him.

Gradually, over a period of time, attitudes began to change. The great Wesley Awakening was taking place in England. And in 1807, one night at 2:00 a.m., a majority voted in the House of Commons to abolish the slave trade. While his colleagues were jumping up and down, jubilantly cheering on, Wilberforce sat there with tears streaming down his cheeks because he knew that in the name of Christ, an era of great human injustice, a blot upon Western civilization and upon mankind, had been ended. It had been ended by the power of Christ working through a small band of men.

I truly believe, my brothers and sisters, that if we are not weary in well doing; that if we remember that with the power of Christ in us we can do that which institutions can never do; if we are not taken in by our own publicity and uppery; if we don't turn off the world by exuding arrogance; that we have something that they haven't yet found, and ours is so superior to theirs. If we don't delude ourselves into thinking that just because we have caught up with Johnny Carson, we haven't really advanced the cause of Jesus Christ in the world; if we don't kid ourselves by promoting celebrities and saying this is the answer rather than being authentic in our own lives and caring that God cares about what is in our hearts; if we don't kid ourselves in doing evangelism just for evangelism's sake by playing the numbers game but are really trying to build committed Christian disciples; if we understand the need for individual repentance and repentance of our corporate sins for which we all stand condemned; and if we can stand in true awe of the holiness of God, then I really believe that awakening that so many have been predicting and fervently praying for can truly begin. But it will be an awakening that permeates all of the fabric of this society in which we live. It won't be simply a cause for Christians to rejoice, but for the whole world to look and say, "Yes, religion is greatly affecting our lives." Most importantly, my brothers and sisters, we will be able to walk across that divide and will be able to see the Lord standing there, and he will say, "Well done, good and faithful servants." That is my dream, and that is my prayer.

May the peace and the love of the Lord Jesus Christ be with each of you. Thank you for having me.

LIFESTYLE: A THEOLOGICAL BASE

William L. Hendricks

What does Christian theology have to say about lifestyle? Nothing and everything. *Nothing*—since the primary source of Christian theology, the scripture, does not address itself to this question directly. It does not do so because the phrase "life style" is a modern sociological expression coined by an affluent society to

speaking of a variety of ways of living—most of which are optional and enviable. It is interesting to note that many major newspapers have changed the designation Society Page to Life Styles. The change of nomenclature is primarily that, for the subjects of that section of the news are the same people as before, most of whom have self-determination as to the type of life they will lead.

Everything—since the Scripture speaks explicitly about how people ought to live and how they do live. Christian theology, per se, as a discipline which reflects on biblical norms, tradition, and human existence, has done different things with life styles. The church has affirmed the status quo of the affluent and the impoverished. It has sought to impose its preferred life style on all. It has given priority to a life style of withdrawal from the world. It has sought by friendly persuasion and otherwise to move all of society to its own vision.

Contemporary Christian theology uses various models in order to express its suggested life styles. Three current ones come to mind. There is the eschatological anticipation of justice in Frances Schaeffer's *How Shall We Then Live?*¹ There is the salvaging and fulfillment of the self represented in Henri Nouwen's *Genessee Diary*.² There is the visionary and ecumenical motif of Hans Küng's *On Being a Christian*.³

I would propose a fourth model, which I can only style as biblical realism. The primary biblical funding for this model is the Sermon on the Mount (Matt. 5-7) and its Lucan counterpart (Lk. 6:20-23). In particular, its insights are drawn from the beatitudes, especially these three: "Blessed are the poor, for yours is the kingdom of God" (Lk. 6:20b); "Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called the children of God" (Matt. 5:9); "Blessed are they who do hunger and thirst after righteousness, for they shall be filled" (Matt. 5:6).

An adequate theological base for Christian life styles drawn from biblical realism must incorporate human existence as actually lived. I call this the indicative dimension of life style. It is where we all are. It comes by virtue of heredity and environment. This "isness" incorporates the inequities of life and the inevitable dimensions of our finitude. This is the descriptive phase of human life style. A Christian expression about life style that ignores the reality and actuality of human existence is hopelessly utopian. This phase of life style is grammatically styled indicative. A participle which is appropriate for this phase is coping.

A second basis for a theological life style based on biblical realism is a description of what might be. The grammatical indicator for this phase is the subjunctive. The participle particular to this phase is choosing. The beatitude applicable to the choosing phase of theological life style is that of peacemakers. A life style of biblical realism must include the intentional element of choice or it becomes fatalistic and predestinarian.

The third theological base for Christian life style employs the grammatical symbol of the imperative. Its ascriptive participle is changing. The beatitude most appropriate to this theological base is the one pertaining to hungering and thirsting after righteousness. A theological life style that does not include the thought of change loses both its vision and its virtue.

Each of these bases may be related to a theological

virtue. The virtue appropriate to the indicative of coping with its beatitude of blessing to the poor is love. The virtue of the subjunctive of choosing with its beatitude of the peacemaker is power. And the virtue appropriate to the imperative of changing with its beatitude for those hungering and thirsting after righteousness is power.⁴ There pertains a gift of the Spirit to each basis of a biblical realistic view of life style. To the indicative of coping with the beatitude of blessing to the poor and its virtue of love is added the gift of hope. Without the gift of hope, the indicative would end in despair.

To the subjunctive of choosing with its beatitude of blessing for the peacemakers and its virtue of power is added the gift of love. Without the gift of love the choices of the subjunctive would end in depravity.

To the subjunctive of choosing with its beatitude of hunger and thirsting after righteousness and its virtue of justice is added the gift of faith. Without the freeing power of faith changing would end as blind determinism.

Since what is projected in this programmatic essay is the skeletal outline for a major book of Christian ethics and life style permit me the simplicity of a theological chart. (I would like for you to realize that they are not merely the possessions of the eschatological groups.)

Beatitude

Blessed are the poor

Blessed are the

peacemakers

Blessed are those who

hunger and thirst after

righteousness

Mood

Indicative

Subjunctive

Imperative

Participle

coping

choosing

changing

Virtue

love

power

justice

Gift

hope

love

faith

The Indicative of Coping

For the majority of the world's population, there is no option in life style. There is only the legacy of coping. Most people cannot choose a life style. They must come to grips with the realities of what their circumstances indicate. Life has no style for the poor, only a set of conditions. Of this group, the biblical material is fully cognizant. And for this group, biblical faith promises the kingdom of God. To their group Christian theology has offered all too often only another wordly version of the Kingdom of God. Therefore, among this group, Christian theology is losing its credibility. And large numbers of this group are turning to secularized ideologies which will grant them a power of choice in changing their circumstances and a chance to taste the fruits of the kingdom here and now.

Biblical materials dealing specifically with those who are in the indicative of coping are the eighth century writing prophets, the message of Jesus covering God's compassion for those who cannot help themselves, some of the ethical injunctions of Paul, and particularly the book of James. Contemporary theological movements which are dealing especially with this phase of a life style of biblical realism are: liberation theology,⁵ women's theology,⁶ and black theology.⁷

Particular groups to be considered in the indicative coping category are: the economically disadvantaged, who are monetarily poor; the physically disadvantaged, who are the infirm poor; the psychologically disoriented, who are the confused poor; and the socially disowned, who are the discriminated poor.

It is obvious that the dispossessed of earth possess the virtue of love. For if they had not had the compassion of love for others in related circumstances, none of them would have survived. And if they had not demonstrated the capacity of love toward others, even those who have power and administer human justice, society would not have survived. There has been the posture of a sociological, common grace.

To these who can only cope, Christian theology must speak a word of hope. And this word of hope must involve the virtues of power and justice. Our word of hope cannot be merely a promise of an other-worldly kingdom of God. Our word of hope must include a sharing of the virtue of power, which is the only way that we can demonstrate our own gift of love and keep our own faith in the midst of the imperatives of change, which we should joyfully accept, rather than merely tolerate. Notable examples of those who give hope to those who must cope with the indicatives of life are Tolstoy, Dorothy Day, Tom Dooley, Sister Theresa.

There are many current cultural expressions which highlight the conditions of those who cope with the inequities of the indicative. Most prevalent among these are examples of ethnic coping. These include: Alex Haley's *Roots*, and the older works of Richard Wright and Alan Paton; the dramas *Don't Bother Me I Can't Cope*, and *Four Colored Girls Who Contemplate Suicide When the Rainbow Is Not Enough*.

Christian theology must know the "poor" who are promised the kingdom of God. And knowing we must care. And caring we must share the power so that we can keep the faith—our faith that change, which is inevitable, must not follow a violent, revolutionary pattern.

My assumption is that most middle class American Christians and, such are some of you, are in the choosing spectrum of life styles. Nor will I permit you to attenuate my categories by suggesting that there are areas in which you too must merely cope. The case is granted, but not to the degree that we neutralize the cry of those who can only cope. We must speak words of appreciation for their forbearing love. We must do acts of sharing power which will give them hope. We must work creatively in the change of their ongoing history so that they and we may have faith that justice will prevail. It should prevail because of choice and not because of an inevitable dialectic of history which merely exchanges the places of the coping and the changing.

These are the indicative conditions of the coping.

They have been promised the kingdom of God. They have exhibited the virtue of caring love to their fellows and restraining love to those who have the power of change. Hope must be a gift for them, for in themselves they have no reason to hope. This is the life style of the majority of the world's people.

The Subjunctive of Choosing

The very phrase "choosing of a life style" implies affluence, mobility, and viable alternatives. The majority of the world's people are indeed in the indicative of a given circumstance. The subjunctive is a luxury. Being able to choose a life style implies the power to make and effect various choices. The power of the subjunctive which may choose various life styles may be the military power of strength, the economic power of wealth, or the intellectual power of education. The bourgeoisie and the wealthy of earth are in this subjunctive of power.

There are for the powerful subjunctive a wide degree and spectrum of life styles. These life styles range from the opulence of the super-rich (the late Marjorie Meriweather Post is an example of the opulent super-rich) to the intentional simplicity of those who could afford more (see here the capricious simplicities of J. Paul Getty, H. L. Hunt, and Howard Hughes). The general trend of persons who are in the power of the subjunctive is toward a higher and a more complicated socio-economic structure of life (a caricature of this middle class mobility is in Cyra McFadden's *Serial: A Year in the Life of Marin County*).⁸

The majority of the power of those who have subjunctive choice of life styles is expended on themselves that they may have higher mobility, richer life styles, and more prestigious and secure ways and means of living.

The biblical materials do not completely condemn the upward mobility choice of life styles. But Scripture does suggest: (1) that the rich and powerful tend to depend more on themselves and less on God (the Synoptic Gospels, especially Jesus' teachings); (2) that the wealthy tend to get their wealth at the expense of the poor, and that this is reprehensible in the sight of God (the eighth century prophets especially Amos); (3) that those who have power and mobility are responsible to assist those who do not (the book of James).

The Christian community has often softened this critique of power or blunted the effect of the judgment upon the rich: (1) By aligning itself formally with the politically and materially powerful (the state church); (2) By defending and promulgating the political and economic structure which promote the *status quo* of the affluent (the church in the Babylonian captivity in culture as described by the liberation theologians); (3) And by securing for itself power and privilege and wealth for the perpetuation and well-being of its own ecclesiastical structures and institutions (the ecclesial luxuries whose fringe groups such as the Mormons and the Unification Church leave the old line denominations aghast at their overt display of wealth and simony, but whose economic use of power is only more crassly qualitative than that of standard denominations).

The virtue of the subjunctive of choosing life styles is power. It is precisely this virtue which is also the vice. Power may be used in corrupt or beneficial ways. This is

why the powerful must exercise the gift of agape love or their virtue will become the vice which destroys them. Just as the virtue of the coping, which is love, can become their vice of greed and desire, so the virtue of the powerful, which is their power, may become their destructive use of power. Even as the virtue of the coping which is love must be united with their gift which is hope, so must the virtue of the choosing which is power be united with the gift to the choosing which is love. When the choosing abandon their gift of love and misuse their virtue of power, selfish aggression and callous exploitation results. What should become evident is that the coping and the choosing are inevitably and dialectically bound together in the inevitable web of the changing brought by the ongoing process of history.

Since the powerful subjunctive of the choosing are more responsible by virtue of their power, the church may do several things in order to enhance the proper use of the virtue of power and in order to bring to full fruition the gift of love by which they ought to perform. For if the powerful do not exercise their gift of love, they will use their power in such a way that they will frustrate the gift of hope among the coping. They will destroy the gift of faith in the changing life styles changing it into a merciless fatalism, which merely reverses the roles of the coping and the choosing in history. They will abort their own good gift of love and opt for a destructive use of power. In the light of these alternatives, the choosing must choose to love and the church must proclaim that choice unambiguously.

The church must remind her members of the rigorous judgment of God on those who misuse power, and this judgment does indeed begin "in the house of the Lord." The church must call for a sharing of power, all forms of power, in benevolent ways so that the coping can have hope, the choosing can exercise their gift of love, and the changing styles of history may be anticipated in faith and be believed in with courage. The church should strongly encourage some reversal in the upward mobility of life styles for the sake of accomplishing her larger tasks. The church should model and embody some simplification of life styles and use of power (cf. the Episcopal Diocese of New York and its determination to leave unfinished, for the time, the Cathedral of St. John the Divine for the larger crises of sharing in the midst of its ghetto context). The church (including and especially Southern Baptists) should encourage intentional communities and experiments in sharing, simplified life styles. One might cite as examples the Koinoinia experiment of Clarence Jordan at Americus, Georgia, the Taize protestant community of Europe,⁹ and even the secularized versions of the simplified life styles of the American youth sub-cultures of the sixties.

The numerous cultural expressions of the powerful subjunctive who choose their life styles reflect more upward mobility than intentional simplification. One thinks here of Sinclair Lewis' *The Great Gatsby* and *Citizen Kane*. Less successful and more poignant examples of those who struggle for upward mobility but do not achieve it are found in the works of Tennessee Williams and Arthur Miller, especially in the latter's play *The Death of a Salesman*.

I perceive it to be one task of theology to advise the powerful choosing subjunctive about life styles. We must remind those choosing the upward mobile life

style of their obligations to love the coping and share with them. We must remind those struggling to preserve the status quo life style that their motives cannot be selfish or else they will lose their gift of love. We must remind those blessed few who are opting for simpler life styles that they should not do so merely to make their lives more spartan, but that they should do so in order to share their power and thus embody the beatitude of blessing for the peacemakers, who are indeed the children of God. It is entirely possible that only those who opt for intentional simplicity and sharing love will be able to function in the role of peacemakers in the process of changing in which both the coping and the choosing must participate.

The Imperative of Changing

In this section, I am less concerned to describe or advise concerning the status of individual life styles. The focus is broader. Both the coping and the choosing are involved in the life styles of changing. The grammatical structure of this life style is the imperative, the participle of this imperative is changing. Older static categories of being have given way to newer descriptions of reality which are called becoming.¹⁰

The biblical categories and descriptions of reality seem to be particularly amenable to the imperative of changing. The pilgrim age of the people of God in the Exodus is a venture in becoming.

All conversionist theologies and philosophies, both religious and secular, presuppose change as an ongoing condition of existence. They must make some provision in their ideologies as to how change is possible. There have been two streams of thinking about change: (1) the predestinarian stream represented by Calvinism and communism, which sees change as inevitable; and (2) the voluntarist stream represented by Wesleyanism and free enterprise which sees human decision as possible and desirable in the process of changing. If the former seems grimly pessimistic, the latter is, at points, naively utopian.

My point is that theology should be involved in preparation for and the process of change. I share the biblical realist's eschatological view that change is desirable. I share the modern philosophical view that change is inevitable. We deal with becoming not being. I see, increasingly, the value of a semi-Pelagianism which cannot espouse predestinarian fatalism or be convinced of the reality of naive voluntarism. As facilitator of change in the life styles of individuals and societies, the church must hold firmly to the virtue of changing which is justice. Without the virtue of justice, change would be merely a reversal of the roles of the coping and the choosing. Without justice, changing is a blind fatalism guided either by a capricious deity or by corrupt earthly powers. Neither Christianity nor communism could live with the notion that justice, as each conceives it, is not guiding the process of change. Without the virtue of justice, the imperative of changing would become a nightmare of serial life styles.

The gift which the imperative of changing must bring to its virtue of justice is faith. The faith that informs justice is the faith that what ought to be can be. Since life styles must change, let justice be the abiding vision of their change and let the faith that the vision can be accomplished be the attitude in which life styles change.

If there is no faith in justice, then the beatific vision of religion, the freedom and justice for all of democracy, and the utopian classless society of communism are all equally voided.

The gift of faith necessary to the virtue of justice is expressed in Scripture by Abraham, Moses, and Christ on his way to the cross. Politically, faith in the justice of the imperative of changing is exemplified by Israel in Egypt, Spartacus in Rome, the revolutionaries for independence in America in 1776, in Russia in 1916, and in China even more recently. The difference among revolutionaries is not in their necessary vision of justice, which all must share in. The difference lies in the ultimate guarantor and basis of that justice. At this vital point, Christian theology must affirm God as the final basis for justice in tension with all political, social, and economic systems. Secular examples of the imperative of change which seeks justice are found in the arena of sociology, politics, economic theories, and the arts and literature based upon them. (For example, Thomas Hobbes' *Leviathan* as a literary expression of his social theory of the contrast state; Thomas Swift's *Gulliver* as a satire against the excesses of bureaucracy; B. F. Skinner's novel *Walden Two* as an expression of his behavioral sociology; Ayn Rand's novels *The Fountainhead* and *Atlas Shrugged* as an example of laissez-faire capitalism; Spenser's *Faerie Queene* as a tribute to monarchy, etc. It would provide grist for many a doctoral thesis to compile and critique forms of the arts which are used to protect and protest the cause of justice and theodicy.)

The beatitude which is applicable to the imperative of changing life style with its virtue of justice and its gift of faith is "blessed are those who hunger and thirst after righteousness for they shall be filled." This eschatological promise, and I do not mean by eschatology merely other-worldly insights but all the ultimate aspirations of this life, must be held in faith.

Theology, and the church it serves (for I perceive theology as a prophetic servant of the church) must declare its faith in the vision of justice necessary to the imperative of changing life styles. Theology must advise the choosing that they should choose a changing life style which embodies justice. The choosing must not choose a changing life style merely because it is thrust upon them. This would make a virtue of necessity. The choosing must choose a changing life style involving justice because only then can they exercise their gift of love. Only then can they have faith in a just future and not a fear of a fatalistic future. Theology must advise those of the indicative, coping life style that their change should be with a decision of justice and not merely a reversal of the roles with the choosing. Only then can the coping exercise their virtue of love. Only then can they adequately fulfill their gift of hope. The imperative and the changing life styles must hold the requirement of hungering and thirsting after righteousness before both the coping and the choosing so that the future will contain the beatitude which God intends for all creation.

Conclusion

Life styles are ways of being and becoming. The coping are. Theirs is the imperative of givenness. Their

basic virtue is love, which if it had not been expressed in persevering patience, would have given place to a rage that would destroy us all. Their only gift is hope and we dare not deprive them of it by using our power without love or envisaging an imperative changing future without justice. Their promise is the kingdom of God. Sooner or later they shall have it.

The choosing are ourselves who may exercise the luxurious subjunctive of selecting life styles. Our basic virtue of power must be exercised in the gift of love or the coping will be deprived of hope. We are responsibly charged and blessed with being the peacemakers, the children of God. Our midwifery is to birth changing life styles that are just and gifted with faith.

Changing life styles are imperative. They will involve both the coping and the choosing. The imperative of choosing life styles is inevitable. The participants in changing life styles are both the coping and the choosing. The vision of changing life styles has the virtue of justice. The gift of changing life styles is faith—a faith in the future of the yet unborn shapes of our becoming. The imperative is blessed only so long as it entertains the beatitude of hungering and thirsting after righteousness. These are our ways of being, of opting, choosing, or becoming. Our virtues are love, power, and justice. Our gifts are hope, love, and faith.

All being, opting, becoming; all love, power, and justice; all hope, love, and faith; all beatitudes, are *from* God. Our task is to use them wisely in constructing life styles that give glory *to* God. We're not through yet.

FOOTNOTES

¹ New Jersey: (F. H. Revell Co., 1976).

² Henri Nouwen, *Genesee Diary*.

³ Trans. from German by Edward Quinn (New York: Doubleday and Company, 1976).

⁴ Cf. Paul Tillich, *Love, Power, and Justice*, (New York: Oxford University Press, 1954).

⁵ Miguez Bonino, *Doing Theology In a Revolutionary Situation*, (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1975). See also Gustavo Gutierrez, *A Theology of Liberation: History, Politics and Salvation*, Trans., and ed. Sister Caridad Ina and John Eagleson, (New York: Orbis Books, 1973).

⁶ Mary Daly, *Beyond God the Father: Toward a Philosophy of Woman's Liberation*, (Boston: Beacon Press, 1973). See also Rosemary Radford Ruether, ed. *Religion and Sexism: Images of Woman in the Jewish and Christian Tradition*, (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1970); Clara Benedics Fischer, Betsy Brennehan, and Anne McGraw Bennett, *Women in a Strange Land: Search for a New Image*, (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1975).

⁷ Albert B. Cleage, Jr., *The Black Messiah* (New York: Sheed and Ward, 1968). See also James Hal Gore, *Black Theology and Black Power* (New York: Seaburg Press, 1969); also by Gore is *A Black Theology of Liberation*, Eric Lincoln Series in Black Religion, (Philadelphia: J. B. Lippincott Co., 1970). In addition, see Joseph R. Washington, Jr., *Black Religion: The Negro and Christianity in the United States*, (Boston: Beacon Press, 1964).

⁸ (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, Inc., 1971).

⁹ Andreas Stokl, *Faige: Geschichte und Leber de Boudier Von Faige*, (Hamburg: Verlag, 1975).

¹⁰ Pierre Teilhard de Chardin, *The Phenomenon of Man*, Trans., Bernard Wall, (New York: Harper, 1959). See also Peter Gay, *The Enlightenment*, (New York: Time Inc., and Silver Burdett Co., 1966); John Herman Randal, *The Making of the Modern Mind*, (New York: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1954); George Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel, *The Philosophy of History*, trans., J. Sibree, William Benton Publisher (Encyclopedia Britannica, Inc., Chicago, London, Toronto, 1952), pp. 153-369; Karl Marx, *The Communist Manifesto*, ed., Max Eastmann, (New York: Modern Library, 1932).

THE PROPHETIC PASTOR IN A WORLD OF CHANGING LIFESTYLES

Liston O. Mills

I am delighted to be with you for several reasons, not the least of which is that I have had opportunity to see people I have not seen for twenty years. They know me, and they know better than to pay attention to the introduction, and they wonder what I am doing here. I have wondered the same thing. Pastoral Theologians have not usually been known as prophets, and I assure you that I am neither one myself nor the son of one. I feel then, not only in speaking to you but also in the topic assigned to me, much like the farm wife who, with her husband, had retired and moved to town. She was awakened on their first night by the town clock and counted as it struck thirteen. Whereupon she punched her husband and said, "Wake up, Paw, it's later than it's ever been before."

To address the question of prophetic pastors and changing lifestyles brings to mind all sorts of tempting dichotomies. We have shown considerable ingenuity in some of the cliches we have developed to deal with the tension inherent in our topic. Thus, we could talk about prophets versus priests; or we could raise the issue of the individual versus the social. It would be natural for me to talk about directive versus non-directive, or about judgment versus acceptance. We could talk about talking since prophets are stereotyped as doing a good deal of that, and we could juxtapose talking to listening.

In these and many other ways we have caricatured prophets on the one hand and people in pastoral care on the other. As tempting as these topics are, I have decided not to approach the subject in such fashion. What I would like to do instead is to describe a prophetic pastor as one who seeks to play a part in creating an intentional community, a community which, first, has a certain understanding of the source of life and, second, a certain sense of responsibility for the shaping of life.

It is as such confession as it is observation when I call attention to the church's responsibility to direct us to the source of life. Perhaps it is a function of my middle-age, but I am more and more impressed with what seems to me to characterize many people I know. They seem to seek the place or the relations or the conditions in life in the midst of which they may flourish and grow and be strong. Moreover, our quest is intensified by our experience of the fragility of life. I am not simply depressed when I confess to my discovery of the delicate texture of the things and relations I hold most dear. The things we count precious are easily destroyed.

My friend and former colleague James Laney has noted how the affirmation of what he describes as the "essential vulnerability" of life stands in contradiction to the bravado which characterized the sixties.¹ Then we appeared persuaded that if we're active enough, we could move from victory to victory until finally we brought in the kingdom. But the cynical manipulations of trust, the crude exploitations of entrusted power, the crisis of the family—all these experiences revealed to us some of the ways in which our lives and our institutions are vulnerable. They have awakened us to our misplaced

concern for the source of life, and caused us to seek again that grace, that gift of life itself which will enable us to flourish. It seems to me that if we are to speak of lifestyles, we must locate the issue in the quest of humankind to discover the grace and gift of life. For the "new" lifestyles which we either applaud or lament reflect this quest and are attempts to deal with our weakness and vulnerability.

When we affirm an experience of vulnerability at the core of life, some of our responses are more easily understood. The church and its ministry are as tempted as anyone to develop ways of life which will insulate us from our threats. Withdrawal, defensiveness, hardness and accusation, cynicism about power, grasping after power so that we may use it for righteousness' sake—such responses do indeed make us more invulnerable. They protect us; they put shields about us. But they neither nourish our strength, nor do they make our common life more humane. They protect us, but the protection and fulfillment they offer is finally destructive of the very life we seek.

Other responses to our vulnerability have led us to individualism, to innumerable therapies, self-help schemes, and flights into "freedom." Not long ago I read an advertisement for a new magazine which held out the prospect of life if one would subscribe.² The areas they proposed to discuss included self-actualization techniques, Gestalt therapy, encounter groups, meditation, bio-energetics, hypnotherapy, relaxation techniques, self-analysis, primal therapy, psychoanalysis, altered states of consciousness, and some ten other modes of changing ourselves.

Again, change is often recommended as a source of life. A recent story in a San Francisco paper quotes with approval: "Adults don't stay put the way they used to. Everywhere you look, people are moving around, changing jobs, going back to school, getting divorced, starting over, in short. At age 30, 40, 50, 60, there's no end to it."³ Along similar lines a recent writer has invoked the folk wisdom of our day in a litany of advice: we should quit putting ourselves down; we should not try to be something we're not; we're O.K.; we should hang loose; be free; get off our head trip and trust our feelings; get our own needs met and stop worrying about other people; be self-affirming and start doing your own thing; thinking is out and feeling is in; duty is out and freedom is in; relationships and commitments are out unless they contribute to our self-fulfillment.⁴

It would seem that our confidence in our capacity to alter society has been superseded by our confidence in our ability to refashion ourselves. Vulnerability and finitude are not the actual state of human beings. They are accidental and may be remedied by new experience. We are only fragments of what we may become. Do not copies of the Esalen catalogue advise us that "you don't have to suffer to feel good", or ask us "how do you want to be alive in this world?" Such commentaries raise again the question as to where is the gift of life itself to be found? Is it in flight and in the fantasy that life is infinitely open and perfectable, or is it in coming to terms with our vulnerability?

I think it important at this point to pause and enter a disclaimer. I understand full well that much of what I have described has been helpful to a good many people.

I have no need or desire to discredit or to demean approaches to helping people that have been beneficial. However, I think it important to point out that many of the assumptions undergirding our preoccupation with lifestyles reflect an understanding of life that stands in contradiction to Christian faith. Perhaps some attention to the ways the gospel deals with our undoing will illumine this observation.

To what or to whom does the church point in its efforts to deal with vulnerability? In many ways it has simply bought into the self-fulfillment cult. In other ways it has had its own ways of denying our weakness. Many of us were taught, for example, that our vulnerability was a token of unfaith. The new birth promised deliverance and if one lacked assurance one lacked faith. Life was enclosed in rigid orthodoxies and pieties which assured us that we were alright. In effect, such affirmations sealed us off from the fountain of identity and community without which we perish.

A somewhat different understanding is presented by Paul in II Corinthians 12. It is the text, you will recall, in which Paul complains about a thorn in the flesh and finds solace in a rather puzzling and enigmatic answer: "My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness." It would seem that Paul is telling us that divine grace, that is power, is made manifest in the midst of weakness, or as we have described it, vulnerability. Paul felt himself exposed. He was ridiculed for his speaking, and his authority was rejected by the church in Corinth. His background was in question and his authority and credentials as an apostle were suspect. He claimed to have many matters of which he could boast but set aside the temptation even to brag of his religious experience. Instead he mentions an occasion on which he sought the removal of some handicap and was turned away as the only reason for boasting. He claims to have found strength in weakness, in vulnerability.

Paul saw grace manifest in the midst of life itself. Laney suggests that "at the moment when Paul felt least sure of himself in overwhelming, overpowering, intimidating, manipulating, and managing, when he was least the professional, strangely enough he was most in touch with the source of life and most adequate in his dealings with people."

It seems proper to interpret the incarnation and many of the teachings of Jesus in terms such as these. God made himself flesh in the incarnation, that is he made himself vulnerable. He was born of a woman, grew to manhood, and chose a vocation. And he was tempted, actually tempted, to make himself exempt from the exigencies of life, that is to make himself invulnerable.

Beyond this many of the teachings of Jesus depict the adequacy of grace in the midst of life. It is these who mourn, who are poor, and those who are persecuted who are blessed. And they are blessed because in their weakness, in their vulnerability of poorness or mourning or persecution, they discover grace. Such affirmation is not a confirmation of the status quo. It is instead an approach to life which finds in the acceptance of shared common vulnerability the grace of life itself.

To summarize, then, the source of life to which a prophetic pastor points is an affirmation of the human condition itself with the assurance that grace and strength come in the midst of that condition, not

in deliverance from it. I should go on to suggest that this notion of the source of life gives us a basis for understanding what identity and compassion and community are in personal and social life. It helps us to understand power not as our impact upon another person or another community or upon a social system by manipulation and management, but rather by a full participation in which we are exposed, and finally at the mercy of people. It is in this context that we discover the basis upon which any lifestyle is fashioned.

Self-understanding is rooted in an acknowledgment of vulnerability. Someone has said that "failure to understand oneself is not as innocent as other kinds of ignorance. Ignorance in general can be absorbed by good humor and the will to live. But ignorance of who one is muddies the waters at their source and the navigation of life can only be a kind of aimless wandering." Pretending to own strength and courage and certainty we do not possess seals us off from the grace which shows us who we are. The effort to affirm ourselves by flights to freedom and self-fulfillment, by denying our weakness, muddies the waters of self-knowledge at their source. The tendency to judge others by whether they have escaped vulnerability, and so are strong, finally distorts and perverts others.

Vulnerability visited by grace is also the seed bed of compassion and community. Compassion has its origins in empathy and identification. It stems from confessing the ways in which I am like other persons rather than boasting of the ways in which I fancy myself to be different. Compassion in turn ties us to people. The shedding of pretense summons us back to the condition we sought to escape so that we may be alive to where honest people live and where, I might add, if God has any concern at all, He will be found. This sense of being located, of having ties, of having come from someplace that is identifiable amongst people who have names and faces flies in the face of the denial of personal history and the tentativeness of commitment characteristic of many present panaceas. But it does seem to be the foundation for any sort of life-giving community.

I have emphasized the idea of the source of life as vulnerability touched by grace because it seems that lifestyles must be evaluated finally from a theological vantage point. They must be questioned as to their notions of the source and meaning of life. However, when I introduce the community, it becomes clear that our responsibility extends beyond simply affirming life in vulnerability; it also involves the shaping of life in moral deliberation and discourse. Finally, the question of lifestyles is one of both life and value.

James Gustafson maintains that traditionally the church as a particular kind of institution and community understood its interest to be at stake in what we believe about God, the source of our life.⁵ These beliefs form the ground for the ways we shape and order our lives. The therapeutic theology that characterizes the church today has to a great degree lost sight of this shaping task in its preoccupation with the healing and sustaining ones. It is important that we re-introduce some notion of the pastor's and the church's participation in the shaping of life and moral purpose.

It could be argued that our lack of attention to serious moral discourse reflects a de facto surrender to the ethics of fulfillment. Our confusion in the face of

the dilemmas of our day, e.g., lifestyles, violence in and between groups and classes and societies, control of the instruments of mass destruction, racial and religious animosities, etc., and our temptation to resort to ad hoc pronouncements would suggest that we have misplaced the art of serious conversation about matters of morals, or that we have agreed that such conversation is an invasion of privacy, i.e., nobody's business.

Since my own specialty has had a large part in separating healing and guiding, let me rely on two colleagues for their comments. Theron Nease of Columbia Presbyterian Theological Seminary argues that we have done our work well in understanding the work of ministry as shepherding, that is in calling attention to the healing and sustaining dimensions of ministry.⁶ But he is not satisfied with speaking of his work with people solely in terms of acceptance and tender and solicitous concern because this does not describe all that he feels it important to do. Nease's goal with a person is not simply that the person become insightful about his/her behavior, but that the person find new paths so that his action in society may change as well as his/her attitudes.

The shepherd image of the pastor as it is presently understood, Nease continues, does not permit the kind of active participation and guidance he thinks characterizes his care. He wishes to introduce the Old Testament wisdom literature as a more helpful supplementary image. The wise man was one who sought the moral keys which would open meaning so that it might be grasped and serve to clarify and give integrity to life. Wisdom was understood as a gift of God that had to do with the ordering of life. His experience would argue, Nease says, that persons in distress are not just seeking relief from anxiety; they are also declaring that they have "lost their counsel" and the right ordering of their lives. Instead of answers, they seek someone with whom they may discern their values and order their lives. Nease thus removes the work of the counselor solely from the realm of the therapeutic and has made a place for moral discourse and discussions of value in work with persons in distress.

Don Browning of the University of Chicago Divinity School locates the problem in a different place.⁷ Whereas Nease focuses on the understanding of ministry, Browning discusses the meaning of care in the church. He suggests that our care proceeds largely on the assumption that questions of obligation, duty, and right are to be disregarded; this, in turn, has fostered a neglect of the Old Testament and of the traditions of the church. Counseling has been identified with care and it has been understood essentially in terms of existential, developmental, and social problems that individual people have. It is not understood in terms of the incorporation of values and the setting of those priorities by which we live our lives. Browning says that once a person is freed of their intrapsychic and interpersonal conflicts, they still need to discern what is right; we cannot assume that simple freedom from conflict assures a person knows how or according to what values to order his/her life. He argues that pastoral care should enlarge its notion of care to include moral discourse and that this discourse should be understood as part of the counseling relation. He buttresses his argument by describing the church as the cultural

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Henlee H. Barnett

locus for coming to terms with society's view of the meaning of life in the world.

James Gustafson says that it is endemic to the church to become a moral community.⁸ By this he means a community in which moral discourse of a particular kind can take place. This conversation is informed by its traditions in Old as well as New Testament writings. Moreover, it is a conversation in which the language of ethics is utilized, i.e. ought, duty, right, wrong. It is a conversation in which ministers do not tell parishioners what to do but engage in serious conversation as all participate in a quest for values.

Our temptation is to respond to the new lifestyles with either approbation or disapproval and to social problems with activism. We need to learn again the possibilities of serious conversation about matters of moral concern so that together we may order the values which undergird our lives.

I know that the call for the pastor to understand the source of life in vulnerability touched by grace and to understand his/her responsibility in the shaping of life through the church as an arena of moral discourse presents problems for us. Our heritage offers us both handicap and possibility. We are tempted to collapse the call for vulnerability into cliches which have served us well and to miss the possibilities for grace in the new and different patterns of our lives. Talk of vulnerability and grace easily becomes nostalgic talk and a yearning for the way things were. Moral discourse is a treacherous term; it so easily becomes moralism. A call for respect for the tradition lends itself to biblicism and shibboleth.

Yet there are strengths among Baptists which hold the prospect of serving the whole church well. We have not relinquished our conviction that grace may make us whole and strong. Our affection for the tradition means that we have difficulty turning our backs on history. And our commitment to the moral seriousness of life has meant that we have not relinquished our commitment to questions of value.

Perhaps the real question for us is whether we are willing to confess our own vulnerability, to acknowledge that our answers are partial, and thus become part of an anguished mankind in its quest for life and value.

FOOTNOTES

¹ James T. Laney, "Vulnerability and Christian Growth," *Biennial Report of the Association for Professional Education for Ministry*, printed and distributed by the Association, 1974. I am indebted to Mr. Laney's discussion of "vulnerability" for many of the ideas expressed here.

² Winthrop D. Jordan, "Searching for Adulthood in America," *Daedalus* 105 (Fall, 1976):9.

³ *Ibid.*

⁴ Shirley C. Guthrie, Jr., "The Narcissism of American Piety: The Disease and the Cure," *Journal of Pastoral Care* 4 (December, 1977):220.

⁵ James Gustafson, *The Church as Moral Decision-Maker* (Boston, Philadelphia: Pilgrim Press, 1970).

⁶ Theron Nease, "Pastoral Care: Generativity or Stagnation," *Pastoral Psychology* 26 (Summer, 1978).

⁷ Don S. Browning, *The Moral Context of Pastoral Care* (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1977).

⁸ Gustafson, *op. cit.*, pp. 82ff.

From the Apostle Paul to the present, homosexual expression of sex behavior has been condemned by the Christian church. Currently it has become one of the most explosive and emotional issues confronting the Christian conscience. With the emergence and rapid growth of the gay liberation movement and the gay churches in the last decade, homophiles have come "out of the closets" all across the country. They are pressuring the traditional or straight churches to rethink and revise their traditional anti-homosexual theology so as not only to sanction homosexual behavior but to receive homosexuals into full fellowship of the churches with the right to ordination and same sex marriage.

Confronted with these challenges, what should be the response of the Christian and the churches? Providing an adequate answer to this question requires of the Christian some knowledge of homosexuality and biblical revelation. The issue requires rigorous thinking for so little is known about the homosexual as a person and even less about the cause or causes of his or her condition.

Due to limited time and space, this paper focuses primarily upon male homosexuality. The organization of what I have to say about homosexuality and Christian response is as follows: (1) an empirical perspective; (2) a theological-ethical perspective; and (3) toward a Christian response.

I. Homosexuality: Some Empirical Perspectives

Homosexuality is a term derived from the Greek word *homos* meaning one and the same. It is defined generally as sexual attraction between persons, male or female, of the same sex. Homosexuality is the overt act. This definition of homosexuality is inadequate because it does not distinguish between the degrees and types of homosexuality. Differential diagnosis is, therefore, essential to understanding the homosexual. On a heterosexual-homosexual continuum rating scale of 0 to 6, individuals can be classified according to their overt behavior, their psychic response, or both. Between the exclusive heterosexual and the exclusive homosexual there are different degrees of homosexuality.¹

Among the categories of homosexuality are: (1) transient homosexuality which occurs in the preadolescent period and may stem from curiosity or experimentation; (2) substitutive or situational homosexuality where there is an absence of the opposite sex such as during periods of prison confinement; (3) pseudohomosexuality or latent homosexuality in which the person has either a conscious or unconscious impulse toward homosexual behavior but does not overtly act on it; (4) episodic homosexuality in which the person engages in both homosexual and heterosexual activities; and (5) exclusive homosexuality in which the person consistently engages in homosexual activity.²

Stereotypical thinking about the homosexual is fallacious. There is no such person as a "typical" homosexual. For example, the popular notion that all homosexuals are effeminate, has no foundation in fact. According to C. A. Tripp, effeminacy is relatively rare in homosexuality.³ The fact is that masculinity is highly

valued in gay society. Other myths about homosexuality such as all are brilliant, artistic, boy molesters, and promiscuous have long since been exploded, but they linger on.⁴

Homosexual practices vary in the sex act. Mutual masturbation, oral-genital contacts, femoral intercourse, and anal intercourse are common practices among male homosexuals.

Places of homosexual happenings are gay bars, coffee shops, autos, public restrooms ("gay tearooms"), parks, and parking lots. These are cruising grounds where liaisons frequently take place.⁵ Promiscuity is frequent among male homosexuals. They are more often concerned with a "one-night stand" and a succession of partners than settling down to a permanent relationship. Obviously such sexual encounters are impersonal and primarily for sexual satisfaction.⁶

Homosexuality is a complex phenomenon with multiple causation. More than sixty-five etiological factors have been reported in male homosexuality alone.⁷ Among the major theories of causation are: (1) constitutional or biological/genetic or hormonal factors;⁸ (2) Freud's view underlying castration anxiety and unresolved Oedipal situations; and (3) the pathogenic family which is the most prevalent theory today. It is held that a parental constellation of a detached, hostile father and a possessive, dominating, overprotective and "demasculinizing" mother is the most significant factor in the production of the homosexual. But the fact that many heterosexuals have similar backgrounds and do not go on to be homosexuals suggests that this theory is inadequate in and of itself. The fact is that homosexuality is multi-determined by biological, psychodynamic, socio-cultural, and situational factors.⁹

My own thinking on the matter of etiology is that homosexuality is largely learned or acquired. At birth, as Freud observes, human beings have the capacity for both heterosexual and homosexual orientation. There is really no inborn tendency toward either sexual life style. Homosexuality develops later in life as the sexual drive is conditioned by one's environment. "We may speak," says Churchill, "of a *tendency* toward heterosexuality and/or a *tendency* toward homosexuality. But this tendency is *acquired* and is a product of learning rather than a part of the individual's biological inheritance."¹⁰

Is homosexuality an illness? Students of the issue are divided in their opinions. Psychiatrist Edmund Bergler, after 30 years of treating homosexuals, concludes that "they are sick people."¹¹ He thinks that it is a neurotic disease with ten unconscious factors involved: (1) a homosexual is "an exquisite injustice collector, and consequently a psychic masochist"; (2) a fugitive from women; (3) flees to man as an antidote to the woman he fears; (4) he is perpetually on the prowl "cruising" (seeking a short term partner); more than the heterosexual, he specializes in one-night stands; (5) he uses the husband-wife camouflage or smoke screen so as to appear as a heterosexual; (6) a megalomaniacal outlook on life—convinced of his superiority over others; (7) he has gay hilarity which is a thin pseudo-phoric camouflage; (8) he has inner guilt arising from the perversion which denotes infantile sex encountered in an adult; (9) he exhibits irrational jealousy; and (10) he is unreliable and uses unsavory short cuts and detours of conspiracy.¹²

Martin Hoffman, who represents the position of many students of homosexuality, declares that in itself homosexuality does not necessarily indicate mental illness. Psychiatric studies, he observes, are based on samples that are not necessarily representative of the homophile community. Hence, he concludes: "Homosexuals seen in psychiatric treatment are no more representative of homosexuals in the general population than are Jews seen in psychiatric treatment representative of all Jews."¹³

In 1974, the American Psychiatric Association substituted for homosexuality a new definition and category calling it "sexual orientation disturbance." This category is for persons whose sexual interests are directed primarily toward people of the same sex and who are either disturbed by, in conflict with, or wish to change their sexual orientation. This diagnostic category is distinguished from homosexuality, which in itself, does not necessarily constitute a psychiatric disorder.¹⁴

There does appear to be a higher incidence of neurotic personality disorder among homosexuals than among heterosexuals. But given a society like ours in which being a homosexual is to be subjected to ridicule, contempt, rejection, and punishment by the state, it would be a miracle if most homophile persons did not suffer emotional and mental illness.¹⁵ Yet many homosexuals function honorably and responsibly, often in positions of highest trust, and live well-adjusted lives except for their sexual preferences.

Homosexuality is the most common sexual deviation and occurs in most countries and among all socioeconomic classes. In 1948, Alfred Kinsey, et al., reported that no less than 37 percent of the male population had some homosexual experience between adolescence and old age.¹⁶ But these figures are faulty because they include individuals with only one homosexual experience. Kinsey states that about 4 percent of all white males are exclusively homosexual throughout their lives.¹⁷ Female incidence of homosexual experience was reported as less than half that for males.¹⁸

Irving Bieber estimates that there are two million homosexuals in America.¹⁹ Daniel Webster Cory, a homosexual writer, declares that there are more homosexuals than there are people with heart disease or cancer.²⁰ Lewis Williams concludes that there are at least 15 million homosexuals in this country and that they make up the nation's second largest minority group.²¹

The truth of the matter is that is impossible to determine with any degree of accuracy the number of homophiles in America. The social stigma related to homosexuality and persecution makes it dangerous to "come out of the closet" and be counted. The figures presented above may represent only the tip of the iceberg.

Can homosexuality be "cured"? Here again the specialists have a divergence of opinion. Gay liberationists are angered and irritated at the suggestion of prevention let alone cure or change. Almost all students of the problem agree that unless the homosexual really wants to change very little can be done toward effecting change. When homosexuals do seek to change, they do so because they have difficulty in attracting partners, problems of depression, self-realization, and some form of neurosis. If treatment fails to effect change, some psychiatrists attempt to help homosexuals to accept their

sexual orientation without shame and function as responsible persons.²²

For centuries the homosexual has been the subject of harassment, discrimination, persecution, and punishment by the state. Penalties for homosexual behavior in the United States range all the way from one year to life in prison in some states. In 31 states sex between consenting adults of the same sex is a crime. (Sodomy laws have been repealed in 19 states: California, Colorado, Connecticut, Delaware, Hawaii, Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Maine, Nebraska, New Hampshire, New Mexico, North Dakota, Ohio, Oregon, South Dakota, Washington, West Virginia and Wyoming). No consistency prevails in the application of laws against homosexuals by judges, juries, and policemen. Some homosexual law reform has been initiated, notably by the Wolfenden Committee in England, the American Law Institute in America, the American Psychiatric Association, and the National Institute of Mental Health. All call for decriminalization of private sexual behavior between consenting adults.²³

II. Homosexuality in the Context of Theology

Any Christian who takes the issue of homosexuality seriously must view it not only from the standpoint of empirical data but also from the perspective of biblical revelation. These data must be interpreted in the context of theological understanding.

Biblical Perspectives on Homosexuality. Genesis 19:4-11 is most often cited as a major teaching about homosexuality. In this passage, the men of Sodom demanded that Lot turn over to them his two guests that they might "know them" (v. 5). By some it is argued that this phrase means to "get acquainted" and that the central teaching of the passage is not the sin of sodomy but of inhospitality.²⁴ But the phrase "to know" (*Yada*) means carnal knowledge. The same word is used in v. 8 where Lot offers his virgin daughters to the men of Sodom in lieu of his guests.²⁵ Judges 19 tells a similar story. In this passage (v.5) there can be no doubt that *Yada* means homosexual coitus.

It is true that both of these stories deal with intended homosexual rape and not homosexual relationships between consenting adults. Even so this does not mean that homosexual behavior was condoned if it were not rape or between consenting adults. Indeed, Leviticus 18:22 and 20:23 clearly teaches that homosexual sex relations between consenting Israelite males were considered wrong because they violate the male and female order of creation.

In the New Testament Jesus never mentions homosexuality. In Romans 1:26-27, Paul speaks of heterosexuals, both men and women, who have "exchanged natural relations" for "unnatural relations." Here homosexuality is placed within the context of idolatry. The people had become confused about the identity of God (v. 23 which resulted in a confusion about their own identity. Hence, they perverted natural human sexuality into homosexuality (vv. 25-27).

In I Cor. 6:9-10, Paul includes homosexuals in a catalogue of the kinds of persons whose behavior is not in conformity to the will of God. *Malakoi* and *Arsenokoitai* are in the list and they shall not inherit the kingdom of God. *Malakoi* has the meaning of soft with reference to persons and things. The King James

version puts it "effeminate". Walter Bauer notes that the terms relate to persons who are soft, effeminate, especially of catamites; "men and boys who allow themselves to be misused homosexually."²⁶

While there may be some doubt about the specific meaning of *Malakoi* in the above passage, there can be none about the meaning of *Arsenokoitai*. It is translated "homosexuals" in the R.S.V., "pervert" by Phillips, and "homosexual perverts" by T.E.V. Thayer's *Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament* puts it: "One who lies with a male as with a female; sodomite." Bauer agrees that the term means sodomite.²⁷ Sodomy is also condemned in I Tim. 1:10 and Jude 7.

Some writers have sought to "read out" homosexual behavior between consenting adults in all of the above passages. In each case it is said that homosexuality is condemned in terms of rape or male prostitution rather than sex between consenting male adults. At any rate there is not a single passage in the Bible that supports consensual sex relations between male adults. The fact remains that there is a general condemnation of homosexuality (overt act) in both the Old and New Testaments.

Theologizing About Homosexuality. The church Fathers, the Reformers (Luther and Calvin) and other Christian theologians through the centuries have condemned homosexual behavior. In the Catholic tradition, Aquinas reasons that sex organs must be used for procreation. Hence, sodomy and bestiality are wrong because nature's rule of heterosexuality is violated.²⁸ John Calvin opposed homosexuality declaring that not even the beasts are guilty of such perversion of nature.²⁹

In the tradition of the Fathers and Reformers, Karl Barth rejects the homosexual orientation and relates it, as does Paul (Romans 1:27-28) to idolatry.³⁰ In Barth's opinion, homosexuality is "the physical, psychological and social sickness—perversion, decadence and decay which can emerge when man refuses to admit the validity of the divine command" ³¹ Romans, chapter 1, reveals how homosexuality becomes humanity without fellow-humanity which is rooted in the togetherness of man and woman. So inhumanity results from an ideal of a masculinity free from a woman and a femininity free from man. In short, for Barth, homosexuality is willful and deliberate sin, a refusal to hear the divine command. But he adds that the doctor, the pastor trained in psychotherapy, the legislator, and the judge must know God's grace as well as his demand and put forth their best efforts for the protection of youth.³²

Helmut Thielicke criticizes Barth for his lack of charity and human understanding and makes a plea for law reform relating to homosexuality. He favors placing it on a plane along with disease and suffering as contrary to God's will in creation. Moreover, the homosexual must be willing to be treated so as to be brought back into the order of creation. Thielicke almost sanctions homosexual love but ends up by counseling sublimation.³³

A statement by some English Quakers in 1963 fully sanctions the homosexual life-style. It calls upon Christians to reevaluate their traditional attitudes toward homosexuality. Homosexual acts, it is claimed, are neutral. Homosexuality, therefore, can be used for either good or evil and should be no more deplored than "left-handedness."³⁴ It is the nature and quality of the relationship that matters, for homosexual affection can

be as selfless as heterosexual affection and is not morally worse.³⁵

III. *Homosexuality in an Ethical Context*

Christian ethics seeks to identify the grounds, guidelines, and goals of human character and conduct in terms of the will of God as revealed in Jesus Christ as Lord.

Christian ethics looks to the sciences for **what is**, for facticity about the context of Christian action, and to the norms of Scripture for **what ought to be** in particular moral decision-making. In this way the text of Scripture is transposed from its historical and cultural setting and related to contemporary moral issues, clarified by the sciences. This means that the ethicist must gather as much empirical data as possible from the sciences about homosexuality and interpret these accurately and objectively. Then in the light of the Christian ethic one can act more intelligently and effectively.

Agape (love) is the central ethical motif in the New Testament. It means to will the well-being of all of God's creatures and creation. God is love and the ground of our loving (I John 4:8, 11). As a God of love, he wills our well-being and we in turn will the well-being of ourselves and others. Among other things one's well-being includes health, happiness, justice, mercy, truth, forgiveness, and reconciliation in human relations. This sort of love is not sentimental and does not sanction persecution of persons, racial prejudice, economic oppression, and sexual immorality. Rather it works for the fullest possible development of personhood.

Criteria for the conduct of the Christian are spelled out in the fruit of the Spirit: love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control (Galatians 5:22-23). Love heads the list, and love without justice is an abstraction. Justice, forgiveness, and reconciliation are instruments of love, giving it direction and concreteness.

Christian ethics recognizes that Jesus Christ is "the criterion by which the Bible is to be interpreted."³⁶ He is the hermeneutical key to our understanding of the historically and culturally conditioned teachings of both the Old and New Testaments which do not apply to our contemporary situation. To cite a few examples: the death penalty for adultery (Leviticus 20:10) and for a child who strikes or curses his parents (Lev. 20:9); witchcraft (Lev. 20:27); eating certain foods (Lev. 11:6-12; 21:17-24); women required to wear veils and to keep silent in the churches (I Cor. 11:2-16; 14:34) and to refrain from wearing jewelry (I Pet. 3:3). These and similar passages in Leviticus are ritual laws; the Pauline and Petrine passages have to do with practical problems in local churches.

Jesus was concerned with the moral law, not ritual law. He never taught in terms of rules. Rather he laid down guiding moral principles which can be universalized and applied in every age. He never abrogated the moral laws of prohibition against sexual impurity, killing, divorce, and retaliation (Matt. 5:17-48).

While the gospel records nowhere indicate that Jesus dealt with the issue of homosexual behavior, he nowhere affirms, permits, or condones it. Rather he reaffirms heterosexual marriage as God's original intention (Matt. 19:1-9). Indeed the whole canon of

Scripture clearly indicates that sexual expression should occur within the heterosexual model of marriage.

The biblical ethic of love recognizes the value of every person. Every individual is made in the image of God and therefore has inherent worth in the sight of God (Genesis 1:27). Jesus was the first to bring "the value of every human soul to light, and what he did no one can anymore undo."³⁷ He saw worth in a little child (Mark 10:13-16), a leper (Matthew 8:1-4), an adulterous woman (John 8:1-11), and publicans and sinners (Luke 15:1-10). He declared that a person is worth more than many sparrows (Matthew 10:13). And Paul warns us not to destroy a person "for whom Christ died" (Romans 14:15). To know a person in this sense is to love and to care for him regardless of his race, class, or condition.

In the light of love it is wrong to persecute, harass, discriminate against, or to destroy any person. Yet such injustices the homosexual has suffered at the hands of society and even the church. Like Blacks and other minority groups, the homosexual has been dehumanized often in the name of God!

The Christian ethic holds that homosexuality is not the unpardonable sin. It is held by some to be the "abominable sin," the worst one can commit. Yet it is not singled out by Paul as being any worse than thievery, idolotry, adultery, greediness, drunkenness, and slander (I Corinthians 6:9-10). So why identify homosexuality as the most terrible of sins? Why do church members not have the same abhorrence for the greedy person or the slanderer they have for the homosexual?

Scientific researchers are now tentatively agreed that homosexuality is learned or acquired in interpersonal relations. If homosexuality is learned, then there is a possibility of re-orientation toward the heterosexual life-style. Paul notes that some of the Corinthian Christians had been homosexuals. By faith in Christ they had been transformed, washed, justified, and sanctified by Jesus Christ and the spirit of God (I Corinthians 6:11). But even after such a religious experience, psychotherapy and pastoral care may be necessary to aid the person to sublimate his homosexual urge. The homosexual has the same problem of sublimation as that of the unmarried and married heterosexual. Hence, he can live morally or immorally as a homophile.

The gospel ethic of love is all inclusive. Agape impels us to love (will the well-being of) everyone, including our enemies (Matthew 5:43-48). One can love his enemies, but not his deeds. One can love the homosexual, but not his homosexuality. One can love divorced persons without condoning divorce. One can love a follower of Mohammed without accepting his beliefs and life-style.

In the light of current research and biblical revelation, the following conclusions appear to be valid. The weight of evidence points in the direction of learned—not inborn—homosexuality. The claim by homosexuals that "God made me this way" is a doubtful one. From the biblical perspective, homosexuality does not conform to the will of God. There is no evidence that the biblical writers were aware of latent or pseudo-homosexuality. Ethically speaking the homosexual is to be treated as a person with basic human rights. There is no biblical teaching relating to the moral viability of a loving, faithful, permanent relationship between partners of the same sex. Rather the biblical implications

are that this sort of arrangement is wrong. Perhaps a permanent relationship would be better, as some writers say, than "prowling promiscuity" or the "lesser of two evils", but it does not conform to the heterosexual norm.

IV. *Homosexuality Within the Context of the Church*

Every church is confronted with the issue of homosexuality within and without. Among those of this sexual orientation are ministers, church members, seminarians, and persons who hold positions of leadership in religious denominations. Hence, the churches can no longer ignore the problem. But as in the case of race relations, the churches are getting into the action too late and with too little.

Southern Baptists' traditional attitude toward homosexuals has been one of contempt rather than compassion, rejection rather than redemption. The following suggestions for a Christian ministry to homosexuals are beamed primarily to Southern Baptist Christians.

1. Our churches need to overcome their fear or "homophobia" of the homosexuals as persons. Such fear is a barrier to a positive ministry of the churches to them. Some homosexuals are lonely people who need Christian concern and understanding. Individual Christians can begin by becoming acquainted with a homosexual who may be a member of a church with a view to helping him in his efforts to live a Christian life.

2. Religious education programs can be developed to help church members to become knowledgeable about homosexuality from the biblical and scientific perspectives. Workshops and seminars on the subject can result in a more realistic view of the problem. Myths about homosexuality and stereotypes may be corrected. At the Convention level a task force should make a thorough study of the issue and provide guidelines for church action. Colleges and seminaries might provide courses on sexuality including homosexuality so that laypersons and ministers may learn how to deal with the issue in the local church.

3. Should homosexuals be admitted to church membership? Yes, if they meet the criteria applied to any other prospective member and seek to follow the biblical norms for sexual expression. The church is a redemptive fellowship in which we are all unfinished persons growing toward mature human beings, measured by the stature of Jesus Christ.

4. Should homosexuals be ordained to the ministry? Some churches have ventured to do so. Paul Moore, Episcopal bishop of New York, ordained a professed lesbian to the priesthood, but not without objections from the House of Bishops. The majority of the members of the task force of the United Presbyterian Church U.S.A. believes that homosexuals may be ordained if they manifest such gifts as are required for it.³⁸

But ordaining a practicing homosexual to the gospel ministry violates the clear biblical teaching against homosexuality. Further as a model for the congregation, the minister is to exemplify the Christian ideal in all areas of life including sex behavior. The same norms of behavior that apply to the heterosexual also apply to the homosexual in sexual activity. And in case a homosexual marries a partner of the same sex or even the other sex, there will be serious problems.

Such a "marriage" would violate the biblical model

of heterosexual marriage. If the couple decided to adopt children, their lack of attraction to the opposite sex may be imparted to the children. Would not such unions tend to undermine rather than strengthen the moral and spiritual foundations of the family? Does a church which ordains a homosexual who is living intimately with one of the same sex anticipate paying annuity to the surviving partner of a homosexual minister?

5. Preaching is a means of ministering to people who are lonely, frightened and persecuted. The pastor should seek to dispel the myths about homosexuality and warn members of the sin of despising and discriminating against others on the basis of their sexual orientation. Positively, the preacher can uphold the Christian ideal of heterosexuality and manifest the joys of this relationship.

6. Providing pastoral counseling is a positive way of ministering to homosexuals within and without the churches. A trained pastor in a local church can provide counseling for those who want to change to a heterosexual life-style. Parents especially need pastoral care when they discover that a son or daughter is a homosexual. The skilled pastor will know when to make referrals and when a person needs pastoral care and psychotherapy on a continuing basis.

7. Churches may engage in outreach ministries to homosexuals. Religious leadership may be provided where there is none in the homophile community. We have overcome to some degree our antipathy and anxiety about working with alcoholics, drug abusers, and racial minorities. Programs have been initiated to meet their spiritual needs. Now it is time to establish ministries to the second largest minority group in our midst—the homophile community.

8. It is the moral responsibility and task of the churches to work for the civil rights of all persons regardless of sexual preference. It is incredible that the Southern Baptist Convention which stresses separation of church and state, democracy, and freedom of religion would call for the denial of the basic civil rights of a minority group on the basis of sexual orientation.³⁹ But then one remembers that this same denomination a few short years ago called for the denial of the rights of Americans on the basis of the color of their skin.

If churches really believe in the Christian and democratic way of life, they should work actively to decriminalize laws against homosexual behavior between consenting adults and to eliminate discriminatory laws in employment, housing, and public facilities.

These suggestions are made as positive ways of Christianly responding to the challenge of homosexuality in the light of research and revelation. The church of Jesus Christ must provide a moral lead.

FOOTNOTES

¹ Wardell Pomeroy, "Homosexuality", in Ralph Weltge, ed., *The Same Sex: An Appraisal of Homosexuality*. Philadelphia/Boston: Pilgrim Press, 1969, pp. 7-8.

² See Lionel Ovesey, *Homosexuality and Pseudohomosexuality*. New York: Science House, 1969, p. 31.

³ *The Homosexual Matrix*. New York: McGraw-Hill Book Co., 1975, p. 9.

⁴ Kimball Jones, *Toward An Understanding of the Homosexual*. New York: Association Press, 1966, p. 27; Evelyn Hooker, "Homosexuality," in Elizabeth S. and William H. Genne, eds., *Foundations for Christian Family Policy*, New York: National Council of Churches, 1961, pp. 168-169; Gordon Westwood, *Society and the Homosexual*, New York: E. P.

Tom Skinner

Thank you very much. I suppose the most crucial question whenever you are in a group like this is: "How do you change the taste of people so that they develop class?" There are a lot of classless people in the world today, like Dallas Cowboy fans, you know.

I got a call once from a news reporter from the *Miami Herald*. It was before a very crucial game between the Dallas Cowboys and the Washington Redskins. He said, "You know, I've interviewed several people from the Dallas Cowboys, and there seems to be some fine, upstanding Christian gentlemen on that team. I've interviewed several people on the Washington Redskins, and there seems to be some fine, upstanding Christians on that team. Now whose side is God going to be on Sunday afternoon?"

So, of course, his question was very symptomatic of the nature of religion in America. And his question is also symptomatic of the degree to which the church has not penetrated the culture. Because there's a certain kind of Americanism that has infiltrated our theology that suggests that God has to be on somebody's side. The most mind-blowing answer is when they respond to the reporter and tell him that God could care less about the game. There is a certain kind of winning theology that we've developed in America—God's on our side. We've particularly been good at that in America. We've got God's name on our money—"In God We Trust"; and we've got God's name in the salute to the flag—"One nation under God," you know. It sounds really great. Because then it means that anybody we want to drop bombs on, it's cool because God's on our side.

But more and more, I am becoming appalled as I move across the country to discover the degree to which so many Christians do not have a biblical world view and in fact do not understand the Scriptures. And, that a great number of Christians have memorized some Bible verses because they were told that is necessary to chalk up some credit accounts with God, and they also read the Bible for comfort—you know in those great moments of crisis when we are depressed and down and the world comes in on us. We turn to those favorite Scriptures, "God is our refuge and our strength," and all those things that help us. But a study of the Scripture to develop a biblical lifestyle is not occurring on a large scale in our country.

And it is even worse when you consider that several years ago—I was excited to see the number of my friends that you have sitting on the platform doing your meeting here this week—but you remember when Chuck Colson came out with his book *Born Again*. It was about the same time that Jimmy Carter made it known that he was a born again Christian and Jeb Magruder of Watergate fame also let it be known that he was a born again Christian. Eldridge Cleaver came back from Algiers and let it be known that he was a born again Christian and so the Louis Harris people and CBS and the Gallup poll people and *Time* magazine got together and said, "Hey, there's a new phenomenon in America called 'born again.' We ought to investigate it." And so they took this poll in which they discovered that there was supposed to be something like fifty to sixty million of us in America and Christians went wild:

Dutton and Co., and London: Gollancz, 1952, pp. 132-133; Albert Ellis, "Homosexuality and Creativity", *Journal of Clinical Psychology*, Vol. IV, No. 4, Oct. 1959, p. 377.

⁶ Weltge, op. cit., p. 30.

⁷ See Laird Humphreys, *The Tearoom Trade: Impersonal Sex in Public Places*. Chicago: Aldrine, 1970, pp. 60-68.

⁸ *Changing Homosexuality in the Male*. New York: McGraw-Hill, 1970, pp. 34-35.

⁹ See S. James, et al, "Significance of Androgen Levels in the Aetiology and Treatment of Homosexuality." *Psychology of Medicine* 7(3):427-429, August 1977; R. C. Friendman, et al, "Hormones and Sexual Orientation in Men," *American Journal of Psychiatry* 134(5): 571-572, March 1977; B. Zuger, "Monozygotic Twins Discordant for Homosexuality: Report of a Pair and Significance of the Phenomenon," *Comparative Psychiatry*, 17(5):661-669, Sept.-Oct., 1976.

¹⁰ Alfred M. Freedman, et al, *Comprehensive Textbook of Psychiatry*, II, Vol. 2, Second edition, Baltimore: Williams and Wilkins Co., 1975, pp. 1510-1520.

¹¹ Wainwright Churchill, *Homosexual Behavior Among Males*. Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, 1967, p. 105.

¹² *Homosexuality: Disease or Way of Life*. New York: Collier Books, 1967, p. 25.

¹³ *Ibid.*, pp. 13-25.

¹⁴ *The Gay World: Male Homosexuality and the Social Creation of Evil*. New York: Basic Books, 1968, p. 157.

¹⁵ Clarence J. Rowe, *An Outline of Psychiatry*. Dubuque, Iowa: W. C. Brown Publishers, 1975, p. 121.

¹⁶ Freedman, et al, op. cit., pp. 1517-1518.

¹⁷ *Sexual Behavior in the Human Male*. Philadelphia: William B. Saunders Co., 1948, p. 623.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 651.

¹⁹ *Sexual Behavior of the Female*. Philadelphia: 1953, pp. 474-475.

²⁰ "Speaking Frankly On a Once Taboo Subject," *The New York Times Magazine*, August 23, 1964, p. 75.

²¹ "Homosexuality," in Albert Ellis and Albert Abarbanel, eds., *The Encyclopedia of Sexual Behavior*. New York: Hawthorne Books, 1961, Vol. I, p. 490.

²² "Walls of Ice: Theology and Social Policy," in W. Dwight Oberholtzer, ed., *Is Gay Good: Ethics, Theology and Homosexuality*. Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1971, p. 172.

²³ Freedman, op. cit., p. 1519.

²⁴ *The Wolfenden Report: Report of the Committee on Homosexual Offences and Prostitution*. London: Stern and Day, 1963, paragraph 18.

²⁵ John McNeill, *The Church and the Homosexual*. Kansas City: Sheed Andrews and McMeel, 1976, pp. 42-50; D. S. Bailey, *Homosexuality and the Western Tradition*. New York: Longmans, 1955, pp. 1-28.

²⁶ William Gesenius, *A Hebrew and English Lexicon of the Old Testament*. Boston: Crocker and Brewster, 1872, p. 380.

²⁷ *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament*. trans. by William Arndt and Wilbur Gingrich. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1957, p. 489.

²⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 109.

²⁹ *Summa Theologia*, Part II, Second section, pp. 152-154.

³⁰ John Calvin. *The Epistle of Paul the Apostle to the Romans and to the Thessalonians*. Trans. Ross Mackenzie. Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Erdmans Pub. Co., 1961, p. 36.

³¹ *The Epistle to the Romans*. Translated by E. C. Hoskyns, London: Oxford University Press, 1950, pp. 42-54.

³² *Church Dogmatics*. Edinburgh: T. and T. Clark, 1961, Vol. III/4, p. 166.

³³ *Ibid.*

³⁴ *The Ethics of Sex*. Trans. by John Doberstein, New York: Harper and Row, 1964, p. 269-292.

³⁵ Alastair Heron, et al, *Towards A Quaker View of Sex*. London: The Society of Friends, 1963, p. 26.

³⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 36.

³⁷ *The Baptist Faith and Message*. Adopted by the Southern Baptist Convention May 9, 1963 and published by the Sunday School Board of the Southern Baptist Convention, Nashville, Tennessee, 1963, p. 7.

³⁸ Adolf Harnack, *What Is Christianity?* New York: Harper and Brothers, 1957, pp. 67-68.

³⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 171.

⁴⁰ Resolution on Homosexuality adopted by the Southern Baptist Convention, June 16, 1977, Kansas City, Mo., *Annual of the Southern Baptist Convention*, 1977.

"You mean there's fifty million Americans who identify with being born again! Boy, the Christian cause is really on the march." I would have been embarrassed to admit that there are fifty million of us—given the state of this country; given the moral depravity; given the broken relationships, the hunger, the violence, the depression. I would be ashamed and embarrassed to admit that there are that many of us. Which means that somewhere we have to begin to really investigate what does it truly mean to be Christian in the society and what is evangelism, given the nature of the world that we are in and the call of the church.

Now there are a couple of things that I think that I ought to try to set straight at the outset. One is that I'm a street person. I was born and raised in Harlem in New York City. I grew up in an area where the population was one million people in 2½ square miles. On the block where I lived there were five thousand people. My whole background is one of coming off the streets and having lived a life of violence and crime and bigotry before I came to know Jesus Christ. So I am new to the whole religious structure, and I'm just learning my way around it. Okay?

I am by trade an evangelist, which means that I spend the majority of my time with pagans. Alright, the majority of my time is spent with nonchurch, non-religious people and I very rarely get a chance to talk to religious crowds and to preach in churches. So I don't know the jargon very well and the ecclesiastical religious language very well and I have a demeanor when I speak that sometimes is offensive to religious people because I spend so much time talking to non-religious people. So you are going to have to bear with me. Now there are times when I speak that my face frowns up, and that's only because the light is so bright and I'm ugly. Okay? It in no way means that I'm after you. It just happens when I talk. It's just that way. Okay? And so that you will have to bear with.

Now on a couple of occasions, on the few occasions that I have spoken before Southern Baptist meetings, conferences, and conventions, immediately after that I've always been cancelled out in some other city when I was going where they were from and I have a bad reputation in that respect. But it's nothing personal; really, it's nothing personal. I am really trying to get AT what God wants in our lives. I'm really trying to dig for that.

Now the advantage is, the difference, I think, between me and maybe some other people is that I don't have a reputation to defend. My bread and butter is not based on my ability to preach and to satisfy religious crowds. Get the message? I am not economically dependent on religious people, I can afford to speak the Word of God.

Having said that, let's get on with it. Now, communication always creates another problem because the human mind is able to comprehend about 450 words a minute, the human voice speaks at about 150 words a minute, which means that the human voice trails the human mind by about 250 words a minute. Okay? Now what happens is, because the human mind is so fast and the human voice so slow, the human mind often drifts to other things to give the human voice a chance to catch up. And by the time the human mind comes back to where it thinks the human voice is, the human voice has moved on to something else. And that's what we call a communication gap. So we have to work

real hard at solving that.

How many of you saw "Fiddler on the Roof"? Do you remember the fiddler always had this conflict between the Russian Czar and the Jews? Back then, there was always this trouble between the Russian Czar and the Jewish people. One day the Czar made it be known that he was going to wipe out the Jewish village. The rabbi went up to plead the case for his people and the Czar said, "There's no hope. You are going to be wiped out." But the rabbi said, "There's got to be something we can do to keep from being wiped out." The Czar said, "Now I tell you, you debate with my high priest—the most brilliant, articulate, intellectual debater in the world—defeat him in debate and I will spare the village." The heart of the rabbi sank and he returned to his village disheartened because he and no one else in the village had the capability, intellectual capacity, or the eloquence to be able to debate the great high priest. He called a town meeting and announced the decision of the Czar and the town idiot raised his hand and said, "I'll go." Of all people, the town idiot volunteered! The rabbi said, "We going to be wiped out anyway. What have we got to lose? Send the idiot up to the high priest."

Now in those days they debated by pantomime, like we play charades today. Well, they debated in pantomime. And what was to happen was the high priest would sit at one end of the table and the town idiot would sit at the other end. The people gathered around and they debated in pantomime style. The high priest opened the debate. He went like this (made large circle with hands). Without a moment's hesitation, I mean without any thought or reflection, the town idiot came back and went like this (pointed at ground). The high priest was flabbergasted. He didn't expect such a quick, eloquent response. And so after a few moment's reflection, he held up three fingers. And again, without reflection, the town idiot came back and held up one. Well, by this time the high priest was really thrown for a loop. And finally, after some moments of thought, he reached into his knapsack and pulled out a loaf of bread and a bottle of wine and held it forth. Without one moment's reflection, again, the town idiot reached in his knapsack and pulled out an apple and bit into it. The high priest jumped up and said, "I quit. I've never in my life debated a person of such eloquence, such logic, such depth." And he walked away in utter disgust and the Czar told the town idiot, "Return home and tell your people the village is spared." He turned to the high priest and asked, "What happened?" He said, "You're the greatest debater of the world, and you've allowed yourself to be defeated by an idiot. What happened?"

"Well, I thought I would begin to debate with something theological, so I said, 'God is everywhere.' And then the idiot came back without one moment's hesitation and said 'God is also here. God is here.' So I held up three fingers to signify the traditional Christian belief of the Trinity—the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. And without one moment's hesitation, that idiot came back and said, 'God is also one.' So then I reached into my knapsack and pulled out a bottle of wine and a loaf of bread to signify salvation and redemption. Then the town idiot reached into his knapsack and pulled out an apple and bit into it to signify sin and the fall of man." He said, "I've just never seen anybody respond so."

By that time the town idiot got back to his village.

The whole town turned out and asked, "How did you do it?" "Look, there's nothing to it. There's nothing so great about it," he said. "He started out telling me that the whole village is going to have to go—the whole thing. Then I told him I would stand right there. Then he held up three fingers telling me that we've got three days before we're going to be wiped out. And then I told him not one of us was leaving; not one of us was going. He reached into his knapsack and pulled out a loaf of bread and a bottle of wine and held it up, and I reached in my knapsack and pulled out an apple and bit into it to let him know that I brought my lunch too." Communication is not what is being said, but what is being heard. I trust you got the message!

How does one develop a lifestyle that will make the Christian church, the body of Jesus, effective in the area of evangelism? I think the answer to that lies in our ability to discern what is the purpose of the church, or the theology of the church. Because if we do not understand that, we cannot understand evangelism. There's a lot of things going around the world today in the name of evangelism. There are many cheap forms of evangelism that suggest that the whole reason for preaching the gospel is so that people will get saved in order to get a passport out of hell into heaven. There are others who see this as an attempt to chalk up brownie points with God. So, certain people run around to buttonhole people as though they were carrying a sales slip, and they've got to get the guy into the kingdom today. So, what really does God have in mind? What do we mean by developing a lifestyle so that we can be effective as evangelists for God?

Evangelism often stirs up negative connotations in the lives of many people. When I tell people that I'm an evangelist, I find that they already have a definition of what that means. It's some guy who comes to town to hold revival services. Or there are others who have other kinds of connotations without ever really sitting down to discuss what is the biblical definition of evangelism. But let's begin with the role of the church.

I would draw your attention to the eleventh chapter of Luke. You will remember that Jesus had just finished praying. His disciples were impressed with the way he prayed so they came to Jesus and said, "Lord, why don't you teach us how to pray?" Someone suggested that Jesus prayed as naturally as he breathed. Prayer was not an extracurricular activity in the life of Jesus. Jesus did not wake up in the morning and on his way out the door say, "I forgot my quiet time." Jesus was in continual conversation with his Father. The relationship with his Father was of such a nature that it was like breathing. The disciples, sensing this intimate relationship, wanted to get in on it; so they said, "Lord, teach us how to pray." And Jesus said, "When you pray, here is what you will lay on the Father." You will say, "Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be your name. Your kingdom come, your will be done on earth, the way it is in heaven. Your kingdom come, your will be done on earth, the way it is in heaven."

Now, if you examine very closely the ministry of Jesus, you will notice that he had a lot to say about this thing called the kingdom. The kingdom of heaven is like this, the kingdom of heaven is like that, and the kingdom is like something else. He was always

talking about this thing called the kingdom. It was obviously very important to Jesus. In fact, the very first words to come out of his mouth when he began his ministry was, "Repent, the kingdom of heaven has arrived." Now, if the kingdom of heaven has arrived, then the logical questions are: "Where is it? Take me to your leader. Where is this thing called the kingdom? What is it about?"

Now, there are a great number of people who believe that the kingdom is something that will eventually come. What we do is kind of accept Jesus as our personal Savior, collect our fire insurance, get our passport out of hell into heaven, and then we kind of twiddle our thumbs waiting for the kingdom to come.

And there are others who have other kinds of definitions or interpretations. But Jesus is now saying, "Your kingdom come, your will be done on earth, the way it is in heaven." This meant that in the mind of Jesus there was something going on in heaven that he wanted to happen on earth. Now if, for the sake of definition, heaven can be defined as that sphere of influence where God is in control. In other words, what makes heaven heaven is that in heaven Jesus is Lord, and in heaven everything happens precisely the way God wants it to happen. That's why it is heaven, because Jesus is in control.

Now, because Jesus is Lord in heaven that is the perfect will of God. It's taking place in heaven. In heaven there is no war, no poverty, no violence, no ache, no conflict, no hunger, no oppression, no broken relationships. All of the things that I listed to you are the works of the devil and he has no influence in heaven. That is obviously not true about earth. On earth there is violence; there is war; there is hunger; there is oppression; there's racism; there's poverty. There are broken relationships, because on earth Jesus is not Lord. Now, that simple fact must be understood if God's people are to develop a lifestyle that is to make it a clear and effective witness in the world. Because again we have been duped by a certain kind of Americanism which says, "Hey, God, Jesus may not be Lord on earth but at least he is Lord in America."

But turn with us now to those thrilling days of yesteryear when out of the past came a hearty "law and order." George Washington prayed at Valley Forge and Ben Franklin opened the first Congress in prayer. America was founded by God-fearing men. Have you ever checked the theology of George Washington, Ben Franklin, Thomas Jefferson, Tom Payne? Have you ever checked those dudes' theology? It'll blow your mind!

Now, they were pantheists, deists, and transcendentalists. What makes it even worse is that we have adopted them as the standard in many Americanistic forms of religion as the example and model of what is biblical. God is on our side, and so we have created a myth in American society that says Jesus is Lord of America because, after all, he is in the salute to the flag and he is on our money. But do we honestly believe that Jesus runs the state legislature; that he is in absolute control of the city council? Do we honestly believe that Jesus controls the Senate and the Congress and the White House? Do you understand that if Jesus is Lord of America, he has been blowing it lately? He has been polluting his own air and his own water.

He's been dropping bombs on his own kids. He took a bunch of people in this country who were here before the rest of us ever arrived and he allowed them to be massacred, to be driven from their land, forced to live in isolated pockets called reservations, and we have the nerve to say that this is the land of the free and the home of the brave? In fact, God doesn't even know how to balance a budget.

Now you see, God doesn't run America. He never has. Now, until we understand that; until we understand that the Bible teaches that the whole world order lies in the hands of the evil one, that God has not yet removed him from that position, that he is the God of this world—that's the reason that the Scripture says that the kingdom of this world *shall* become, they are not *now*, the kingdoms of our Lord and of his Christ. And it is in that context that Jesus prayed, "Lord, your kingdom come, your will be done on earth, the way it is in heaven, that just as in heaven righteousness and justice and love and mercy reign; that just as in heaven your will is being done. Our prayer is that your will will come on earth and that you will do among us what is going on in heaven." This may I add, then, becomes the function of the church. The church becomes that body of believers, that colony of God on Satan's territory whose function it is to be the live model on earth of what is happening in heaven so that anytime anybody wants to know what's happening in heaven, all they have to do is check with us. That is the function of the church.

It is the function of the church to live out on earth, in Satan's territory, the lifestyle of their citizenship in heaven.

Do you remember in history when we studied colonial powers? You remember the British were a colonial power, and the British colonized Africa. Now it is safe to say that when the average Englishman landed in Africa, the average African had never been to England. That's safe. But, by observing the lifestyle of the British in Africa, the African soon learned what was going on in England. He watched the British and their recreation habits. They would go out in the field, they would take this ball and kick it up and down the field, and they would try to kick it through these two uprights with a crossbar. The British called it soccer; we call it football. But the African soon learned that they played soccer in England.

They would go out in a field. This guy would take this flat stick and others would scatter out in the field. He would stand near this thing with three sticks coming out of the ground with a puck sitting on top. Seventy-five feet away would be a man with a ball. They called him a bowler, and he would run about fifteen feet toward this thing called the wicket. Then, about sixty feet away he would release the ball and try to knock the puck off the wicket. And the guy with the bat would try to hit the ball before it hit the wicket. They called it cricket. The African soon learned that they played cricket in England.

The African watched the social habits of the British, and he noticed that every afternoon at 4:00 p.m., the British stopped to have a spot of tea. He soon learned that in England they had tea at four. In other words, by observing the lifestyle of the British in Africa, he soon learned what was going on in England.

I suggest to you that is what God has in mind for the church. It is the function of the church in an alien society, in a contradictory world, in a world of evil and wickedness, oppression, poverty, and hunger. It is the function of the church to model the kingdom of God. It is to become the colony of God on earth. The reason for your local church is that there ought to be in a particular community a family of people who, because of their commitment to Jesus Christ and their covenant relationship with one another, have agreed to be in that neighborhood the live model of what's going on in heaven. That is the function of the church.

Our failure as a church is to understand that. Most of our people still think that the function of the church building is a place where we can go. If you interview Christian after Christian and ask them what the church is, they will tell you it is a place to go, a place to worship. They still see it as a *place*. The reason for it is that those of us who are church leaders keep emphasizing the importance of the place. Most of our money is tied up in the brick and mortar of the place. We have continued to make people feel that the church is that steepled building, that building with the stained-glass windows and its pipe organ and its beautiful carpet and its pews and all those nice things that we put in there to be occupied for three hours a week. We have continued to make people feel that that is the center of God's colony. The Bible has tried to tell us absolutely *no*, that the colony of God is those people who agree in that neighborhood to be live models on earth of what is happening.

The church is not a place. The purpose of the church is to be the live model on earth of what is happening in heaven—which is why when Jesus appeared on the face of this earth the word spread like wildfire by those angels to those shepherds abiding with their flock that night, that "unto you this day is born in the city of David a Savior who is Christ the Lord." What made that news exciting was that the angels sang for the first time in human history that God had put skin on himself in the person of Jesus Christ. God had walked the earth as a man. God had broken through into Satan's territory to declare the building of a new order. And when Jesus Christ arrived, he planted his feet on Satan's turf. He stood in the middle of violence, war, hunger, poverty, hatred, and he said, "Repent, the kingdom of heaven has arrived." That is the function of the church!

The reason for establishing a church in a community is that there are a family of believers whose presence in that community is one continual life of saying to the neighborhood, "Repent, the new order has arrived. There now dwells in this neighborhood a group of people whose citizenship is in heaven, whose value system comes from the lordship of Jesus and we have come to live out a new lifestyle. We have come to provide an alternative." Now without that you cannot have effective evangelism. Because without that all we will end up doing is wearing bumper stickers on our cars saying, "Honk if you love Jesus"; buttons that say, "I've found something"; or buttonholing people and asking if they ever heard of the five spiritual principles. The point is: that is not what God had in mind for evangelism.

Let's talk about who these people are who are

going to live out this lifestyle; who are going to be the live models on earth of what is happening in heaven. You see, in order to have a new order, you have to have new people. You cannot have a new order without new people. The sickness of our society is that we continue to try to change the world by rearranging the furniture. What God is calling for is a new order. You cannot have that without new people. This is essentially what the dialogue was about between Jesus and Nicodemus in the third chapter of John.

Nicodemus, ruler of the Jews, came to talk to Jesus about his preaching on this thing called the kingdom. And he began by saying, "Master, we know that you are a teacher come from God. Nobody can pull off the things you are pulling off except God be with him."

You have to ask yourself why Nicodemus says "we." It means he's not speaking simply for himself, he's saying, "Back at the Sanhedrin we have discussed you. Your name has been on the agenda at a number of our meetings and all of us have come to the conclusion that you are a teacher from God." And the question is, if they really believed that, why all the flack? If they really believed Jesus was a teacher come from God, then why didn't they get off the stick? You see the Pharisees were really not that different from most religious folks in America today. We've got the language down right—"Jesus is Lord." If Jesus is Lord, then why don't we do what he tells us?

"Blessed is the nation whose lord is God." "God is on our side." "In God we trust." That's good jargon. But if we really believe that God is on our side, that the Bible says the nation whose God is the Lord, that the Lord encampeth about those who trust in him, that the angel of the Lord hovers over those who trust him, then why do we have to spend \$260 billion on defense? But you see, that's just religious jargon. We don't really believe the angel of the Lord camps about those who trust him! That's why we've got missiles—just in case God doesn't come through. "Lay not up for yourselves treasures on earth where moth and rust doth corrupt and where thieves will break through and steal. But rather lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt and where thieves do not break through and steal" (Mt. 6:19-20). We do not believe that! Because if we do, why do we continue to worry about our property values or about who will move into the neighborhood?

It's like Nicodemus—we've got the language down pat. We know the Bible verses and we recite them because there is no way you can be a Bible-believing-orthodox-conservative-evangelical-fundamental Southern Baptist without reciting them. But the point is, do we believe it? And I suggest like Nicodemus, it's nice language. It is the proper theological verse to support the premise. "We know that you are a teacher come from God. Nobody can do what you are doing except that God be with him. Our only problem is, Jesus, you're not one of us. We dig everything you are doing—blind folks seeing, dead people coming alive, lame people walking, we even dig your welfare program (thousands of folks eating off a couple of loaves and fishes). We like what you're doing, Jesus. It's just that you're not one of us. You're not part of the movement; you're not a member of the council; you're not a Southern Baptist. All we ask is that you come join us. Well,

after all, we've got a lot in common. You can trace your family heritage back to Abraham, and so can we. You come from one of the twelve tribes of Israel, and so do we. You want to change the world, and so do we. We've got different words and terminology for it. You call it something called the kingdom of God, and we call it social reformation. But what's semantics among friends?"

It is at this point that Jesus understood what Nicodemus didn't understand. So Jesus said to Nicodemus, "I don't want you to climb the wall when I lay this on you. Now don't get uptight when I make this mind-blowing statement: Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom, the gates of pearl, the streets of gold, the crystal fountains flowing through heaven."

God is putting together his own order. God has his own agenda. God is building his own kingdom. The reason for being born again is not so when you die you will go to heaven. The reason for being born again is not so God will save you from smoking and drinking and miniskirts and pornography and nightclubs. But the reason for being born again is that's the only way you can become part of the new order; that you can be a part of the colony of God, whose purpose it is to live out the value system of God's kingdom in this present world, with your two feet planted on the earth. The only way that you can take on the lifestyle of God himself is that you must be reborn.

We have in America a cheap form of evangelism which simply suggests that all people have to do in order to truly be evangelized is to hear that Jesus was nailed to the cross, shed his blood, and rose again from the dead. And if you believe that, you have been evangelized. That's not what Jesus had in mind.

We've got a whole lot of people who have fire insurance, a whole lot of people who are saved but it has not changed their lifestyle one bit. They still practice their business the same way; they still spend their money the same way; their relationship with their children hasn't changed; they still have not rearranged their priorities. The proof of it is the fact that a businessman can be born again and still carry on the same kind of business practices. He can still have the same hiring practices. He can still refuse to hire and promote in his business Latins and women and blacks and Indians. But he's born again!

Those same born again Christians put up their "For Sale" signs and move out of the neighborhood when certain people move in. They run, and while running, echo back that Christ is the answer. They are born again. Those same born again Christians pass resolutions in their churches excluding certain people from membership because of the color of their skins. But they are born again. And the reason for that kind of sickness is because there is a devastating form of evangelism which suggests that the whole ultimate purpose of God is to get you saved, to give you your passport out of hell into heaven, to give you eternal life. Oh, there are some fringe benefits—peace and joy and happiness which everybody must get if they trust Jesus. Salvation is always something God's going to do for us. He's going to give us joy; he's going to give us peace; he's going to give us happiness; he's going to thrill us. But somewhere along the line, no one has mentioned the fact that salvation means taking up the

cross and following Jesus, denying oneself, that Jesus is above every other love of my life. To embrace the cross is to pronounce death on my own priorities and my own agenda.

Evangelism for others of us born again are those special revival services when we ask people to come down the aisle and shake hands with the preacher and join the church, but those people's lives never fundamentally change, a great number of them. Because they have been reared on a cheap, indigestible form of evangelism which says that the ultimate purpose of God is to simply get you saved.

So our churches are filled with saved people who have walked the aisle, who have shaken the preacher's hand, and who have been added to that number that appears either in the front of the church or in the vestibule of the church temple which says, "Through today's date we have baptized 1,440 people." That person becomes another statistic, because that has become our concept of evangelism.

What happens is that basically it is centered around the fact that success in evangelism for most of us is the numbers of people. The more people who join, the more successful we are. The success of the pastor is denoted by how large his church is; so he must do everything he can to get more people into the church; to build a bigger and larger structure so he can rise in the denomination.

When was the last time that Southern Baptists had a president of the Southern Baptist Convention whose congregation was less than fifty people? You see, the point is that we become wrapped up in the structure so that rather than calling people to a Christian lifestyle, to a biblical lifestyle, to be the live model on earth of what is happening in heaven, we basically invite them to become part of an institution. The more who join the institution the more powerful the institution becomes, and the more people who join, the bigger the buildings we have to build in order to house those people so that even the majority of the money that we raise in our churches is really spent on ourselves. We do really very little giving in our churches. We don't give because most of the money we give is to make it comfortable for ourselves. That's a cheap form of evangelism.

To be reborn is to be impregnated with the Spirit of God. To be reborn is an abdication of all rights to oneself, to allow Jesus to become Lord. But evangelism must speak by its lifestyle as well as by its verbalization, which leads me then to say something about these people once they make this commitment to Jesus Christ.

The Bible teaches that they become a fellowship, which is essentially what God had in mind for the church if the church is to be a family. The word "fellowship" means exactly what the words says: fellows in the same ship. A group of men and women who agree to hurt together, bleed together, celebrate together, rejoice together, and overcome together. And Jesus laid down some tough criteria for them. If you really want to be an evangelist, if you really want to develop a lifestyle that is going to be effective, Jesus gave a new commandment for it: "Love one another the way I have loved you." And the thing that excites me about that is that the Bible says, "A new commandment I give you." Notice it is not an option. Jesus

says, "I command you to love one another"; which means that we're under orders; it's not an option. It's not something I can do if I feel like it. It is not something I can do if the other person qualifies. You know, I could love them if they took care of their property. I could love them if they would only learn to behave themselves. I could love her if she weren't so conceited and stuckup. I could love him if he weren't so arrogant. In other words I keep putting qualifications on my love for people. And Jesus keeps saying that the lifestyle is that you have to love one another. You must constantly be in the act of preferring one another above yourselves. He commands you to do that!

During the days when we were trying to get folks together and teach people how to love one another, there was always the reaction which said, "Now, you can't force that. You just can't go around forcing people to love one another. It has to be a voluntary thing. You just can't force it. You can't legislate love." Listen to Jesus, "I command you to love one another—I have ordered you to love one another." What do you think about that? He doesn't say, "If you get around to it, I challenge you on a voluntary basis to love one another! A new commandment I give you, I order you to love one another the way I love you." Which means I have to find out how God loves Tom Skinner. I discovered that God loves Tom Skinner the way Tom Skinner is. God does not ask that I go through any changes in order for him to love me. Isn't it amazing the changes we put each o'her through? And then Jesus adds this, "By this all people will know you are my disciples by the way you love one another."

The world is not going to know you are a Christian because you carry Bibles under your arms, or by your bumper stickers. The world is not going to know you are a Christian because you're the last of the Mohicans holding onto New Testament truths. The world is not going to know that you are a Christian by your theology.

But the world, says the Scriptures, is going to know that you are Christian by the way you love one another. Now, it means that the church has to be constantly in the act of physically, visibly demonstrating their love for one another before the world.

The problem is how can we demonstrate that love when most of us only get together on Sundays for fifty-nine minutes with one minute for time to shake each other's hand on the way to the parking lot? Oh, there is the announcement that comes after the service: "Immediately after the morning's service, we will all retire to Fellowship Hall where we will have a time of fellowship. We walk around with our teacups having fellowship."

Oh yes, there's that once a year meeting called Fellowship Dinner where we all bring potluck supper and we call that fellowship. I suggest that that's not what God had in mind.

The church is a group of people who hurt together, who bleed together, who celebrate together, who suffer together, who rejoice together, who overcome together, who look out for one another. The church is made up of people whose attitude toward one another is "what is mine is yours, and what is yours is mine." I suggest to you that the same commitment God expects us to have to our primary family group—the mother, father,

sister, brother, husband and wife—is the same commitment God expects us to have to the fellowship of believers we are committed to. That was why the early church addressed each other as brother and sister, because they saw by virtue of their commitment to Jesus Christ that they had entered into a covenant with one another that made their relationship as thick, if not thicker, than blood brothers and sisters. Which is why the Bible says that there was no one in their midst who had need. Everybody looked out for each other. No one said that which they possessed was their own, they had all things common. Without that kind of basis, then there's no opportunity for real fellowship, no opportunity for evangelism. Because if you read the Scriptures, the Bible declares that the Christians first demonstrated the gospel, then they proclaimed it.

You remember the day of Pentecost. The Spirit had broken loose among the disciples, they were acting a little peculiar. The critics came up and said, "What's wrong with you guys? Are you drunk?"

And Peter said, "No, we're not drunk. It's too early. The bars are still closed. It's just the ninth hour of the day. We're not drunk."

"Then, what's wrong with you guys?"

Peter said, "Well, do you remember Joel, the prophet?"

They said, "Yeah, we remember him."

"You remember he said, 'In the last days he will pour out his spirit among all flesh?'"

"Yeah, yeah, we remember that."

He said, "Your young men will see visions, your old men will dream dreams."

"Yeah."

"Well, this is that," said Peter.

In other words, this was the demonstration of what was proclaimed. And the early disciples demonstrated the gospel and their love for one another. They demonstrated it by a lifestyle that was consistent with the values of their understanding of the kingdom of God, and then out of that demonstration, they explained the gospel.

Our problem is that we do a lot of explaining; there are a lot of explanations for the gospel. We've got some of the best proclaimers of the gospel in the world in America today. And I mean when those guys get up and preach, they can preach! The church is doing a great job of turning loose people who've been verbally proclaimed, but that is not what God had in mind alone. The explanation must be the result of a demonstration. If there is not a community of believers who are in the constant act of loving one another, preferring one another ahead of themselves, sharing with one another, looking out for one another, then we do not have the basis for an effective evangelistic witness.

Jesus put the cream on the cake when he said, "There is no greater love than when a person lays down his life for another." In other words, the lifestyle that God's people must have is one of constantly being in the act of giving their lives for one another unto death. They are constantly preferring one another ahead of themselves, they are constantly in the act of submitting to one another. They would lay down their lives for one another. You cannot have that kind of commitment to people you don't know. Most of the people in our local churches don't know each other. So how in

the world are they going to die for one another? Because, for most people, the church is an assemblage of people on Sunday morning for that one hour, or however long it lasts. They have no relationship with each other, no understanding of each other, no suffering with each other, no bearing the cross with each other, no picking each other up when they fall down.

I was listening this morning as the brother brought us that magnificent presentation to help us struggle through our biblical perceptions on homosexuality. How alien that would be to a great number of our people. We do not realize the numbers of homosexuals who are in our own congregations simply because we don't know each other. We don't know the number of people who are hurting and trying to struggle through it simply because we never get a chance to get next to each other. It's important for us to hurt together, bleed together, to feel what's going on inside each other. And yet we want to be busy going out to win souls. There are those who want to get on with evangelism. Let's get out and save precious souls for Jesus. What are you going to bring them to once those precious souls come to Jesus? What are you going to invite them to? What is the model that they are going to participate in? What you are going to do is bring them into a sick fellowship and then turn them loose to go out and win other people to Jesus, to bring those people into a sick fellowship. And we are going to continue to reproduce unhealthy people. Does lifestyle never change?

Let me hasten to the end. This group of people who have been reborn, who are now a fellowship, who are prepared to lay their lives down for one another and begin to penetrate the world, they have to break the huddle and go into the world. Jesus said that they are going to be light. Jesus said, "You are the light of the world." One of the functions of light is to overcome darkness. Light overcomes darkness, which means that the function of God's people is to go where it is dark, to dwell in those dark places in the world where there is no light, where the truth of Jesus hasn't broken through, where the person of Christ is not clear, where the vision is not sharp concerning who he is. Yet the church consistently dwells in those safe places in the world.

Oh, we heard the brother this morning, but how many of us are going to go back to our churches and begin to develop ministries to homosexuals? We are scared to death of them! You wouldn't want to be inviting homosexuals to your house, to love them and minister to them. Think about that! They might molest your kids.

Don't think some folks aren't thinking that. Most people can tell you, anybody who has done their homework will tell you, that molestation is greater among heterosexuals than among homosexuals. Some people in their campaigns just overlook that little fact. You see our problem is that we are scared of the world. So who's going to minister to prostitutes, who's going to minister to pimps, who's going to go and live out the lifestyle of Jesus in the redlight districts of town? Who is going to be Jesus in the scum areas of our society? Who's going to live with and rub shoulders with the scum of the earth?

You will notice that most of our evangelistic efforts

are confined to those nice people. We like to win those nice middle-class folk and especially the celebrities to Jesus. It's wonderful when the celebrities come to Christ. But who's going to win the scum, the prostitutes, the whores, the pimps, the drug addicts? Who's going to penetrate syndicated crime? Who's going to be a live model of Jesus to syndicated crime? Who's going to penetrate the entertainment industry, the sports world, the legal profession, and the prison system? Who's going to live in the slum areas of our country? Who's going to go to Harlem and Bedford-Stuyvesant in New York, to the south side of Philadelphia, the south and west sides of Chicago, the Watts district of Los Angeles? Who is going to live there to be a model on earth for what is happening in heaven?

We're not going because, you see, we have invested most of our money and our energy into ourselves. How can we be concerned about people in Watts and the Hill district of Pittsburgh, the south side of Chicago, or the central ward of Newark, when we have stained-glass windows costing \$10,000 a pane? We've installed pipe organs in our churches that cost \$750,000! Jesus says that we are to be light.

My grandmother used to tell me that salt is the only thing that can go down among the fish without becoming a fish. The function of God's people is to go in the world without becoming like it, but you have to go in and rub shoulders with it and be in it. People have got to run for city council and state legislature, and people have got to work in the education system not because God needs Democrats and Republicans and not to go in to profess a liberal or a conservative ideology but because the city council, the state legislature, the congress and senate need to be occupied by people who love Jesus and who are going to take legislation in one hand and the Word of God in the other and bring a biblical point of view to the political system if we are going to wrestle with that.

The most atrocious system in America today is the penal system, the prison system in America. It was basically designed for poor people. The rich can commit almost any crime and get away with it, but the poor people can be innocent and be convicted because there is no way they can beat the system. Who's going to destroy the works of the Devil in the penal system? Where are our Christian Southern Baptist lawyers in the face of that kind of injustice? Where are the legal minds in our churches? Where are our Christian laymen who understand the legal system and go in there to destroy the works of the Devil? I suggest to you that the great bulk of them are in there with the rest of the pagans fighting to get to the top but not to destroy the works of the Devil. In order for this to happen it means God's people are going to have to change their lifestyle.

Somewhere along the line some of us are going to have to ask ourselves, in light of the values of the kingdom of God, that if we live in a \$75,000 home is it possible that we could get by with a \$40,000 home and use the difference for the kingdom of God? Some of us are going to have to ask ourselves, "What is it we really need in order to be effective witnesses for Jesus in terms of a standard of living?" Somewhere along the line, brother pastor, you are going to have to accept the fact that if you are going to truly have

a church with a strong evangelical witness the function of the pastor is to equip the saints for the work of the ministry; that it is not the function of the pastor to be the minister. You are not their minister. You are an equipper. The people are to be the ministers.

George Allen has never played quarterback. Tom Landry does not play quarterback or center or guard. He coaches the quarterback. The function of the pastor is to coach God's people to do the work of the ministry. You've got to coach people into lowering their standard of living to free up money for loving the poor and the oppressed. Somebody has got to say to the people, "Listen, there are 3,000 verses of Scripture that talk about the responsibility of God's people to the poor and the oppressed." You know what the Bible says? The Bible teaches that the whole reason God allows human government is to defend and protect the poor. How many poor people do you know who have access to the government? They can't even get near it because government doesn't even exist for the poor. That is the reason it ought to exist, God said. Somebody has got to cry out.

If the church wants to be an effective evangelistic witness, it has got to sit at the gate of the palace and, like John the Baptist, cry out to Pharaoh, the king of the palace, "Thus saith the Lord!" The tragedy is John the Baptist has now become chaplain in Herod's palace. But where is the prophetic voice? You must be one if you want to be truly evangelistic. God help us! God help us to pray: "Thy kingdom come, thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Help the church to become the live model on earth of what is happening in heaven. Help us to truly be born again that our lives reflect you so that we are prepared to lay down our lives for one another, to go into the world and to commit sabotage on Satan's world, to bring those people to relationships with Christ, to lower our standard of living, to free up our money to defend the poor, the wretched of the earth so your will will be done the way it is in heaven."

THE INTERACTION OF RELIGION AND LIFESTYLE IN AMERICA: A SOCIOLOGIST'S VIEW

Jeffrey K. Hadden

My topic this afternoon is a reflection on your conference theme of religion and lifestyles in America from a sociologist's point of view. By way of introduction, I'd like to take a minute to emphasize my role in addressing your topic *as a sociologist*.

My role as a sociologist attempting to understand the relationship between religion and lifestyle is quite different from that of those professing that religious beliefs have profound effects on their own personal lifestyles. John Mitchell once advised us to pay attention to what the Nixon administration did rather than what it said. We took him seriously, and you know the rest of the story. The sociologist's role is both to listen to what people say and to examine what they are doing. To the extent that sociologists have a reputation of being debunkers of society, this reputation results in con-

siderable measure from the fact that we frequently observe that what people say and what they do is not the same.

In my view, sociology should not stop here. We have obligations to ask why and to attempt to explain what is happening in human societies. I see sociology as a form of contemporary history. Current events, collective behavior, and individual beliefs and actions don't make a whole lot of sense unless we can interpret them within some framework about what is happening in history. Any interpretative framework is necessarily based on theoretical assumptions that are not easily verified. Hence, as a starting point, we need to recognize that sociological interpretation and sociological knowledge are precarious. To this we should add the caution that all interpretation mirrors, in some measure, the consciousness of the interpreter. A final caution, and this is no less important, those who read or hear sociological interpretations about society filter those messages through their own systems of values, beliefs, and taken-for-granted assumptions about reality. The greater the distance between the value presuppositions of the sender and those of the receiver, the more difficult it is to approach a one-to-one correspondence between the intended message and what is actually received.

Still, the sociologist qua sociologist must by definition stand at a distance from that which he or she endeavors to understand. If sociology is to be more than just another set of opinions about society, that is, if it is to develop a corpus of empirical knowledge about our collective life, it must strive to separate personal values and beliefs from theory and data. Because I come to you in the role of sociologist, there is necessarily some distance between my perspective on trends in American religious life and your own. I sincerely hope that distance will not be too great an obstacle to effective communication.

From a sociological perspective, then, the most distinctive feature of religion in American society is its *pluralistic* character. In one sense, we are all aware of this. We know there are Protestants, Catholics, and Jews in America. And we know that within Protestantism it is not quite the same to be a Baptist as it is to be an Episcopalian or a Seventh Day Adventist. Still, the average person has little knowledge about how other religious groups differ from his or her own. And what the average person can say about the differences between various Christian faith is usually characterized by stereotypes. Often these stereotypes tell us more about those who use them than about those who are being labeled.

For example, Jimmy Carter's profession that he is a "born again" Christian did not immediately help his presidential campaign in some regions of this nation and among members of some religious groups. There was already sufficient apprehension about having a Southerner in the White House. His public profession of having a close and personal relationship to God, of praying frequently, sent further tremors of doubt running through many sectors of society. Similarly, only a short time ago, millions of Americans feared that, if elected, John F. Kennedy would hand our government over to the Vatican. Everyone knows, so the

stereotype went, that Catholics owe their first allegiance to the Pope.

In short, while we know that America is religiously pluralistic, most people know little about faiths other than their own. And what they do know is frequently filtered through stereotypes that are more colorful than accurate.

This rather simple approach to the content of various religions is repeated in most Americans' lack of awareness of the diversity of religious meaning and belief *within* denominations, even within single congregations. While I'm sure some wise elders and clergy knew, the diversity of belief within denominations was not documented until the 1960s. My colleagues Charles Glock and Rod Stark made *Newsweek*, *Time*, *U.S. News and World Report*, and network television news when they published their study of religious beliefs in America. And, I would submit, their survey was newsworthy not because it found, for example, that Baptists and Congregationalists interpret scripture differently, but rather because of the enormous diversity it found within denominations. This same diversity within denominations was found in my study of clergy a couple of years later.

One type of response to this discovery of great diversity was to label as heretical all whose beliefs were not squarely in the center of denominational doctrine. Indeed, the schism that erupted in the Lutheran Church, Missouri Synod, near the end of this past decade pivoted centrally around the revelation of diversity and the demand by some for doctrinal purity.

I would not wish to minimize the anguish caused by the discovery of great diversity within denominations, but I think it has had some very positive results. As one comes to recognize that there are honest differences in interpretation of the faith within one's own religious group, it becomes easier to respond with both greater tolerance and more respect to Christians from other denominations, even those that have traditionally been stereotyped as being very different. I submit that Jimmy Carter experienced less suspicion about his personal religious commitments on the campaign trail than did John Kennedy, and this for reasons of more tolerance in American culture not for reasons of Catholic versus Baptist beliefs.

Traditionally, Southern Baptists have been characterized as being extremely homogeneous with respect to doctrinal beliefs. At one level, this was affirmed by the findings of Glock and Stark. But Baptists are by no means of one mind on many doctrinal issues. And when Glock and Stark turned to questions about the relationship between creed and deed, that is, the implications of specific beliefs for behavior, the consensus among Southern Baptists largely vanished. In this respect, Southern Baptists are much more like most other denominations than they are different.

In addition to describing the vast array of beliefs and analyzing the relationship between belief and behavior, sociological studies conducted over the past fifteen years have sought to understand the meanings and motives behind religious behavior. Again, the findings of these studies attest to great variability. The data simply will not permit us to conclude that there is any such thing as consensual religious doctrine within any denomination in America.

Two important implications follow from these findings. First, the diversity of belief and behavior we find within any single denomination, or congregation, suggests the highly privatized character of religious meaning in America today. Privatized faith, as I use this term, refers to the dislodging of religious meaning from collective consciousness. Rather than referring to taken-for-granted truths about ultimate meaning that are shared by a collective body, privatized religion finds its ultimate source of truth in the individual. Some have referred to this phenomenon as selfism, others have called it a cult of self worship, and still others see it as plain old fashioned narcissism.

Such privatized faith may be theologically sound in circles that believe God speaks to each and everyone of us individually, but sociologically speaking, the implications are onerous. In effect, individual consciousness becomes deified. Religion becomes anchored in self and can legitimize any individual act, no matter how bizarre or at variance with collective norms. The God of history, however imperfectly understood by various religious groups, is stripped of authority. If God is to be found in individual consciousness, then what role is there for the collective lore and wisdom of religious truths that have been transmitted over the centuries through the institutional church?

The manifestations of privatized faith are rather widespread in our culture today. There are secular as well as religious expressions, the essential difference being that the latter more self-consciously use religion to legitimize the worship of self. Further, this cult of self has made inroads into every theological orientation from the most liberal to the most conservative religious groups.

The essence of religion, sociologically speaking, is a collectively held and internalized set of beliefs about ultimate reality. Only by removing meaning from the precariousness of everyday life and granting it a taken-for-granted ontological status can religion function to integrate human society. Without collective assent, meaning loses its sacred quality as well as its power to guide individuals and move history.

Privatism, thus, as I see it, represents an important challenge to the authority of institutionalized faith. It means, in effect, that people will listen to the authority of the church only to the point they feel it is in their interests to do so. When their church or preacher propose behavior or lifestyle contrary to what they want to do, people whose faith is essentially privatized start listening to a different God. History has taught us that God sometimes speaks to those outside the religious establishment, but we ought to recognize also that there is a credibility problem somewhere when so many people go off in so many directions, all in the name of God.

The second implication of the great diversity of belief we find in American religion today is that it is extremely difficult to make generalizations about the effects of religion on lifestyle in America. Religious leaders of every theological persuasion are prone to make proscriptive statements about the effects of religion on lifestyles. While conservatives may stress personal piety and liberals good works, both are proclaiming what they think ought to be the effects of religion

on lifestyle. Sociologists and journalists too have been prone to allege effects on the basis of presumed beliefs. And, when they don't see those effects, they usually think they have a story to tell the world.

Northern journalists, for example, had a heyday in the South during the 1960s. They didn't have to look very far to find what seemed, obviously enough to them, breaches of the doctrine of Christian brotherhood. They tended to be short on background and contextual analysis of the alleged breaches, and they told us almost nothing of the personal agony and pain of those who were caught up trying to be Christian in a most difficult time and setting.

Now many of these same writers are scratching their heads trying to understand how Roman Catholics could be behaving like their stereotypical images of Pentecostals from the hills of West Virginia and how evangelicals could be talking about a social gospel. How is one to explain the events that bring the son of a Baptist dock worker from New Orleans and the daughter of an Episcopalian business executive from Scarsdale together on an Atlanta street corner to chant in praise of Hare Krishna? And how do we explain the Eldridge Cleavers and Charles Colsons and Larry Flynts? And what of the priests and nuns who left their order to enter the holy institution of matrimony? And what about homosexuals who demand the right to marry in a Christian ceremony or to be ordained? And I should add that I could easily use all of the time allotted for this talk this afternoon without even beginning to catalogue the dazzling array of religious phenomena that are happening in our society today.

There are obviously many explanations for all of these developments. Most of our response to or explanations of these phenomena are grounded in stereotypes. And quite often we are judgmental, measuring them in terms of their distance from our own religious experience and beliefs. If we know little about the persons in the pews in front and behind us on Sunday morning, we know almost nothing about the vast array of religious phenomena in America today. What are the motivations behind all of these expressions? What meanings do they have for their practitioners? Are they as diverse within their own ranks as we? And how does their faith effect lifestyles that are not visible to us as casual observers?

To ask the question of the relationship between religion and lifestyles, thus, is to raise a question that really has no answer. At least the answer is not to be found in searching for normative generalizations. The effects of religion on lifestyle are as diverse as the array of religious expressions we find in America today. If we insist that there ought to be some proscriptive formula that describes the proper interaction of faith and lifestyles, we are destined to reach conclusions that deny the validity of the religious experience of great numbers of our fellow citizens.

While it is true that some zealots have no difficulty in excluding the validity of all religious expressions save their own, it seems to me that this stance no longer typifies most religious traditions in America. Glock and Stark's data show that even among the more conservative traditions, there is considerable willingness to acknowledge the authenticity of religious expressions

that vary from their own. Even though many may proclaim their faith to be "the way," the evidence would seem to point toward the conclusion that most are saying my faith is one way among others. While they may believe in the superiority of their own faith, they are not willing to hold that God grants his blessings, salvation, or whatever benefits they believe to be forthcoming only to those who believe and practice faith identical to their own.

Thus, I think we can conclude that while religion in America has become more pluralistic in character, it has also become considerably more tolerant of different faiths. This tolerance, of course, is in tension with traditional stereotypes which break down ever so slowly. As with racial stereotypes, we now find ourselves able to say with all sincerity that some of our best friends are Catholic, Jewish, Mormon, or whatever group it is that is different from our own, and yet still cling to the group prejudices that are anchored in cultural stereotypes. For those who view tolerance as a positive cultural value, I think the future is full of hope. We have made rather remarkable progress over the past two decades in learning to live with those who differ from ourselves racially, culturally, socially, and politically. And in many respects, we have moved beyond a live and let live philosophy toward a genuine respect for cultural differences.

If tolerance is a gradual historical product of pluralism, it has also been reinforced in the privatization of religious meaning. To the extent that we are conscious of the degree to which our own faith deviates from standard doctrines of our particular institutional affiliation, we are more likely to be accepting of the private faiths of others.

I suspect many of you will see this more positive assessment of privatism as being at variance with my earlier appraisal of some rather grave implications of privatism. If it is not incongruent, there is certainly need for further analysis and integrative tissue. I shall try.

Before I begin, I need to caution you that the route may seem circuitous. But I believe it to be a road worth traveling. For me, at least, it suggests that diversity of experience and belief may be leading us to unity, that all of the cultural malaise we have seen these past two decades does not point to Armageddon, and that privatism may be the route to renewal of collective faith.

One of the most persistent questions in sociology has been, "How is social order possible?" The other, of course, is, "How do societies change?" Major tremors of change are observable, recorded by historians, and rich with possibilities for theoretical speculation. Order, on the other hand, is more easily ignored and taken-for-granted. But not for the sociologist. He looks at all the turmoil and conflict of modern society and asks why order and regularity remain the most striking features of human society. To the sociologist, order in human society is a kind of miracle not unlike the miracle of life to the biologist. To contemplate seriously why order prevails over the threat of chaos and anarchy is no less awesome than to contemplate the rhythm of the universe.

I began by noting that pluralism is the most distinctive feature of religion in American life. I want

now to suggest that secularization is the most distinctive feature of Western culture. To understand this idea, we need to examine the underlying assumptions and intellectual problems of early social science theorists. Sociological and anthropological theory is no less grounded in evolutionary thought than is all knowledge emerging from the 19th Century.

Almost every major classical theorist in sociology saw religion as a major integrative force in human society. But the dominant influence of evolutionary thought led them *not* to take this force for granted. To the contrary, an evolutionary model postulated that religion was but one step beyond the magic of more primitive man, a stage through which man was passing. As science and rationalism gained stronger footholds, it was assumed that man would evolve a higher order of consciousness. The concept *secularization*, meaning the process whereby the institutions and values of human society are removed from the domination of religious influence, was invented to describe this dramatic change which was even then taking place in the human community.

With the exception of Marx, who celebrated the passing of traditional society, most of the classical writers were gravely concerned about the implications on their own theories. The life and work of Emile Durkheim is instructive of this concern. His *Elementary Forms of Religious Life* is a brilliant treatise on the way humanity transformed those elements of culture which are considered essential to the maintenance of social order into a canopy of sacred truths. Anchored in the cosmos, they became taken-for-granted and unchallengeable, for they were the truths of the gods. But if humans have created their gods and not the other way around, and if they have now, in the age of science, discovered this ingenious ploy, how shall they be able to continue to believe? How can humans believe in that which they know not to be true? More importantly, if through the millenia religion has been the glue which has held the social order together, what lies ahead for humanity?

Durkheim suffered great agony without finding a solution to his problem. He thought for a while that science itself might become a new sacred canopy. But the very logic and method of science requires that one challenge existing truths, scientific or otherwise. How could a sacred canopy be constructed out of such fragile material? Durkheim clearly foresaw not only the precariousness of scientific truths, but also the fragility of science as a way of knowing. For a while, Durkheim also hoped that moral education might replace the eroded glue. But his own experience with the politics of the French educational system left him with serious doubts regarding the possibility of education to fulfill this great void.

If not religion, what? While not every sociologist since Durkheim has asked this question, almost every scholar who has attempted to construct a macro-theoretical model of society has found it impossible to escape what has come to be known as The Durkheimian Question.

In the *Social System*, Talcott Parsons developed one of the most important treatises that has ever been written on social order. Social order is possible, he argues, because human society is integrated at three inter-

locking and interdependent levels: cultural, societal, and individual. *Culture* embraces a vast reservoir of shared values. The *society* includes complex structural and institutional arrangements which pattern the ways we do things. Finally the *individual* is largely governed by an internalized commitment to shared values. And those who are unable or unwilling to be governed by internalized value commitments are subjected to a variety of societal mechanisms of external social control.

Shared values are the key to this integrative process. Our taken-for-granted value orientations have everything to do with the institutional arrangements we create. And our institutions, in turn, are instrumental in shaping values through a process sociologists call socialization.

Religion, Parsons believes, is central to each of these levels of social system integration. Our shared cultural values are anchored in taken-for-granted religious truths. Religious institutions transmit and reinforce these truths at the societal level and, thus, are important agents for both socialization and social control. As a result, individuals, for the most part, internalize values and conform to the norms and expectations of society.

If Parsons succeeded in providing a theoretical model that could account for social order, he failed to answer the Durkheimian question. If religion is slowly eroding as a result of secularization, the dilemma of Durkheim and other classic theorists looms all the larger as a result of Parsons' system model.

One route out of this maze is to reject the fundamental premise of secularization. The three hundred years of the modern era has witnessed a stubborn reluctance on the part of religion to peter out in conformity with the theoretical model. At least there is a lot of evidence to suggest this is the case. On the other hand, the phenomenon I have called privatization of faith cannot be dismissed easily, nor can a lot of other features of modern society which seem to support the secularization thesis.

I think there is an alternative response to the Durkheimian question. It involves rethinking both what secularization is as well as what its effects on modern society are. To begin with, I think that sociologists have fundamentally erred in their understanding of secularization. The removal of institutions and values of human society from the domination of religious influence does not necessitate the disappearance of religious influence and meaning in culture. Yet, I think that sociologists have assumed that this is precisely the meaning of secularization. Secularization has been understood to mean a kind of creeping cognitive rationality which renders the mind incapable of believing religious dogma.

To be sure, secularization must be understood to embrace a different cognitive style. And to many, that style does render adherence to specific religious doctrine difficult, if not impossible. But I think there is a much more fundamental and important dimension of secularization. What happened in history was not the removal of mankind from religious meaning, but rather the gradual liberation of humanity from the dominance of religious *institutions*. If we understand religious dominance to mean institutional dominance, including a particular motif of belief and prescribed ritual, we

can see secularization in quite a different light. Secularization, in this sense, means the liberation of humanity and culture from the oppressive power of religious oligarchy.

I think secularization can also be understood to mean the liberation of religious *symbols* and *meanings* from the dominance of a religious oligarchy. We are no longer restrained from giving religious meaning to those aspects of life that a religious elite consider inappropriate. For some, this may mean a deeper reverence for the natural wonders of God's creation. For others, religious meaning may be found in respect and care for living things. But perhaps most importantly, we have a new found freedom to cultivate love and care for our fellow humans. The mind of man is capable of infinite combinations of meaning. Only when humans were liberated from a circumscribed system of meaning were they free to discover new meanings.

Secular man has infused religious meaning into many sectors of life. These meanings are real and not dependent upon a profession of some particular religious doctrine. One of the most important of these is the institution of the family. I doubt that any of you would quarrel with the proposition that the family value system is fundamentally religious and sacred in character. I would argue that many of the particular dimensions of this value motif are grounded in what I am calling *secular religious faith*. Several recent studies of the family in history provide evidence that our familial values are not inherent in Christian dogma. I would mention Philippe Aries' *Centuries of Childhood* as one important evidence of this proposition.

Robert Bellah's writings on American civil religion provide another important evidence of the infusion of religious meaning into nonreligious institutions. Civil religion is not the worship of the state. It is, rather, an affirmation of a set of sacred values and beliefs that have a taken-for-granted status of truth. It is the duty of the state and its citizens to uphold and foster these truths, but the truths are above the state. They exist *alongside* of, *but* clearly *differentiated* from, any particular religious institutional church in American culture. Civil religion has its own sacred documents, beliefs, symbols, and rituals.

Before Bellah called this phenomenon to our attention, there was a tendency for us to subsume it under the Christian faith. And, we unquestionably have invoked and continue to invoke Christian symbols and rituals to express this faith. But there is no question in my mind as to the independence of our civil religion. The memorial service for Hubert Humphrey in the Capitol Rotunda a few weeks ago was a civil religious ceremony. The rituals, the symbols, and the beliefs reaffirmed were all emblems of this civil religion. One did not have to be a Christian to be deeply moved.

What I am arguing is that secularization has freed religious truths from any particular religious faith or institution, thus permitting these truths to grow. They have penetrated human consciousness in a way that was not possible when they were embodied in a single faith and institution. Modern man, thus, is guided by principles of religious truth that are independent of professing any particular religious faith.

To acknowledge the existence of secular religious truths which are relatively independent of the Chris-

tian faith is not to grant this faith ontological superiority. Neither is it necessary to argue that the cultural origins of this secular faith are independent of the Christian faith. Indeed, they are not. At the same time, they are not exclusively Christian. The physical mobility of modern man has been instrumental in the emergence of pluralistic culture. The secular faith, thus, has been leavened by many religious heritages, and the evolving tenets of this faith are universal truths. Nevertheless, the principal inspiration for this universal secular faith in Western culture has been Christianity.

For those of you familiar with the civil religion thesis of Bellah, I want to make clear that my concept of secular religious faith is considerably more inclusive. Civil religion is but one component, one which refers to the reciprocal duties of citizen and state. Secular religion has the quality of a *Weltanschauung*, an overarching set of symbols and meanings that serves to integrate individual lives and culture in history. To be sure, this secular religion is no less precarious than formal institutionalized religious systems. Indeed, it may be even more precarious because it has fewer routinized ritual expressions. Still, it presents guidelines for human conduct and integrative meaning of life. It penetrates our lives on many fronts—in our taken-for-granted values about family life, in our expectations of the political order, in our hopes for our educational systems, in our codes of ethical conduct in the professions and business, and so on.

I'm sure that many of you will want to think long and hard about this secular religion thesis before you accept it as a valid interpretation of American life. Unfortunately, the structure of conferences, unlike the classroom or the pulpit, does not provide the opportunity for ongoing interaction where ideas can be cultivated and permitted to grow. Guest lecturers can only toss out ideas and hope the soil has been readied in advance. They can, at best, point to the benefits of the harvest if the seeds are permitted to grow.

In the few minutes remaining I would like to address some of the implications of this thesis as I see them. In doing so, I should note that I see myself departing from the role of sociologist qua sociologist. The most important implication is this: Christians are not alone in our society in their endeavor to make our world more Christ-like. All of you know businessmen, students, teachers, and common laborers who do not consider themselves to be Christians, but whose lives are filled with the spirit of love, kindness, and compassion for their fellow human beings. I would submit that these people are your allies in building God's kingdom. What does it matter whether their goodness and humanity has been nurtured in the Christian church or in a culture that has profited immensely from the Christian message of brotherhood? I am reminded of the words of Senator Sam Ervin: "My mother used to say when I was a boy, 'Sam, don't try to reform people. Remember there is a lot of good in them and try to bring it out.'"

It seems to me that many members of the Christian faith have been too busy proselytizing when they should have been trying to bring out the good that is already here. They have unfortunately assumed that accepting their version of Christian dogma is a pre-

requisite for full membership in the brotherhood of man.

I would propose that the spirit of tolerance that has emerged in our pluralistic culture can, if permitted, nurture a renewed sense of the brotherhood of all. And that our relationships with our fellow human beings can be guided by this recognition of our oneness. The Protestant Reformation marked the beginning of a proliferation of religious groups that continued more or less unabated for four hundred and fifty years. This proliferation of cognitive subworlds has stressed the importance of marginal differentiation at the expense of underlying unity of meaning and purpose. Universal truths have been sacrificed for symbols that gave distinctive identity to individual groups.

The second half of the twentieth century has seen two important developments in this nation, and in some measure, these developments are global. First, while denominational schisms continue, there has been a marked trend toward Christian unity. I refer not only to denominational mergers, but to an increasing openness for dialogue among most branches of the Christian faith. Also, there has been a new spirit of openness and respect among Christians and Jews. The second development is the penetration of non-Western religions into our culture. While both Christians and Jews have misgivings about these religions, we have been amazingly tolerant.

Together, I think these developments represent a quest for renewed religious meaning in the modern world. If we seem to be going in many directions simultaneously, there is an underlying pursuit of our common destiny and of universal truths. The secularization of modern society, thus, has not eroded man's capacity to believe. Humans must believe. They need an accounting of history which will permit them to locate themselves and which will give meaning to human society. The question, thus, is not whether they will believe, but what. And what they believe must be plausible and consistent with their own experience.

Secularization has challenged particular structures and institutional forms of religion. But secular man has not abandoned belief. If secular religious faith is not a full blown religion in the traditional sense of institutional religions, it is a nascent expression of universal truths. The Christian church is anything but irrelevant to this unfolding historical drama. It has lent direction from the beginning. But the emphasis on denominational uniqueness at the expense of underlying truths that are both Christian and universal presents an obstacle to the leavening potential of contemporary Christianity.

I am not suggesting that denominational uniqueness should disappear. To the contrary, this pluralistic quality of American culture is one of its strengths. What I am suggesting is the Christian message of brotherhood and love can be strengthened in direct proportion to the willingness of Christians to rediscover their unity of purpose. Privatism, as a drift away from collective consciousness and well being, can be checked only as we recover our common heritage and destiny.

Let me conclude by offering an apology to those of you who would have preferred that I stick a little closer to the topic of the interaction of Christianity and lifestyles. In defense of the route I have traveled,

I have tried to say that the diversity of beliefs and lifestyles that are subsumed under the umbrella of Christianity in our society is so great as to defy categorization. From moral or theological perspectives, one can respond with approbation or reproach of these various styles. A pure "value-free" sociological perspective might have taken as its text the words of Jim Casey in Steinbeck's *The Grapes of Wrath*: "There ain't no sin and there ain't no virtue. There's just stuff people do." I have tried to chart a middle course, drawing upon sociological concepts and theory to interpret the role of religion in contemporary America. If each of us can find cause for alarm in some things we see happening in the name of Christ today, I think there is also much cause for celebration. I have tried to suggest that the spirit of Christ lives in our culture and not simply in the hearts and lives of those who profess His Lordship. The challenge to those who call themselves Christians is to cultivate that spirit wherever it is found.

ECONOMICS: TOWARD A LIFESTYLE FOR CHRISTIANS

Millard Fuller

Mr. Tillman, Foy Valentine, David Sapp, and many of my personal friends, my fellow Christians, it's a real joy and privilege and indeed an honor for me to address such an august body of Southern Baptists. As you were told in the introduction, my wife and I spent several years in Central Africa in the country of Zaire and over there we learned a very, I think, useful and beautiful custom which I want to use here tonight and that is one the Zairian people use for establishing a relationship. When a person stands up to speak in Zaire he thinks that it's very important that the people are listening to whatever he has to say. So they have a series of greetings that wake the people up. You know you Southern Baptists used to do it by the use of "amen," but I spoke at Southern Seminary in the ethics class of Henlee Barnette last year and I broke loose with a little South Georgia preaching and nobody was saying "amen" and I wondered why not. I just stopped in the middle of my presentation and I said, "Henlee, what's wrong? Why isn't somebody saying amen?" He said, "Well, they dropped Amen 101. We don't teach that course here anymore."

But I think it is important for us to have a relationship if I'm going to say something and I want you to hear it. Anyway this is the way they do it in Zaire.

When a person gets up to speak he greets the people with the Lingala greeting, "Mbote." This means in their language, "hello" or "greetings." Then all the people reply, "Mbote," which means hello. Then he says secondly, "Mbote nabino," which means in their language, "hello again." Then the people respond, a little louder this time, "Mbote." And then he says, "Mbote lesusu" and that means "hello again" and the people say back to him, "Mbote" a little louder and then he says, louder than ever, "Mbote mingi" and this means "hello a whole lot" and then everybody says back, rattling the

rafters this time, "Mbote," and that means "hello" and the speaker feels good and everybody's awake and a relationship has been established. All right? Now let's pretend we're on the banks of the Zaire River in Central Africa. You are not Southern Baptists any more, you're African, you're Christians, and it doesn't matter whether you're Southern Baptists or not, but you're there, you're waiting on a speaker to speak and we're going to greet each other, all right? You got this? Now don't mess it up. No matter what I say, you say, "Mbote." You got that? Don't mess it up. You're not going to mess it up, are you? All right.

"Mbote." [Fuller]

"Mbote." [Audience.]

"Mbote nabino." [Fuller]

"Mbote." [Audience]

"Mbote lesusu." [Fuller]

"Mbote." [Audience]

"Mbote mingi." [Fuller]

"Mbote." [Audience]

Good, we've got something going now.

I do want to tell you what a real thrill it is to be here and I want to tell you that I think the Lord brought us together tonight. I think that God has something that he wants to come out of our time together. We are not just here in Nashville, Tennessee as an exercise because you didn't have anything else to do, but because God has got something for you and me to do in this world today. We live in an exciting time and I hope that you will listen to me and to the other speakers this weekend in a spirit of expectancy, a spirit of trying to understand and discern why God has brought us together in this particular session.

You were told in the introduction that I live in Americus, Georgia, and that I have a relationship with Koinonia. Koinonia, you know, used to be near Americus. He made a slight error. It's now near Plains. It's in the same place but it's not near Americus now. It's near Plains because it's about eight miles from Plains and eight miles from Americus.

Last week when I was trying to get my thoughts together on what I would share with you here tonight, I went to the back side of Koinonia where we have there what is called a meditation shack. It's just a little, old, wooden shack with a tin roof on it that's perched on the side of a hill overlooking a swamp. And it's real quiet and I went back to think about what I wanted to say to five or six or seven hundred Southern Baptists up here in Nashville, Tennessee, tonight. I did a lot of thinking and praying about what I wanted to share with you and then as I was getting somewhat frustrated over this tremendous opportunity that was going to be mine to share with you, I thought I'd better go get some advice and I thought of my friend, Ethel Dunning.

Ethel is a black friend of mine who lives at Koinonia in one of the housing areas we have built for low income families. She's a beautiful person and she's a deeply Christian woman. I thought, "If I went over there and talked to Ethel, she would give me some ammunition. She would give me some ideas for these Southern Baptists."

So I went over and I walked in. She was sitting on the front porch. I walked up to her and I said, "Ethel, how you doing?" "Oh," she said, "I'm fine." She said, "How

you getting along?" We passed the pleasantries of the day and I said, "Look, Ethel, I came over here because I've got a problem. I've got a challenge. I have an opportunity to speak to about five or six hundred Southern Baptists, a lot of them preachers, and I want you to tell me what I should say to them because they've given me the topic to talk on: economics—you know, things about money and material possessions and what kind of a lifestyle that Christians ought to be moving toward in regard to their money and their possessions." She said, "That's a good subject!" And she said, "That's a good congregation to hear that subject!" She said, "You go up there to Nashville," and I'm going to tell you exactly what Ethel told me to tell you. She said, "You tell them there ain't no way you can live in big homes with lots of money and plenty of food and they is po' folks all around them living in shacks and hongry and God is going to be happy with them." That's what she told me to tell you. That's the sermon from Ethel Dunning.

I almost could sit down right now because in those few words you have been delivered; you have heard, a powerful proclamation of the gospel. As I heard and as I listened to Ethel speaking there on her front porch, I thought about someone else who said something so similar to that. He was a fellow Baptist. He did his thing about two thousand years ago. People call him John the Baptist. I call him John the Bulldozer because he went down by the river Jordan and he started his evangelistic campaign; he must have been some preacher.

It's recorded in the third chapter of Luke. He said, "Get the road ready for the Lord." And he said, "Make a path straight for him to travel. Every valley must be filled up and every hill and mountain must be leveled off. The winding roads must be made straight and the rough paths made smooth. And all of mankind will see God's salvation." And his evangelistic crusade was so successful he drew ever larger crowds. Every time he would preach, the crowd would get bigger, and the people would come around and want to be baptized and John said to them, "You snakes! Who told you that you could escape from the punishment God is about to send? Do those things," he said, "which will show that you have turned from your sins. Do those things," he said, "which will show God that you have turned from your sins and you really and truly have repented and want to receive baptism from God. And don't go sniffing to God," he said to them.

"But my daddy and my granddaddy and my great granddaddy were Southern Baptists."

"No," he says, "don't say that. Don't think you're going to get any help because your ancestors came from Abraham. The axe is ready to cut down trees at the roots and every tree that does not bear good fruit will be cut down and thrown into the fire." The Bible says, you know, don't judge, but God, if he doesn't make us judges, he does make us fruit inspectors. By their fruits you shall know them and he said, "God is looking at your fruit." The people asked him, "What must we do to be saved, to get this salvation?"

This negative preaching was tearing the people up. John just made it so plain, he said, "You got to do something. You got to take some action." But the people

said, "What do you want us to do?" And you would think old John, being a good Baptist, being a good evangelist, would say, "You got to be more religious. You got to get yourselves straightened up and look religious. You got to get out here and go to Training Union. You got to go to Sunday School. You got to give a tithe of everything you make. You got to be religious. What, don't you understand what it means to be religious in this world in which we live?" Yeah. No, he didn't say that! You know what he said? He said something that wasn't even religious sounding. You know what he said? "If you got two coats you've got one too many." Now that don't even sound religious, does it? If you got two coats you've got to get rid of one of those coats." Oh, yeah, if you got some extra food over there in your cupboard, you better get it out and share with them folks around here that ain't got nothing to eat." And he gave some specific advice to the tax collectors and to the soldiers. But of course, I won't dwell on that because I think all the tax collectors are Methodists, and, also, I think the soldiers are spread out in other denominations. But anyway, this business about coats and this business about food, he didn't designate it for tax collectors or soldiers, he said everybody—Baptists and Methodists, Presbyterians, the Lutherans—all of you—he just made it general.

Here a while back I was speaking down in St. Petersburg, Florida. I was in a Baptist church. It wasn't a Southern Baptist church; it was an American Baptist church. Y'all know where St. Petersburg is? Well, St. Petersburg is not a poverty section of the United States. And I was down there talking to these folks. It was a meeting one night. It was a supper, and we were down in the church basement. I used this text from Luke the third chapter, and I was talking about this business of sharing our coats and sharing food, and I knew that everybody there had one house down in St. Petersburg and another one up North somewhere and I said, "You know, I wonder if this business about coats would apply to houses?" And after I said that I paused just a little bit, and there was a man about halfway in the back; he just popped up like a cork. He said, "Excuse me, Mr. Fuller. Excuse me. I know you didn't ask for questions in the middle of your talk, but I feel I must say something at this point, because that analogy between those coats and houses is not a good one because a person can't wear but one coat at the time; but with houses he, uh, uh, uh," and he sat down. There was an embarrassing silence and we went on.

You know what? That preaching of old John the Baptist Bulldozer does have something to do with houses. And it has something to do with money in the bank and pants and dresses, material possessions of all kinds. And the message, my Christian friends, is this: Those who own the mountains of wealth are commanded to push it into the valleys of poverty and level it off.

Consider the story of the Bible, which is well known to all of us, of the so-called rich young ruler. You'll find it in the eighteenth chapter of Luke. This man came to Jesus and said, "What must I do to receive eternal life?" And Jesus responded, "You know the commandments. Don't commit adultery. Don't murder. Don't steal. Don't be guilty of false accusations

of people. Oh, yeah, and honor your father and mother, honor your mama and daddy." This young man, he was a very bright young man, obviously. He said, "Oh yes, yes, I've done all that since I was a little bitsy boy, I did all of that." And Jesus said, "Oh, yes, there's just one other thing you need to do. Get rid of all of your possessions and come follow me." But he turned away sorrowfully because he had lots of stocks and bonds and hogs and cows and land and all of that. He was a very rich man, and he went away sorrowfully because he couldn't do that. He wasn't willing to do that. You know what? I think that young man would have been a good Southern Baptist. You probably would have been glad to have him in your church; might have put him on the deacon board.

How many of you ministers who are here tonight have ever preached a sermon against adultery? How many of you have ever preached a sermon against killing folks? All good Christians are against murder. All good Christians are against adultery. How about stealing? Have you ever preached a sermon against stealing? How about false accusations? Have you ever preached a sermon that it's wrong to make false accusations or even to make accusations when you're not sure whether it's false or true? And how about urging the members of your congregations to honor their mother and their father? Have you ever preached a sermon like that? But how many of you ministers have ever stood in your pulpit and looked out there at people you knew and said, "Look, the Bible says you cannot be my disciple unless you give up everything you've got and come follow me." How many of you have ever seriously told the members of your congregation to give everything away? In other words, you stop exactly where the rich, young man stopped. You preach against all of those things which he said he observed. But when it comes on down to that next step, that's where you stop.

It is interesting to note that this exchange between Jesus and this young man resulted from the question, "What must I do to inherit eternal life?" I don't think I'll be wrong to say that the best known Scripture, perhaps the best loved Scripture in Baptist churches across this country is John 3:16. "For God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son that whosoever believeth in him should not perish but should have everlasting life." But here this young man comes along and he says, "What must I do to inherit eternal life?" You would expect Jesus to say, "What's the matter with you? Don't you know John 3:16? Believe in me. That's the way to get eternal life, just believe in me, man. It's clear. John made it very clear in the third chapter, sixteenth verse."

Again, in Luke, the tenth chapter, we find a law professor coming to Jesus asking this same question, "What must I do to have eternal life?" And Jesus said, "What do the Scriptures say?" And the man responded, "Love the Lord God with all your heart, mind, soul, and strength, and your neighbor as yourself." Again, you wonder why Jesus just didn't say to this law professor, "Believe in me, don't you even, you law professor, you don't know John 3:16? What's the matter with you?" But he didn't say that. He asked the man this question and he responded, but this man being a *good* law professor, wanting to get things defined very

precisely, he said, "Will you please tell me who is my neighbor?"

You know the story. He told him the story that we know so well in our churches, the story of the Good Samaritan. Now, I don't know about where you live, but down in South Georgia, our Samaritan population is running a little low. The last census they took down there, they didn't find one in Plains. They didn't find any in Americus either. But you know what we do have down in South Georgia? We've got lots of white folks, and we've got lots of black folks. When you start talking about white folks and black folks everybody down there knows what you are talking about. And so, Clarence Jordan, who is the man who founded Koinonia Farms way back in 1942, the most profound Christian that I have ever known and have ever had the privilege of knowing, felt that people ought to understand the gospel in terms of where they live. He took this very beautiful and very loved story and translated it into terms that people in South Georgia could understand. So he took a man off of the road from Jerusalem to Jericho, put him on the road from Atlanta to Albany and got the man beat up at Ellaville. Ellaville is just a little bit bigger than Plains. It's not as well known but it's just a few miles away.

He had the man beat up at Ellaville and it happened in August. You know the Lord comes through South Georgia in August, and you have revivals down there in his honor all through that area. I don't know when he comes through your particular area; but it was August, and they were having a revival in the Lord's honor in Albany, and this Baptist preacher came by there. He was in hurry, you know, going down there to the service to preach, and he came by this guy who had been beat up in Ellaville. He slammed on the brakes. He started to stop and then he thought, "Aw, you know, I'm running late. Oh," he says, "the crime rate is increasing. It's awful. Somebody ought to help that fellow, but I don't have time to stop. God bless you." And he took on off for the revival. Then a few minutes later the song leader came by. He was in a nice, new car with good upholstery, and he wanted to stop but he couldn't either. He told himself, "Oh, my goodness, that fellow's been beat up, it's just awful. The crime rate just keeps going up. We got to do something. I've got to write my congressman. I've got to do something, but the revival starts in just a few minutes." Of course it could start without the preacher, but no service can start without the song leader. And so he put his foot on the accelerator and went by whistling the tune he was going to teach the Junior choir that night, "Brighten the Corner Where You Are." So he went on by. Then a little bit later a black man comes by. He doesn't have to go to the revival. He doesn't have to lead the singing or do the preaching, so he stopped to help, and picked this man up, and he took him down to Albany to the hospital.

Well, Clarence told this s'ory. He wrote it up, and then he did a record of it. Somehow a white lady up there in Ellaville got hold of that record. She listened to it, and she was a little bit upset about that record. So she got the telephone number of Clarence Jordan over at Koinonia and called him up and said, "Are you Reverend Jordan?" "Yes," he said. "Are you the man that did that record?" He said, "Uh, well, what record

is that?" "You know, that record about that man got beat up in Ellaville?" He said, "Yes, I did a record like that." Well, she said, "I live in Ellaville, and I want to know where did that happen?" And he said, "Uh, Uh," and he was trying to think. "Well," she said, "who was that white preacher that went by there and wouldn't help him?" And then, before he could answer, she said, "And who was that song leader, and who was that nigger that finally picked him up and took him to the hospital?" And so Clarence finally broke in and said, "Well, I was just trying to make this story relevant because the Samaritan population is a little low down here. I was trying to help people understand what that story was all about." She said, "You mean to tell me that didn't really happen?" Well, no." "Oh, well, that's what I wanted to hear. I thought it was a lie. You mean to tell me you're a preacher and you not only tell lies, you make records of your lies and sell them?"

The woman at Ellaville didn't want that story to be relevant. Undoubtedly she'd heard that story since she was a little girl in Sunday School. She liked it when that man was on the road from Jerusalem to Jericho. She thought that Samaritan was a wonderful man. But when he got on that road between Atlanta and Albany and that man got beat up in her home town and she had to deal with it right at her front door, she didn't like it. That was too close to home. But, my Christian friends, we cannot escape the eternal relevance of the gospel. And we cannot escape the fact that it has something to do with our possessions. And it has a relationship, it has a great deal to do with our neighbors in need, whether they are at our front door or whether they might be half a world away.

The key to this whole question is, I think, to look at ourselves, our neighbors, our abilities, and our possessions from God's point of view. I think that is the essence of Jesus' teaching to love our neighbor as we love ourself. I think that is implicit in John 3:16; "For God so loved the world," for God so loved the *whole* world, not just the United States, "that He gave his only begotten Son. . . ." He loves not just the United States, not just Southern Baptists in the United States. God wants us to adopt a lifestyle that is agreeable in his sight. God wants us to adopt a redemptive lifestyle, one that redeems the world not only spiritually, but physically; not only in the future, but now; not only redemptive for ourselves, but for others; not only for fellow Baptists and fellow Americans, but for the whole world. The Bible makes it clear that God loves those who share with people in need.

You know Isaiah, the fifty-eighth chapter. "The kind of fasting I want," says God, "is to remove the chains of oppression and the yoke of injustice and let the oppressed go free. Share your food with the hungry and open your homes to the homeless poor. Give clothes to those who have nothing to wear and do not refuse to help your own relatives." You also know in First Timothy, the sixth chapter, how it is written: "Command those who are rich in the things of this life not to be proud, but to place their hopes not in such an uncertain thing as riches but in God who generously gives us everything for our enjoyment. Command them to do good, to be rich in good works, to be generous and ready to share with others." You know from James, "My brothers, what good is it for

someone to say that he has faith if his actions do not prove it? Can flat faith alone save him? Suppose there are brothers or sisters who need clothes and don't have enough to eat. What good is there in saying to them, 'God bless you, keep warm and eat well,' if you don't give them the necessities of life?"

So it is with faith. If it is alone and includes no actions, then it is dead. And in First John, the third chapter, we read this, "If a rich person sees his brother in need and yet closes his heart against his brother, how can he claim that he has the love of God in him? My children, our love should not be just words and talk, it must be true love which shows itself in action." So the word of God is clear. We are compelled to action, to do something for those in need, to be bearers of good fruit for the kingdom.

But there are also some quite practical considerations that should, that indeed must, move us to action in the day and age in which we live. Energy is becoming scarcer and scarcer. Prices for sources of energy mount. Human population continues to grow. Food prices increase. Inflation is a world-wide problem. The world cannot forever afford our opulent lifestyle, our extravagant use of the earth's resources. Americans consume, we are told, five times the resources of a third world country, at least five times. We must step down from our opulent lifestyle as we lift our poorer brothers and sisters up. Are you willing to do that?

You ministers—I want to speak to you ministers now. You ministers, are you willing to preach negative sermons like John and call your members snakes? Do you have that kind of courage? Are you willing to tell a family in your congregation that the opulent house they are building at the edge of town is sinful? Will you say to that deacon who is building a second home out in the country that he who has two houses has one too many? Are you willing to say to that lady in your congregation who has eaten too much, who has gotten too fat, that she's guilty of sin not only because she's hurting her own body, but because she's eating more than her share of the world's goods, of the world's food? Or, will you continue to preach the safe sermons, the personal piety sermons—being against adultery and murder and false accusation, and honoring your mama and daddy—all of which are important. Jesus never said that those things are unimportant. Are you going to stop right there in order to keep your rich young rulers in your congregation happy?

Twelve years ago my wife and I were living an opulent lifestyle. We were down in Montgomery, Alabama, in business. We had big, plush offices, 150 employees, a big house in the Cloverdale section of town, 2,000 acres of land, horses that jump over little things that you're supposed to have if you're rich, lot of cows, little fishing lakes, cabins on the lake, speedboats to ride in. And then one night in November, 1965, God spoke to us on the city street of New York, just off Fifth Avenue, and he turned us around. He said, "I want you to do my work. I want you to be my messenger." And we felt and we sensed very strongly that God wanted us to get rid of all this stuff. And he led us, just as surely as I'm standing before you tonight, to Koinonia where I met Clarence Jordan. We were down there together for a month in December, 1965. And Clarence, in very profound way, nurtured us as

baby Christians, showing us and affirming us that the steps we had taken were right and that God was pleased when we turned our lives and hearts away from the acquisition of material things and turned our lives and hearts toward the Lord Jesus in doing the fullness of his work in the world.

We eventually went back to Koinonia after a few months, and we set up this program called Koinonia Partners, and we established a fund for humanity. We saw so many people in that area who were hungry. We saw people who didn't have jobs, who were living in a very low subsistence level, people who didn't have decent houses in which to live. We began to build homes for those people through this fund for humanity, not charging any profit, not charging any interest. You read the twenty-second chapter of Exodus. It's very clear there: when you lend money to the poor, do not be like the money lenders and charge interest. We wanted to take the burden of interest off the backs of the poor and, as a Christian ministry, help those people to have decent places in which to live. And by the grace of God, in that county alone, we've now built over a million dollars worth of housing for the poor, and families in three different locations are able to live in a decent way.

But in 1973, after this program was well under way, we felt God calling us to go to another part of the world and a part of the world that's much poorer even than South Georgia. We went to the country of Zaire. There we began to work with the people, getting artificial limbs for them, getting eye glasses, preaching, distributing Bibles, and we saw they had such a tremendous need for housing. We began to build houses there in the city of Mbandaka, the capital city of Equator Region, and then, a little later, down in the southern part of the region at the village of Ntondo.

But you know what we discovered when we got out there in July, 1973? We discovered, my friends, that we were rich again. We were rich again, not because we had suddenly inherited some money, but we were rich again because we had changed places on the face of the earth, and I discovered that my modest missionary salary, which was ten percent of my salary as president of my company, was twenty times that of a local high school teacher, thirty times that of a local elementary school teacher, and forty times that of a local pastor. We were rich again because we had moved to a different part of the world.

I remember one day; I was standing out in front of a little woodworking shop where we were building doors and windows for these houses we were building for the people—again on the same principle we had in South Georgia, no profit and no interest, so the people could afford to have a decent place in which to live—and a pastor of the largest Protestant church in the city came up to me and addressed me. The official language out there in that country is French, and he greeted me in French: "Bon jour, Monsieur Fuller. He said, "Good morning, Mr. Fuller.

I said, "Bon jour, Pastor." I returned the greeting.

He said, again in French, "Can you make a coffin for me?"

I said, "Yes, Pastor, but why?"

He said, "Because my nine-year-old son has died."

I said, "Oh, Pastor, I'm sorry to hear that. I hadn't heard. What happened to your son?"

"Mister Fuller," he said, "he died of starvation."

Here was not just a layman. Here was a brother Christian who had dedicated his life to proclaiming the gospel to his people, but he didn't make enough money to feed his own son.

I learned many things in Zaire. I learned that there are many differences that separate us. There's a different culture and a different language and a different way of thinking about a lot of things. But I learned that there is so much more that binds us together in a common humanity and in a common faith than there is that separates us. I submit to you that a story like this cannot but touch your heart unless you have a heart of stone. God is crying out from heaven tonight saying, "Feed my sheep," and that doesn't just mean go out and preach John 3:16 even though that is so important. But we must minister to the physical needs of our suffering brothers and sisters around this earth, beginning next door to where you live and across the street.

God is not happy with our lifestyles. We must cut back and share. You know this to be true. You honor one of your own who understood this. Her name is Lottie Moon. She refused to eat when her neighbors could not, and she gave her life's earnings and then her life because she wanted to identify with the hungry where she lived and worked. Last Christmas you took up \$30 million dollars in your churches in honor of this great lady, but how much of it went to feed the hungry of our world? You have a world hunger and disaster relief fund in the Foreign Mission Board of your church. Even though Baptists put nearly \$2 billion dollars in the offering plate last year, less than one million dollars went to this fund to feed a hungry world. And further, this amount of nearly a million dollars, eight hundred and some thousand dollars was even less by a considerable amount than you gave the year before. How will you respond to the world in which we live? How will you respond to the pastors whose sons are starving in our world? What is God calling us to do in the present world situation? The cross is still central in our faith. The way of the cross is the way of the Christian. You believe that. I know you believe that.

Economics: toward a lifestyle for Christians? Economics: toward the cross. That's the way. May God give us the strength and courage to go in that direction, to go toward the cross with Jesus, to meet him there, and with him being our strength, to serve a hungry, suffering world.

THE ENERGY CRISIS AND AMERICAN LIFESTYLES

John F. O'Leary

Thank you very much. It is really a pleasure to be with you this evening. We have had about a three week discussion back and forth as to whether I could make it, and, finally, we were able to clear the calendar to get down. I tell you it is really a pleasure to be with you. We spend too much time in Washington, I think, with our bureaucratic friends, and we tend

to forget that there are a lot of people out there who are not bureaucrats, not Washingtonians, but just very nice Americans.

Let me tell you a little bit about how I view the energy crisis, some of the problems we are going to have, and some of the responses that I hope this administration, the Carter Administration, will be able to make to it.

First of all, I think if you were to stand back and take a look at where we are today you would have to say that we could depend pretty much entirely on five systems, five pretty distinct systems for our energy well-being. They are domestic oil, domestic gas, domestic coal, nuclear energy, and imported oil. Now we have some other systems in the wings. In the next four or five years, for example, we are going to have some good news with regard to solar energy. Maybe in another fifteen to twenty years we will have some good news with regard to fusion. It is possible that we will find, in limited circumstances, application of wind power within the next four or five years, economically. It is possible, also, that we will be able to get energy from biomass, that is to say from growing things, economically—maybe a little bit from tides. If you look over where we are now and where we are going to be, I believe for the next fifteen years or thereabout, the great bulk of energy is going to be drawn from those five sources: domestic oil, domestic gas, domestic coal, nuclear energy and oil imports.

Now, if you were to back off and ask yourself, how are we doing on those five systems? I think you would have to come to this fairly concrete set of conclusions. First of all, with regard to domestic oil and gas, those first two systems that now represent really the backbone of our energy economy, we are not doing very well. We have been declining in production of both oil and gas since the early 1970s. We are having a little upsurge now as the very large find on the North Slope of Alaska begins to make itself felt in markets of the lower forty-eight states. That will peak out, I suspect, in about 1981 or 1982. Then I think we are bound almost inevitably to turn on down again.

Now we hear a lot about the tremendous amount of oil and gas to be found in the outer continental shelves. And as I was looking over some numbers recently, I noted that we have been working very hard in the outer continental shelf down in the Gulf of Mexico for about the last twenty years. And right now the oil we have out there is about three to four billion barrels of reserves, which doesn't mean much to you people because you don't deal with these numbers every day as I do. But it means that is ten percent of the reserves we have here. And that has been a very great success story. If we do as well offshore in the Atlantic, I think we will be lucky. So we might add another four or five or maybe six billion barrels of oil and a few trillion cubic feet of gas offshore in the Atlantic. But it will not change this basic picture.

Five years from now and ten years from now, I suspect we will still be declining in the production of these two strategic sources of supply for this economy: domestic oil and domestic gas. The numbers might run about like this. We are now producing about nine million barrels a day of oil. We will hold that steady as the Alaskan field comes in and offsets the declines of

the lower forty-eight and by 1985 we might be steady or down a million barrels a day. Gas is running now at the rate of around twenty-one trillion cubic feet. That's down from the high of the early seventies of twenty-two to twenty-three trillion cubic feet. Now this is per year. I suspect that by 1985 we will be lucky to be producing, with the Alaskan gas, about seventeen trillion cubic feet. That's kind of the dimensions of the problem. Domestic oil has been the mainstay of this economy since the end of World War II. It's surprising to me to reflect that two-thirds of the increase in energy consumption of the country after World War II until 1970 was supplied by natural gas. You have to say to yourself that those two strategic sources of energy for this economy do not have a bright outlook.

Now, how firm is that kind of a prospect? It is firm because it is based upon the best extrapolation we can make off activity that has been going on now for better than a century. Something could come along and change that. We could find a Middle East right underneath Nashville tomorrow. The odds for that, unfortunately, are very low. We've been looking for a Middle East for a long, long time and we have only found one. As a matter of fact, you might be interested in where we get our oil and gas. We have, for example, in this country about twelve thousand oil fields that have been found since Drake put down his first well back in 1859—twelve thousand oil fields. One hundred of those oil fields produce half of the oil that is produced in this country today. They are great big oil fields. And interestingly enough, with one exception, that is the North Slope of Alaska, all of those were found better than twenty years ago and a lot of them better than forty years ago. It seems as you look around that you can find the prolific, great big oil wells quite easily. We are, in this country and in many other parts of the world as well, at the stage now where we look harder and harder for smaller and smaller oil fields. That goes to back up my feeling that unless something that we really can't reliably predict now, something that is very low in probability, occurs that this country is not going to be able to look forward to expanded supplies of domestic oil and gas.

What about the other two domestic resources, coal and nuclear energy? We have just finished a very long, sad period in the relatively sad history of the coal industry in this country. As was pointed out earlier in the introduction, I was the director of the Bureau of Mines, back in the late sixties and early seventies. While I was director, we had a lot of responsibilities for the development of data, for the development of research programs, but the most important from my standpoint was the health and safety responsibility of the Bureau of Mines for coal miners.

About three months after I took office as director of the Bureau of Mines there was a very, very serious accident in Bannington, West Virginia. You may recall that. It was in the headlines for weeks. An explosion after explosion rocked the mine, almost 300 people were killed. I determined I would spend the remainder of my time at the Bureau of Mines trying to reform the health and safety laws of the country that could prevent an accident like that from occurring. At that time we were routinely killing about 250 people a year

in underground mining directly, and about another thousand a year as a result of inhaling dust or, the so-called black lung. We brought on a program that, I think, has reduced to maybe a hundred or so a year the incidences of pneumoconiosis or new black lung and has cut that 250 to 300 people who were killed in falls of roof and timber accidents in the mine to about 150 a year or maybe 130. That has been one effect of that. The other effect is that as we force the mining industry to become more and more careful productivity has gone down very sharply. During that period of time we were producing about fifteen tons per man-shift in underground mines. Today it is about eight, almost half of what it was in the late 1960s.

Aside from the increased emphasis on health and safety, you ask yourself, what has happened to that industry? I think it tells us a little bit about the coal strike that we have just been through. Going back in history, that industry employed some 600,000 people in Appalachia in the late 1940s. And then oil and gas came on surging and took away the markets that coal had enjoyed. By 1960 that 600,000 man work force had been cut to about 100,000. And the people who were still in the mines were the people who were good miners and very tolerant of bad management.

For example, I talked to one executive recently who told me that about the time I was worried about this matter in the Bureau of Mines, there was in his company a work force with an average age of fifty-five years and the average tenure in the mines was better than thirty years. These were the few survivors of that very large work force of 1947. The people were good enough at mining and tolerant enough of bad safety conditions to stay in the mines. Now in the fifties, if you didn't like the way the mine was run and you wanted to blow the whistle on the boss, you were finished in the mines; you were blacklisted. By the time we got into the seventies all of those older miners had begun to go off the books, and the industry had to really attract new people. Right now, for example, that fifty-five average age is thirty years of age, and that thirty years experience is four or five years of experience. The fact is, if you don't like working in one mine in Appalachia today, you can quit, blow the whistle on the boss if you wish and walk across the street into the next mine and get a job tomorrow morning.

Thus, we have a very severe legacy of ill feeling between management on the one hand and labor on the other. I think if there was one last residue of peonage in this country, it was in the mines of Appalachia up until the early 1970s. It was a very bad set of conditions, and it is going to be a long time before those miners forget it.

There is one other very interesting fact we stumbled upon during this month and a half or two months of working with the operators and the UMW. Not one of the principal operators has a single person whose full-time job is labor relations.

Well, you take a look then at that third system, the coal system. You really have to have an optimistic person to think that that is going to be a shining light in the next decade. The President announced the other day that he will establish a commission to take a look at this situation of coal mining in this country and try to bring stability to it. I think that is a very smart step

because it is quite evident that we have to bring some external view into this very, very bad, actually poisonous, labor-management relationship that we have in coal mining. Until management is happier with workers and workers are happier with management, I think we are going to look forward to a bad time for coal in this country. So that's the third system then. That leaves us then with the final domestic system, nuclear energy.

Nuclear energy, as we view it today is finished as a strategic contributor to our energy supplies. We can resurrect that perhaps by paying belatedly attention to some of the long exposed wounds insofar as public policy goes that affect this industry. For example, only now, only in this month are we beginning seriously to address the whole host of problems that are associated with waste-disposal of nuclear plants.

Only in the last year have we begun to address the most serious of the problems associated with nuclear energy and this proliferation, the spread of weapons. At the national level, you will recall that only five years ago we found one morning that the Indians had exploded a nuclear device without warning, and we wonder how many other countries have the capacity to build and to explode nuclear weapons. Then at the sub-national level, almost every day we get stories in the papers of the college student doing his dissertation on how to build a bomb. This is an enormous concern. We have to give that the best thought we have in this country. And the President has done that. That was one of the very high priority items he brought with him into office. But beyond that, there are a host of problems.

For example, if a utility that wants to build a nuclear plant were to begin today in 1978 to order his plant, clear his land, to do the permitting, to do all the rest of the things, then to construct the plant, to run all the tests that the Nuclear Regulatory Commission requires to bring that plant up to criticality and to put power on the line, about the earliest he could expect to get power would be 1990. So you talk to the utility industry, and you have this kind of dialogue. "What do you think of nuclear energy?" you would say to the president of the company. He would say, "I think it is good." It has turned out to be safe. We have never killed a person yet in the civil nuclear programs of this country. And that is quite a record, including the programs that have been run with now thousands of reactor years by the Navy. Actually those Navy systems are precursors to the ones that we have in civil reactors. We have never killed a person, never had a serious accident, though we have come close. From the standpoint of environmental concerns it is much more benign than a coal fired plant, any utility executive will tell you. It is cheaper, from the standpoint of the energy that they turn out. It is better for the consumers from that standpoint. Then you say, "Good, when are you going to open your next plant?" And he will say, "It is not for me. Let my neighbor utility across the county order it." Then you go to that man and he is not going to order one either.

During the period that I was at the Atomic Energy Commission, 1972 to 1974, the utility industry ordered thirty to forty plants a year. They have ordered one plant in the last twenty-four months. During that period

of time they "unordered" fourteen and slipped schedules on a whole bunch of other plants. Now what does all of this mean? Well, it means that we are fearfully reliant on that fifth system.

One of the great ironies of last winter's methane gas shortages and this winter's coal problem was that every day those OPEC ships came to the docks down on the Gulf of Mexico and offloaded that OPEC oil. And indeed I heard some of my more cynical colleagues in Washington last year say that we were overly dependent upon domestic supplies of natural gas, and this year we are overly dependent on domestic supplies of coal. Well don't let that fool you. We have learned in 1973 and 1974 that if the political winds blow in the wrong direction, OPEC oil is a totally unreliable source. And that's where we are today.

Let me give another number or two. In 1970 we were importing about three million barrels a day. That, for a point of reference, is about equal the total output of Texas when Texas was the biggest producer in this country. It is equal to one-third of today's production. That is a lot of oil. You have heard of Venezuela as a producer. It is equal to about Venezuelan production at its peak. We are getting three million barrels a day in 1970. By 1973 just before the embargo, that three million had become six. After the very severe lessons that this country should have learned in 1973 and 1974, we have tightened our belt, and we commuted that 1973 number of six million barrels a day to last year's nine million barrels a day. If we keep on the way we are now, the legacy for 1985 will be twelve to fourteen or fifteen million barrels a day. Now, can we continue to do that?

There are two problems with that sort of reliance, in addition to the quite obvious one that you might be cut off tomorrow morning for a protracted period of time. First of all, we are learning, and here again you can read it every day in your papers, that when you bring in forty-five billion dollars worth of oil on top of all the other things we bring in and run an annual deficit of better than twenty billion dollars, as we did last year, people begin to have doubts about the dollar. This reminds you that the *deutsche* mark, the German mark, was four to one a decade ago, but it is two to one today. The same thing can be said for the Swiss mark. The yen is about half that bad. It hasn't gone off quite as badly as the *deutsche* mark. But the fact of the matter is, we have so many dollars going abroad to pay for those oil imports that people don't want those dollars anymore. That is part of the background of this crisis of the dollar that we have experienced here over the last six months. I heard one man, Robert O. Anderson, the chairman of the board of Arco, one of the larger oil companies, say that people won't accept our currency for oil above the current levels of imports. I don't know whether that is true or not, but that begins to put a very serious cloud on that projected figure of twelve to fourteen million barrels a day in 1985.

Now the second thing we have to worry about is, I believe, more severe. The world today is producing sixty million barrels a day of oil and consuming it—that is, the Soviet Union, the Third World, Africa, South America, Asia, sixty million barrels a day. That's going up between three and five percent a year. That means

that every year we have to add three million barrels a day to global capacity. And we ask ourselves, what are the odds of being able to do that next year? They are very good. There are four and one-half million barrels a day of shut-in capacity today and there is no problem. And the year after will be easy. Mexico is coming in with about two million, and the North Sea is coming in then, and the North Slope of Alaska will be adding another half a million. We will make it in 1981, probably in 1982, but probably not in 1983. In other words, somewhere between 1982 and 1984 we are going to have a replay, unless we do our job in this country well, of 1973 and 1974. What happened in 1973 and 1974 was really very simple. The world needed more oil than was available.

Let me tell you a little bit about what OPEC is and what it wanted. OPEC was formed back in 1959 when Exxon, then Standard of New Jersey, without any consultation reduced the price of the posting on OPEC oil, on Saudi Arabian oil, because some Russian oil came into the market which had been offered in India and they wanted to compete with it. At that point it became glaringly clear to the Saudis, the Kuwaitis, the Iranians, and the other people who are now OPEC, led by the Venezuelans, who really are OPEC, that they did not have any of the characteristics of ownership. And here is the way they characterized ownership: (1) How much do I produce? (2) How much do I get for it? (3) Where do I sell it and for how much? They didn't have any of those characteristics of ownership. They found that the large oil companies could adjust liftings, that is to say, could adjust the amount that they took from a company and penalize those who had acted improperly.

For example, when Iran became very nationalistic in the early fifties under Mosadegh, the major oil companies diverted their production away from Iran, and Iran suffered for a decade. They paid a price for that act of independence. During the recurrent crisis in the Middle East the oil went wherever the majors wanted it to go, despite the political leanings of the people whose oil it really was. Then finally in 1959, Exxon, Standard of New Jersey, demonstrated that they didn't even control the price. So OPEC was formed then to get some control over that heritage of theirs and it didn't work until 1973. It didn't work because we had a large surplus of oil in this country. In 1965, for example, we had three and one-half million a day of shut-in capacity down in Texas and Louisiana. That was enough to discipline the world market.

What did OPEC want during this period of time? It was very simple again. In their literature they said they wanted the U. S. price. You remember that during that period of time, the fifties and sixties, we were controlling the amounts of imports that came into this country. We had a \$3.00 price that by 1973 had become about \$3.50. The rest of the world had a \$1.00 price that by 1973 had become \$2.00. And the OPEC people took the very simple and straightforward view that if oil was worth \$3.50 or \$3.60 in the U. S., it was worth \$3.60 in Iran or Kuwait or Saudi Arabia. That's what they wanted. We had the embargo then and we, the Japanese, and the Western Europeans began to go out and bid the price up. It got to \$3.50 almost overnight. And that, remember, is what OPEC wanted.

There has been a lot of rewriting of history since then but this was a diabolical plan to drive the price up. The fact of the matter is, they had their aspirations pretty well committed by the middle of November when the price went into the \$3.50 to \$4.00 range. Then they declared, around Christmastime of 1973, that they would like the price of \$5.60. We continued to go out there and bid against one another. Pretty soon it was \$5.60, then \$7.00. You recall, then, in the summer of 1974, it was \$10.00. That was our doing. It came about because there was more demand around for oil than there was oil. Now that, I am afraid, is where we will be somewhere between 1982 and 1984.

It seems to me knowing that and recognizing our responsibilities to ourselves, to other nations, and to the generations that follow us, we ought to begin to act more responsibly and more ethically in our dealings with energy than has been the case in the past. I think we are beginning to learn some very harsh lessons. From three episodes in the last few years of our exposure—the 1973 and 1974 embargo, last winter's crisis with regard to natural gas and this winter's crisis with regard to coal, we have learned, I believe, that we live really in sort of a fool's paradise if we are going to be greedy. I think our first responsibility to ourselves, to those who follow us here, and to the people of other nations is to become much more conservative in our use of energy. And that indeed, is the first plank in the President's platform for dealing with this problem. This isn't driven by necessity, because clearly this country, if there is twelve million barrels a day to be had on the world market, can in one way or another bid it away from the Japanese or the Western Europeans or the developing countries. It's a matter of our responsibility to the rest of the world, and I don't think that we are owning up to that responsibility very well.

This is one of the real key questions before the Congress right now. What will they do with the President's national energy plan? They have been slow. I tend to be optimistic that they will pass it. I think one of the things that you must be interested in is the success of that energy plan in the Congress, because, with all its weaknesses, it is the only plan now before them that has any possibility at all of beginning to deal with this problem. What it does is relatively straightforward. It takes us to the point where we begin to own up to our ethical responsibilities to ourselves, to our neighbors in other countries, and to the people who are going to follow on after us in this country in the simplest terms. Right now, for example, we know intellectually that there is a shortage of natural gas and oil just on the horizon, and that the market value of natural gas is about \$2.50 a thousand cubic feet, and that the market value of oil, as indicated by the cost that we pay for half of our oil, those nine million barrels we import, is \$15. Yet in that \$2.50 natural gas world we say to you, the American people on the interstate market "for you it is seventy cents." It seems to me that that simply encourages waste, and we say to you who use oil that "it isn't a \$15 world that you live in, it's a \$10 world," the way we tilt the books and keep price controls on oil.

I am not making any claims here that we should take off those price controls; they are on for a very

good reason. But the crude oil equalization tax that is the principal feature of the President's plan tends to cure that and make us live in that \$15 dollar world instead of the fool's paradise that we are in now. It makes us really live up to the ethical responsibilities that this country has to act responsibly in the area of fuels. It seems to me that it is absolutely essential that we do that. Let me say one other word about what we are going to have to do here in the years to come.

We have, as I say, three sets of responsibilities that I think we will have to discharge. In no particular order, they are: responsibility to ourselves that we don't fall over the cliff in 1982 or 1983—and the National Emergency Plan is directed at that proposition; the responsibility to the other people living in this world—the people from whom we can bid away these scarce supplies of oil and in the course of doing so, wreck their standard of living; and we have an ethical responsibility to those who will follow on after we are finished. Only by facing hard these conservation challenges that the President has thrown upon the Congress, can we begin to deal with these problems. For example, in 1972 the average car in this country used fourteen miles per gallon. Under legislation that has passed the Congress, this will be improved to twenty-seven and one-half miles per gallon by 1985. We expect that although there will be more cars, more drivers, and more miles driven per car in 1985, we will actually be using less gasoline in 1985 than we are today. The question we have before us, however, is "What is our will to go further on that twenty-seven and one-half miles per gallon?" In one key test, this spring, we found in the House that on the proposition of a four-cent tax on gasoline, the House voted it down 55 to 377 and that reflected our will. And it seems to me that as long as we are willing to take that view, we can use as much gasoline as we darn well please, drive all we wish, keep as cool as we want in the summer and as warm as we wish in the winter, we don't need this ethical responsibility to ourselves, to our associates, in other countries, and to those who will follow on behind us.

The President's program seeks at bottom to be responsible to force this area of responsibility on the American people. You may recall that at first there was a recognition that that program did indeed add up to the moral equivalent of war, and then there was a feeling of, "What's in it? Where is the difficulty? This is an easy program. It doesn't require sacrifice at any level." Then people began to understand the sacrifice that will be called for from you as drivers and consumers of oil products, from the refining industry as producers and sellers of world products, from the producing industry as people who produce oil and gas. They have ganged up on that program to the point where it may be defeated. If that is so, this country will have failed in its moral obligation. It is simply a matter of economics. As the President said, when he came back from the trip he made in early January, everywhere he went he was asked, "When will the United States live up to its obligations to us, the other countries of the world?" I ask you, when will we live up to our obligations to ourselves and avoid the almost certain disruption that will occur within the next seven or eight years unless we become responsible now, and when will we live up to our obligations to our successors?

Well, these are really the fundamental questions that are before the Congress. But in a more realistic sense before you as thinking, feeling, sensible American people. This is a program that we must understand, that we must address, because, again, to go back over the early remarks, looking at these five systems, the only one that can be counted upon for growth today is the final one, the one for imported oil, and we can't count on that very long.

MORALITY AND TELEVISION

Van Gordon Sauter

One of the things I was responsible for in my previous job in New York was not just what was in the programs, but also I had to call into account the accuracy of the advertising. I am not a public spokesman, which is really apparent and which will be, no doubt, painfully apparent to most of you before this is over.

I am very happy to be in Nashville for a couple of reasons, not the least of which is that my mother lives here; so I appreciate an opportunity to come down here. She still holds me in account for any number of things that have happened; so there are some blessings to it but also some travail that goes along with it.

I know this is an awkward way to begin one of these events, but in all candor, I do want to start with a few apologies. First of all, I am accustomed to communicating through a typewriter or a camera and I find live audiences dreadfully unnerving; so please bear with me as we go through this. My apprehension is heightened by an awareness that some of you are fundamentally suspicious about the topic of this session, "Morality and Television." In other similar arenas, I have met those who feel that, in a philosophical sense, those words are mutually contradictory; and in a practical sense, the topic formed by the words can be dispatched in forty-three seconds and hardly requires fifteen minutes. But I differ with such assumptions, though. As the least successful anchorman in the history of commercial broadcasting, I pale at the prospect of proceeding along for fifteen minutes on any given topic or cause. Also I didn't come to this session with any precise base in religion. I guess I fall into the category of the secular humanist, the person who, because of disinterest or disbelief, has not made any denominational commitment, and thus, no doubt, I view television from a very different perspective than you do.

Finally, I am not a driven fan of television. In fact, years ago when I was a poor but honest newspaper man, living abroad as a single parent, I tried to raise my sons without television; and finally it became apparent that there were things I thought they should see on television, and more pressingly, things I wanted to see on television; so we got one. And one Saturday morning, there were these shrieks from the television room, and I thought, "My gosh, they have finally seen the light." I ran into the television room and indeed, they hadn't seen the light, but the television set was on fire! I picked up this burning hulk and threw it out the back door, thinking I was forever done with tele-

vision, but I guess like the Phoenix that rose from the flames, it now threatens to consume me.

I couldn't be a highly selective viewer of television except after flights from Los Angeles east when the time change leaves me wide awake at 2:00 a.m. attempting to write a speech in a hotel room. I must say I was a bit bewildered last night at 2:00 a.m. when the commercial television stations had in effect gone off the air, and I was given the choice of two hotel television movies: one a Clint Eastwood excursion down the streets of police brutality; and another one called the "Class of '74," a sleazy piece of trash which should never ever be seen on television. I had some curiosity about going to the management of the hotel this morning and asking him why I didn't have a better selection of movies at 2:00 a.m., but whatever, maybe we share some of the thinking about television on that.

But, nonetheless, my business is indeed that of television, and like my counterparts nearly 2,000 other television stations across the country, I seek to arrange and broadcast that mixture of entertainment and information that will be appealing to the public and responsive to its needs. But that public, I must say, is frightfully illusive; it's very difficult to find. It is difficult to perceive those common denominators, those shared attitudes and expectations and rewards that result in a concentration of an audience, a convening of the public in substantial numbers before the television sets of a community, be it Nashville or Los Angeles, or the country as a whole.

Consider, if you will, the diversity of the audience that we serve in any community in any place across the country. Think of the diversity of that television audience in terms of religious conviction, educational background, social status, and educational achievement. In fact, the diversity of the society is so great that one of the few things everyone has in common is television itself. Our charge, our purpose as broadcasters, is to find those images, those personalities, and those themes which will strike a common chord in that audience. It is a complex task, and, I must say, one that is fraught with a high rate of failure.

Besides creating and airing programs that people will view and enjoy with regularity, we must insure that those broadcasts are consistent with community standards. They must reflect the values and the tolerances of the audiences for which they are designed. In that sense, we must not just look at a television program like an exhibit in a laboratory, isolated in some sterile form, to be examined for its nuances or deviations for what we personally consider to be the desired norm. Television is viewed by people who have different expectations of different programs, at different times of the day. Television is absorbed into the complexities of our daily life experience, serving different entertainment requirements. The programs and the people who view them are hardly one-dimensional.

Does television respond to our need for diversity? Well, I think so. Last night I purchased the current issue of *TV Guide* for Nashville. These are the listings for Wednesday night in that *TV Guide* between 7:00 and 11:00 p.m. when the majority of the people in this city are watching television. Here are your fundamental programs, for instance: "Eight is Enough," a family program of broad appeal and I must say, a

very successful program; "Grizzly Adams," a fundamentally non-violent western; a film called "The Amazing Spider Man," which is based on a comic strip and also fundamentally non-violent; there are three hours of opera from the New York Metropolitan Opera; two hours of country music featuring Dottie West, Kenny Rogers, and Roy Acuff; a movie, of all things, about a talking mule, starring Donald O'Connor and Zazu Pitts (I think that is what I would have watched!); and besides that, there is Johnny Carson and Dick Cavette. This is an interesting collection of things to see for a rather broad spectrum of tastes. But besides these programs, there are three others that deserve to be noted, and indeed, they are noted by a lot of people. Also on Wednesday night, you have "Starsky and Hutch," "Charlie's Angels," and "Police Story." But fundamentally you have an incredible mixture of programming which responds really to any level of cultural taste or anticipation within our society, and I frequently feel that some of the people who most vehemently denounce television don't watch it or don't take the time to pick up the *TV Guide* and really see what is available on that tube.

But again, our attitudes toward television can vary over the course of a single broadcast day. And our expectations vary and our taste levels vary. Let me give you an example. One of the concerns I had in my prior job was the soap opera. Now, I am not a fan of soap opera, but I must say that they can become horribly addictive; and if you spend some time with them, you frequently end up going back. But during the day the soap opera is fundamentally watched, in the statistical sense, by 1.1 persons. This is a housewife, at home by herself, perhaps accompanied by a child. You can do things, show things, and handle themes during the day when you are dealing with that solitary audience that cause absolutely no problems with the viewer. The viewer does not take offense.

However, in the evening, in the prime time, the statistical audience goes from 1.1 up to 1.8, which indicates that that same person is home in the evening watching television, but this time in the company of a husband, a friend, a neighbor, a teenage child. And if you give those same kind of stories, those same kind of themes, depicting the same kind of scenes that you did in the day, if you showed that in the evening, it would create in that viewing environment a tremendous amount of unease and awkwardness. There would be the indignation of the viewers who felt that their rights were being abused by it; which goes to show that you can show one thing during the day because there is a different audience and a different expectation.

At night that audience changes in a very subtle fashion as do the expectations and the tolerances. This is not, as some may say, a form of situational ethics. It is merely the reality of living in a society where our experiences tend to be very fragmented; where we can relish and can absorb different levels of entertainment at different times in different environments with different companions. But that brings to the viewer the obligation of being very selective, of taking the time required to determine what is on television, and what corresponds to our viewing interests and our personal tastes. Television should not, and cannot, be all things to all people. Viewer discretion is required.

When in New York, I frequently date a divorced woman with two bright and very engaging teenage daughters. Some months ago, after a late dinner on Saturday night, we returned to their apartment and very casually, without any thought at all, just switched on television. We were suddenly struck, the four of us, with a brutally raw stretch of dialogue related to incest. We were midway into a "prime-time documentary" on that subject. I was embarrassed for the four of us and I was furious with the television show. But it was fundamentally my fault. The program was serious in intent and the subject is, no doubt, deserving of such scrutiny on television. But I had made the mistake of assuming that, at any given moment, anything on television, on any given channel would be perfectly appropriate for me. That is not, and should not be the case. In its diversity, television is not at every moment responsive to the interests and concerns and values of everyone in the available audience, and thank goodness! We must individually seek out the television that is appropriate to us.

Now this is not to imply that television is devoid of any obligations. To be successful, to be accepted, television must fall within the norms of the community it serves. The standards it reflects must be consistent with the standards of the available audience. The values must be consistent with those values of the society.

There are those who say, "No, television has a far higher obligation. It must, at the very least, reinforce community values, if not strive to set them at an even higher level." That's wrong, and even more so, it is dangerous. In this context, television exists to entertain, no more, no less. It is not there to determine or to advance value systems.

I have no doubt that many of you in this room would find my lifestyle woefully inadequate, if not tremendously self-indulgent. You would not want my personal attitudes infused into the television entertainment programs which are delivered into your household, or the household of your parishioners. At the same time, I might find your lifestyles highly restrictive and would be appalled if your lifestyles were imposed upon the television entertainment that came into my household. Those entertainment programs must not carry messages. They must entertain; they must be consistent with our society, not a few steps ahead of it. But they must, under no circumstances, advocate.

I see a direct parallel to the news business. The news on television and in our general circulation newspapers must be as objective as humanly possible. I don't want a reporter shaping a news story so it promotes his own perception of what society should be. I just want the facts. At the same time, I don't want a writer, or a director, or a performer, or a television network, or a television station using an entertainment program to promote a particular social perception.

What we have reached, I think, is a situation where there is, in effect, television by consensus. There is an understanding that television must be rooted in the reality of our society, the diversity of our society. Somewhere between the sound stages of Hollywood and the viewing rooms of America has emerged an understanding of what is appropriate and acceptable to the population of this country. A lot of people have impact on that understanding: the creative people, the

networks, the station operators, the viewers, and the special interest groups. They all exert some influence, either through reason or by power or by the voting of the Nielsen statistics, that consensus is achieved.

But there is no fixed point of accommodation. It will always move. The moralists, the futurists, the soothsayers will tell us whether this movement is beneficial or not. But the movement itself is inevitable. Remember, it was only about four decades ago that it nearly took presidential intervention to allow Rhett Butler to tell Scarlett O'Hara that, frankly, he didn't give a damn. And it was probably about twenty years ago when the most popular performer on television walked off his show because he was not allowed to tell a joke which contained in the letters w.c. for water closet. The joke, no doubt fortunately for us all, has been lost to history, but the lesson is still there.

But television does not, in my opinion, dictate any change. Television responds to change within the society. Television mirrors the society. There is no doubt that at times we err, but given the incredible volume of television, that is hardly surprising. And given the complexities of our society, I think the record of television is remarkably impressive.

Nearly two years ago, shortly after returning from Europe to be in charge of program practices for CBS's television network, I was personally responsible for putting an admonition on a Woody Allen movie. The admonition in effect said that it might be unsuitable for a large portion of the television audience. But in the first couple of months after being back in the States, traveling through the country, watching a lot of television and films, talking with vast numbers of people, reading, going over statistics, I quickly reached the conclusion that I had been wrong and the movie did not require an admonition. And I thus adjusted my calibration as to what I personally thought was appropriate for the television viewers of our network.

However, on other occasions, I did allow certain things to go on the air that I thought were totally innocuous, only to be besieged with phone calls and letters from station operators, viewers, and my own peers. Again, I changed my calibration. But that is what television is all about—always searching for the correct level, always trying to stay current within the parameters of good taste, in synchronization with the expectations and moral standards of the audience.

But what about those occasions when you or I as viewers find something on television or about to be on television, totally intolerable; when we feel there is a value system being represented that is unacceptable if not harmful to society. Well, there is recourse in both the public and private arenas. Throughout the country, there are individuals and organizations working through private channels to influence the nature of television as we know it now. Each had its own agenda for what should or should not be on television or how the system should be totally reorganized to respond to those agendas of priorities, and to achieve their goals. And there is always the public arena where you take your case to the citizens. That is a messy and tricky business. The public tends to be fickle and totally unpredictable. In the public arena, one either wins or loses, and it is quickly apparent when one has lost face or has enhanced face.

But inherent in all of this in either public or private is the spectrum of censorship, the denial of rights to the creators and consumers of entertainment. I personally have no objection to a minister or a teacher or an advocate going to the public and urging his or her followers not to watch a certain film or television show or not to read a certain book or magazine. But I am diminished, as are my freedoms, when that individual or group precludes my right of making my own choice of what is suitable for me or my family. Our forms of mass entertainment will find their own levels of commercial acceptability within the society. These levels will reflect the moral expectations and financial capabilities of the segments within the society.

It is worth noting in this context that television is unquestionably the most conservative of the entertainment forms we have before us, and rightly so, given the unusual nature of its audience. It cannot, given the present technological delivery systems, be targeted like particular books or films to specific interest groups. It has the capability of reaching everyone, and while certain programs are designed to respond to certain interest levels, somewhat specific audiences, the targets must be large in size, and thus the programs must have broad general appeal.

There is no formula for creating successful television. On a network level, it is fair to say that over the course of a year some 700 ideas of merit for programs are submitted to the network for consideration. Some 150 of those 700 ideas are promising enough to have a formal script written. Out of 150 scripts, maybe sixty will be cast and produced for the final film or tape then evaluated by the network and test audiences. Of those sixty programs, maybe fifteen will eventually become series and scheduled to be seen on television. Of the fifteen or twenty, more than half will be absolute failures. Last year, the networks spent over thirty million dollars trying to develop those seven, eight, or nine broadcasts which the public found acceptable and were willing to watch on a regular basis.

It raises the question: Does that reflect an incompetence on the part of the creative effort? No, I don't think it does. I think it reflects the intense competition for attention plus the shifting interests of the viewers. It reflects the incredible fragility of the whole creative process. Consider, if you will, the genius and the good fortune that created the "Mary Tyler Moore Show," or "All In the Family," or "Little House on the Prairie." Some early errors in casting or scripting in the tone of those broadcasts could have resulted in their being three-week failures; seen once, twice, three times, and gone.

But a common ingredient that is behind all programs, successful or not, is the assumption that they must be acceptable to the large numbers of viewers, the millions of viewers who will insure success. No other entertainment form requires such a mass endorsement as a television program, and that in itself I believe, guarantees that the programs will be consistent with the moral tone of our society.

Besides that, the television industry has several levels of direct accountability for performance. By law, every television station is licensed by the Federal government and every three years it must go to the community for endorsement. It is a detailed process and the station

makes pledges and must live up to those pledges of community service. Once on the air, the station must appeal to its audience with its news, entertainment, and public service programs. It is difficult to find a more competitive industry in which to work. There is also the accountability to advertisers; for a station or a network that violates the sensitivity of its audience will soon find itself without commercial support and necessary income. And finally, there is accountability to the general public. Sometimes that public is represented by groups such as this who carry messages to the stations and to the network. But there is also the press. No other industry in this country is subjected to the intensity of scrutiny on a daily basis as the television industry. While television may be profound power, it is not without a system of checks and balances, and I say to you that they work.

And what of the men and women who create and administer and broadcast television? They are a diverse lot, which is imperative in that creativity is fueled by diversity and uniqueness of thought. What constitutes a personal morality, I guess is a very subjective judgment. But by my standards, which I think, are fundamentally not that different from yours, I find the vast majority of people in television to be of value. Keep in mind that television is not a cluster of studios in Los Angeles or three network buildings on Sixth Avenue in New York. Television is fundamentally all those television stations in large and small towns across the country, run by people who live in that town, who have families in that town, who have friends in that town, and who are very susceptible to the opinions of their neighbors and peers. The people in those stations, not unlike the people in those studios or in those network buildings, are aware of the scope of television, of its potential power, of the intricate system of checks and balances. They are, I think, like you and me. They have their roots in the community. They have options, they have temptations, they have limitations, but fundamentally they seek positive judgments from their families and peers and audiences. Although their calibrations of moral values may at times differ from yours and mine, more often than not in my experience, those values are incredibly similar. And while we may have our own peculiarities and indulgences, I think it is fair to say that the vast majority of us share the same moral tenets and aspirations that provide a consistency throughout our society. And that, I think, is reflected in the television we see; television that reflects the audience it serves, television that neither leads nor abuses its audiences, but is created to win approval from its viewers. I see in this system the options that provide for the morality of honest expression, the morality of free choice, the morality of common virtues. It is not television that shapes morality within the society; it is the common morality that shapes television.

TELEVISION, MORALITY, AND CONTEMPORARY LIFESTYLES

Harry N. Hollis, Jr.

Television and contemporary lifestyles are thoroughly intertwined. Television programing is shaped by the

moral values that give rise to contemporary lifestyles, and television programing certainly has a hand in molding the moral values that give rise to contemporary lifestyles. We shape television, and we are shaped by it. This is a reality which must be grasped if we have any hope of getting television to live up to its vast, largely untapped, potential for good.

There are some, of course, who say that there is very little good about television. Recently Malcolm Muggeridge charged that television "has provided the devil with the greatest opportunity in human history since Adam was pushed out of Eden."

Is such pessimism about television justified? I must confess that as I look at some of the values taught by television and as I see what television is doing to our lifestyles, I am tempted to embrace this approach. But I have not. I believe television's potential for good is as great as its potential for evil. But I believe that no human invention has had such promise and has so failed to live up to its promise as television.

My assignment is to consider the impact television has on our lifestyles and what we can do about this impact.

The Impact of Television on Society

The incredibly powerful impact of television is not difficult to document. On an episode of "Gunsmoke" some years ago, Chester forgot to limp and the network got a million letters about this omission! Some of the letters said, "Thank goodness, he's cured!" The impact of television!

At a church prayer service in Tennessee, a member requested prayer for a person who was scheduled to have surgery the next day. The person was a fictional television character scheduled to have surgery not in real life, but on a television show! The impact of television!

A fifty-year-old British bricklayer named Alex laughed himself to death while watching his favorite television program. His widow told reporters she was going to write the show's producers and thank them "for making Alex's last moments so happy." The impact of television!

During the first five years that Robert Young played a doctor on the "Marcus Welby, M.D." show, he received 250,000 letters, most of which asked for medical advice. (I asked a friend in our office if she believed this and she replied, "Of course I do. In fact, he answered my letter.") The impact of television!

Gary Trudeau in his comic strip "Doonesbury" showed a family gathering at Christmas to sing carols. While the others sang traditional carols, the baby in the family sat in her high chair singing her own carol learned from television: "Hold the pickle, hold the lettuce; special orders don't upset us. . . ." The impact of television!

It is said that programmers have had to eliminate the roles of poor people from soap operas, because the viewers send in so many gifts of food and clothing. The impact of television!

On college campuses, many students avoid courses that come when the soap operas are on, and it is reported that a group of United States congresspersons regularly watch soaps in the cloakroom with little re-

gard for what's happening on the House floor (Frank Mankiewicz and Joel Swerdlow, *Remote Control*, page 160). The impact of television!

Television is a part of our lives. We have all heard the figures—ninety-seven percent of the homes in America have at least one television set and this is more than have refrigerators or indoor toilets. Forty-four percent have two televisions or more. There are 100 million Americans who are regular television viewers. The average set is on over six hours a day. About one-third of all American adults watch television four or more hours a day. Eighty-five million watch television every day. We watch about 100 billion hours of television in a year. Our interrelationship with television is very clear.

How We Shape Television

It is clear also that television programming is shaped to some degree by the moral values that give rise to contemporary lifestyles. Why is there such a ready market for the exploitation of sex? Why does the upcoming season threaten to be a titillation derby? Part of the answer lies in the fact that there is a "Looking for Mr. Goodbar" loneliness in our society which turns to the counterfeit salvation of television sexploitation. There is a hunger for true intimacy and a desperate desire for sexual fulfillment which contributes to the popularity of television's exploitive shows. There is a strong curiosity about sex which is not being met elsewhere.

One reason why there is so much sex exploitation on television is because we in the Christian community have failed to spend as much time proclaiming God's good news about the joy of the responsible use of sex as we have proclaiming God's judgment about the misuse of sex.

Why is there so much violence on television? Why does television's goreography flourish? Part of the answer lies in the jadedness, the emptiness, the dissatisfaction with Walter Mitty lives which causes so many to turn to violence as a means of momentary release. A lust for escape through violence was already alive before television came along. And we in the Christian community have not been evangelistically energetic enough to find creative ways to share the Good News which can transform drab lives into exciting ones.

Why are so many so willing to tune into television's obscene giveaway shows? Why are we ready to watch with fascination as human beings prostitute themselves by shrieking and wearing absurd costumes for a quick buck and a higher income tax bracket? Part of the answer lies in the fact that there is a preoccupation with possessions in our midst. And we in the Christian community must bear our share of the blame for we have talked about giving but we have not talked enough about responsible attitudes about possessions and about the responsible use of possessions.

In one sense, then, the problem of immoral programming is beyond television. It is not just a *program problem*, it is an *audience problem*. It is a problem growing out of human nature. To discern this is to avoid oversimplifying the causes and the cures for immoral television programming.

Christians are called to acknowledge that part of

the problem lies within us, the viewers. Let us work to make all people aware of the negative impact of immoral television shows on themselves and on society at large. When television programming is shaped by negative aspects of our lifestyles, let us work to change the lifestyles.

How Television Shapes Our Lives

The other aspect of the interrelationship of television and ourselves is that television shapes contemporary lifestyles. It shapes contemporary lifestyles profoundly. The truth is that television sometimes shapes us for good. It teaches pro-social values, takes us to new places, provides superb entertainment, informs us about important happenings, and enables us to participate live in historic events such as the first moon walk. Television opens up a world of beauty to young and old; it offers outstanding drama, great music, and inspiring art. Some shows unmask the racism that permeates society's structures. The joys of family life are sometimes portrayed. The pressures of everyday life are sometimes relieved by television entertainment.

Sometimes, therefore, television shapes lifestyles for good, but far more frequently, television has a negative impact on contemporary lifestyles. The television networks seem to have adopted for their motto the saying of H. L. Mencken: "You'll never go broke underestimating the taste of the American public."

Indeed, television is in danger of becoming an extended moral "Gong Show." Many shows attack morality the way the "Gong Show" assaults talent.

Television does have a negative moral impact on our lifestyles. The fact that I am going to say more about the negative than the positive is no accident. It reflects my own view that what television is doing to us is essentially negative.

Television's Negative Moral Impact on Our Lifestyles

Here are some of the ways in which television has a negative moral impact on contemporary lifestyles.

Television systematically stereotypes and dehumanizes people. For example, the way television exploits and abuses women is a national scandal. Women are routinely treated as simpering idiots who suffer from ring-around-the-collar paranoia and who slip around the grocery store trying to squeeze the toilet tissue without being seen. In one ad a new bride presents her husband his laundry and anxiously asks, "Did I wash it right?" When he approves, she exclaims, "He noticed; I'm a wife!"—as if this were the real consummation of her marriage!

A major portion of the energy of people concerned about genuine freedom for women should be directed against television's mistreatment of women. Unless a change takes place, the children sitting in front of the television sets today will be the chauvinists of tomorrow.

Television also has a negative moral impact by encouraging a grasping materialism. By high school graduation a young person has seen about 350,000 television commercials. This is not hard to comprehend when we remember that the purpose of commercial television is not to entertain, nor to inform, nor to in-

spire. Its purpose is to deliver audiences so that products can be sold. Television exists not to present programs but to present commercials. The programs are simply the bait. So for television too often it is not the play's the thing, but the pay's the thing.

Again television has a negative moral impact because it often functions as an addictive drug that induces passivity instead of involvement. Television narcotizes us, blunting our moral sensitivity. For many people it becomes what Marie Winn has called a "plug-in-drug." It pulls us from reality.

Abigail Van Buren printed a letter in her "Dear Abby" column from a mother who wrote to say that a robber had burst into her home and bound and gagged her and sent her son, Ronnie, into the next room to watch television. The four-year-old child was instructed by the robber to watch television until the end of a program which had twenty minutes to go and then he could help his mother. The mother wrote that the robber left and the child stayed in the room for three hours watching television and ignoring the mother's muffled screams in the room next to him. The mother wrote Abby to ask, "Could Ronnie possibly have some hostility toward me?"

Most of us could answer that question. The child was probably not hostile; he was just reacting as so many react to television. This unusual incident points to a commonplace reality: television often pulls us from involvement and numbs us to the needs of others.

Television has a negative impact as it contributes to our drug culture by frequently picturing the use of drugs as an acceptable way to cope with life. Better living through chemistry is the underlying theme of many television programs and commercials. Many people are being turned into what some physicians call "electronic hypochondriacs."

Is it possible that people start with a "plop, plop, fizz, fizz," and end up moving to addictive drugs in search of the pain-free, tensionless life pictured on television? I think it is, and this is one of television's most harmful effects.

Television has a negative moral impact on our lifestyles because it is the number one sex miseducator in America. There is no other institution, in my judgment, that is even a close second.

Television's anti-sexual values contribute significantly to contemporary sexual confusion. Television frequently fails to show the consequences of sexual freedom divorced from sexual responsibility. This is its biggest sin in regard to sex. Television ought to deal with sex, but it betrays the public interest when it treats sex irresponsibly.

The television industry has demonstrated that it knows how to leer at sex and evidently it is just warming up. About television's preoccupation with sex, Lynn Roth, director of television comedy development for Twentieth Century Fox says: "It's a trend that's out of control; . . . It's usually sophomoric sex; they put innuendos in place of a good story; they put tee hee jokes like kids in junior high schools who get together and try to be shocking and tell sex jokes in the toilet" (*New York Times*, March 20, 1978, p. C-15).

People in our society who are determined to work for healthier sexual attitudes and behavior are going to

have to deal with television's prostitution of sex for profit.

Television has a negative impact as it contributes to family instability by picturing so many morally warped family models. Why are television writers so hostile to the family? Where are the joys of marriage, the pleasures of fidelity, the fun of family solidarity? Too often these are missing, and our society suffers because of the damage done to the family.

The National Institute of Mental Health in a study entitled "Television and Society" reports that a majority of adults use television to learn how to handle specific problems related to family routines. Increasingly young people look to television to guide them in what is appropriate social behavior. The situation comedies, the talk shows, and the dramas are taken by many as resource material for their own family relationships. Surely this is one of the significant causes of family problems in our society.

A final negative impact of television on our lifestyles can be seen in the fact that television helps to precipitate violent acts and blunts sensitivity to the harm that violence does to human beings. In order to see fifty-four acts of violence, one can view all the plays of William Shakespeare or one can watch three evenings (or less) of prime-time television. (This point is made in *Remote Control*, p. 7.) Television and violence are intertwined—witness the Marine bound for Vietnam who said to a reporter, "I want to kill a lot of Vietnamese and I want to get on TV."

Television often uses violence as a formula for entertainment and it uses violence as a means to solve problems. It thus has a negative impact on society. I believe the evidence is clear that violence seen on television influences some people to act violently. Indeed Frank Mankiewicz and Joel Swerdlow suggest in their book *Remote Control* that even if only one-tenth of one percent of the people watching television act violently, that is 85,000 additional acts of violence in this country every day. It is an idea worth pondering.

Some of the ways that television has a negative impact on our lifestyles have been mentioned. There is a sense, therefore, in which television is not really giving people what they want. We want joy; we get hostile humor. We want intimacy; we get sexploitation. We want adventure; we get violence. We want information; we get sensationalism. We want to relax, and we are assaulted with slapstick morality. We want to see how people live, and we are deceived with stereotypes.

The impact of television on American lifestyles is thus profound, and, alas, it is primarily negative. Television is essentially a moral wasteland. We may not have the right to expect television to uplift us morally—hopefully it will at times, but we do have the right to expect television not to push us toward moral chaos. This is why we have to do something about television. We have to develop a strategy for coping with television as it is, and we need to find ways to change television for good.

Controlling the Influence of Television on Our Lifestyles

To control television's influence on us, we must seek to understand how it shapes values and behavior. Tele-

vision influences people to buy products, and it influences people to emulate the models they see. Not everyone buys a given product and not everyone is influenced by a particular show. But many buy the products and many are shaped in their behavior.

Can we not best cope with television by simply turning off the morally irresponsible shows when they come on the air? We would do well to turn them off, I believe, but the industry would do well to take them off the air.

Television does not have the freedom to show everything that an adult movie theater would show. This is true because television stations are licensed to act in the public interest. We would not allow the water company to send polluted water into our homes and then accept the argument that if the water is polluted, we should simply turn the faucet off. The water company is obligated to act in the interest of the people it serves. (See the film *TV: The Anonymous Teacher*, 1976.) Television is a public medium. It does not own the airwaves. Stations are licensed by the government to act in behalf of the people.

In their arrogance, based on profits and power, the networks have forgotten this, and we must be intent on helping them recover this reality. We have the right to try to change television therefore, because the networks are abusing their trust. They are not acting in the public interest.

But how can we cope with television until changes can be made? Let us examine our own viewing habits to determine how much television we are watching. Let us evaluate the moral content and teachings of the programs we watch, and sensitize others to do the same. Let us learn to watch television programs instead of watching television. By this, I mean the careful selection of specific programs we want to view. Let us discipline ourselves not to become so absorbed in the tube that we neglect relationships with other people, daily conversation, study of the Bible, listening to great music, viewing great art, reading good books, serving in the church and community. Let us put television in its place. And perhaps its place is in the closet. A good many people are putting it there and bringing it out for special occasions.

Changing Television

How can we bring about change in television? I am convinced that we can do little if any good by friendly persuasion of the networks. Reasoning with the networks has not produced astounding success. This is not because there are not decent, reasonable people in the television industry; there are, and Van Sauter is certainly one of them. But these decent people are caught up in an indecent system. It is a system that is not asking the right questions. The television industry does not ask often enough: "How can we act in the public interest?" They ask, "What can we put opposite 'Three's Company' to get a bigger share of the audience?" The television industry does not ask, "How can we maximize the public interest?" They ask, "How can we maximize profits?" General Motors has no right to make all the profits it can. It has the right to make all the profits it can while making reasonably safe cars. The television industry has no right to make

all the money it can; it has the right to make all the money it can while it acts in the public interest.

Let's thank the decent people in the industry. Let's wish them well. Let's write letters to the networks so they'll know we are at work and let's look in another direction to bring about change.

We have a better prospect of influencing television at the local level. We can befriend local station managers, program and marketing directors—commending them for the shows we like and expressing opposition to the ones we dislike. We can encourage and enable other people to do the same. We can seek to learn from these community leaders how we can be supportive. We can let them know that we want to be in a helping relationship, not an adversary one. But the local stations are at a disadvantage. They are the ones that are licensed, not the networks, and they face tremendous pressure to take the network shows. There is a greater chance for influence at the local level, but even here the impact will be limited in most communities.

Is there any hope for bringing about change through law? I believe it is possible to protect freedom so essential to the survival of our society and still have closer regulation of the television industry. The rewrite of the Federal Communications Act of 1934 is now being pursued in Congress and should be a matter of utmost priority. This rewrite is long overdue. One thing that is absolutely essential, I believe, is that we communicate with the people who represent us in Congress and call for a rewrite which would, among other things, require stations to meet their responsibility to act in the public interest. The FCC ought to do a much better job of regulating the industry, but it is limited. Someone has pointed out that the entire budget of the FCC is about that of Anacin's advertising budget for a year. And that should give us all a headache.

I believe our best hope for diminishing the negative moral impact of television on contemporary lifestyles is communication with the sponsors. There is no question but that the sponsors will listen to people about what is sponsored. They want to sell their products and they do not want to waste their money sponsoring shows that will hurt them.

Is it un-American for us to want to communicate with sponsors? Absolutely not. It is as American as the free enterprise system. We pay for television ads. We are consumers and we have a right to be heard. Television consumers are just getting started. If the networks want to keep on with their immoral programming, there are groups and individuals across the nation who aim to make it very expensive for them to do so. If the networks want to offer programs which are in the public interest, there are many who will protect their right to make a reasonable profit in doing so. The key to changing television programming is communication with the sponsors.

What does a Christian lifestyle have to say about all this? Let us bring Christ's values to judge television values. Let us counter television's materialism with Christ's teachings about possessions. Let us share the Christian good news about fidelity and the joy of sex as an alternative to television's frantic exploitation. Let us offer Christ's love in opposition to the cruelty seen on so many shows. Let us present Christ's call for

peacemaking to counter television's use of violence as a means to solve all problems. Furthermore, let us call upon as many like-minded individuals and groups as we can find to bring their influence to bear upon television so that we can have a greater impact for good.

Let us oppose not only four-letter words, but also television's four-letter ideas. Let us reject not only excessive physical violence, but also the violence that television does to decency and gentleness. Let us vigorously attack the idolatry of television by teaching that television is neither a one-eyed tyrant to be feared nor a one-eyed God to be served.

I believe the negative impact of television programming on contemporary lifestyles is as great as any social crisis that we face. I believe the positive impact that could come if television acted in the public interest would bring about a social revolution. Therefore, we need help to change attitudes and values which lead to immoral television programs and we need to work to change television.

Imagine, as Malcolm Muggeridge suggests, that an archaeologist many centuries in the future discovers in a salt cave videotapes of current programs and commercials. These are the only records he has of our civilization. What would he think of our lifestyles? How would he evaluate our television morality?

It is clear from what I have said here that I believe these Dead Sea videotapes would not tell a story of moral wholeness. But I am not without hope that television may yet live up to its potential for good. I have hope, because I believe in the power of the gospel to change us, the viewers, to change our lifestyles, and to enable us to work with people in the industry to change television for good. I have hope that television will increasingly act in the public interest.

And, who knows, maybe sometime centuries from now, an archaeologist will find videotapes and view them and say: "Here was a culture whose television programs and its people's lifestyles reflected moral health."

FAMILIES AND THE LIFESTYLE REVOLUTION

Charlie Shedd

Have any of you ever been in a flood? Well, I was in a bunch of floods when I grew up back in Iowa. If you have been in a flood you know it is a very traumatic experience. The water comes in over the floors; it ruins the carpets; it starts up the walls; and then it finally covers the furniture. You have moved out in the meanwhile, but you come back now and then to look in the windows; it is just awful.

Well, there was this old boy who had been in the first of the Johnstown floods, and it made such an impact on his id that he went around saying to everybody thereafter, "Did you know that I have been in the Johnstown flood?" He stopped people at church in the halls and embarrassed the dickens out of everybody by saying to strangers, "Did you know I have been in the Johnstown flood?" He would stop the tourists out on the streets who would be coming

through and he would say, "Let me tell you about being in the Johnstown flood." Everywhere he went it was the same thing: "Let me tell you about being in the Johnstown flood."

Well, finally it got so embarrassing that his friends suggested that he work up a talk to see if it would help him get over this and he worked up this talk on "I have been in the Johnstown flood." It was a fine talk and he gave it everywhere. He was asked to give it particularly to garden clubs, because garden clubs were always looking for speakers, so he would talk on "I have been in the Johnstown flood."

Finally he died and went to heaven. The very thing when he met St. Peter he said, "Say, St. Peter, did you know I was in the Johnstown flood?"

St. Peter got out the Book and ran down the page and said, "Oh, yes I see, it says right here that you were."

"Did you know that I have a talk on 'I have been in the Johnstown flood?'"

St. Peter looked again, thumbed through some pages and said, "No, we don't have that on your record."

"Well," he said, "I do, I have a talk on 'I have been in the Johnstown flood.' Do you think the people up here would enjoy my talk on the Johnstown flood?"

St. Peter said, "I think they would. Most of them are interested in everything. We will set up an appointment for you. Next Tuesday at 9:00 p.m. you come and give your talk on 'I have been in the Johnstown flood.'"

So next Tuesday night here was the host of heaven, the largest crowd he had ever addressed, all of them sitting on their clouds. It was bright daylight, of course; there is no night there you know. And there he was ready to talk on "I have been in the Johnstown flood" to the host of heaven. Just before he got up ready to give this talk on "I have been in the Johnstown flood," St. Peter stepped up and whispered in his ear, "Friend, I think I should remind you that Noah will be in the audience."

That's how I feel. The more I thought about this the more it appeared to me that I am like the old boy that had been in the Johnstown flood and Noah is in the audience.

Well, I don't know everything I need to know about lifestyles for today's revolutions, but I do know a thing or two. I know I have the neatest wife that anybody ever had, in my opinion; and I know that we have been married thirty-eight years and we are just having a super thing of it. It gets better all the time. So I thought I would like to talk with you this morning about what I know about, and that is about a super marriage.

Only first, I have to tell you the most optimistic thing I have heard. Talk about lifestyles and the good news! Let me tell you a story. You will be glad you came to this conference for nothing else but the story I am about to tell you. There was this group of Shakespearean actors who were playing "Othello" in this little town down in Arkansas. Now if you are acquainted with the original version of "Othello," you remember there is one spot where an actor pulls a rope and shouts, "I descend into hell! I descend into hell!" He falls through a trap door in the floor and disappears from the stage. It is a very moving moment, obviously.

On the night they were playing "Othello" in this little town in Arkansas, the actor who was to descend into hell fell ill; so it was necessary to go out and get a substitute. The only one they could find with any acting experience was a very fat high school boy. But they hired him, and he did very well. He learned his lines and got along famously until he came to this part where he was to descend into hell. Whereupon he pulled the rope and shouted "I descend into hell! I descend into hell!" He fell into the hole but he stuck. There was a little freckled-faced kid up in the balcony who jumped up and shouted, "Hallelujah, hell's full!" Being a Presbyterian, I wouldn't guarantee that. So keep preaching the Word.

I tell you I am optimistic about marriage because I am into such a wonderful, optimistic marriage myself, and I am very optimistic about the way the young today are interested in marriage. Martha and I were conducting a seminar at Louisiana Tech University recently. We get invited to colleges a lot, particularly the secular schools. It was a room as big as this one, and it was nine o'clock at night. We were invited to be there for the college home economics department, and we were talking about marriage, family life, home, sex and dating, and all this good stuff. So they introduced me and I stood up in a room jammed full at nine o'clock at night, mind you, in a secular school to listen to someone talk about marriage. This kid at the back of the room stood up, before I could get a word out of my mouth. He was a seedy character and he said, "Hey, gramps, what have you got for me?" I think he had been drinking too much. And he said, "Listen, I have been shacking up with this babe and that. I have been in a commune out in Colorado, I have been on drugs, and now I am drinking too much. I want to know what you have got for me." I put my arm around Martha and I said, "Buster, what we have got for you is a thing called 'old fashioned marriage.' And the way it works is that you lock on to this one chick and you decide you are going to make a go of it, and when it thunders you hang on tighter. After thirty-eight years you get so turned on to each other you just can't stand it. The joint is just going boing, boing all the time!" Whereupon the kid said, "That sounds kinda kinky." But that is not the bottom line. The bottom line is this. He said "I am willing to listen to you because I sure haven't found out where it is at."

I would like to challenge you to understand that we in the lifestyle of a revolution have a word if we are in love, a word for kids, a word for men and women who do not know what love is. Whether we are grandpas, grandmas, moms, dads, young lovers; all over the place in society there are people looking to the church and saying, "Hey, is there anything to this stuff of the male-female relationship? Does it really count?" Because I don't know everything I should I would like to turn to the Bible, and I would like to stick real close to the Bible for my talk today.

If you have your Bible you can turn to the twenty-fourth chapter of Genesis, the story of Isaac and Rebekah. I want to tell you that I am reading to you from the King James Version. Actually I am reading from the Gideon Bible that I got from my hotel room. I will leave it there although nice Gideons tell me they love to have people steal Bibles.

I am pastor of a little Presbyterian church on an island in the ocean. We meet in the fire station in a very posh area where people have made money all the way up. Way back there they turned the Lord off. Now they have moved to Skidaway Island where they play golf and tennis and drink at the club, and they thought when they got to Skidaway they would be in heaven. A couple was sitting there one evening and he said, "Mama, we have been here six months and I thought we would be in heaven but we have the same problems. Where is it at?" She says, "I heard they have a church in the fire station. Let's go see what's going on there."

On Sunday morning we always open the Book, because I am just there until the church gets started well. I hope that you are into the Book. Preachers come and preachers go in the Baptist church as they do in the Presbyterian, but the Word of God stays on forever. Everyone has a Bible, and a lot of them need to get it down off the shelf and dig into it for the things they have heard on Sunday morning. So, from the twenty-fourth chapter of Genesis let's look together at the love story of Isaac and Rebekah.

It says here that "Abraham was old and well stricken in age." God had blessed Abraham in all things. That means he had a sock full. I mean he had a portfolio that wouldn't quit, Abraham did. Did you read the record? He had Xerox, IBM, and the highfliers, and a lot of the blue chips, and a bumper or two. But this guy was loaded. He was so loaded that if you had built a fence six feet high out of gold around your place he would buy it from you. Only you never get so loaded, you never get so much of it that you have it all. There was one thing he didn't have, and that was a daughter-in-law. Before he checked out, he wanted to see who his son Isaac would marry.

So it says in the second verse, he called his eldest servant of the house, his most trusted servant, and he said, "Servant, I've got a job for you. I want you to go over to this nice country over here and pick out a class girl. We don't want any ragtag, bobtail gal; we want the cream of the crop. Now use your head and you go out there and find her and bring her back." From the back of the tent, although Sarah obviously had checked out long back, you could hear her saying, "Yes, and be sure, Servant, you find one who can cook, because this boy sure likes his mother's biscuits." So he went out, it says, and in the tenth verse the servant took ten camels of his master and he departed.

Then in the eleventh verse "he made his camels to kneel down without the city by a well of water at the time of evening, even the time the women go out to draw water." Smart old fellow, wasn't he? You're looking for a girl, you go where the girls are. And where are the girls? The girls are out there in the evening drawing water. So, I have four things I have to say to you right out of this chapter.

This is number one. The old servant was standing there evaluating the various arrangements of molecules as they went by him, and suddenly he glimpsed Rebekah, and was she beautiful! If you don't think so, it's in the book. The sixteenth verse says, "And the damsel was very fair to look upon." He said, "Wow! She has got it all together, now let's find out some things about her. What do we want to find out?" The very first thing it

says here in the seventeenth verse is that the servant ran to meet her and he said, "Let me, I pray thee, drink a little water of thy pitcher." Remember, all the scholars on your shelves will tell you a girl was never supposed to speak to a man in public and certainly not to a stranger. What will she do? Then it says in the eighteenth verse, she said, "Drink, my lord."

My first question to you is this: Are you willing to be transparent, to open up, to share? Are you talking more and more? Communication, the importance of communication—are you growing in your ability to be vulnerable, to show each other what is going on inside? In my book *Talk to Me*, I tell about a letter from a lady who said, "Dear Dr. Shedd, you have heard of the Sphinx? Well, I have married it!" Then she said, "Do you know how barren it can be to be married to someone who only makes guttural sounds, and that is only when he wants something like sex or food or to change the channel?" All over the land there are countless lonely men and women married to each other. You know that's a fact. So do I. So, talk, talk, talk, visit, visit, visit.

Grandma McDonald is ninety. We had a birthday party for her recently. All the neighborhood was there. She comes over and sits on our porch swing and she walks down the street. She is ninety and everybody's favorite. Everyone brought their presents and while she was opening her presents, someone asked, "Grandma, what is your happiest memory of the last ninety years?" She said, "Oh, that's easy. It was all the times Lewis and I would sit on the back porch and visit." She has been a widow for twenty years. "Drink, my lord," she said. He was a wise old servant. He wanted someone who would open up. How are you going to do this? I don't know how you are going to do it. I sure like to hope that you might be teaching people how to communicate. One of the ways Martha and I do it is that we spend time with each other. Once a week we go out together on a date.

I write a newspaper column called "Strictly for Dads" and get mail by the train loads. I had a letter recently from a lady recalling her father, and she said, "One of the big events at our house when I was growing up was when my Dad and Mom would go on an overnight honeymoon once a month. Even before they could afford it they would go out and camp out. Then they would borrow a friend's cabin. And now, she says, they go for two or three days together. The overnight honeymoon, how do you do it? I don't know. Martha and I spend fifteen minutes a day talking about what's going on inside each other, just being each other's psychiatrist. If you are psychotic, I wouldn't recommend this. But if you are just neurotic like we are, it could just be super. I wouldn't start with fifteen minutes; two minutes is enough. It's scary, isn't it? O, yes it's scary, because if I show you everything I have, and you don't like it, what have I got left? Nothing! "Drink, my lord." Thank you, Rebekah, for showing us one place where we ought to be with it.

Now, here's the second question I have for you right out of the Book too. My question is: Are you doing more than you need to do? Are you developing the art of the little extras? Listen to the nineteenth verse, "And when she had done giving him drink, she said, 'I will draw water for thy camels also.'" Are there any dry camels in your marriage? Are you watering each other's camels? You don't have to, you know. You get married and the

law doesn't require much. You really should put a roof over her head to keep her out of the rain. You ought to bring home enough so she can buy food, and she ought to cook some of your favorite dishes. You ought to buy her some clothes occasionally, and she ought to sew on your buttons. What else? Not much else.

What is the great marriage? A great marriage, Rebekah, you go it right, honey, a great marriage is watering camels too. He was a smart, old servant. "I want a gal who will talk and then I want a gal who will do more than she needs to do." And listen to this. When she gets through giving him drink, she said, "I will draw water for thy camels also until they have done drinking." You know how much water a camel drinks? Well, friend, it's a bunch. You know how many camels there were? Well, look right over here in the tenth verse. It says the servant took ten camels of his master's camels. This gal was just crazy about watering camels!

If you have heard my text you have heard me say this, so please forgive the repetition, but I need to hear these things real often, I certainly do. But we have this thing, Martha and I, that every day we are going to pay each other a compliment. Not a day goes by that I don't say, "Honey, I like you on account of . . .," and she says, "I appreciate you because. . . ." Like what? Well, for all the fellows here I would just like to educate you a little. Most guys are kind of dumb dumbs. I realize that there are no stupid lovers in this audience, but if you have a dumb brother-in-law, or if there is somebody in your church who isn't getting the job done, then dig me good. Every day I am going to say to her, "Honey, I like you because . . ." But fellows, you want to change it a little bit, and there are certain favorite compliments that you can use over and over. Like what? Well, something about her cooking. "Darling, your blueberry pie is all by itself." You see, it is just a nice little extra touch there. Or, here is one that never fails, at certain moments. You have got to choose your moments. But, oh boy, what this doesn't do. It goes, "Sweetheart, you are not a woman, you are a memorable experience."

I forgot to tell you too, Martha and I pay each other a new compliment every week; something we have never said before. Now listen to that. We have been married thirty-eight years. That's 1976 things she knows about me and she knows that I like about her. No wonder she is out of her tree about me, don't you see, and vice versa?

The Bible says (doesn't it?): "Love rejoices not at wrong, but rejoices in the right." Somehow, some way, we need to get marriages turned around from the downbeat to the upbeat. Rebekah, you have got it right. "I will water your camels too."

I want to skip you over to another verse in the latter part of the story. I ought to bring you up to date just a bit on what happened. You remember the story. Go back and read it together and notice all the wonderful things that it has to say about your particular marriage. He was a smart, old fellow. He was checking out her ability to talk and whether she would do more than enough. At any rate, he said to her, "Darling, would you believe that my reservations at the Holiday Inn ran out and I don't have any place to stay?" Now that is a broad interpretation of this passage. She said, "Well, now, listen to me, I come from a home where all they do is just pour another cup of water in the soup. You

can come on over to my house and bring your camels, too."

And so, he went over to her house, and the very first thing he did before he touched the victuals, he said, "Hey, folks, I think I ought to tell you I'm on a stealing mission, like Baptists or Presbyterians looking for a preacher." That's not in the Book either, but anyhow, he said, "Now look, I am out here to find a girl for Isaac, and he is a prime catch and I think I have found her, and I would like to take Rebekah." And they said, "Oh no, there is no way you can have Rebekah. She can water camels. She also carries wood." They were just not going to let her go. Finally, her brother saw the earrings and the beads and the bracelets and he said, "Where did you get those?" And she said, "I got them from him." Her brother said, "I move we reconsider." So they reconsidered and then they agreed they were going to let her go and, the next thing, her mama came out of her corner and said, "Wait a minute. We want her ten more days." You read it, it's all there. "We want her ten more days so we can build up her hope chest." He said, "No, I can't wait ten days. Isaac's out in the field waiting." So, what are they going to do? They get into a rhubarb in this family about whether they are going to let her go. And finally, here comes the fifty-seventh verse, and this is the text for this point. They said, "We will call the damsel, and inquire at her mouth." Or in one of the modern translations, "Let's just ask Rebekah what she wants to do."

So here is my third point: Are the freedom bells ringing loud and clear in our love? In addition to our declaration of commitment to each other, is there also a declaration of independence, whereby each of us is encouraged to develop our own uniqueness? "We will call the damsel and inquire at her mouth." He was a smart, old servant. "Let's get a gal who is used to making up her own mind."

What's the women's lib movement all about? Well some of it is super and I am glad to see some of it. Some of it is awful, and I get on TV with some of these gals who just rattle my keys. But, I do think, fellows, the women's lib, by and large, is men's fault. I came into marriage, and I've got to confess to you and I'm sorry to confess it, with the idea that now I had someone who would do my washing, my cooking, sleep with me! And, wouldn't that be nice? And here is my little gal spending thirty-eight years saying, "Charlie, I'm a person. I am an individual, unique by divine creation.

"We will call Rebekah and inquire at her mouth." So Martha has some friends I don't like. What's the matter with that? Nothing. One particularly I don't like. I'm working at it. I don't think I'll ever like her. I'm just trying to love her. But Martha loves her. What's the matter? Nothing. I like to go places. I like to go to farm sales. I almost bought a team of little black mares the other day when I waved at a guy across the auction barn. She could care less about farm sales. I like to go to dog shows. She likes to ride her bicycle all over Skidaway Island. I don't care about that at all. What's the matter with that? Not a thing. "We will call the damsel, and inquire at her mouth."

I should tell you the rest of the story. I'm sure you're acquainted with it. But you remember the beautiful ending to the chapter. Isaac went out into the field to meditate at eventide, and he lifted up his eyes, and be-

hold the camels were coming. Rebekah lifted up her eyes, and she lighted off her camel and she said, "Hey, who's that?" The old servant said, "That's Isaac." Then it says that she got down off her camel and covered herself. I always say to kids, "That's a good thing. Don't show them too much, too soon." Then the servant told Isaac everything that he had done, and then it says, and listen to this beautiful verse, "Isaac brought her into his mother Sarah's tent and took Rebekah and she became his wife and he loved her."

I wish I could sit down now but that would not be fair because I challenge you to read chapters twenty-five, twenty-six and twenty-seven. The chapter title for those three chapters is, "Where have all the flowers gone?" You see a marriage that has started out on such a high level reduce itself to a chicanery and deceit where a mother and son stole the birthright from a father and son. What happened? What happened, I think, is that they quit watering each other's camels. They quit the business of communicating in depth. They quit all the good stuff. And how many marriages do you know and do I know like that? There are many, many marriages like that.

I wish we could teach people to pray. I wish I could teach you to pray like Martha and I pray. But, it was hard for us to pray. We've been praying together seriously now for about twenty-five years. At first it was so embarrassing because I was worried about what she would think about what I was saying to God and vice-versa. And so we decided we would pray together silently; just the two of us holding hands, talking about what we wanted to pray about. And we still do this today. We have a little, rocking love seat. We sit on that love seat, and even when our kids were little they learned that unless the house was on fire, when Mom and Dad were holding hands on the love seat, they should just walk right on by. You can train them to do that. And so we would talk about what we were going to pray about. Every day we have this prayer session, Martha and I.

The fourth question I'm asking you is: Is your duet becoming a trinity, where the Lord is really coming in to turn you on in the deep places to each other? The Bible says "Deep calleth unto deep." Does it? Of course it does. But are you listening? How do you listen? One way you listen is to tune into the divine vibrations of a God who loves us so much that he sent his Son to be a risen Lord, to be the Trinity in our love. So we prayed silently. We just held hands and talked about what we wanted to pray about. Now, we've gotten to where we can pray out loud together with no problem. Even today there are some things too deep to talk about. The Bible says that's true, doesn't it? There are certain things only the Holy Spirit can say. Right? And so, we talk about these things—then we hold hands, and then we carry them together to the Lord. And then we say the Lord's Prayer.

We have another thing I wish I had time to tell you about. It is our Bible study system. Martha and I decided some twenty years ago, after we had ben praying awhile, we said that the Lord is already talking to us in His book. So we developed a system of Bible study together. If there is a preacher here, I would like to lay this on you as a possibility. Martha and I, for the last twenty years for a big church of 4,000 members in Houston and our little, bitty church in the fire station in Savannah, Georgia, we prepare our sermons together.

We take a passage and we study it together. I get up Sunday morning and I say folks, Martha and I this week have this for you. You can't believe how much more effective my sermons have been since I started doing that. I'd like to challenge you to give that consideration. You see what's happening is, not only are you helping people to understand the Word of God as a duet, but you are also growing together as God speaks to you as a couple out of His word.

Well, it's time to close. If we are going to have time for questions and answers, I had better wrap this up. Jesus Christ is a living Lord or Easter is a big phoney. It's that simple and that beautiful. But we need to make ways to let him live in our homes. And I would just like to witness to you that after thirty-eight years of trying to tune in as a duet until our marriage becomes a trinity, we still have problems. We had a fight a couple of weeks ago. It was just awful. I don't think there is anything wrong with that, do you?

Did you hear the story about a couple who wasn't getting along too well? But this old boy, on the coldest night of the winter—it was stormy, it was sleeting, it was icy, it was snowing—he bundled up and opened the door. The wind blew him down the street and he slipped and slid two blocks to the bakery. He opened the bakery door. There was no one else there, of course and the baker said, "Hello, I am surprised to see you. What can I do for you?"

The little fellow said, "I want two sweet rolls."

The baker said, "Is that all you want?"

"Yes," he said, "Just two sweet rolls."

So the baker wrapped up his two sweet rolls and took his money and then the little fellow pulled his ear muffs down, put on his hat, pulled up his coat, put on his gloves. As he reached for the door knob, the baker said, "Friend, you do not mind if I get personal do you?"

"No, that will be all right."

"I want to ask you something. You came out tonight just for two sweet rolls."

He said, "Yes, just two sweet rolls."

He said, "Tell me, are you married?"

The little guy said, "You don't think my mother would send me out on a night like this do you?"

He was a wise, old servant indeed. He wanted a gal who would talk. He wanted a girl who knew about watering camels. He wanted a girl who had been brought up where freedom bells were ringing and each person could be a person with spaces in the togetherness. And then this wise old servant, you know, you could read it for yourself; you see him in the chapter; you see him out there by the well. What is the very first thing he does? The first thing he says is "Wow! I'm a traveling salesman, get out of the way." No, the first thing he does it says is "He lifted up his voice and said, 'Lord, here I am, out here in this strange country. I am standing by this well and here comes all these girls.'" Now, Servant, don't you think the Lord knew where you were? Don't you think the Lord knew that all these girls were coming to draw their water? Praying to God the old servant was. This chapter is steeped in prayer. Then he said a beautiful thing. He said, "Lord, I would like to lay out a fleece. I would like for the girl to whom I say, 'Give me a drink,' and she says, 'Drink, my lord,' I would like for her to be the one that you have appointed."

O, dear friends if only you and I, every single day of our marriages could some time in the secret look at our mate and say, "Thank you, Lord, that you appointed this one for me." And if we could teach people to understand that marriage is a gift of God, that the deep calling to deep and the wonders of harmony in love are a gift of the Lord who lives and wants to live in our love and to turn our marriages from duets to trinity.

EVALUATION AND SUMMARY

W. David Sapp

For two days now we have been sitting, squirming, listening, not listening, and visiting. What has it all come to? The investment of time, energy, and money which we have made here demands that we pause for at least a moment and try to synthesize the many words, ideas, and personalities to which we have been exposed. Let me share some of my personal reactions with you by raising four questions.

First, *what have we done here?* We have engaged for two days in a lifestyle of contemplation. We have examined a host of lifestyle issues from economics to energy to sex roles to television and family. We have looked at these issues from a variety of perspectives which do not always harmonize. (But then, neither does life.) We have, each of us, had our notions about appropriate lifestyles reinforced by some speakers and challenged by others. But at least we have thought carefully about what it means to apply the gospel personally to the way in which we live. We have taken seriously the old hackneyed epigram which tells us that our actions are more important than our words. And the staff of the Christian Life Commission earnestly hopes that the program has been a stimulus which will spur thinking Christians to new creativity and which will prod them into vigorous action on behalf of righteousness.

The second question may be more important. *What have we not done here?* First, we have not covered all lifestyle issues. We cannot even claim to have covered the most important ones. Hunger, singleness, aging, racial attitudes and behavior, and a host of other issues remain for you to think about and to act on. Also, we have not closed the door in discussion of the issues we have covered. Quite the contrary, we hope we have forced the door open a little wider. No final words have been spoken here, only words of persons who see through a glass darkly and who desperately yearn to see more clearly. With God's help, we can all participate in focusing the vision.

There is at least one other thing we have not done: we have not really clarified the definition of lifestyle. Foy Valentine opened the seminar by noting the vagueness of the term. The vagueness remains. Does this word "lifestyle" mean nothing more serious than fashion? Or is it a much more profound matter? Does lifestyle refer to our superficial "styles" of behavior, or does it refer to the deeper systems of values which govern our lives? Generally, we decide this on the basis of convenience. For example, if you are criticizing my lifestyle, then lifestyle is an inconsequential matter of personal preference. But, if I am criticizing yours, then of course

LIFESTYLE: SALT AND LIGHT

William L. Self

lifestyle is a crucial matter of morality. When we speak about lifestyle, however, we are toe to toe with an important problem; namely, matters which are of little consequence to some are infused with heavy moral content by others. So an old man in a hospital bed once asked me if I believed the whole Bible. "Indeed," I replied. And he said, "Then what are you doing with that long hair?" To me it was a matter of style; to him it was a matter of faith. But from either perspective, it was a matter of lifestyle. Perhaps, given this kind of ambiguity, we can never say with finality exactly what "lifestyle" means.

A third question occurs. *What conclusions have we reached?* Obviously, at this point I must speak only for myself, and I must speak in generalities. But I have some rather definite ideas. One personal conclusion I have reached is that lifestyle cannot be equated with or divorced from Christianity. The Christian faith is far more than a human lifestyle. Long ago on the mission field we learned that Christianity cannot be equated with lifestyle; more recently, in the naive moral fervor of the sixties we learned that Christianity cannot be divorced from lifestyle. Christian missions is not calling other persons to live like we do; and a sixties' type struggle for social justice cannot long be sustained by Christians who have no regard for personal morality. Indeed, evangelism will be fruitless if it becomes only an invitation to a lifestyle, but its fruits will not matter if it becomes an invitation to a faith with no meaning for lifestyle. Charles Colson is a sterling example of the powerful effect the gospel has in transforming our lifestyles as well as our beliefs, and Tom Skinner's call to lifestyle evangelism is an important word.

Another conclusion I have is that a personal lifestyle cannot be shaped apart from one's context—social, religious, cultural, and familial. These support systems have potent impact on my lifestyle. In other words, my lifestyle is defined by my relationships.

And yet my lifestyle may often change—in big ways or small—for, as Bill Hendricks suggested, lifestyle for humans is at best a tentative stance—a mode of becoming. My lifestyle, I must never forget, is constantly subject to God's nurturing judgment and grace as He continually moves me toward the abundant lifestyle He intended for me. As I respond to Him, I may begin missing meals to feed the hungry. I may begin living in a colder house to preserve God's earth. I may begin to take seriously the call of Bill Hendricks and Millard Fuller to live an economically responsible life. I may begin working less in order to share more of myself with my family and in order to develop a less one-sided self to share with them. I may develop, as Carolyn Weatherford and Paul Jewett have suggested, a new respect for the half of the human race known as women.

One thing is certain: having once met Jesus Christ, our lifestyles can never again be the same.

The final question remains. It is the same final question which troubles us at many meetings like this one. *What must we now do?* There are many answers, for there is much to do. We must show men and women a better way. We must reevaluate our own lifestyles. We must continue to think long and deep and hard about the meaning of the gospel for living. But most of all, we now must worship. That is, we now must contemplate the lifestyle of God, and insofar as we can, with His help, we must make His lifestyle our own.

One night last week or this week, I have forgotten which, my youngest son, who is a high school senior, walked through the dining room while I was putting the finishing touches on this—it happened to be one-thirty in the morning. Brian said to me, "What are you doing, Dad?"

I said, "I am putting the finishing touches on a manuscript."

He said, "You never use a manuscript."

I said, "I know it, but for that crowd, I am going to this time."

He said, "What is it, a sermon or a paper?"

I said, "I don't know." So he sat down in front of me and for about an hour we went over this.

When we finished I said, "What is it, Brian, a paper or sermon?"

He said, "I don't know," and got up and walked out of the room.

I don't know whether I have a sermon or a paper or just some random thoughts or some organized feelings, but here it goes. There are some things I want to say.

We have been talking about lifestyle. We have determined that lifestyle is difficult to focus in upon. Lifestyle is hard to manage and very hard to define. But as the title was given to me, "Lifestyles: Salt and Light," I became impressed with the fact that this was something unique about the Christian community that needs to be said. I am not going to spend your time trying to exegete what salt and light means, because if you have been around the Christian Life Commission seminars very long you know what salt and light are all about. I have been impressed that in the Christian community we have been described by some as being like the great, giant, electric generating plants on the edges of our cities. One of them had a sign that said: "heat, light and power." In the Christian church we have been impressed with heat, we have given a lot of light on the issues of life, and we have used the language of power: but frankly, most of us have never really come to grips with the place of power in the life of a Christian. So I want to talk to you today about power.

We use the language of power; we talk about the church in power terms; we talk about going on crusades. We have used this language at Wieuca Road Baptist Church. We have been engaged in evangelistic crusades, which is a power term. We talk about bringing in the kingdom and doing things so the world will come to Jesus Christ. These are power words. This is power language. I think that we talk more about power and power language than we understand power.

I want to take as a nontext for this worship hour, and I take it as a nontext because I don't want to be held responsible for doing all the things that preachers are suppose to do with text, including trying to determine whether or not this text is a part of the Scriptures. And I don't want to get into all that. But anyway, I want to take as a nontext that last liturgical refrain on the end of the Lord's Prayer: "For thine is the kingdom, and the power and the glory, for ever."

Franklin D. Roosevelt had it and Harry Truman

picked it up on the first bounce. Richard M. Nixon threw it away, and while Richard Daley clutched it tightly until the day he died, Gerald Ford seemed genuinely confused and Eugene McCarthy merely bemused by it. Lyndon Johnson loved it almost sensually, having learned its tricks from another Texas master, Sam Rayburn. Beneath the Zen sleight of hand of Jerry Brown, who has an old-fashioned grasp of it, we understand the seed of the devil is power. The gift of God is power. It is a smoky essence stronger than sex. Power, political or otherwise, beckons and repels Americans. It is the fundamental ingredient of America's lifestyle.

The power struggle is very much a part of our lives. I think it all started in the Garden of Eden. God had something they didn't have, and they were going to get it, and the power was going to be shifted over, and so the struggle began. Who would control the garden and who would control the tree? The power struggle continued outside the garden. A classic case of power struggle was Cain and Abel. I have two sons. That is a very vivid experience for me, with the Cain and Abel understanding. There were Jacob and Esau, Joseph and his brothers, Moses and Pharaoh, and the disciples of Jesus trying to determine who would be at the left and right of Jesus.

Power has never been adequately defined. It is like combustibility. You put a spark of personality with it and something begins to happen. Power, roughly speaking, is the ability to move something from here to there. Herbert Simon says it is the capacity of causing change in behavior. I think power is the capacity to control so change can be made. Now this is sort of an introduction to power.

Let's talk about the nature of raw, political power, the kind of power that we see and experience but rarely define. I don't know that I have defined it. Power is always personal; regardless of how it is acquired, it is always personal. It usually comes in the context of an institution. It can be exercised only by the decision or act of an individual, and the ultimate issue is always the issue of power. Power is the essential, fundamental, basic, primordial, primary issue. I don't care if you are dealing with a church committee or a political campaign or how the budget is going to be divided, who is going to use the car tonight, what percentage of the budget will go to missions, or who gets the Bold Mission increase, the issue is power. Is it going to be the Missions Service Corps or the Cooperative Program? The issue is power. This is the illusive siren that seduces us all.

The power struggle is ever present. It is the shadow that falls across all that we do. Power was in the streets of Russia, but Lenin had enough strength to pick it up. Power is hardly ever glamorous. It is not a commodity that beckons with glamor or the outcome of the manipulative processes such as putting your desk at the correct part of the room, like Michael Korda says in his book on power. The tentacles of power go deeper than that.

Power thrives in confusion. Powerful men never underestimate the value of confusion. You want to be powerful, mess your desk up. If you want to be seen as a weak man, a clean desk is a weak man, if you take this to its logical conclusion. When Harry Truman picked up the office of President on the first bounce from Franklin Roosevelt, he was impressed with how diffused and confused the White House was. But then he realized that this confusion was a contrived thing by

Franklin Roosevelt, for the longer he kept confusion reigning in the White House, the more power came to him. Later he learned to do the same thing.

Power is like muscle. Its tone and strength depends upon regular use. The wielders of great power use it often. They make it clear that they alone possess it. They delight in exhausting vigilance through which they exert and preserve their power. Authentically powerful people never lived balanced lives. They cannot, because they worship the goddess of power. She is everything for them. The powerful take few vacations; they have no hobbies, and they keep power by never glancing away from it. On the other hand, Dwight Eisenhower cared nothing for power, vacationed often, played a lot of golf, and did a lot of other things that were very relaxed. This is true of presidents and popes, governors and committee chairmen, pastors and deacons, executive directors and chairmen of the board, as well as dog catchers.

Power makes room for great ideals, though, we must understand that—Christmas and Easter, the Fourth of July, Labor Day. But it survives on human blood, fresh out of the veins, of the earthly realities of the way people actually are rather than as they should be. Abiding political clout is unsentimental in its vision of human nature, and those who keep power believe that self-interest is strong and accessible and is a motive for everyone. Powerful people live on the razor's edge of cynicism, balanced between man as he is and man as he should be. They accept this view of a flawed universe. Remember, the powerful almost never back a hopeless cause.

The powerful are active and thus keep their muscles engaged. Powerful people never, never share power, and powerful leaders never have a clearly discernable second man. The powerful leader seldom shows much interest in retiring, and powerful people always make big mistakes never little ones. Now that's raw, political power. That's power of the world. That's Goliath. What about the power of the Bible, the nature of Christian power? For all that I have said should be repugnant to you, although some of it should have been familiar to you.

Let's talk about Christian power for a moment. And I do not in these moments intend to say that I have the last word on this, but there are some clearly discernable aspects of Christian power that I want us to look at. The Bible contrasts the power as I have described it with the power of God, which consists of a certain, subtle, tangible wisdom only visible in its results, for instance, in Pharaoh's army versus the Hebrew children, the giant Goliath versus the boy David, the large army of the enemy and always the weak army of Israel. Anywhere in the Old Testament Israel is always fussing with the Philistines.

The power of God is invisible, as in the hymn, "Immortal, Invisible God Only Wise." It is not measurable in human terms and not a logical choice for a materialistic government. It is absolutely foolish for a man with 300 to go against an army of 3,000 as Gideon did.

The power of God gives a different perception to the man of God. The man of God has a perception that allows him to fight so that the enemy is at a disadvantage. He has an unusual wisdom, and this is again illustrated in the classic struggle between David and Goliath.

God's kind of power is channeled through the person already totally committed to him. He has a deeper dis-

cernment of an impossible situation. Moses, Deborah, David, Amos, Paul, and Martin Luther, all of these have the prototype of Jesus who had this way of dealing in the world. Let us say that a person commits his life to Jesus as totally as he can. Then he is drawn to a conflict caused by man's sin and power lust. When he commits himself to the victims involved, he may then receive a perception, an understanding of the total problem and its relation to those in power which other people cannot see. With what appears to be amazing courage, he confronts the power structure. Before them stands one man, with no army, no electorate who may destroy their world structure. He can see their vulnerability and is not afraid of their most dangerous weapon so they must directly or indirectly destroy him. And those who are afraid of losing their power usually destroy the prophets. Of course, a classic case of this was Jesus before Pilate. During Holy Week I became severely impressed with the fact that the whole week was a struggle in power. Who had the power? Three forces came together. Two of them collided. The Jewish and Roman forces came together and collided with the power of Jesus in that whole experience. By the time they got around to it, a seed may have been planted. And that seed grows in the crack made in the institution by the prophets, and that seed grows so that it breaks down the institution that it has been growing in. St. Francis, Luther, Wesley, and Martin Luther King, Jr. are all illustrations of this.

One homely illustration of this was at my own house. We built a part of our driveway. We extended it to take care of all of our automobiles and the automobiles of my children's friends as they came to our house. I don't know much about that sort of thing. If I can't talk a thing into place, it doesn't get there. I watched the men as they came to work. I said, "Surely there is one good sermon illustration here." They said to me, "You haven't prepared this ground correctly." I said, "What do you do? You dig a hole, you pour asphalt in it and run a car over it and you're home free." He said, "You'll see!" So they poured some asphalt into the place that had been prepared. He said, "You didn't put any weed killer down there?" I said, "No, I didn't put any weed killer down there. There is no seed in my yard that can grow through asphalt." Well you know the story. I don't have to push that hard. Spring came and I had the best crop of grass in Atlanta in that new driveway. Now that's the kind of power the Bible talks about. I may be jumping ahead, but you can't hold that kind of power back, I don't care what you do. It is not easily discernible. The behavior revealed in a crisis is a product of months and years of prayer, reading scripture, trying to live in relationship to God and his people.

It is interesting to note that running the references to power and the power of God in the Bible always leads you to the Holy Spirit or the suggestions of a seed growing secretly and of a not easily discernible power which has its way of bearing much fruit. It is the humble people, the Davids of this world toppling the Goliaths, or Rome, or Pharaoh. It's Paul conquering the empire. Now, I have contrasted two kinds of power, the rattling sword of Goliath and the seed growing secretly.

Let us see how this walks across our stage today. Let's look at the dilemma of our President, Jimmy Carter. The fleas come with the dog in Jimmy Carter,

to use an expression from the *Atlanta Constitution*. This is not to be considered as a political judgment. But, in Jimmy Carter we get a man who was on the side of David, educated in Baptist Sunday School and in Baptist life, understanding the power that we have growing secretly, all of a sudden being given the power of Goliath. Now for the first time a man has both powers together, or for the first time in my memory. But he seems haunted by the conflict of these powers that he controls. He controls overwhelming power and if he is going to be president, he is going to have to stand a lot of people with more discernment than this preacher looking at what he is doing. But I do it because he is a public man, and I think he is a good illustration of what I am trying to say. I believe that he is essentially ambivalent in the use of power, and I think the fascination of this enormous power that he now has, both spiritual and materialistic, both political and religious, is causing the waters of his Baptist soul to be tormented. President Carter has a religious conscience that makes it very difficult for him to exercise power in an absolutely decisive manner. He sounds more like a traveling evangelist than he does a man who is accustomed to using power. He can tell civil service workers to no longer live in sin, and he can exhort us to better action, but he doesn't seem to be well equipped to exercise power in the way that other presidents have. Whether that is good or bad, I am not making a judgment yet.

Let us look at the funeral of Hubert Humphrey. (All of this analysis obviously is not mine. I am not going to tell you what my sources are unless you press me, but I agree with the analysis. I don't think anyone likes to hear footnotes read.) He goes to the funeral, eulogizes Hubert Humphrey, and says that Humphrey should have been president, not Jimmy Carter. Now that sounds good in a Sunday School class, but I have never heard a president in my life say that he should not be president. I didn't hear Lyndon Johnson say that after he got the presidency from John Kennedy in that very difficult time. I think it sounds very good and very modest and very humble and it sounds like the third part in Training Union. It is even worthy of the good old boys who stand out in front of the church and smoke to be a little humble. You know, of course, that power structures in churches are never on your elected board. They stand out front and smoke. If you want to be a power in a Baptist church, get to be a departmental Sunday School secretary. You can do your work in ten minutes, and you can get to the parking lot and run the church from out there. And if you don't believe it, you are not a pastor, or you are blind, and I've let you see.

Anyway, this guilt of being president was clearly evident in the statement at Humphrey's funeral. Later in that same statement he talked about being in India. "Walking through India," he said, "I saw the writings of Ghandi on a wall. Well, I didn't see them, someone saw them and told me about them." Well, I have never heard of a president backing up to do anything like that. He was getting it correct for the record as if he were in church and wanted to be clear and true. But a powerful man goes ahead and flexes his muscles and uses his power and lets the record straighten itself up, and he goes down. He keeps things in confusion

so that you can't straighten records up. This is a sensitivity of conscience, and it makes a cautious use of big power, blind and immoral as it is in the hard-hearted, excruciating situations, very difficult for our president.

I think he moved too slowly in dealing with the coal strike. It is easy for me to sit back safely in my home in Atlanta or in the study of my church and tell him how to run the government. But it is evident from those who analyzed the situation that he held his power until the very last moment and only after high, public clamor and fuel shortages and layoffs absolutely demanded that he commit himself and his presidential power to the Taft-Hartley injunction, which by that time was virtually impotent. Perhaps the president will become less uncomfortable in dealing with the realities of power, but as of now he exemplifies the country's divided feelings on the matter. He is a walking conflict between power as we normally see it in the political arena and power as it has been taught to us out of the Christian gospel in our Baptist Sunday schools.

This vacillation may be one of the prices of preserving, even in a ragged and battered state, a democratic form of government. Jimmy Carter's apparent aging in the office, I don't think is due to long hours. I think it is due, and I can have an opinion like anybody else, to the agony of power, the uses of power and the conscience and guilt related with it. David has become Goliath, Moses now commands Pharaoh's army, and there is an uncomfortable conflict in this transition.

Machiavelli lives in a thousand incarnations in every organization that possesses staying power in a difficult world. It is true that there are many who have failed to gain power at least partially because of an unrealistic view of it. Many others turn away from the contest because the game doesn't interest them. But power is going to stay here. It is one of the coldest and least deniable aspects of our existence and, despite notices of movements in the country to the contrary, it seems likely to survive, "like a fine, dark mist, forever rising above the human condition."

Now, what does this mean for us? I think it is easier to analyze than it is to summarize. I think it is easier to talk about the problem than it is to bring an answer. So I will beg off at the end and say, "For me and my house here is a partial answer." Let us come at it this way. We are talking about lifestyles. I personally recommend a lifestyle geared to the radical power that comes in Jesus Christ. It reflects a deeper understanding of power from the New Testament vantage. We have to opt with the power of the New Testament to be true to who we are. As Christians we are part of a faith community and in becoming a part of this kind of community, we are a part of a new reality. This is a revolutionary force. It's a new power. It is different than the power exhibited in the political arena. And anytime anyone under the banner of Jesus Christ adopts the power tactics of the political arena, he is saying something about the impotence of the spiritual power in his life. We have undergone an interior transformation in this faith community. We have had a revolution inside of us which has freed us from the domineering, victimizing forces of the power, the power of this world, and we must become humanizing forces

in our world. Didn't Jesus describe us as salt and light? I refer to that only because, as I said earlier, you understand the exegesis of this. Jesus called us to become part of these faith communities whose task it is to witness to the ultimate power of the universe which is the power released by Jesus Christ at Calvary and at Pentecost. The reverse side of this task is to debauch every other power, the powers of darkness and death, the principalities and power.

Now, before I come in for a landing, and let you go to the airport and take off, I want to give a couple of illustrations here to let you know that this is not something I poured on the dining room table to fill a paper. It is no secret that Wieuca Road Baptist Church in Atlanta does normally pay its bills every month. I am not speaking of these issues from the safe, comfortable lair of a Baptist preacher who has not grappled with this issue. I was uncomfortable in some of the things that have been suggested to me in this conference. But I have found the gods of my people.

I have preached on every controversial issue that can be preached on at Wieuca Road. We went through the puberty of our nation in the sixties as we discovered sex. We talked about race from the safe, white, velvet ghetto in North Atlanta, where no one is ever really intimidated by it because of owner-worker relationship. We have been through all this. We stand on Sunday morning and read from *Gone With the Wind* responsively like any respectable, Southern church ought to do. We have paid our allegiance to the gods of the South, but I have found my people's gods. They are not the gods of culture, race, and tradition as the media told me they were. The gods of my people are the god of American corporations and the god of technology. And these gods are worshipped with almost blind fanaticism by the corporate middle-management structure in America.

I found that I have as much freedom as I wish to take, and my church is as strong as I wish to be free from the pulpit, and it is as weak as I wish to be weak. There seems to be some relationship there. Any pastor who says he isn't free in the pulpit just hasn't exercised the freedom that God gave him there. My people rejoice in it. They don't like it, but they rejoice in it. There seems to be an ambivalence about it out there. One Sunday I told my people that they were a bunch of Technocrats living in a Technocracy and worshipping the god of Technology with all capital "Ts." At the door, I thought I was going to be stoned. Only, they did do it nicely. They wrap them in velvet when they throw them at you, or send them in from the guys in the parking lot. I'm not sure how they got there, but they came. I found out I discovered their gods. They really felt that the great god Technology was going to save them.

The more I pressed, I found not only was the great god of Technology going to save my people, but I found out the great god Technology had been married to the American way of life, the free enterprise system, and the corporation. All of this wrapped up in one big thing, and my role was to become a chaplain for all of that. Now I can be fired any day, but they don't hire me.

A man took to me to lunch. This is the corporate way of doing it. I have had more lunches that have soured

on the way down. I had rather go to lunch over an issue like this than do marriage counseling over lunch. At lunch he got to telling me about all of these things. Then this man my age, who had just received a vice-presidency of a major corporation, looked at me and said, "When you see business you see me, and when you see me you see business." I called his name and said, "My God, you are a man. God made you a man. God did not make you a computer."

Yesterday one of the men in my church unraveled a very difficult personal situation to me. Coming home in the car, he looked at me and said, "Are you going up there and kick the free enterprise system?"

"No," I said, "I'm going to demythologize. I am not anti-free enterprise; I'm just pro-Jehovah. By the way, it hasn't been very good for you. You were president of a corporation and then somebody on the Board of Directors decided you were disposable. And now you are looking for something else to do. Power pushed in on you."

Here are these two men in our church—the one who was driving the car, former president of a corporation, now at leisure in mid-life; and another one who was middle-management and all of a sudden became corporate vice-president and went to New York. Now corporations need vice-presidents. I don't have any problem with that. But I think that the corporate vice-president has the same problem that Jimmy Carter has. He has two power structures going on inside of him and he is in tension over these two things. But somewhere on the local level we have learned to pay homage to these things and we have become chaplains. I will be preacher, pastor, leader, but I will never be the chaplain for the establishment.

In the Christian lifestyle we have to call these gods into question. I don't know whether the saying of it or the leaning against it, or the strong-minded consciousness raising of it is as important as wearing the sackcloth and ashes. I can't make that judgment. I know we can't worship it. I am getting tired of hearing pastors talk about politicians who are in their church. They genuflect everytime the limousine goes by. It so happens we have the dogcatcher in our church. No one has more power than a man who issues a license for something. He knows the limits of his power and he uses it. I went to the state legislature and told them this and told them they were impudent and I got a round of applause for it, because they knew it, particularly in Georgia.

We can minister to a politician as a human being, for that is what he is, and he likes to be referred to as a human being, but we need not be awed by him anymore than he is awed by us. We have heard the Lord God speak. We have felt the power of the Lord God in our own lives. We need not be awed by big corporations, multi-national or otherwise. We no longer need to be mesmerized by the state.

The governor of our state made the mistake of inviting me to speak to the annual Governor's Prayer Breakfast. I thought I was supposed to say something

there. I really did. I thought I was supposed to preach the gospel. I made the mistake of thinking that. I found out that my job description was to tell them that when politicians pray, it was wonderful. See, they were not ready to hear the gospel. They were ready for me to bless what they were doing. There is a difference in that. So I called technology and corporations into question, talked about the uses of power. The room cleared quickly. Oh, I told enough stories to soften it, pad it, and put sugar on top of it. It was over and no one was particularly happy about it.

I am a member of a radical faith community, and I have been liberated from the orders of necessity. We have been freed from a lifestyle of high consumption, and we are freed from the tyranny of work and from the tyranny of time. Thank the Lord, we can take a few Sabbaths now and then because we no longer have to worry about holding it together. We are part of a power that will hold it together in spite of us. We are no longer bound by the tyranny of time and the orders of necessity.

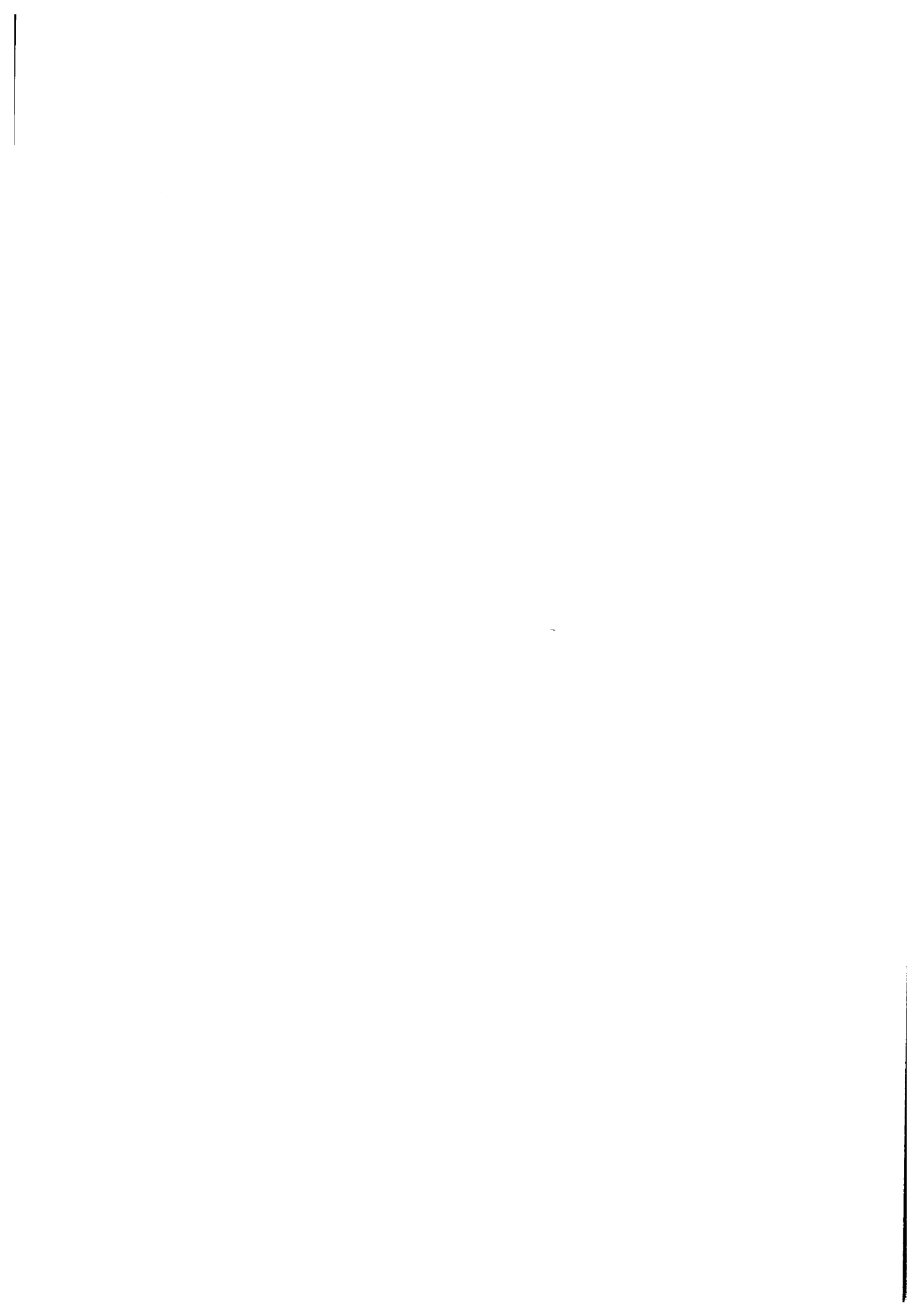
The lifestyles of those who live with kingdom power means that they are no longer separated from the victims of society, for they do not intimidate us like they intimidate those who clutch their little power. And whether they be in prisons, or mental institutions, or the economically poor unable to buy power in our culture, we are commanded by Jesus to respond to the powerless. And its an intimidating lifestyle.

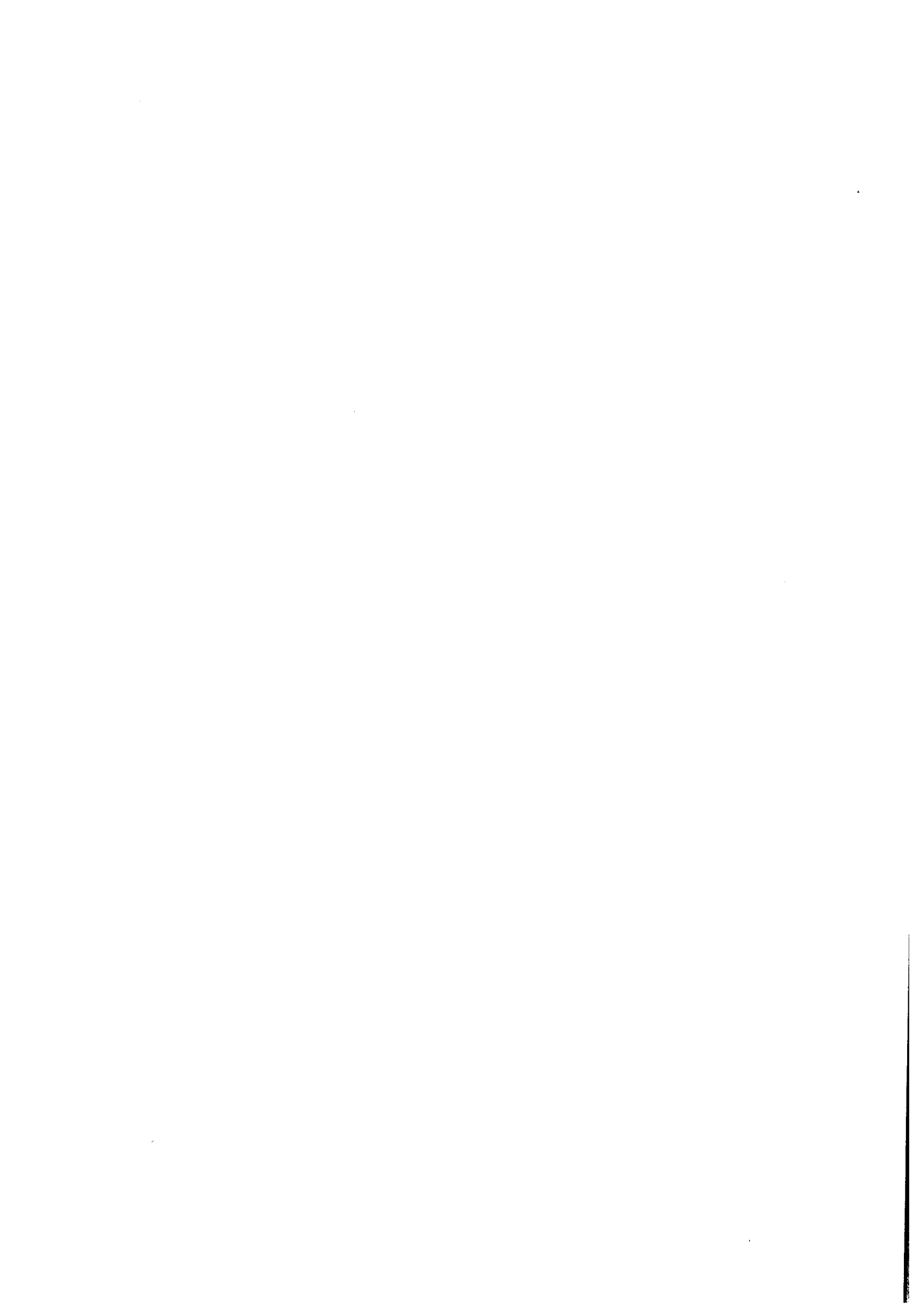
Our styles of life are no longer in the sense in which we fear the aging process. We do not have to look or act young, whatever a pulpit committee says. The aging process has no destructive power over us, for the graying of the hair and the diminishing of our forces within us are simply preparing us to meet the One who makes all things new. Death which believes that I am its victim will be with me and to me as it was with my Lord Jesus who slipped out from under its control.

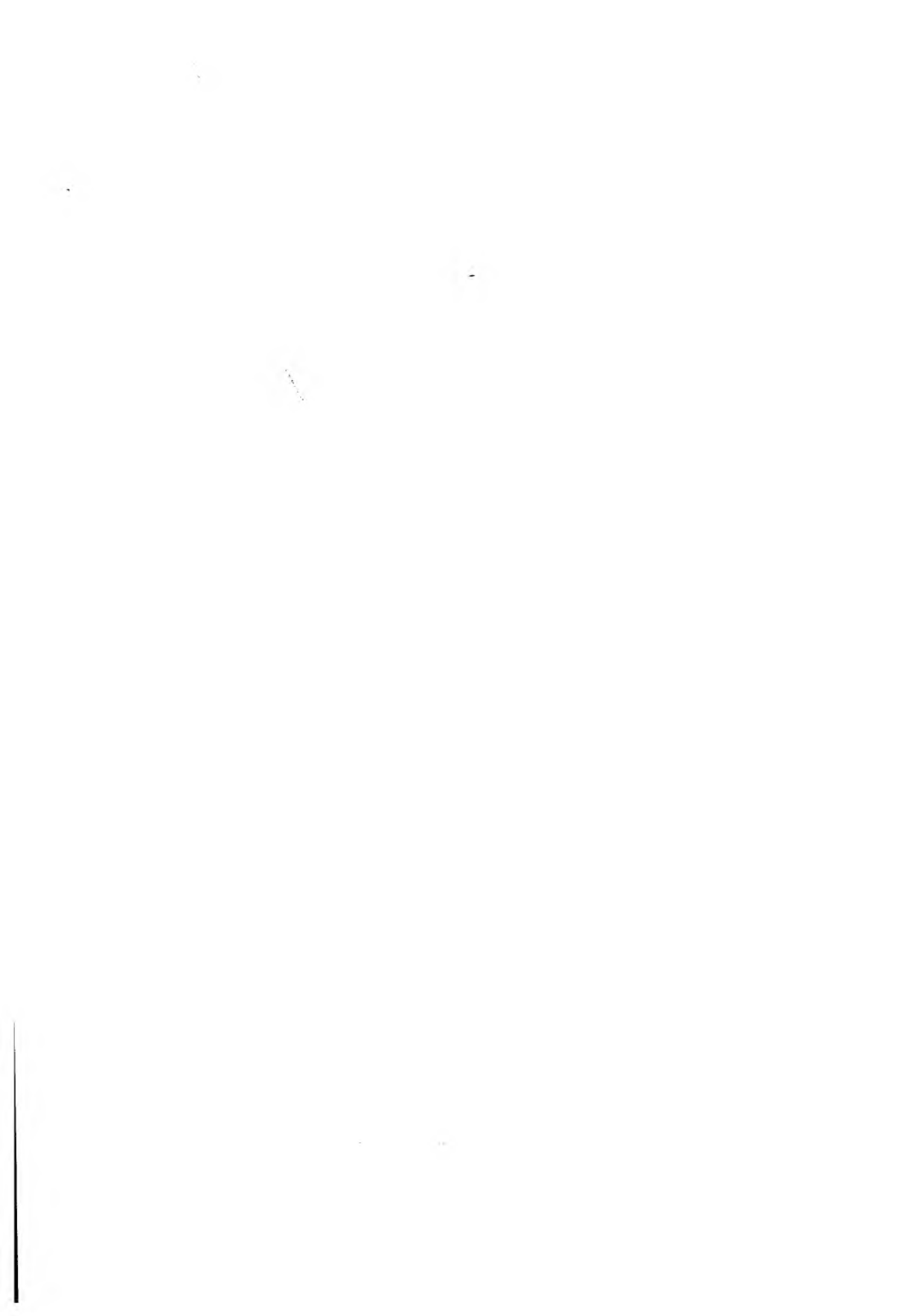
Our lifestyles must affirm positively that there is one power of life and that it is the power of the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, the power of the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. And because of that power, our life is radically changed, as spring revolutionizes the ravages of winter. I am increasingly impressed with the fact that you cannot hold back spring. You can defoliate the trees and you can plow up the ground but you can't hold back spring. You can't keep it from coming. That is what God is saying. All the armies of this world, all the fertilizer, all the destructive forces, all the things that man can do to the earth and soil is not going to hold back spring. It is going to come. That is what the Bible means when it talks about the power of God. As spring revolutionizes the ravages of winter, I call on this faith community to pick up its task, to affirm, to live by, to declare, point to, rejoice in, and praise that ultimate power.

Somehow it seems more important to me when I realize, even if it happened to be a liturgical attachment on the end of pedagogical device on prayer, someone in the early church realized: "For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever."











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