



**POWER**  
**Ch<sup>in</sup>urch**  
**Society**

**1981**

**Christian Life Commission  
Seminar Proceedings**

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# Forward

The Christian Life Commission's 1981 national seminar on POWER IN CHURCH AND SOCIETY had 422 registrants from 26 states to hear and enter into dialogue with 14 outstanding program personalities.

The addresses of these speakers are reproduced here in this form as a reporting and reference service for the seminar registrants. The addresses were prepared for oral presentation to a live audience and should therefore be seen not as if they had been written for formal publication in book form.

It is hoped, however, that these addresses in this form will enable both those who were present at the meeting in Dallas and other interested persons who were not present but who are concerned about the responsible use of power to profit from the presentations of these distinguished speakers.

Special acknowledgement and thanks are due W. David Sapp who served as the primary planner and coordinator of this meeting, and the other Christian Life Commission staff members who worked long and hard to make the seminar a success: Jean S. David, William H. Elder, III, Tim Fields, Raymond E. Higgins II, Harry N. Hollis, Jr., Duann Kier, Karen Roberts, William M. Tillman, Jr., Mary Elizabeth Tyler, Edith Wilson, and John A. Wood.

We hope these printed proceedings may substantially enlarge the usefulness and impact of the 1981 seminar on POWER IN CHURCH AND SOCIETY.

Foy Valentine, Executive Director  
The Christian Life Commission of  
The Southern Baptist Convention

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of the 1981

Christian Life Commission Seminar on

POWER IN CHURCH AND SOCIETY

The Dallas Hilton

Dallas, Texas

March 23-25, 1981

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# By Appointment Only

L. D. Johnson

Amos 3:3

Good relationships depend less upon the parties involved agreeing with one another than upon their accepting one another. If that were not true a lot of marriages would never come off, much less last. A great many friendships would never develop, and most churches would splinter.

As a matter of fact, the reason so many marriages, friendships, and churches are in trouble is partly because people do not distinguish between agreement and acceptance. As far as I know, the only community where no disagreement exists is a cemetery. Wherever there is life there is differentiation. It is a large part of what makes our being human so wonderful a privilege. We humans are choice makers. When we choose this, we choose against that. Why should we insist that those close to us should choose what we choose or else sever the relationship between us?

Think about yourself. Am I alone in experiencing anxiety because of my neurotic need to have others agree with me? Am I alone in having continually to struggle against the error of confusing acceptance and agreement? There are some marriages in which--if you can believe the couples--there has never been a disagreement. How frighteningly limiting, how inhibiting of personal growth, how incredibly dull! That kind of condition really suggests that one partner has ceased being a partner and has become a functionary. I am currently trying to help a couple where the problem may well have been the confusion of agreement and acceptance. The man simply announced one day that he was walking out after 30 years. The wife was staggered and crushed. "We have never had a cross word," she told me between sobs. When he came to see me, he said, "For the first ten years I tried to talk to her. For the last 20 I have just kept my mouth shut." After 20 years of total agreement through default, he had had enough.

Have you ever tried to be friends with someone who made it plain that the only way that was going to happen is for you to agree never to disagree with him? There is no friendship in that kind of relationship, no matter if you call it friendship. It is a self-contradiction, because there is no acceptance in it. It is a one-way street.

Sometimes pastors get terribly threatened by disagreement with themselves, whatever the source. It is as though they have to be infallible interpreters of the Word, as well as the Word itself being infallible. Their infallibility tends to become a life style at home or in church.

A pastor I knew used to present a program to his staff and then say, "Everybody who agrees with this plan say, 'Aye.' Anybody who disagrees say, 'I resign.'" I am sure it was said in jest, but there are situations in which that kind of unanimity is equated with loyalty. If the pastor interprets all expressions of disagreement as acts of disloyalty to God and himself (sometimes he appears to have some confusion a-

about identities) the church is in bad trouble.

The dynamics of every healthy community include, I am certain, lively disagreement. There is a place for the "loyal opposition," and most of us need it to keep from getting too comfortable with our narrow and marred visions. To presume that somebody else may need us to correct his errors, but that we do not need him to correct ours is to assign ourselves an omniscience belonging to God.

A verse in the Book of Amos speaks to me powerfully about this need for acceptance rather than agreement. The prophet is illustrating God's inevitable judgment upon our works. Things have consequences. What you do is what you get. You don't sow oats and harvest corn. Amos illustrates his point by citing a half dozen of what must have been accepted proverbs. A proverb is a brief, pithy statement of a chunk of human experience, the boiled-down, distilled essence of what a lot of people have learned, mostly the hard way.

The first of these maxims used by the prophet says: "Do two walk together unless they have made an appointment?" (RSV). If you meet your neighbor for an early morning brisk jog around the block, you may get mugged by accident, but you won't meet your neighbor except by appointment. Oh, you might once in a while run into him, but if you walk or jog together every morning, or 3 times a week, or on Mondays, it is not going to happen unless you make an appointment with one another, even if it is a standing appointment. It happens because you have planned to do so, resolved to roll out of bed to do so, gotten up on cold mornings when sleeping in would have been much more comfortable. You hit the cold floor because you have an appointment to keep.

The KJV reading of this proverb was misleading, and it has led to a lot of mischief. It has Amos ask, "Can two walk together, except they be agreed?" The problem here is not so much in the translation as in the interpretation which has been made of the translation. The sense of the question is perfectly plain. "Except they be agreed" meant simply that the parties had made an appointment to walk together. It did not mean, as it has come to mean in many Southern Baptist pulpits, "You can't fellowship with me and I can't fellowship with you if we disagree." All my life I have heard that interpretation of this proverb in sermons designed to promote a narrow exclusivism that always took the delineations of that particular preacher's theology. It made me uncomfortable even before I learned to my great relief that that isn't what the text says at all. It did not sound like Jesus. Then, lo and behold, one day I discovered that it wasn't what Amos meant. He wasn't even implying such a thing. What he said is that people do not find commonalty by fortuitous circumstance. As we don't find community by accident, neither does it emerge naturally, undirected and uncared for. Weeds grow unintended, but not gardens. Nor does community come out of coercion and force. Totalitarianism does. Wherever you are given only the choice between "Aye" and "I resign" you don't have community.

I am troubled by what appears to be a serious attempt in this society to change the principle of relationship by appointment into a rigid totalitarian view of association by agreement only. It is the kind of mentality

which fixes another with a flinty look and says coldly, "If you don't agree with us, get out." "If you don't like the way we do things, go somewhere else." "America--love it or leave it!" Whatever happened to loving America and wanting to change it into a more equitable and just society?

When people feel threatened their willingness to tolerate difference and disagreement narrows. The more insecure we feel the less willing we are to allow for those who look different, speak differently, or hold views which we perceive to be different from our own. Need I remind this group of the shameful things we did to Japanese-Americans in the post-Pearl Harbor days of World War II? The distressing thing about history is that we learn so little from it. Just now the pressures for association by agreement only rather than community by means of commitment to mutual acceptance is the prevailing current in the air of American political and religious atmosphere. Examine the history of political and religious fundamentalist movements and you find a common theme: "We must eliminate those who don't agree with us." It is ever the same. The hard-liners are unbearably threatened by anybody whose views are not a carbon copy of their own.

And this is where the subject of this seminar becomes crucially important to the life of the Southern Baptist Convention. Where agreement is the name of the denominational game. It's where people are either asked to serve on boards and commissions or else excluded from serving on the sole ground, not of their competency or prior service to the cause of Christ and of our denomination, but on the basis of whether they are perceived by those who make such appointments as agreeing or disagreeing with themselves. Then the issue of power becomes crucial. When power is used to compel agreement, where power is used to coerce disagreement into silence, where power is used to enforce one point of view, it has not only ceased to be Baptist; it has ceased to be Christian. It has become demonic. I sometimes wonder, knowing how tempted I am to want power, how our Lord said, "No" to the devil when he was offered the kingdoms of this world provided he would agree with the devil about who was who. Power does corrupt, and only by the love of Christ can we resist using it to demand agreement rather than to grant and receive acceptance.

We are too easily deceived by our own rhetoric. We talk ourselves into believing that we are crusading for Christ when we are actually struggling for control. Power is a heady commodity, and a dangerous one, for the obvious reasons that getting it signifies something about your own importance--a dangerous position to put any one of us in--and the more you have of power the easier it is to suppose that you have it by virtue of your merit. I judge that the closer you edge toward omnipotence the more tempting does the feeling of omniscience become. And both are close to the seat of the worst forms of idolatry.

The antidote for the abuses of power is not always a system of checks and balances. Granted, it is sometimes the best we can achieve. That explains the constitutional government of this nation, of course. It was not any notion of human goodness and unselfishness that produced that marvelous document, the Constitution of the United States. Rather, it was the realization that unchecked power soon becomes tyranny.

But the system of checks and balances which protects the constituency of a political body is not a valid basis for operating a family, a church, or a denomination. There you have to have something more than, "Let's vote!" What you have to have as the basis of community is mutual acceptance, not agreement. We have a spirit moving across this Convention which would have been right at home with those disciples who said, "Lord, we saw a man casting out demons in your name, and we forbade him because he is not one of us."

So, let us make an appointment to walk together. We say from the heart in concert the crucial things: "Jesus Christ is Lord." "There is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved." "God was in Christ reconciling the world to himself." But we cannot walk together if we have to pass one another's saliva test of orthodoxy. We can walk together if we want to do so badly enough to make an appointment based upon mutual acceptance.

I want to walk beside my brothers. If I know my inner being, I do not want to walk ahead of them. There is small chance of that happening anyway. I don't even fantasize about it. And I can tell you straight off, I will not walk behind. Nor will I walk in lockstep. Nor will I pull away and go off and walk somewhere else. I came to walk with you.

I would like to. We have an appointment, a rendezvous not just with one another, but with Christ in whose footsteps I want to walk. I close with the words of a man who deserves veneration, if indeed any human being deserves it. This man is a candidate for canonization, if Southern Baptists decide ever to do such. It is customary to canonize only after he is no longer around, so I do not intend to start a movement toward this end for a long time, hopefully, because he is very much around. If it please God, I hope he will be. God knows this man is needed. I refer to T. B. Maston, who was recently quoted with the following Mastonism: "Just the fact that a fellow agrees with us, with our viewpoint, doesn't mean that he's a super Christian. And if he disagrees, it doesn't mean that he's not a good Christian."

## Power: The Subjunctive Possibilities

William L. Hendricks

To speak passionately and incoherently arouses interest and sympathy but not understanding. To speak with structure but without passion brings understanding but neither sympathy nor interest. Therefore endure with sympathy this passionate structure for the sake of understanding and decision.

Christian life style embraces love, power, and justice. Whereas all of the biblical materials are primary funding for our way of being in the world, the beatitudes of Jesus are special signals as to the quality of Christian life. Love, the indicative reality which speaks of coping, is exemplified in the beatitude of blessing for the poor. Justice, the imperative necessity, speaks of changing whose exhortation is the beatitude for those who hunger and thirst after righteousness, and

whose gift is hope. Power, the subjunctive responsibility which allows choosing, offers the blessing of peacemaking in the spiritual context of faith.

Power, the subjunctive possibility of choosing, has three forms: (1) kratos, the power of force embodied in the biblical paradigm of Isaiah in the arena of politics. Jurgen Moltmann speaks of this model in his Theology of Hope. (2) dunamis, the extraordinary power evidenced in the biblical paradigm of Ezekiel in the arena of personality. A theological expression is Moltmann's The Church in the Power of the Spirit. (3) exousia, the power of intrinsic authority reflected in the arena of pain as expressed in Hosea. Moltmann's theology of pain is The Crucified God.

Power is the force of life, and like all of the givens of life there are determinants about it. Our quotients of strength, wisdom, and length of days as individuals are powers of life determined, in some sense, by heredity. Our quotients of resources, wealth, and culture as nations are givens of our historical and geographical milieus. Nevertheless, within these determinants are large variable possibilities. In many ways we may choose how we will use the resources and powers to which we are heirs. Power is subjunctive. We may use it. We may abuse it. We may delegate it. We may convert it to bane or blessing. We may accumulate it, display it, deploy it and be crushed by it. According to B. F. Skinner's social vision Beyond Freedom and Dignity anyone who uses power is aware that he must ask permission for his programs and describe the outcome of his uses of power. As yet his oratory and peregrinations have not been successful in persuading large segments of the population that they should live beyond freedom and dignity.

Power is subjunctive because of freedom. God has chosen that even his own power will in some measure be subjunctive to the freedom of the decisions of individuals and nations. He will not coerce us to choose him. We do not have to be saved or to survive. We do not have to be peacemakers. We do not have to be true to prophetic insights. We may. Power is subjunctive.

No genre of biblical literature is so much about historical, earthly power as are the prophets. Their dramatic callings are impressive, but they are not imperative. Isaiah could have fled the smoke-filled temple (Isa. 6). Ezekiel could have refused to eat the scroll (Ezek. 3). Hosea could have rejected the wife of whoredoms (Hos. 1). But he did not. Their decisions caught them up in a maelstrom of powers--the focus of politics, of personality, of pain. Prophets are about power. The powers of this world are instruments of love and wrath. The power of God can ecstasize or exile. The power of pain can break or benefit.

The primary gift of a prophet is not knowledge about the future. The primary gift of a prophet is faith. He must have the gift of faith to hear or see the words and visions of the Lord. He must have an incredible faith to believe what he sees and hears. He must have courageous faith to proclaim and persevere in what he has heard and seen. He must have an impossible faith to cling to the promised outcome in the face of all apparent evidence to the contrary.

Power

Kratos-Isaiah-Politics-Theology of Hope

Kratos

Kratos is force. It is majesty in God,

might in man and energy in nature. Kratos involves revolutions of the earth, the muscles of mankind and the molecular action of all things physical. God who brings into being and lets be is the source of all power. All living organisms have their own appropriate power, and when it departs they die. Impressive displays of kratos are seen in the phenomena of nature (the nature Psalms). Intricate uses of power are exemplified in the composition of the human body. Kratos is the power that keeps us moving wherever it is we're going.

Politics

Tillich identifies two fields of power--the physical and the social. Christians must be concerned with both. Matters of physical power and their deployment are determined by social uses of power, especially politics. Politics, the art of the deployment of power is, in western civilization, sensitive to or hostile toward religious claims about power. Religious claims about power are ultimate claims because of their referent God. All claims about power may be either prophetic or self-serving. Religious claims may also, when they speak as God instead of for God, be idolatrous at best and blasphemous at worst. Baptist insistence upon the separation of church and state was a prophetic stance which enabled the state church dilemma to be resolved in our country. Baptist insistence on special favors from elected officials at every level from local councilmen to national president have been self-serving. Military strategists are prophetic when they realistically assess the strength needed for national defense. They are self-serving when they desire inflated budgets that do not curtail extravagant spending. Oil companies are prophetic when they unrelentingly seek alternative sources of energy. They are self-serving when they gouge prices in the name and under the guise of expensive research. Conservationists are prophetic when they are zealous for the preservation of endangered species and areas of natural beauty. They are self-serving when what they seek to preserve is at the expense of increased food production to meet minimal human needs. (For example, coyotes are being imported to Angel Island in San Francisco Bay to thin out the herd of tame deer. The process will be supervised at considerable expense by highly qualified personnel. Granted, the coyotes are the natural enemies of the deer, this particular exercise is artificial because of its controlled circumstances and excessive expense. Easier, quicker, more efficient and actually more human(e) methods could be employed).

Christians have wisely decided against a total separation of the two powers, religious and political, because of the all consuming interests of both areas. Americans have, up to this point, wisely decided against a predominance of religious power over the civil powers. And our constitution guarantees protection from the civil powers having an absolute hegemony over religious powers.

We are in need of some criteria for discerning which uses of political power are prophetic and which are self-serving. We are in special need of this criteria of judgment in the bifocal arena of ecclesiastical politics. It is naive in the extreme to suppose that politics is the province of civil structures and that it is not necessary to or utilized in ecclesiastical structures. One biblical paradigm who distinguished the powers and was influential in both was Isaiah.

### Isaiah

There is an incipient pride in most Christian exegesis of the Old Testament. The exegete tends to identify his country with Israel. This is particularly true of Americans whose concept of manifest destiny helps them come down on the plus side of being an elect nation. The political realities of Israel and Judah were such that they were small, struggling nations who were brutalized by the superpowers who often chose the territories of Israel and Judah as a battleground for their own warfare.

Judah's best political strategy was neutrality when possible or to ally with the most powerful when necessary, which was most of the time. In a brief moment of weakness in the Assyrian kingdom about 800 B.C. Israel and Judah began to flourish, the latter under Uzziah who came to the throne in 786. The good do not always die young, but they do often suffer long. In 758-57 Uzziah became a leper and was succeeded by his son Jotham. Reform civil and religious progressed until Assyria's internal problems were resolved. Jotham was succeeded by Ahaz who ruled at the time of Uzziah's death in 735 and beyond it to 726-5. But Tiglath-pileser (745-27) was waiting in the wings and he soon subdued all of the territories up to the Brook of Egypt. Israel joined alliances with other nations until she was carried into captivity and ceased to exist as a state in 722. Ahaz and Judah were spared by aligning with the Assyrians, against Isaiah's advice. Ahaz was succeeded by Hezekiah as king of Judah. Hezekiah joined with the Egyptians and the Babylonians against Assyria. Judah was spared by divine intervention and by the payment of tribute. Isaiah counseled against any alliance except with God (Isa. 28, 29, 36). Isaiah's trenchant taunt to all who depend on political alliances for ultimate safety was the well-known,

The Egyptians are men, and not God;  
And their horses are flesh,  
and not spirit (Isa. 31:3).

Nor was his the counsel of an inconsequential man. He had the ear of kings (Isa. 7:3 ff) and the high priest (8:2). But more important was his vision of God, which he proclaimed with uncompromising integrity and unrivaled eloquence.

We know only of him that his father was Amoz and that the call to prophecy came in 735, the year of Uzziah's death. It has been surmised that he was of the nobility and/or that he was a citizen with a farm and a person of substance. He has been romanticized and fantasized but seldom understood or followed. What he really was proposing was a policy of radical neutrality which said to individuals and the nation "If you will not believe, you will not be established" (Isa. 7:9). We have clung to his longing for a peaceable kingdom and his predictions of the coming Prince of Peace. We have failed to see him as a peacemaker who was marked by the gathering storms he saw coming. Michelangelo understood him. Search out a picture of his Isaiah on the Sistine ceiling. It is the representation of a man who has looked darkness in the face. A contemporary theological expression of power and politics that shapes Israel's realistic vision, as well as his forward look, is Moltmann's Theology of Hope.

#### Theology of Hope

Moltmann is a founding father of "political theology." He did it with hope, a hope with practical consequences. "As long as hope does not embrace and transform the

thought and action of men, it remains topsyturvy and ineffective. Hence Christian eschatology must make the attempt to introduce hope into worldly thinking, and thought into believing hope." His translation was made via the futurist categories of the Marxist philosopher, Ernst Bloch. Moltmann's theology has been a funding source for the liberation theologians of South America. The overtones are theologico-political. Moltmann's metaphor of the "exodus church" is a vehicle for expressing his ethical concerns about politics. He welcomes the passing of the view of the church as a public cult, for as such it lost its prophetic voice. Nor does he welcome the church as the cult of the new subjectivity which psychologizes and privatizes religion. The major function of the church is not to provide community for man dehumanized by the industrial revolution. The church is called to go into society, to be political.

The coming lordship of the risen Christ cannot be merely hoped for and awaited. This hope and expectation also sets its stamp on life, action, and suffering in the history of society. Hence mission means not merely propagation of faith and hope, but also historic transformation of life. The life of the body, including also social and public life, is expected as a sacrifice in day-to-day obedience (Rom. 12:1 ff.). Not to be conformed to this world does not mean merely to be transformed in oneself, but to transform in opposition and creative expectation the face of the world in the midst of which one believes, hopes and loves. The hope of the gospel has a polemic and liberating relation not only to the religions and ideologies of men, but still more to the factual, practical life of men and to the relationships in which this life is lived.

Few Baptists have appropriated in toto Moltmann's vision of the church as a public political force. Yet we are moving more forcefully, which is not necessarily the same as wisely, into the arena of politics. And this move makes necessary some questions about our political involvement civil and ecclesiastical.

#### Questions About Politics As the Arena of Power

Politics may be prophetic or self-serving. Religious politics can be the necessary structures for the existence of the church or occasions for idolatry and blasphemy. As we become more overt in civil politics and more aware of ecclesiastical politics certain questions need to be asked.

1. Do we imagine ourselves free from the fascination with and corruption by power because we are religious? (We know where the demagogues are! Where are the statesmen?)
2. Should our political influence be used to make uniform for all our belief system and our way of life? (We know what we want! Do we have to have a monopoly?)
3. How can we be politically responsible without seeming to throw the weight of God behind each issue we support? (We know what we think God says. But even God gives the Devil his due!)
4. To what extent are those who use prophetic/preacher rhetoric responsible for the results and the keeping of their promises? (We all have to campaign. Do we have to deliver?)
5. To what extent should ecclesiastical politics be acknowledged as such and not be a hidden agenda under theological issues? (We all believe the Bible. Who gets the push

teaching jobs?)

6. Are all alliances between Christians and politicians sacralized just because they agree on a given narrow agenda? (We used to know the Philistines by sight. Are some of them in the Lord's army unbaptized?)

7. Do we propose to stick with the issues or support those who favor our items of self-interest? (We have enough bombs to kill everybody once. How many lives does the human race have?)

#### Power

#### Dunamis-Ezekiel-Personality

#### The Church In the Power of the Spirit

#### Dunamis

Dunamis is the most sought after form of power in our contemporary context. Dunamis is the power to do and be extraordinary. It is the New Testament word for miracle. Its manifestation is taken as an unmistakable assurance of divine favor. It is desired intensely by preachers, politicians, and producers of entertainment. Dunamis increases faith (John 2), produces extravaganzas (Hollywood), promises the moon (the electronic church) and sells products people don't want for prices they can't afford (Madison Avenue in the designer-jeans-stage).

Dunamis may be expressed in the authentic power of God (Pentecost, Acts 2 or in the inauthentic cleverness of man Simon Magus, Acts 8:9). There are the deep things of God and of the evil one. If dunamis is a touchstone of God's presence in true manifestations of power, its counterpart is the replicas of magic which connote the absence of God and the presence of human tricksters.

The gift of dunamis is charisma. The medium of dunamis is human personality. The miraculous in Scripture may affect nature and other orders of existence besides the human (the miracle of stilling the waves and the finding of the coin in a fish's mouth), but the purposes and effects of all miracles are to redeem, alleviate, confirm, and impress the human observers and recipients. The realm of dunamis is unmistakably personality.

#### Personality

Personality is a modern invention. The science of the inner being, psychology, is less than one hundred years old. One of the arts of psychology is persuasion or salesmanship. The Greeks spoke of this art as rhetoric. The Hebrews called it being mighty in word and deed. Personality is a protean term; its nuances are legion. It involves Freud's ego, superego, and libido at the individual level and Jung's cosmic symbols and collective archetypes at the corporate level. Personality is a product of natural abilities, desires, and reflexes as filtered through the expectations of society and its morals. Personality is the result of chemistry--body chemistry and that more intangible kind of chemistry we apply to the psyche in its manifestations (e.g., the German Weltgeist and the Puritan mentality). Personality, if not the key to success, is the lock that controls access. I am convinced that it is in this intangible area of personality that power is most pervasively and effectively used. The use of the power of personality may be either integrative or insidious. When personality is used in an integrative manner all of each self and all of all the selves involved are nurtured (e.g., those felicitous ministry/congregation/mission/community situations in which some of you work, or those happy detentes between politicians and their constituents, professors and students, merchants and customers in which bonds of

trust are established, respected, and fulfilled). Personality used in an insidious manner manipulates, exploits, brutalizes. All classes of examples of the integrative personality use can be distorted into insidious use. The reversal is not so easily accomplished because of the disillusionment and distrust which accompanies the insidious use of one's personality on other(s).

Even the charismata of the Spirit may be abused in practice. Examples are Samson's strength expended on the gates of Gath, upheaval of Christian worship and warring factions as evidenced at Corinth. What is required is a trying of the spirits both to discern the integrative from the insidious and the building up from the tearing down uses of dunamitic power and its charismatic manifestations in the arena of personality. I propose Ezekiel as a biblical model of the integrative use of dunamitic power through the charism of personality.

#### Ezekiel

At first glance Ezekiel seems a strange choice for the authentic use of personality. Many of us remember only the dating difficulties with the book and the bizarre actions of the man of God. We have frankly left to those whose personalities are more passionate than reflective the apocalyptic visions and the strident voice of Ezekiel.

Walther Eichrodt's marvelous reconstruction of Ezekiel the man on the basis of Ezekiel the Book has brought the prophet back to life for me. Here is a man trained to be a priest, later called to be a prophet. The sense and sensibilities of all of his fine education rebel at the pyrotechnic requirements of being a prophet. His submission symbolized by his vision (Ezek. 1) and the swallowing of his parchment scroll (Ezek. 3) led not only to a new shape of ministry but also to great personal anguish. He grieves at his wife's death (24:15). At times he seems to be "catching at God's arm and trying to hold back the hand after it had been lifted up to strike a blow" (4:14, 9:3; 11:3). He suffers mentally and physically during the period of reassessment when faith required what familiarity wanted but could no longer have.

It sees reality and mankind in the hand of him whose voice calls into history from its end, saying 'Behold, I make all things new,' and from hearing this word of promise it acquires the freedom to renew life here and to change the face of the world.

In the transformation of his own personality there came the ability to use the familiar, the priestly metaphors of his background, in the service of the new (the pronouncement that suffering was God's will now and that the new Temple was his promise for the future).

Eichrodt describes not only Ezekiel but also everyone who is called to change from priest to prophet.

That is the sin which most profoundly threatens the believer. It is not the evil he does, but the good he does not do, not his misdeeds but his omissions, that accuse him. They accuse him of lack of hope. For these so-called sins of omission all have their ground in hopelessness and weakness of faith. 'It is not so much sin that plunges us into disaster, as rather despair,' said Chrysostom. That is why the Middle Ages reckoned acedia or tristitia among the sins against the Holy Spirit which lead to

death. Presumption is a premature, self-willed anticipation of the fulfillment of what we hope for from God. Despair is the premature, arbitrary anticipation of the non-fulfillment of what we hope for from God. The despairing surrender of hope does not even need to have a desperate appearance. It can also be the mere tacit absence of meaning, prospects, future, and purpose.

The modern church must ask in this arena of the power of personality if there are not shifts that must be made from priest to prophet. We must devise some means of trying the spirits to distinguish the integrative from the insidious.

The Church in the Power of the Spirit Moltmann's Theology of Hope is taken up and incorporated in his The Church in the Power of the Spirit. This volume, unlike his other two written in dialogue with scholars, is born out of his personal interactions in pastoral theology.

The contents of this book do not derive from the study, or from the lecture rooms of Tübingen University. Readers will rightly ask: What church is he actually talking about? Apart from the fact that for five years I was pastor in the country parish of Wasserhorst, near Bremen, lecture tours and ecumenical conferences during the past ten years have taken me to churches in other countries and other situations. The experiences of Christians in Korea, their missionary zeal and their suffering in political resistance; the charismatic experiences of the independent churches in Kenya and Ghana, their prayers and their exuberant dances; the work of Christian communes in the slums of Manila and the villages of the campesinos in Latin America, their life among their people and their persecution by the police--all these things impressed me more vividly than I probably realized myself.

The church exists before God, before men and before the future. The center of the church is her relationship to Jesus, the Lord of the church. The horizon or periphery of the church is her "relationships with partners in history who are not the church and will never become the church." Our partners in dialogue are Israel, world religion, human social systems, and nature. Our partners in dialogue are especially the poor.

The 'poverty' extends from economic, social, and physical poverty to psychological, moral, and religious poverty. The poor are all those who have to endure acts of violence and injustice without being able to defend themselves. The poor are all who have to exist physically and spiritually on the fringe of death, who have nothing to live for and to whom life has nothing to offer. The poor are all who are at the mercy of others, and who live with empty and open hands. Poverty therefore means both dependency and openness.

For Moltmann the distinctive personality of the church is created by the energy of the Spirit granting the charismata to the members of the church which are implemented through the threefold ministries of proclamation, fellowship and service (kerygma, koinonia, diakoinia).

The personality of the church and the personalities in the church must confront redemptively the needs of mankind and the

stewardship of resources. The church, more than others because she knows God, must see the inter-relatedness, the symbiosis of all existence.

We would therefore call symbiosis our guiding line for economic action and for our support or resistance to economic trends. It is only the fellowship of men and women and of human societies, participating equally in responsibility and a just distribution of goods, which gives everyone, collectively and individually, a chance of survival. It is only fellowship in respect for the unique character and needs of the natural environmental system which gives humanity and nature a chance of survival. Such symbioses, in both limited and wider contexts, are to be seen as corresponding to and anticipating the kingdom of God in history. For it is only fellowship with the Creator in the coming kingdom that gives coming together of men and women in the history of humanity and nature its transcendent and thus its stimulating meaning.

Since the church as corporate body and as individual members must call its power of personality to bear in all arenas, there are questions we must ask about the power of personality.

#### Questions About Personality As the Arena of Power

Dunamis is the most sought after of the powers. Its use can be integrative or insidious. There is a dunamis of God and a shadowy, imitative counterpart dunamis of evil. The questions about dunamis and its arena of personality as power base are sharp, for they involve motivation as well as action.

1. Are the models of personhood the church is using and projecting appropriate to her calling? (We know where the entertainers are. Where are the prophets?)

2. Is the "modern" personality of bland agreement with its beatitude of "peace at any price" adequate for the radical decisions implied in the gospel? (We know where the negotiators are. Where are the real peacemakers, some of whom must be warriors?)

3. Is the nostalgic chauvinist personality of my party, my country, my church, my turning back the clock commensurate with the unifying vision of the gospel? (We know where our interests lie! What of his? Can they be seen through the refracting rays of our own broken vision?)

4. How can we discern the difference between manipulative oratory and meaningful proclamation? (We know where the PR men are! Where are the preachers?)

5. Are we, with our new awareness of psychological sciences and their acts of counseling and therapy, producing persons in our own images rather than authentic others? (We know where the clones are. Where are the productive eccentrics?)

6. In the selling of super personalities and their success syndrome are we causing the ordinary or less gifted to despair? (We know the stellar figures. Isn't it okay to be part of the Milky Way?)

7. In the persuasion of powerful personalities are we overlooking the frustrations of the inarticulate? (We've heard the slogans of the restorationists. When are the riots coming?)

Exousia Pain-Hosea-The Crucified God  
The Jewish leaders asked Jesus by what power or authority he taught (John 8). Exousia is the word for intrinsic power. This

power comes out of the being itself or from some delegated, duly constituted and recognized channel. It is the inner strength and confidence a person knows him/herself to have. It is power at the most convincing but least forceful level. This kind of power makes individual heroes, frontier sheriffs and Swiss bankers act like they do. In the vernacular this kind of power knows where it is coming from. If exousia is the most convincing form of power it is also the most threatening form of power to those who do not have it. Its exercise heightens insecurity; brings confrontation; causes pain.

#### Pain

It is discernible how politics and personality are power bases. It is puzzling that pain should be seen as a power base also. Pain is perhaps the ultimate power base because it is predicated on and recognizable only because of health, integrity and love. When these are violated, pain ensues. Pain according to its type and intensity demands the responses of frenzy, moodiness, despair, or acceptance and endurance. The pain of deprivation drives nations to war. The pain of humiliation leads to vengeance. The pain of ruptured relationships can lead to redemptive love. Pain is necessary to the human condition in order to discern that something is wrong. Pain can be senseless, can be unjustly inflicted, and even administered (e.g., as evidenced by the California prisoner who was recently exonerated of a crime for which he had already served an eight year sentence). What does one say when occasioning or afflicting irrational pain? "Sorry about that!" We need to discern the spirits in suffering as much, if not more than, in the arenas of power and personality. The pain of the poor is the guilt of the rich. The pains of the rich lead to the sufferings of the poor. The pain of God leads to the redemption of his cosmos. The pain of Hosea in the trauma of his marriage reflects the pain of a redemptive God at the unfaithfulness of his covenant community.

#### Hosea

Sampey said the book was a succession of sobs. Possibly, but what eloquent crying. The metaphors and beauty borne of these "blossoms" in the dust have the tender entreaty of a lover. Hosea spoke for God to Israel. There was no thundering about political alliances as with Isaiah nor exotic uses of personality with visionary parables as with Ezekiel. There is painful entreaty and the more painful promise of inevitable judgment. The righteousness and justice of Amos and Isaiah, southern contemporaries, is replaced by the knowledge of God, devotion and faithfulness. A wayward wife is but a singular instance of Israel's collective harlotry. Three peculiarly named children are reminders of divine displeasure at the gross misconduct of a chosen people. That the early period of Hosea's ministry was a time of Israelite national prosperity made for the pain of seeming irrelevance. That his latest oracle speaks of the imminent and sure fall of the nation's capital made for the pain of despair which comes to a caring prophet of doom who realizes that his words are true.

Finally, in the awesome pain of redeeming an adulterous wife is given the parable and promise of what the pain of God will do in providing vicarious redemption. Even a commentator who does not subscribe to the one wife theory and does not ascribe to the theory that Hosea's relations to women "furnish data for a reconstruction of Hosea's

biography" nevertheless recognizes the distinguishing mark of this prophet as pain.

Whatever implications for the life of Hosea may lie in those stories, it is certain that these symbolic acts brought his whole life into public view and involved his total existence in the hostility provoked by his message. He had to incarnate in his own personal life the word of Yahweh. That he could and did is evidence of his profound identification with his God, an identification which, if we can judge from his sayings, allowed him even to feel and experience 'the emotions of Yahweh.'

The prophet's pain was parabolic of the suffering of God. The God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, the God and Father of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ is reflected in Hosea but fully revealed in Jesus Christ. It is because of this that Moltmann captures God's suffering in the title The Crucified God.

#### The Crucified God

Moltmann's first book was about Easter, his third about Pentecost, and his second, The Crucified God, about Good Friday. The Crucified God is, in my opinion, the most intensely theological and simultaneously difficult to comprehend work of Moltmann. Going beyond E. Bloch's vision of hope, he espouses the negative dialectic of Adorno and Horkheimer in which the positive benefits of Christianity can be seen only by apprehending the pain of the negative. In an encyclopedic fashion Moltmann unites classical theology, philosophy, and political theory in his characteristic insistence that Christianity must be based on praxis not theoria.

Orthodox theology is apprehensive about the title wondering if Moltmann is a passian who crucifies the Father. Quite the opposite, in the cross Moltmann sees the abandonment of Christ. Keep in mind that the fullness of God's presence can be realized only when his absence and its meaning have been appropriated too. Moltmann insists that God the Father suffers with the Son but not as the Son. Suffering is God's inner nature; it is occasioned by his love. The only Christian answer to the problem of evil is a picture of God's suffering with his creation which will not let him be the abstract sovereign of classical theism imposing suffering on his creation. It is against this version of classical theism that atheism has always raised its most cogent criticisms. Only a God whose inner nature is suffering can answer the theist/atheist standoff on evil.

With a trinitarian theology of the cross faith escapes the dispute between and the alternative of theism and atheism: God is not only other-worldly but also this-worldly; he is not only God, but also man; he is not only rule, authority and law but the event of suffering, liberating love. Conversely, the death of the Son is not the 'death of God.' but the beginning of that God event in which the life-giving spirit of love emerges from the death of the Son and the grief of the Father.

God is known in suffering, for vicarious suffering is the constitutive principle of Christianity. This awareness of God's suffering leads us to look realistically rather than romantically at the apocalyptic characteristics of our age. From this realistic appraisal comes an honest hope in God as the resolution of suffering.

In this post-Christian, legalistic apocalypticism, the present time becomes the

moment of the great decision: the world is lapsing into the spiritual death of atheism, atomic catastrophe, the death of the young from drugs or ecological self-destruction. At the same time, it is the hour in which the true church has to rise up as the visible place of refuge in the disaster: 'Rise up for the final struggle.' It cannot be denied that such visions of the future exist in the New Testament, and that the crises of history may come to such a critical end. But nowhere in the New Testament does the 'end of the world' bring about the second coming of Christ. The New Testament looks forward to the very reverse, that the second coming of Christ will bring the end of destruction and persecution in the world. Anyone who reads the 'signs of the time' with the eyes of his own existential anxiety reads them falsely. If they can be read at all, they can be read by Christians only with the eyes of hope in the future of Christ. Otherwise the apocalyptic interpretations of the age will be like the nihilistic attempt of the 'devils' of Dostoevsky, who want to destroy the world in order to force God to intervene, and who for romantic reasons regard chaos itself as creative. But this no longer has anything to do with the cross as the horizon of the world, for this cross is the sign of the unity of love with which, according to the Gospel of John (3:16), God 'so loved the world, that he gave his only Son.'

In pain the ultimate power of God is revealed, and it is long overdue that Christians should ask about pain as a power base for affecting our world.

#### Questions About Pain As the Arena of Power

The kinds of questions the Christian community must ask about pain as the arena of power are questions such as these.

1. Is pain per se redemptive, demonic or capable of both interpretations?
2. Is genuine pain defused by the Christian community's alarmist tactics and self-imposed martyr complexes used as rhetorical devices to gain power bases? (e.g., see how the liberals, fundamentalists, you fill in the blank, are persecuting me or are corrupting our denomination!).
3. Is pain afflicted in the name of the Lord ever redemptive?
4. Is pain borne in the strength of God ever other than redemptive?
5. Is the easy triumphalism of the electronic church painful enough to include the cross?
6. Is our scathing excoriation of those outside our camp (racial, sexual preference, moral perspectives) causing the kind of pain of alienation that will prevent ministry to large portions of the population unlike ourselves?
7. Finally and most important. Where is the pain of the body of Christ?
  - a. Is it still largely suffered by the head of the church because of the actions of the rest of the church?
  - b. Is it pushed down upon others outside the camp and ascribed as a mark of their lostness and a punishment for their sins?
  - c. Is it, pray God, in some part endured as a mark of the true church and a proof of her election?

What is the discerning spirit in the matter of pain as power? All attempts to avoid vicarious pain are contrary to the cross, the constituent principle of Christianity. Only in the acceptance of authentic pain can the church convince the world of the truth of the gospel.

#### Conclusion

Let us hope we have done more than play verbal triads on the scale of power. What is needed is a clear melody line, fewer arpeggios, less credenzas. Power can be used in baroque compositions. Just now until all of the competing noises die down we had better stick with an elemental melody such as "not by might nor by power but by my Spirit sayeth the Lord." Dare we go out to make peace with such a simple trumpet sound? Yes, if it is certain. It may be that our best subjunctive possibility is to be peacemakers.

## Civil Religion and the Use of Power

Robert Bellah

I am a sociologist of religion more concerned with the state of our society at the moment than I thought I would be when I accepted this invitation a few months ago. So, if I speak in a somewhat controversial way about fairly immediate events, I hope you will have some forbearance.

This has turned out to be an extremely strategic and appropriate moment to think about power in American society because we are at a turning point in our history and that turning point has very much to do with the use of power. It is still, of course, very far from clear how deep the change will go. Perhaps what we are seeing in the last few weeks is only a temporary interruption. Perhaps the Congress will, as it has before, thwart the full efforts of an administration to change things. Perhaps this particular administration will not last long, although that remains to be seen.

But for the moment, I think we have to take what is happening very seriously indeed. We have to try to understand what is being attempted, what the forces are--so far as we can understand that--who are behind the new turn, and how it may be possible to relate to what is going on. I want to talk in terms of power, politics, and ultimately civil religion.

What is going on in Washington right now is not simply a change of administration, not simply a change of party; it is in the classic terms of political philosophy, a change of regime. This is not like a shift from Truman to Eisenhower or from Johnson to Nixon. What we are seeing now is the first major change in the direction of American politics since 1932. It is a shift away from directions that have more or less persisted in our society for 50 years. We are now embarking on programs that will have extraordinarily broad political, ethical, and human consequences.

Mr. Carter last fall tried to warn us how radical the changes would be, but most of us didn't believe him. The smiling face of the great communicator so familiar from the movies of my childhood reassured me. We are beginning, however, to see that those changes are even more radical than Jimmy Carter imagined. For 50 years, ever since the New

Deal, we have been trying in this society to make a very complex moral revolution. I would say that in 1981 we are witnessing the beginning of the counterrevolution.

A major part of what we are seeing is a change in the role of corporate capitalism in American politics. Ever since the 1930s a significant wing of corporate capitalist America has believed that it was useful to the survival of what is loosely called free enterprise to support ameliorative social policies, to meet at least minimally the needs of the working class, the poor, the blacks, those who have for so long been left out of our society. That wing of corporate capitalism acquiesced in and even helped to create the major institutions of the welfare state. It tacitly accepted a degree of economic planning not compatible with a pure market economy, not that no advanced nation in the world today has been able to do without. In many respects we have less of it than other successful industrial nations like West Germany or Japan. American capitalism allowed that planning to have a democratic component--a concern to soften the economic burden on many parts of our population, even the most vulnerable. It has been capitalism with a human face, if you want to use that phrase.

But for nearly a decade corporate capitalism in America has been in trouble. Established forms of economic fine-tuning have not been working. Look at what has for most of the twentieth century been the key American industry: the automobile industry. In the last two years their combined losses were more than \$6 billion. Look at the American steel industry. It can't compete with any other advanced nation and it is rapidly approaching the same disastrous situation as the automobile industry. There are few areas where we can compete as we once could on the world market. We are being bled white by a monopoly of oil and the constant rise in the price of oil which that monopoly is inflicting upon us.

Under these circumstances, the immense private power of bureaucratic corporate capitalism is changing its mind about the policies of the last 50 years. It is, I am afraid, turning hard. It is, at least potentially at this point, turning authoritarian. The Reagan administration is not abandoning planning. No advanced government today can abandon planning, but it is developing a different kind of planning than that which we have seen in the past. Just months into this administration it is clear that the planning being developed in Washington is not democratic in the sense that we have known it. It is planning in the service of authoritarian capitalism. Structures of controls and restraints that have protected the public from arbitrary decisions and actions by great private economic bureaucracies are rapidly being dismantled. Support systems for the poorest and most vulnerable Americans are under attack while large tax benefits are proposed for upper income groups and all kinds of special benefits for corporations. A genuine concern to bring government spending under control and end inflation is belied by huge and highly inflationary proposed increases in the military budget. We don't know how much of this program will be carried through, but in its initial phases, it looks like the most naked form of class warfare we have seen in America in the twentieth century.

Should the present plan to unfetter free

enterprise fail--and it seems to be following almost point by point the program of Margaret Thatcher, so there's not much reason to think its going to succeed--we can imagine some other plans that may be in the wings to do the same thing in a considerably less palatable form than that presented to us in the last few weeks.

The new concentration and manipulation of power at the center of American society has two purposes. One is to greatly strengthen the power of dominant economic groups relative to everyone else. This means concentrating economic resources for what is called reindustrialization--the reinvigoration of corporate capitalism in America. The way that is being done requires the weakening of support systems for the poor, the old, the young, the minorities, the unemployed--for virtually everyone. It means cutting into the resources of the working class. It means cutting into the resources of the middle class so that capital resources can be concentrated in corporate hands. It means concentrating resources in a way that leaves decisions about those resources in corporate hands. If those who will pay for this shift don't like it, there will be appropriate disciplinary controls to keep them in line.

The second purpose of the new concentration of power is to redress America's position in the world. This means in part an economic position, but that is seen as closely linked to our military position. We want to keep our markets. We are very disturbed at the degree to which we have lost control of the sources of oil. Some of the leading supporters of Mr. Reagan very impolitically published early last year policy statements that say if things get tough, we should just go in and take over the Arabian peninsula. That's one possible use of an increasingly large military establishment. In this situation of international insecurity, of weakness of the United States in economic competition with the rest of the world, our leaders have chosen to resurrect the specter of Soviet power as a challenge to our interests and even to our survival everywhere in the world. To meet that danger, we are asked to embark on a vast military expansion with enormous consequences for our own economy. Remember that it was the Vietnam war and the immense expenses for it which overheated the economy and started the terrific inflation that we have known in recent years. We don't yet even know the full implications of this immense military expenditure that we are being asked to support. We do not know how that power will be used in the rest of the world, what the consequences will be, or what small wars we might be called upon to fight. The effort to recreate the Soviet menace in the early cold war image is, in my opinion, particularly ironic at a moment when everything we know from the best sources about the Soviet Union is that their society is in profound difficulty. They have difficulties of minimal civic commitment and morale much more serious than our own. They cannot deal with a miserably backward country like Afghanistan with effective military power and are being challenged by Poland in ways which ten years ago would never have been allowed to go this far.

We are dealing with a society with the most severe inner tensions and problems and the irony of our present situation is that the one thing the Soviet leaders know could unite their people again is a major threat from the United States. Are we falling into

the very trap that would strengthen rather than weaken Soviet power just when it is in a severe crisis itself?

How can we account for change of this order of magnitude? Who wanted it? Who supported it? Who brought it in? And if we aren't very happy with it, what on earth can we do about it? One of the things that I think accounts for the change is the shift in the power of ruling groups within American corporate capitalism. We've heard a great deal about the decline of the Frost Belt and the rise of the Sun Belt. Those are catchy phrases the mass media uses. They cover hard facts like the decline of cities all over the Northeast, the decline of industries, the decline of economic power, the decline of financial power in what was once the heart of the American economy. They also cover the rise of new industries, new vitalities, new sources of power. In the first instance it's economic, but by now very definitely political in places like Texas where we are now and places like California where I live. What this means politically is the decline in influence of the old corporate leadership that expressed itself in part in the Democratic Party and in part in the moderate and liberal wings of the Republican Party. This has been called, usually pejoratively, the eastern establishment. There is much to be criticized about this eastern establishment, but the day may come when we will sorely regret its departure from the scene. One thing about this eastern establishment is that it did have a social conscience. It had a social conscience that derived often from longstanding family traditions of public service, of education in the great centers of liberal learning and of religious commitments to congregations and denominations that have had a strong sense of social responsibility at the corporate public level. Unfortunately, the new Sun Belt capitalists--sometimes called by those in the East pejoratively the cowboy capitalists--are the sort that surround Ronald Reagan, brought him to power, and are now very much in the next room contributing to the decisions. They are a different breed. They lack that tradition, that education, that religious commitment that would give them any breadth of social vision. They have a highly individualistic, competitive model of economics, of politics, of sports, of social life in general, even though they know that nothing happens without effective organization. I'm not saying that some of them aren't religious, but if they are, they tend to be religious in a very personal, pietistic way with little corporate or public implication.

All this would be less frightening if it weren't that the new capitalist leadership in this country also has a mass ideological base. We've heard a lot about the Moral Majority and I want to talk about that in a minute, but this is not the base I'm talking about. Most liberals I know when they think about the Reagan phenomenon are scared to death of the fundamentalists and the Moral Majority and all that kind of thing.

I'll tell you what frightens me. It's what I think is a far larger component of the Reagan coalition and that's what I would call the amoral majority. As far as numbers are concerned, I'm afraid it comes closer to being a majority than Jerry Falwell's rather small movement. The amoral majority believes in the new gospel of success, 1980 style. It is not, as in the old gospel of success of the late 19th and early 20th century, primar-

ily an entrepreneurial vision of starting your own business and being an entrepreneur yourself. It is rather an ethic oriented to how to get ahead in the corporate world. Its heroes today are people like Milton Friedman, Robert Ringer, and William Simon. Its essential message is looking out for number one. In a world of scarcity, be sure to get to the well first before it dries up. Don't worry about the other guy. Think always about yourself. Get yours, keep it and then do everything you can to see that you don't have to share it with anyone else.

The perfect cultural expression of this ethic of what I'm calling the amoral majority (and I'm sorry to say that because I think this is a great city) is the TV series, "Dallas." Think about that. I'm sure most of you have never seen it, but just as a little look at American culture today, tune in and watch an episode or two. You won't find any moral heroes or heroines. "Dallas" is populated almost entirely by crooks. There are big crooks and there are little crooks and the big crooks kick the little crooks. There are a few weak people who have some conscience and the conscience seems to be a very symptom of the fact that they are weak, but even they are relatively easily corrupted. The moral tale, if you can twist the word "moral" inside out, is that it's better to be a big crook than a little crook. J.R. is the new Sun Belt capitalist as folk hero.

Now, the amoral majority opposes the moral revolution that has been going on in America since the New Deal and which has tried to bring the workers, the poor, the blacks, the Hispanics, and the women more fully into participation in the American community. Some people in the amoral majority today are even themselves beneficiaries--though they may like to forget it--of parts of that moral revolution in its earlier phases, such as the better-paid segments of the blue-collar working class. What the amoral majority wants now is to keep down the poor, the blacks, the Hispanics, and the women because they view them as threats to their own advantaged position in a situation of increasing scarcity.

Secular liberalism, I am afraid, is in considerable part responsible for the phenomenon I'm calling the amoral majority. It has often advocated a degree of individualism that in its radicalness begins to lose any moral content. Individual rights with no concern for social context, social responsibility, or community can end right up with the ethic of the TV series "Dallas." I think many people in the amoral majority lost the ethical teachings that they learned in Sunday School when they went to college.

The deepest source of this force in our society is the very operation of our commercial economy, pushed as it seems to be now to a period of severe stress. The dangers here of a society oriented too exclusively to material and economic well-being were pointed out 150 years ago by Alexis de Tocqueville in that great book, *Democracy in America*, which I think even today remains the most profound statement about the nature of our society. I think he gets very well the mentality of the people I'm talking about. "As the commercial economy spreads," he said, "there are more and more people who though neither rich nor powerful enough to have much hold over others, have gained or kept enough wealth and enough understanding to look after their own needs. Such folk owe no man anything and hardly expect anything from anybody. They form the habit of thinking of themselves in isolation

and imagine that their whole destiny is in their own hands." Now, we know that's not true. No one in this world today can exist alone. This is the most interdependent globe that has ever been in history. Yet what Tocqueville says is true of a large part of the psychology of the American middle class which lives in the delusion that it doesn't need anyone else. Thus, to go on with Toqueville's comment, "Not only does commercial democracy make men forget their ancestors, but also clouds their view of their descendants and isolates them from their contemporaries. Each man is forever thrown back on himself alone and there is danger that he may be shut up in the solitude of his own heart." I would suggest that there are millions of Americans today who are very close to being shut up in the solitude of their own hearts. The same fear that makes these people oppose all those lower in the economic scale than themselves makes them bellicose in foreign policy. They fear foreign powers that they see as a threat to their own standard of living, not realizing perhaps the desperate state of most of the world relative to our standard of living --or not caring.

I would now like to look at the second and in part incompatible segment of the Reagan coalition. And here I come to the Moral Majority that so many of my colleagues are so worried about, taking, of course, the Moral Majority only as one among many groups to symbolize a whole range of phenomena that we've seen emerging in the last few years. There is a good deal of overlap, and I'll try to suggest in what way, between the Moral Majority and what I'm calling the amoral majority, but there are also some striking differences. The Moral Majority represents on the whole the lower economic strata and less educated people than those I referred to as the amoral majority, though they may be upwardly mobile. They may secretly and in some respects even openly admire the lifestyle of the amoral majority, but their backgrounds are different and their position in the society on the whole is different.

The Moral Majority speaks to the old, white, protestant constituency that feels itself threatened--to some extent psychologically at sea--because of the rapidity of changes in our society not fully understood, such as economic, social, and moral changes. This has happened not just in the last ten years, but really for a very long time. The reaction of this group to the confusion brought on by rapid change is also nothing new--it's taking a new form but the same kind of preoccupation has been there for decades--is to concentrate on personal, sexual, and familial issues. They are tangible issues that can be immediately understood about individual human beings, the kinds of issues that are precisely not what the amoral majority is worried about. If you look at public opinion polls on attitudes toward sexual morality in the United States, you will see a steady increase of radical tolerance of just about everything. The concerns of the Moral Majority do not represent the mainstream of what's been happening in American society. They represent a very sharp reaction to that mainstream. The Moral Majority in its concerns tends to draw upon a rigid, authoritarian, and legalistic religion and a particular theology which has potent implications for one of my chief concerns; namely, civil religion.

They imply that if there are troubles at home and weakness abroad, it must be because

our people are individually sinful. We are being punished by an angry God and the evidence of the sins for which we are being punished are rampant sexual immorality, teenage pregnancy, disrupted families in large part caused by women who refuse to accept their God-given subordinate status, and homosexuality that calls in question the God-ordained pattern of stereotyped sex roles which is that men shall be macho and women shall be pliant and submissive. What the Moral Majority and related fundamentalist groups do is play on the most dangerous strands of what I call the folk civil religion to account for our problems. They want to interpret our society in terms of some of those great biblical archetypal images. That's something that all Christians have to do, dangerous, delicate, problematic though it is. But this particular strand in our history which goes back very far indeed, can never quite decide whether our society is Babylon or the New Israel. And that gives you two different strategies. The charm of their intellectual agility is that they can shift from one to the other in the same sermon. The essential teaching that would emerge if we are, indeed, Babylon is that we are hopelessly corrupt. We are suffering God's wrath and we're going to suffer it much more intensely and therefore, the best thing to do is to stockpile food and guns in the hills and wait for the total collapse of our society. I think you know that that's not such a rare thing. There are people all over this country who think that. I'm afraid some of them even take pleasure in each sign of impending collapse because they think they're going to be the only ones who are going to make it.

If we are the New Israel, then perhaps our present punishment is merely a chastisement of God's chosen and God's beloved. If we can take that chastisement to heart and clean up our act and put the blacks and the women back in their places, put the homosexuals in prison for 30 years, then the Lord will make his face to shine upon us and give us back our domestic prosperity and our world empire. Now that's a parody and a caricature, but I am afraid there is more than a little frightening truth to that picture.

The sad thing is that the true interest--economic and social--of most of the followers of people like Jerry Falwell has little in common with the new, hard, capitalist class that is emerging in this country. These people are often relatively poor and frequently old. They need the government's support systems that have been erected in the last 50 years. But the ideological climate that is afoot in this country can override those material interests, at least for a while, and lead them to join hands with those who do not have their genuine interests at heart. Much of the culture of amoral individualism, particularly the promise of upward economic mobility as I've said before, appeals to people of this Moral Majority type. They are really ambivalent. They want to be personally pure, but they also want to have all the latest luxuries they see on TV. On the other side of the coin--although the amoral majority is typically tolerant on sexual and personal matters and often their own lives are far from exemplary--they may in principle go for an extreme toleration that I think no society could live with, as expressed in something like the Libertarian Party. They are not upset at what upsets the Moral Majority. Nonetheless, many people among these self-seeking

individualists who think they are so free from all fetters and simply follow their own hedonistic desires, are vulnerable to anxiety when the pressure gets heavy enough. They, too, may opt for safe symbols and moral virtues under difficult conditions. Civil religion could have an appeal even to these folk, though mostly their way of thinking about social reality is utterly secular.

We can ask in the face of this enormous challenge whether there are the resources in our tradition--including our civil religious tradition--in our civic consciousness and in American life for a possible different turn from the one we seem to have taken very recently. Could our civil religion tell us once again that we are called, not to inspire, but to be a witness people? Could it say to us that our role is to build a pluralist and just society in which all are included? Not to tell anyone else what to do, but to try to be as best we can an example of living together in peace and in affection? Could our civil religion even teach us that we must be not a master race, but a servant people? That we must use our great wealth and our knowledge to help the less fortunate of the world, rather than to dominate them? Can we complete the moral revolution that we started in the last 50 years, or must we watch it turn sour and collapse in the darkening storms that seem to be afflicting most of the world in these latter years of the twentieth century? Unfortunately, some of the traditional resources of civic consciousness that we might have hoped would help in this situation turn out on closer inspection to be a very form of the corruption that is our problem. It is a situation where we are still suffering acutely from the break in the line of continuity and the loss of confidence in our institutions which occurred in the 1960s because of the many crises we suffered in that decade. Therefore, we have seen in the 1970s, eventuating finally in the last presidential election, a movement that claims to revive part of our heritage but in a peculiarly narrow and selfish form. This is the middle-class fiscal revolt, which incidentally would never have gotten as far as it did if major elements of our population, the poor and the minorities, had not withdrawn from the electoral process.

I need not remind you that in the fall 1980 election the smallest number of Americans voted since 1948.

In the name of traditional American ideals and small government and self-help, a significant sector of our middle class has decided that it does not choose to pay for the social costs of a reasonably decent society under the conditions of late industrial capitalism. The language of middle-class asceticism masks the rise of middle-class hedonism and what is really being said is that private consumerism is more important than the amenities of public life. That might lead us to wonder what will happen with these tax reductions. How much is really going to anything other than increased consumption? One can only say that the present narrow and mean-spirited mood is no answer to the profound, ecological, economic, social, and international problems that face our society. Clearly, there is going to be no renunciation of government power. Government is going to be important as never before in this world in which we live. It is sheer ideology to talk about small government in this dangerous world. The question is: what will the power of government be used for? Decisions are going to

have to be made. Decisions that can be made in the mood of vindictiveness and repression, or with generosity of spirit. Decisions of such serious consequences that we may even wonder whether free government will survive the twentieth century in America.

Even though the present moment seems to be one of peculiar failure of moral leadership and public courage, perhaps we can yet see some aspects of our situation that could lead to a reinvigoration of the healthier parts of our own tradition, a new understanding of the covenant model of society or a new assertion of the best in our tradition of civic responsibility.

I think the greatest opportunity exists in the growing realization that endless economic growth is not the answer to all our problems. If the rise of industrial capitalism, for all the benefits it has conferred upon us, lies at the root of most of our problems, then the faltering of the economy that we have seen in the last 10 years may prove an occasion for some profound reflections about the direction we should go in the years ahead. If alert Americans in large numbers begin to realize that big government is not the cause of our difficulties, but a symptom of a way of life that worships wealth and power, that makes economic profit the arbiter of all values and that delivers everything into the tyranny of the bottom line, then it may be possible to reexamine our present institutions and the values they embody. This is true particularly if the present experiment proves to be as rapid a failure as I believe it is likely to be.

Clearly the fusion of economic and governmental bureaucracy which has been tried in some parts of the world is the last thing we want. Another super bureaucracy is no answer. A decentralized and more responsible private economy and public bureaucracy is a key to the revitalization of our common life together as a people. Moving into a world of little or no economic growth without a new degree of decentralization and democratization would certainly only increase the struggle between groups to see who can profit at the expense of whom, so vivid in present politics. It is decentralization on the one hand, but I'm afraid in the real world of the late twentieth century it's also a degree of economic planning. The question is: what kind? Can it be a democratic kind of economic planning?

A major shift in the organization of our economic life with all that it would entail in our society and of the values that economic life embodies cannot be expected as a result of mere technocratic or organizational manipulation. So great a change, overcoming not only entrenched power but entrenched ways of thinking, could only be brought about by some kind of profound change in cultural consciousness. I am inclined to think it would have to be some kind of spiritual awakening. An awakening that would answer on the one side what I am calling the amoral majority and on the other the Moral Majority.

We are, whether we like it or not, going to have to face a world of increasing scarcity and simplicity, voluntary or involuntary. We can enter that world with bitterness and antagonism and with a concern to protect ourselves and perhaps a few family and friends, whatever becomes of the others; or we can enter it with a renewed sense of what John Winthrop said at the very beginning of the American experiment in 1630: "We must delight in each other, make others' conditions our own,

rejoice together, mourn together, labor and suffer together, always having before our eyes our community as members of the same body." To come to terms with what has happened to us in the last century in a way that allows us to regain in a new way the spiritual meaning and the public participation that characterized our own early history, it seems to me that is the only way to create a livable society in the decades ahead.

There are no easy formulas to that goal. A great deal of creative experimentation, a variety of voluntary communities that will explore different possibilities are surely needed. Only the presence of a new sense of moral commitment can provide the time and space for that experimentation and that variety.

America cannot hope to solve the problems of the late twentieth century alone. Unless there is a decline in international tension and above all a control of the increase of armaments, no nation will solve its problems. Nuclear catastrophe is the only outcome.

Finally, we may ask whether there are resources in America from which a genuine moral renewal and a new birth of public courage and public happiness could come. What I have called the corruption of our society so evident today in many quarters has gone very far. Has it gone so far that we can no longer renew ourselves? I believe there are still significant pockets of republican virtue, of moral courage, such that there is at least a fighting chance that we might rise to the challenges that face us. When have Christians ever expected anything more than that? Do we have to be sure? Don't we have to commit ourselves with all the faith we have in the effort, knowing there is the possibility? In the Watergate crisis we had some extraordinary displays of public corruption but also of public virtue, from humble night watchmen to supreme court justices. That was a severe crisis to the very fabric of our republic and we surmounted it. I believe that in our churches, our voluntary associations, our homes there is still today a commitment to the good and not merely to one's own good. That commitment needs articulation and expression. The kind of leadership that Martin Luther King gave us at an earlier period of moral crisis we could badly use today. It is by no means impossible that an alert and responsible citizenry will call forth the leadership it deserves. I believe that in the situation we see in America today there is a great deal of bad conscience; that people are doing things and saying things that they wish were true but that they know are not true. I think deep down in their hearts most Americans today know that only sacrifice, love, and concern for the common good will get us through the crises that lie ahead. It is up to us, the intellectual community, and the churches to try to help make that moral knowledge effective in its social consequences and in its institutional transformations.

# Idolatry— American Style

L. D. Johnson

In the Hazor Museum northwest of the Lake of Galilee you will see objects of Canaanite worship more than 3,000 years old: hands etched in stone pillars held aloft to the sun; a foot-high deity carved from basalt in the form of a man seated on a throne. A mile away is the mound of the ancient city where these and other objects of worship were found. Once Hazor was a Canaanite stronghold which Joshua captured and burned in the name of the Lord 1200 years before Christ. Jesus doubtless passed by the site on his way back and forth from Nazareth to Capernaum.

Not many miles to the south lies an even more impressive biblical site--the hill of Megiddo, 'Ar Megiddon--where you will see stratum upon stratum of the historical record of man's attempts to control the visible world through military power and the invisible world through religious practice. Note yonder the huge circular Canaanite altar which was built long before the Israelites ever came out of Sinai. Over this way are the well-preserved stone ruins of the gates built by Hyksos rulers of Egypt 1,600 years before Christ. There are the massive remains of King Solomon's casement walls for Megiddo's fortification in the 10th century B.C., and down those 185 steps you will come to a well which once lay outside the city but was enclosed by infamous Ahab in the 9th century B.C. to assure the fortress of its water supply in time of war. And everywhere there are signs of man's search to know and control the Unseen Powers that we cannot ever be content to ignore.

The Canaanites were pagans, you see. They were idolaters, worshipping nature, for without a beneficent nature the rain wouldn't fall, and the crops would fail. Without nature's fecundity the bull wouldn't breed and the cow wouldn't have her calf. Mankind, the Canaanites understood clearly, was intrinsically linked to this chain of being--part of the natural order. Our survival depended upon its favor. So he worshipped it, often by seeking to stimulate its fecundity by engaging in sacred sexual rites.

Now, one should not suppose that the Israelites were unimpressed by this. Despite their commitment to the God who is Wholly Other, the I Am That I Am, they were impressed by this fertility cult when they came to Canaan to settle down to farming, leaving aside the nomadic life. They, too, wanted the crops to thrive, the bull to breed, and the cow to have her calf. So they too, to cover all the bases, worshiped the nature god, Baal. That reality explains, among other things, the Mt. Carmel contest between the Prophet Elijah and the Baal priests.

Now aren't you glad that we have escaped all that idol business? Isn't it wonderful that we are so highly developed intellectually and spiritually that paganism has no attractiveness for us? We are mankind come of age. We go to school and learn to read books written by men and women who went to school and learned to read books. We know better than to believe in hocus-pocus clap-trap. We would never think of worshipping

sex, or suppose that if we play our cards right we can manipulate the environment to our personal advantage. We are much too sophisticated for that sort of primitivism, aren't we? Or are we?

In Isaiah 44, beginning at verse 9, there is a beautiful satire on the folly of idol-making and worshiping. The words vibrate with conviction: "Thus says the Lord, the King of Israel and his Redeemer, the Lord of hosts: 'I am the first and I am the last; besides me there is no god.'" That is the basic Hebrew confession of God's soleness, his unique Godness. Against that mighty declaration the prophet sets his swift portrayal of the man who makes a god of the works of his own hands, and gives it his best and highest devotion. The worker doesn't accidentally make a god. He isn't working at his forge or bench when, lo and behold, a god takes shape. If he toils with iron, he takes tongs and hammer and works in the coals, beating the metal into the shape of a human, making an image with the strength of his arms and the imagination of his brain. If he is a carpenter he cuts down a tree in the forest, takes part of it to make a fire to warm himself, and part to cook his food--and then he takes the rest and makes a god out of it, a god that is domesticated and housed, a god that looks like himself and bears his own image, a god before which he falls down in adoration at his own workmanship and cries out to it, "In my hour of trial deliver me, for thou art my god."

The prophetic writer is appalled by this behavior. He sees in it not primarily wickedness but incredible naivete and spiritual blindness. How could people really give their highest devotion to something which is less than themselves? Listen: "No one considers, nor is there knowledge or discernment to say, 'Half of it I burned in the fire, I also baked bread on its coals, I roasted flesh and have eaten; and shall I make the residue of it an abomination (the word being, of course, a Hebrew expression for an idol)? Shall I fall down before a block of wood?' He feeds on ashes; a deluded mind has led him astray, and he cannot deliver himself or say, 'Is there not a lie in my right hand?'"

I believe the subtlety of idol-making is not a dead art. Our culture is full of idols. Perhaps we might identify a few by looking at the marks of the idol of Isaiah's words. For one thing, it is an idol which the worshiper himself has made. He is worshipping what he has done, his own accomplishments. Sound familiar? If this was a temptation to ancient man, think how much more so it is to modern man, for today's idol-maker has such marvelous tools of technology as to seem almost miraculous. Modern man is a clever little two-legged animal. He has split the atom, made bombs that can wipe out life on the planet, landed on the moon, measured the heavens, counted the stars, stored tens of thousands of items of information on circuits no larger than his little fingernail, and now is getting ready to produce life itself from the clever mixing of elements in a laboratory. Oh, man is impressive all right. Henry Adams wrote in 1900 a letter from Paris that he went every day to the World Exposition and prayed to the dynamo. "Why shouldn't the dynamo be worthy of worship?" he wrote.

But bring the matter closer to home. Do you know anybody who makes a god of something his hands have created? Maybe a business? A house? A farm? A church? More than that,

the prophet is astonished that the idol-maker makes his god in the image of himself. He has reversed the Genesis account of creation. "And God said, 'Let us make man in our own image and after our own likeness.'" But the idol-maker says, "let me make god in my image and after my likeness. God could do no better than to be like me." I would suggest that we are a bit more sophisticated than to materialize God in the shape of ourselves, although I am struck by remembering that the favorite pictures of Jesus in any culture are those who make him look like a glorified representative of that group. Sallman's popular Christ is most assuredly an Aryan all-American.

Even if we don't actualize him and materialize him, we are prone to make God into an idol resembling ourselves, warts and all. He is not just on our side; he is one of us--white, Anglo, properly baptized, definitely pro capitalism, and usually a Republican.

Not only did the idol-maker have his own do-it-yourself god, and not only did it bear a distinctive likeness to himself, but he made his god out of material intended to be useful and in itself good, but become evil because it was not meant to be a god to be worshiped. The tree was meant for warming, cooking, and building. The iron was given for tools, not worship.

Augustine argued that sin has no real existence of its own. It is the corruption of the good, a kind of gone-wrongness, as H. H. Farmer was wont to put it. Maybe so. Perhaps that is why idol-making is such a persistent cause of alienation between man and God. We take the good stuff he has given us to use and elevate it to a place it was never intended to have, or we distort it and twist it into something it was never intended to be.

But we are idol-makers and idol-worshippers, as surely as were the sophisticates of Athens to whom Paul said, "I perceive that you are very religious." One of the most disturbing aspects of this condition is that we simply find it hard to take seriously. Not us. We go to church, and we read the Bible, and we sing hymns, and we listen to sermons against idolatry. What we are often not willing to face up to is that, as the prophet said of idol-makers of his day, "There is no knowledge or discernment to say, 'Shall I fall down before a block of wood?'"

What is the shape of American idolatry? Parts of it are gross, grotesque, and the church has little difficulty identifying and denouncing those parts. Perhaps we can get an idea of the dimensions of our idolatry by looking at its creed, a creed composed almost entirely of slogans. When people give up the capacity to reason and to feel, they react out of slogans, sometimes mistaken for wisdom. George Orwell, in 1984 described the frightening dimensions of the nation he named "Oceania" as a place where slogans replaced reflection and kept people in subjection. The three slogans of "Oceania" were: "War is peace, freedom is slavery, ignorance is strength."

What are the slogans of this society? Know those and you can recite the idolater's creed. See if any of the following sound familiar.

1. Bigger is better. That works for General Motors, IBM, and Ma Bell, and it works for the church. Christ calls us to be bigger, which is the same as being better.

2. Winning is not the best thing--it is the only thing. That profound wisdom has

been stated in a variety of forms by various and sundry modern-day prophets, otherwise known as coaches who professionally live and die by that creed. Anthony Campolo has a stimulating little book called The Success Fantasy, in which he challenges what he calls our "Pollyanna theology." "I believe that the Christian lifestyle does deliver success to people," this Christian sociologist writes, "but not the kind of success that is understood by society. Jesus never promised wealth, power, and prestige to those who would follow Him. He warned that while foxes had holes and birds had nests, the disciples were following One who would not have a place to lay His head. . . . Then as now, the social establishment would crucify Him. Jesus warned His followers that what happened to Him would happen to them." Do you and I really believe that?

3. A third part of the creed of American paganism says, "If it is available, you are entitled to it." A great part of the American pagan religion is associated with this myth that you are entitled to whatever is available. So, as Thomas Howard recently put it, ". . . We and our students and our children are told, in a thousand talk shows and a thousand books, and in every journal and seminar, and in every magazine and advertisement, that what we want is something else. If you drive a Pinto, what you want is a BMW; if you drive a BMW, what you want is a Mercedes. If you shop at K Mart, you need to move up to Bergdorf and Niemann Marcus. If you go to Aspen for your holiday, you ought to try St. Moritz. If you are a mother, you ought to be an investment banker. If you work from nine to five, that is a drag and only dull people do that. If you are middle class, you need to get emancipated. Upward mobility. Self-actualization. Self-assertion. Self-discovery. Self-realization. Aggression. Kicks. Travel. Diversion. The Beautiful People. Radical chic. Anywhere but where we are, nothing could be as dull as this."

Well, that all sounds familiar, doesn't it? At the contemporary American shrine one is expected to get all the goodies. If you are tired of your spouse and find a more exciting playmate, who or what is to stop you from changing mates? If it's there, you are entitled. All of this goes on in the name of sophistication and liberation. Then we become dismayed and angry when the have-nots of this country begin to demand and take what we consider to be our own.

4. The fourth part of the American pagan creed is this: "If it is do-able, do it." Once it might have stopped with the restraint, "If it is pleasurable, do it." One of the modern prophets of this American religion defined good as "what feels good afterwards." But we have gone way beyond that limitation. Now the criterion is, "Why not every experience possible?" Don't just enjoy sex with any consenting partner of the opposite variety. Have you tried it with your own sex? There are other possibilities, too. You must try everything. It is there. Do it. Never mind the end of the matter.

5. The fifth part says: "If the odds look halfway good, don't worry about getting caught." Less and less issues are decided on the basis of right and wrong, but on the basis of "Can I get away with it? Can I pull it off?" So, we don't bother with the speed limit. Sure, if we drive fast enough long enough, sooner or later we are going to get nailed. But think of the times, as annoying

as is the one time we were stopped, when we didn't get caught. We tell our children to say they are ten instead of their right age of 12, so they can get a ticket for half price. You can't get away with it forever, but until somebody calls your hand it is a good scam. So, we don't report all our income to the IRS. Those people get too much of our money, anyway. Besides, if they check up on us we'll act innocent and write a check. Thus it goes. "We are becoming a nation of small-time chiselers," a magazine article contended sometime ago as it reported on the multitude of ways we Americans cheat.

6. Finally, the American version of paganism has as one of its important tenets Qoheleth's pithy maxim that "it is better to be a living dog than a dead lion." Less vividly put, that means that if the choice is your survival or someone else's, don't be a hero. All over our part of the country, at least, people are talking about their caches of arms, ammo, and food. When mass starvation or nuclear disaster hit the cities, these people will retire to the hills, hide in their concrete bunkers or caves, and shoot anybody who comes near asking for shelter or food. That is a gross and ugly manifestation of the creed of individualism which has been made into a part of the American paganism. Look out for yourself, it says.

My concern in all this is that it not only informs what is being said in the world, but that it often becomes perilously close to what is said in church.

## Appropriate Christian Citizenship

Gary Jarmin

I would like to thank you, Bill, and the Christian Life Commission for giving me this opportunity. In the past two years I've spoken in dozens and dozens of gatherings, church groups, and so on. This is really the first time that I've spoken to a gathering strictly of members of the Southern Baptist church, of which I am proud to be a member.

I'd like to say first of all, I don't pretend to be a theologian and I don't really have the credentials that my opponent has in that regard. The Christian Voice is led by Dr. Robert Grant, who is a pastor and founding dean of the California Graduate School of Theology, and several other ministers on our executive board. And I would leave to them--it would be more appropriate, I should say--to discuss these matters theologically than I imagine is the theme of this conference.

As a Christian, however, I think there are certain fundamental things that we can all agree upon about the role of power in government. When analyzing the proper role of governmental power, we must realize its ultimate source of legitimacy. In Romans 13: "All power ultimately comes from God," we are told, "for there is no power but of God." The powers that be are ordained by God. Ultimately the only legitimate power is that which is derived from God. Just as God is the source of truth and justice and love, so he is the source of power and of sovereignty.

Now, the state or the government must rec-

ognize that its power emanates from God, and that power becomes corruptible when it fails in recognizing and obeying from whence its authority is derived. I would say clearly that the government today--at least the federal government, and I think this is probably true of most other governments in our society--has gone far, far from recognizing this source of power: God.

Many in our society have adopted a new god, a new power, a humanist mentality of pretending and assuming that power is derived from men; that power is derived from government, and we must keep God away from government, apart from government, altogether. To limit God's sovereignty in laws solely to the church, or to one's own personal salvation or morality, is to deny his lordship and treat God as an unreality; as though God has no part or role in anything but the church and one's personal morality and salvation. As I said before, unfortunately in the modern world sovereignty has ceased to become an attribute of God and has become an attribute of man and state.

Our founding fathers recognized very importantly that our rights, that our inalienable rights, came from God; and that governments were instituted among men to secure those rights. Clearly in our own Declaration we recognize the source of rights and of power itself. They are not derived from the state. Today I believe we have a government that is so secular in its nature, that has been so dominated almost completely by such a humanist mentality, that we have totally rejected the sovereignty and role and importance of God and biblical law in government itself.

In talking about government, we often think of it simply as referring to just the state itself--just the Congress, the judiciary, the executive branch, and their counterparts at the state and local levels. Often that has become the definition. This is not always the case. For example, in Noah Webster's dictionary of 1828, he defined government as: first, direction and regulation; second, as control and restraint; third, as the exercise of authority; fourth, as the exercise of family authority; and only fifth, as a system of polity in a state. From a biblical perspective, the first and basic government on earth is a self-government of the Christian man; second, the family; third, the church; fourth, the school; fifth, our vocation or calling; sixth, our society or community and its standards; and finally, the state or civil government. In such a perspective, the state is one government among many, not the main or sole government.

In brief, the United States was once a Christian nation. Some say it still is. I'm not so sure about that. In brief, the United States was once a Christian nation because it rested on the government of God for the self-government of the Christian man. It was not Christian in the European sense with an establishment of religion or an established church. In fact, it was the establishment of bishops by the government of England that was a major cause of the War of Independence. Obviously Americans turned against this notion and made sure, especially the clergy, that in the First Amendment we had the establishment clause which essentially prevents the state from establishing a state church; and also, of course, to protect freedom of religion.

Today we have interpreted--in fact, many Southern Baptists have interpreted--the First Amendment to mean that government should have nothing to do with God at all. Well, this is constitutional revisionism, my friends, because that's not what the founding fathers said or intended. In fact, the day the Constitution was ratified, George Washington proclaimed that day a day of thanksgiving and prayer. Today Congress still convenes in prayer. The Supreme Court, in supreme hypocrisy, begins each day in prayer. Even the President of the United States places his hand on the Bible when taking the oath of office. So we have never intended that God should not be present in government, but yet we have allowed ourselves to be foolishly misled into thinking that the establishment clause was meant to ban completely the influence, presence, or mention of God in government. Well, that is totally, historically, constitutionally incorrect.

Yet, we have managed to do that in our public schools. We have said that God is not important and that we should not recognize him because to do so in prayer would be the establishment of religion. The First Amendment clause was intended to accomplish two things, which I have already mentioned. One was to prevent the state from establishing a church, favoring one church over another; particularly as far as the founding fathers were concerned, one particular Christian denomination or sect over another. Second, it was to assure total religious freedom. Now, in terms of the Christian role toward government, we believe that the most effective political action ultimately in which Christians can be involved is to train themselves and their friends to be self-governed; dependent upon God, and not upon government. To restore the foundations of our society, we must begin inwardly and work outwardly to salvation of the individual, the family, the church, the school, the community, and so on, and finally government.

In our involvement in government, we must recognize that ultimately we are the people of faith who have the heaviest responsibility, the most important responsibility, because all laws are essentially a codification of our values--those values that are held by society. Where do those values emanate from? They emanate from our faith. Consequently, the burden, the responsibility, is far greater on people of faith to ensure that those laws reflect our values than upon anyone else.

When we decide that we are no longer to exercise our responsibility as Christians in ensuring that biblical law and morality are reflected in our laws, then it will reflect another value system. There is no vacuum. That is a myth. There is no neutrality in values in government. They will either reflect one set of values based on faith in God--on biblical morality, precepts, admonitions--or they will reflect man's value which has realized its ultimate creation in atheistic totalitarian communism. Now, I'm not saying that's the simple choice we're facing! There are many attributes of man's ideology, of man depending on his wisdom and not upon God's.

We as Christians may often share the same values and the same goals. Where we most often will disagree is on the priorities in our values, and in the methodology of making certain that these values are realized or protected. We have a difference among Chris-

tians in the priorities in sort of a general sense. You might call it a competition between those who believe that more important is the moral environment, the moral order, and those who believe that the first emphasis should be placed on social action. The two are not necessarily mutually exclusive or contradictory.

What it simply means is that I as a Christian involved in government may believe that the moral environment and character is ultimately more important in the future survival of this nation, of our freedom and in accomplishing the good works that we wish to accomplish. That is, in fact, the foundation upon which our freedom is based. Should that crumble, then the freedom and the opportunity to accomplish the good works disappears. In other words, we might put it this way: What does it profit a nation if it gains HEW, but loses its own soul? Are we going to sacrifice and ignore all other values in the moral foundation of society in exchange for trying to accomplish some noble purpose?

There are many examples of this. This is ultimately where I think the disagreement comes between groups like ours--like Christian Voice, Moral Majority, and others--as opposed to some of the other Christian activist groups. I am thinking especially of the main-line clergy in Washington, D.C. of whom I could talk for an hour. In fact, I would be glad to get into that later on perhaps. You might want to keep that in mind.

Let's use a couple of examples. Let's talk about busing. Let's start out with some basic fundamentals where we will probably agree. I'm sure John Buchanan and I would totally agree on these. Racism is immoral, is evil--agreed. Society should strive to increase and improve upon establishing racial harmony--agreed. Now, here comes the kicker. To accomplish this, we will have forced integration and in particular, forced school busing. We are going to use our children as social guinea pigs and take them from one school to another to make sure that we have this integration which will hopefully improve racial harmony.

Well, what about other values? What about the value of preserving the moral authority of parents over the control of their children, over the education of their children? When we start busing children across town away from the home and the neighborhood school, we are essentially undermining that important value. We are making it more difficult for parents to exercise control over the education of their children. Of course, there are many in the school establishment today who believe that parents should just keep out of the business of the education of their children; and the more they stay out of it, the better. They think that the state or educational institution and the people in it know better than the parents themselves as to how their children ought to be taught and educated.

Today we have problems with children being taught things without parental consent. We have the government agencies instructing young teenage girls in birth control, and providing birth control devices.

In fact, a teenage girl can get an abortion without her parents' consent. There are many things in many areas in which we are constantly undermining the moral authority of parents. So, I might agree with John that, yes, we ought to try to have racial harmony;

but if we're going to compromise other important values in the process, then we are wrong. We are going in the wrong direction. Now, he may still feel that worthwhile and we ought to pursue that course. He might say, "Well, I believe ultimately the other is more important, so that's my priority," but I have mine. It's not necessarily that one position is immoral or moral, but our priorities are different and we have an emphasis in different areas.

We talk about helping the poor. We have often been criticized and I think it was said today that we don't care about the poor and we're not interested and we don't have enough compassion. In fact, I'm going to start carrying around some Pepto Bismol tablets because the next time I hear that, I'm going to probably lose my cookies. I'm sick of that outrageous accusation. We are just as concerned and as compassionate for the poor, but we question whether or not we are in fact helping the poor through some of the means that we have adopted.

When we make the poor so totally dependent upon the federal government that they have no way out or have lost their incentive, their desire to work and improve themselves, are we really helping the poor? When we have deficit government spending that spends billions and billions of dollars--which is irresponsible stewardship over our resources--that creates high inflation and makes what very little that poor person has even worth less, are we helping the poor? Where is the compassion of our liberal friends--who are always talking about and pretending as though they have a monopoly on compassion--where is their compassion then for the poor? They are destroying what little the poor have through inflation by government-mandated deficit spending.

We have often talked about feeding the poor and the hungry in the world. I like to talk about this because I know quite a bit about this. I travel abroad quite frequently. I talk to a lot of people involved in agricultural development around the world. Studies have shown and proven that a great amount of our foreign aid has actually served to undermine the agriculture systems of those developing countries that we are trying to help. In many ways, our desire to help has been harmful. The old saying, you know, is that "The road to hell is paved with good intentions." That's certainly true of the mentality of Washington today.

I read a Washington Post article not too long ago that showed what I thought was probably the most shocking and catastrophic figure that I have ever seen. Fifty-three percent of all black children born in the United States in the previous year were illegitimate. Think about that. You want a part of the reason? Much of it can be laid at the step of Washington, DC, and its welfare policies and programs. That is shocking! That is catastrophic! In our desire to help the poor, we are helping to undermine and destroy the family structure. Let us continue to talk about compassion. Other values are at stake. We must search intelligently with compassion as to where those priorities are in terms of truly bettering our society, and fulfilling our Christian responsibility and moral imperative that we have been given by God to help recreate our society according to his ideal; to create true justice and well-being for our brothers and sisters.

The methodology that is employed often glorifies the state. We have a major conflict. When we begin to set out to find solutions to the problems that ail our society and we initiate a solution which increases the power of the state at the expense of that ideal of the self-government of Christian man, then we are truly undermining our ability to create, I believe, a true Christian society. We glorify the state itself and allow it to have dominion and power, while it extracts from us our own power which comes from God.

Like most lobbyists, I suffer from the terminal mouth disease of talking all the time, so I'd probably better try to get a little more into talking about some of the things we're doing. I'm sure you've heard a lot about us, and I'm sure a lot of it has been wrong. I'd like to set out a little bit about what we've been doing, and try to clear up some of those myths.

First of all, in talking about our responsibility in government and the making of laws, which are the codification of our values, we come to recognize that this is one of the most important jobs for which we send men and women to Washington--to make law. There are many other reasons why they are there--to make sure that Grandpa Jones gets a Social Security check when it's late, to make sure that Nephew Billy gets into West Point, and all those other noble and wonderful things that congressmen do called constituent services. By and large, most of them do fairly well at that. There are a few who do not. If they do not, they usually do not remain congressmen very long.

Getting back to my original point, the most important job that they do in Washington is to make law; therefore, we at Christian Voice have produced what we call a congressional report card. It is not called a moral report card. It is not called a morality rating. That is a term that some of our friends have given us. We call it a congressional report card on 14 or 16 key moral issues. We believe, yes, there are moral issues. Some people don't believe there are moral issues, but we do. We may often disagree as to what is the moral content or what the proper value or priority might be, as I mentioned before. Nonetheless, these are the issues that we feel are important. I would be glad to defend all of them.

Our ratings are not, I can assure you, a statistical evaluation of any congressman's personal morality. We have never said so. We have never implied that they were. Certainly we are not passing any judgment as to how righteous or unrighteous a congressman may be. We're not so arrogant as to presume that God has anointed us with that divine responsibility. Our ratings simply say one and only one thing: here are the votes, and here's how often a congressman agreed or disagreed with us.

A congressman once said to me (obviously when I tell you, you'll know why I'm not going to tell you his name), "You know, Gary, the thing we fear the most," (maybe that was just his particular fear, not shared by all of them) "is that I'm going to vote today and tomorrow everybody in my district is going to find out about it."

We believe the most important thing to good Christian citizenship and good Christian political action is that people be informed of what the issues are, and how their con-

gressmen vote. Obviously, we can only pick 14 or 15 issues. We cannot pick all 400. Of course, when the AFL-CIO puts out its ratings, it doesn't do that. The United Church of Christ, which publishes a rating, does not do that. Each group selects those issues which they feel are most important, as we do.

Having educated people on these important votes, we ask them to make an evaluation. We're not interested necessarily in educating people that much about all of these issues. There are other groups that do more of that than we do--Religious Roundtable, for example. I think it is doing an excellent job in holding national affairs briefings around the country to have people come in and speak and talk at length about these issues, and discuss them and debate them. We assume the people that Christian Voice is trying to activate politically will either agree or disagree with us already. Either you are for voluntary prayer in public schools or you are not. Either you are for abortion or you're not. You're for ERA or you're not. We'll be more than happy to explain why we are against it. If we can change your mind, all the better. We assume the people have made up their own minds on these issues. We are simply giving them the information to judge how their congressman has voted and based on that understanding they cast a vote at the polls.

Let me give you an example: Congressman John Buchanan. A lot of people were wondering why would we oppose John Buchanan, a minister, a member of the Southern Baptist Convention, a good Christian man, of which I have absolutely no doubt. The reason we did not support John Buchanan is simply because we believe that he was not voting according to our ideals. The average rating we gave for all the members of the Alabama delegation, Democrats and Republicans, was 75 percent, including Congressman Buchanan. The average rating for all Republicans in the House of Representatives was 83 percent. In fact, not a single member of the Alabama delegation except one got a score lower than 70 percent in our ratings. Congressman Buchanan received a score of 29 percent. Clearly we were not in agreement.

Evidently a substantial portion of his constituency agreed more often with us than they did with him. No one elected to Congress is given a mandate to be there until he croaks. That's why we have elections every two years. Every two years we judge and analyze; is this congressman representing my point of view? If he is, fine. I'll go and keep that guy in there because I like him and I think he's doing the right thing. If he doesn't, I have a better alternative and it is my right to choose a different one.

We did so this past election. We targeted, as we say, 32 members of Congress whom we wanted to see retired. Actually we targeted 35, but we were only active in 32 races. Twenty-two of them were sent back to the farm. It would be totally arrogant for us to presume that we could take credit for every victory and, of course, we do not. But those are the statistics in case you are interested.

As probably many of you know, the Christian Voice moral government, which I represent, has launched an independent expenditure campaign for Governor Reagan. Our basic strategy from the very beginning was to target the South, which we did for a couple of

reasons. One was to the extent that Carter had any political base, that was basically it. Also, to the extent that we had a major political base, it too is there. Or probably the concentration of our constituency is the greatest there. We felt that if we could deny Carter the South, that we could help elect Governor Reagan.

In looking at the results of the polls and the election, we did do precisely that. The only reason I say "we" did it is because I don't think there is any question in the minds of most of the observers, particularly those who took the statistics, that it was the Christian protestant vote that took away the South from Jimmy Carter. In fact, pollster Lou Harris says that two-thirds of Reagan's margin of victory came from that constituency.

I think I've touched upon most of all the things I wanted to discuss. I'll be happy to answer any questions later.

## Appropriate Christian Citizenship

John Buchanan

Before I begin, let me respond to one aspect of Gary Jarmin's remarks with a confession. Ever since we Southern Baptists lost the White House to the Christians, I've been having language problems. I was at an international conference one time when then Senator Fred Harris of Oklahoma called for an interpreter when the British began to speak. We had French and German interpreters, but he couldn't understand the British either. Well I'm a little like that. I don't understand anything but Southern Baptist.

My friend, Gary Jarmin, who has a copy of the "moral report card" in his hand, gets up and says, "We're not judging people's Christianity and morality." I'm looking at his report card which says, "How Your Congressman Voted on 14 Key Moral Issues." I look on every single page and it says, "Percentage voted Christian/Moral: 100 percent equals 'A' or best rating; 0 percent equals 'F' or lowest rating." I heard about my Christian/Moral rating for many months last year. It's hard for me to understand that they don't really mean it's a Christian/Moral rating. So, I am having language difficulties to begin with, Brother Jarmin.

The time was World War I, and the place somewhere in France. Five men stood in a trench at the very front of the Allied lines. A heavy rain was falling, but as the five men stood there, the fog would lift a little from time to time. They could dimly see across the no-man's-land between the opposing armies the front lines of the enemy German forces. Unseen by those five men, unheard by them, there crept across the no-man's-land a German soldier. In his hand was a deadly grenade. There was suddenly a sound at their feet. They looked down in horror at the grenade that lay sputtering in the mud. Four men jumped back, terrified, but one man jumped forward and threw himself on that live grenade. When it exploded, its full force went into his body. He died the death that had been intended for the five.

I begin with that real event from World War I tonight because it is a very important story in my personal life. This occurred

some 10 or 11 years before I was born, but had it not been for a soldier who gave his life for his friends, I would not have had the privilege of serving in the Congress or of standing before you on this platform or of ever breathing the breath of life at all. One of the five men in the trench that day was my father, a chaplain in World War I. So, you see, before I was ever born someone died that I might live. I am here to witness to you that what is true for me in a very literal sense, is true for every person within the sound of my voice in the most important way of all.

Before you were ever born, someone died that you might live. His name is Jesus, the Son of God, the Savior of the world.

If I'm going to fulfill my responsibility in life, or as a Christian in any area of life; if I am to try to decide what appropriate Christian citizenship may be; then I must look to Jesus, the author and the finisher of our faith. As I look to Jesus on this subject, I find that first of all, he did say, "Render unto Caesar the things that are Caesar's and unto God the things that are God's."

I believe that our Lord was laying down for us a principle that applies in our time and in every time of Christian history: we are citizens of two kingdoms. We are kingdom men and kingdom women, but we also have responsibilities as citizens of the earthly realm of which we are a part.

Our Lord said we are to be salt and light. I very much believe that it is God's will for us to be involved--with our Christian lives and our Christian influence--in every area of the life of our society. I believe the light of our Christian witness should shine into every dark corner, including that of politics and government. Yes, Christians ought to be involved. Christians ought to be concerned. If the right kind of people stay out of politics and government, they do leave a clear field for the wrong kind. Yet, as strongly as I would urge more Christian action--not less--in politics and government, I must as a Baptist Christian hold before you the importance of a principle that has been a guiding light to us through all the years. It is the necessity of a wall of separation between church and state.

Oh, how well-intentioned were those thousands of Christian people--some of them children--who followed their leaders in the Crusades of long ago to kill and maim and destroy and be killed in the name of Christ. I'm sure the people who headed up the Inquisition were, in at least many instances, sincere in their belief that they were doing right in putting the martyrs to the stake. I'm quite confident that there was some sincerity of purpose on the part of those many people in all the years of Christian history who participated in the religious wars and persecutions that marred and injured the name and cause of Christ in Europe and England.

Even in our American colonies as our forefathers came to find a place to live and work and worship in freedom, I would not have you forget too quickly that Baptist ministers were beaten and imprisoned and run out of town in the colony of Virginia and elsewhere because they preached their Baptist faith at variance with that of the established church.

The wall of separation between church and state protected in our First Amendment was secured in part by our Baptist forebears who, with their overwhelming loyalty to the revo-

lutionary cause, won popular favor with the people who formed this country. There were two Baptist preachers in George Washington's Continental Army. They were the first chaplains.

We do well not to forget how consistently dangerous it has been when a religious group seeks political power (when we seek to gain power in politics as a religious group) and when we get all confused the lines between church and state. I believe there are right involvements for Christian people in politics. Perhaps the best way I could summarize my own remarks would be to give you a case history of what I believe to be a wrong involvement. It is my own personal experience with the Moral Majority movement, and related persons of the New Right.

My first personal exposure came when a group of people walked into my office one day, some 20 to 30 persons, and identified themselves by saying, "We are Christians." I said, "Well, I'm always pleased to meet Christian people. Won't you come in?" They said, "We are the Christians, and we have come to inform you what the Christian positions are on the issues before the Congress." I said, "Well, I'll be pleased to listen to you. I've been a Christian myself for a very long time. What are the issues that you want to discuss?" They said, "First, we must tell you that we are part of a national political movement. It is our purpose to elect to public office those who will vote the Christian position on the issues before the Congress, and to remove from public office those who will not vote with the Christians." I said, "What are the issues about which you are concerned?" They said, "The first Christian issue is the Department of Education. The Christian position is to oppose the Department of Education." I said, "Do you suppose this might be an issue on which Christians could disagree?" They said, "No, not really."

I asked for an explanation of the Christian relevance of a vote for or against the Department of Education and got a full explanation. It seems the religion of the public schools is the religion of secular humanism. The NEA, permeated with the religion of secular humanism, was trying to create the Department of Education so that they could take it over. Then they were going to use that department to take over education in the United States at the state and local level. They were going to use that power to destroy the Christian schools, so the religion of secular humanism would be taught to the children instead of the Christian religion, the biblical view of history and the creation story. This was why Christians should vote against the Department of Education. Now I had many friends who were against the Department of Education, but that was the first time I had been exposed to that particular rationale.

My next encounter with the New Right came with Mr. Jarmin's Christian Voice. As I pointed out earlier, they listed as "Christian/Moral issues" a group of votes in Congress. I personally consider this a really remarkable achievement on the part of Mr. Jarmin who came only recently from the Unification Church to the American Conservative Union and then to Christian Voice. I have been a Christian personally since I was nine years of age. I attended a Christian college. I went to a theological seminary, a Baptist seminary. I pastored churches. I've been involved in politics now for nearly 20 years. I do not yet have the authority or the capa-

bility to divine Christian and moral issues, and to devise a chart and a report card of Christian/moral issues on the way people vote in Congress. It is a remarkable achievement. What makes it even more remarkable is that as one examines the issues, one finds that they are, in essence, the A.C.U. issues which Brother Jarmin brought with him, I assume, from the American Conservative Union. They are the New Right, far Right, issues that you hear from A.C.U. and other such groups. I personally challenge their validity in even measuring conservatism or liberalism of legislators. I think they are mostly invalid issues. Aside from that, it is quite remarkable that somehow the Lord turned them into moral and Christian issues. It's remarkable that coming so new into the Christian faith, Brother Jarmin could bring with him these ideas and set them up as the standard for the rest of us. They turn out to be identical, or almost identical, to the old A.C.U. issues which he was advising and propagating before. I've noted especially that this seems to be typical of the New Right politicians in Washington, DC. A few years ago the issues were conservative/liberal issues as spelled out by entities like the American Conservative Union. Now most of these same personalities are born-again Christians adding to the conservative/liberal aspect of their philosophy a moral and Christian dimension and perspective.

Now my friends, if I were empowered to put together a Christian/moral report card--if it were in my power to do so--I must assure you it would be very, very different from this. You see, on my report card--looking to Jesus, looking to the New Testament--I might have some very, very different measurements of Christianity and of morality. The fact is, I'd have to have in here some civil rights issues--some women's rights issues. As a Christian, I happen to believe there's nothing more important we have to do in this society than to make sure our country is a place where every person--regardless of his or her sex, race, geographic location, or economic situation--has every opportunity and every incentive to become the most and the best that it is in that person to be; that is, to fulfill God's will for that person.

Jerry Falwell, in his book Listen America, revealed something about his mentality that I found extremely interesting in his call for Christian action and mobilization. He talked about how Christians used to be active socially, and in government. Then he describes--after giving a series of examples--how after the defeat of prohibition many people lost interest, and decided they couldn't influence a non-Christian society. Then he concludes with this thought. I find it quite amazing. He's talking about the 1950s and the 1960s. "Christian concern about social issues hit rock bottom during the fifties and sixties."

Hey man, where have you been when the world was turning around? Do you realize during the fifties and sixties the civil rights movement was born? Do you know where it was born? In the Christian church. In the black churches of the deep South the civil rights movement was born. Then it was supported by other Christians and believers all over the land. That development was one of the most important things, in my judgment, that has happened in Christian history. Certainly one of the most important things that has happened in our history. It meant that our country could become itself fulfilled. It meant we were no longer going

to deny the rights to education, and all the other rights, that had been denied to black Americans. It meant there was a better chance that that child--whomever he or she was, black or white or male or female--whom God had given the gift to discover the cure for cancer would have his or her chance in life to give that gift to the world. It was the most important Christian involvement I know about in this century, perhaps in this country's history, other than the fight for emancipation itself.

If I had a Christian chart, it would be different from this. It also might include some things about health care and nutrition and education and what we--rich-man America--are doing about the Lazarus who is at our gate; what we're doing about 15 million children who are going to starve to death on Earth this year. It might include our sensitivity to the problems of the world about us, and toward those within our society who stand in need. That would be my Christian chart. It would be different.

As a matter of fact, the people who scored toward zero on Brother Jarmin's chart included the black caucus, all the women save one in Congress, and all the clergy in Congress except two. One of them scored well, and I was number two at 29. That isn't but half as good as Ozzie Myers got, and we expelled him from Congress for taking a bribe. He made a 58! Did you know Richard Kelly made 100? You may have heard of Richard. He's the one that had the \$25,000 in his glove compartment allegedly to carry on his own investigation in the Abscam case. And, of course, Bob Bauman of Maryland made 100. Indeed as president of A.C.U. he created some of the issues, apparently.

Anyway, my chart would be different. Do you know why I'm not going to write one, why I couldn't? First of all, the Bible tells me not to. "Judge not that ye be not judged." Jesus said that. The second thing is, life has taught me not to. I've been in politics for nearly 20 years and do you know what? Our fellow Baptist, Jesse Helms, is a wonderful Christian and I thank God for him. You know what else? George McGovern is also a Christian and I thank God for him, too; and so are John Anderson and Mark Hatfield and some of the most conservative members of the Texas delegation and your delegation in the Congress. You can't measure a person's Christianity or morality by specific votes in the Congress or by that individual's political philosophy.

My next contact with the Moral Majority movement came when there was the march on Washington. I met with our Alabama group, and listened to them. They prayed with us, and stated their case. I got up and thanked them for their prayers. I said, "You know, like you, I believe that Jesus Christ is the hope of men and nations. Like you, I believe our country needs a revival. I thank you for your prayers and your concern. You keep on praying for me and everybody else here in Washington."

Having thanked them, I said, "I want you to understand where I'm coming from. My Bible says, 'The body hath many members and not every member hath the same function.' What our Lord has laid on me is the burden of 15 million children who are going to starve to death somewhere on Earth this year. What I hear from him are the words, 'I was an hungered and ye gave me meat; I was thirsty and ye gave me to drink; I was naked and ye clothed me; I was sick and in prison and ye

visited me; I was a stranger and ye took me in.' Because our Lord has said these things to me, I have a different point of view on some of these issues than you do; therefore, isn't it wonderful to know that our salvation is not dependent on politics of the right or politics of the left or any kind of politics at all, but our salvation is dependent on faith in and relationship to the Lord Jesus Christ, plus or minus nothing?"

They received me very warmly. I even marched with them. I'm the only person in the world, I'm quite positive, who participated in both the women's march and the march for Jesus in Washington, DC. I kind of get the two mixed up together in my mind. I really do. I find a connection.

One of the most revealing things to me about this whole movement was that these folks had been given a laundry list of issues. I know where they came from. Both Paul Weyrich and Jerry Falwell have said that Paul Weyrich, a leading light of the New Right politicians in Washington, persuaded Jerry Falwell to organize the Moral Majority movement because he and other New Right politicians in Washington, DC rightly saw this powerful weapon of the electronic church. They saw various conservative churches around the country as a political weapon. They saw the potential power of the Religious Right. They reached out to it, helped organize and direct and provide issues for it. I knew where all this came from.

What impressed me and touched my heart was that when I personally talked to these folks from Alabama, one after another came up to me and said, "We can tell, you're one of us." Do you know why? They were right. They were sincere Christian people who'd been told, "This is the way to stand up for God in our society. These are the people who ought to be elected or not elected. These are the issues that are the key moral issues." They were sincerely, so many of them, trying to do something right because they were concerned about the things that are wrong in their country. They had a certain lack of faith in their political institutions and the people who served them. They were sincerely, as Christian people, trying to do something for their country and to bring their country back to God. When they said, "You're one of us," they were precisely correct. I am. I am their brother, and I love them. I pray God they shall find the way to use their Christian influence in the right directions in our country's political life, as well as in all its life.

But, they went back home and beat my brains out in Christian love. Led by Brother Falwell in my city as was the case all over the country, they registered many new voters. Then, one week before election day they had a rally. Brother Falwell came down and spoke. He said, "We don't endorse candidates," but he held me up as a negative example. The last three weeks of the primary campaign, they conducted a massive door-to-door campaign that was tremendously effective. They were able to turn into defeat what would otherwise have been an almost certain narrow victory in my little Republican primary, where I was always vulnerable. It was always a matter of playing Russian roulette to enter that primary because I was not as conservative as my fellow Republicans back home. I fit the district as a whole much better than I did my own party, and looked forward to what was slated to be my largest victory in the general election last Novem-

ber. My Christian friends, however, were able to turn a projected narrow primary victory for me into a clear defeat and elect their own candidate to public office.

My own experience would lead me to have certain questions about this kind of Christian involvement in politics. In the first place, I would raise a question about the basic posture and attitude and spirit that is involved--the spirit of judgment, of anger.

Let me tell you about a part of Jerry Falwell's introduction to Richard Viguerie's book, The New Right, We're Ready to Lead. He describes his group as "sick and tired, angry, disturbed, opposed, alarmed." etc. My Bible says the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, goodness. Where Christ is, love is. Where love is not, Christ is not.

The second thing I would challenge is that I don't believe you can accomplish the Lord's purpose with the devil's weapons. Truth and love are both required.

For example, when a very popular and charismatic evangelist makes up out of whole cloth a fictitious conversation with the President, uses it from the pulpit as if it happened and then later, after the fact, after it has been widely quoted and misinterpreted, says he was only making up a parable, this is dealing fast and loose with the truth in a way that cannot be described as an expression of Christianity.

Finally, I am convinced that this is much more of an expression of a religion of judgment and condemnation, a religion of harshness, the religion of the Pharisees than the religion of Jesus; the religion of the Old Testament rather than the religion of the grace and love that is the New.

In a recent conversation, one of our hostages just returned from Iran said to me that, having had many discussions with his Iranian captors and having long been exposed to their intolerance and intransigence and absolute certainty that their very rigid and narrow point of view was right, he came home to find exactly the same point of view expressed by spokesmen for the Moral Majority.

What then shall we do about the Religious Right, the Moral Majority movement? The antidote is Christian action on the part of the rest of us who are not represented by the Far Right. We must make our voices heard. We must make our influence felt for Jesus' sake.

It is wrong for a few extremist voices to become "The Christian Voice" of our society. It is right, it is necessary, and it is time for the mainstream of Christendom to take its rightful place in the ranks of the involved.

# The Church in an Age of Revolution

L. D. Johnson

At Place de la Concorde in Paris you stand where Louis XVI lost his head to the guillotine on January 21, 1793, during the French Revolution. You remember that Henry Adams once said of Louis XVI that "he would have done well in ordinary times, but he inherited a revolution and was not strong enough to stem the tide." We have inherited a revolution. The church cannot safely continue to ignore that fact. Whether as Christ's body in the midst of revolution we are wise and caring enough to channel the tide is not clear. Stemming it does not appear to be an option.

Isaac Asimov, whose fertile imagination may outrun his wisdom, is not to be dismissed as a sensationalist when he says in a recent issue of a magazine, "I think the chances that civilization will survive more than another 30 years--that it will still be flourishing in 2010--are less than 50 percent." When asked what kind of disaster he foresees, Asimov spoke of insupportable billions of overpopulation all grabbing for shrinking resources, with corresponding want, malnutrition, and starvation, triggering a general outbreak of terrorism as "a way of life in a world marked by severe shortages." He says he is talking about "absolute chaos . . . Nothing will be able to stand up against the pressure of the whole of mankind simply trying to stay alive!"

Robert Heilbroner in his Inquiry Into the Human Prospect paints an equally disquieting picture of the three specters of apocalypse: overpopulation, mass hunger from using up the earth's resources, and war. He will tell you that what we already see is the beginning of convulsive world revolution. Evidences of this upheaval include uncontrollable inflation, unrelenting racial hatred, and unmanageable privation among the world's poor. Other signs of revolutionary conditions are the institutionalization of poverty through the welfare system, and the realization that economic growth is not an unmixed blessing, inasmuch as its effect upon the quality of the environment may outweigh the presumed benefits of affluence. Perhaps most disturbing of all, Heilbroner has argued, is the "civilizational malaise" that has overtaken us as we have come to sense that material achievements in the form of higher incomes, better diets, miracles of medicine, and the endless production of creature comforts, have no power to satisfy the human spirit. In short, we have entered a period of "convulsive change." Heilbroner soberly warns: ". . . The answer to whether we can conceive of the future other than as a continuation of the darkness, cruelty, and disorder of the past seems to me to be no; and to the question of whether worse impends, yes."

Such visions of apocalyptic catastrophe do not induce happy thoughts, but I doubt if anyone here is really surprised. We have known it in our heads and felt it in our gizzards for a long time. We are like a family facing the impending death of a loved one suffering from a life-threatening disease. We don't talk about it, as if silence would

put it away from us. We know that our wealth is supported upon the bent backs of nations whose lands and natural resources we have turned into prosperity for ourselves for centuries. We know that, one by one, these exploited peoples are saying to us, "No more and never again!"

We are not ignorant of the seduction of materialism and the emptiness of its promise of fulfillment and happiness. We ourselves have too often been taken in, measuring even our success in the kingdom of God by the indices of General Motors. We have bought into a system that encourages the illusion that the more things made, sold, and discarded (cluttering the earth and now space with junk and garbage) the better off everyone is. To assist this mass self-deception is an advertising business costing billions, and at its worst subverting nearly every principle of behavior acknowledged by the human family, to dupe people into buying what they neither need nor can afford.

We are not unaware of, though largely silent about, the swelling chorus of discontent among the world's have-nots. Four hundred fifty million starving humans stand around our dinner table, looking over our shoulders at our sumptuous feast, their children crying feebly with hunger, the adults spending most of their waking hours and energy scrounging for food for a single day. Such scenes are not from a bad movie designed to milk a little change out of our pockets into the rice bowl on the dinner table. It is staggering fact that two billion of our brothers and sisters suffer from malnutrition and the diseases related to it, while our most annoying problems are how to lose weight and where to park the car or find some \$1.35 gasoline to keep it on the road. A single evening's entertainment for most of us middle-class people sitting here would feed a starving child for a month. In the words of Archbishop Helder Camara of Brazil to us overfed North Americans, "You have but one mouth but eat as though you have ten!"

It is not as though we didn't know. It is that we are paralyzed by the frightening reality of revolution and the primitive fear about survival. It is no idle rumor that the nations of the world spend 20 times as much to arm themselves against one another as they do for the basic needs of the poor.

Heilbroner compares the "ghastly resemblance of the world's present economic condition to an immense train, in which a few passengers, mainly in the advanced capitalist world, ride in first-class coaches, in conditions of comfort unimaginable to the enormously greater numbers crammed into the cattle cars that make up the bulk of the train's carriages." Further, he observes "the passengers in the first-class coaches not only ride at their ease but have decorated their compartments and enriched their lives by using the work and appropriating the resources of the masses who ride behind them." The differences, not simply in comfort but in basic requirements for living, are too vast between first-class and cattle-class for the few who ride in luxury to sleep peacefully.

Truly, we have inherited a revolution. Instant global communication makes it impossible for us riding in the front of the train to conceal the party we are having from the masses in the cattle cars behind. Something must change before the train is stopped or taken over by those in the cattle cars.

Where is the church in the midst of world need and global revolution? Reinhold Niebuhr,

with characteristic candor once described contemporary American Protestantism in a single devastating word--"trivial." I want to believe that was an intemperate overstatement, but I think we should be troubled by current preoccupation in the churches with whether God inspired the Bible by dictating nonexistent autographs of his divine Word, or whether to spend a million dollars to build a gymnasium (euphemistically known as "The Family Life Center") "because the Methodists and Presbyterians have one, and if we don't build one of our own our young people will go there." I think we ought to be disturbed about obsession with real estate and bigness, as though we are convinced that the kingdom of God is brought near by sanctification of the culture's worst values.

When I think of church I sorely need the reassurance of Scripture not to lose heart. I need Jesus' promise that the church is his, and that the gates of Hades will never engulf it. I need the reinforcement of Paul in Ephesians that God's intention is "that through the church the manifold wisdom of God might now be made known" (Eph. 3:10). Paul's vision of the church is anything but trivial. God who has been coming to the human family through the ages, who came fully and ultimately in the incarnated Person of his Son, Jesus Christ, continues to present himself to the world through the church. You have got to be a believer to believe that about the church.

Yet, what is the alternative? As the fellow said, the only reason Noah could endure the smell inside was the view of the flood outside. If that is what the church is, and it is what Scripture says it is, then the church is not a stranger to the world, or a foreign substance implanted in the body of the world. It is, instead, a part of the body--that part which has been reclaimed by the love of God in Christ. It is being used by him in the body of the world to bring the rest of it to health. The church is not an alien, not an invader from outer space. It is a sector of the native population loyal to the world's rightful Sovereign. It is a piece of the mainland, all of which was once estranged, but the church is that piece taken back from the enemy. God's primary concern is not with the reclaimed piece, but with the rest of the mainland to be won.

If this is true, the church's focus ought to be on what happens to the world more than it is on what happens to itself. It means that the church's chief vocation is not its own salvation but to be saving salt of the earth. It means that the primary arena of ministry is not the religious enclosure but the City of Humankind that lies outside the enclosure. The Gospel is not the exclusive property of the holy enclave, but is for "the healing of the nations." The church's place is in the midst of the world, not as a sanctuary but as a base of operations.

I spent time across 40 years with Carlyle Marney in church, not very often in a church building. Early December 1975, Marney and I "winged" a dialogue about the future of the church while we shared a platform in a church house on a Sunday morning. The good ideas and the zingers came mostly from Marney, as you might expect. Asked where the church is now, he growled: "If I had to say where the church is now I would be incapable, though I know when I'm in it, . . . and I think I'm in church nearly all the time. . . . I find I'm in church anywhere I'm getting heard or getting to hear and I run into more church

in this decade of my life than any other decade. . . . Whatever the church is for, whatever the Gospel is about, it's for the inhabited world of men." Then he went on to recite the only creed he really believed: "God is not an adjective. Christian is an adjective. White is an adjective. Black is an adjective. Baptist is a modest adjective, and Methodist is even more modest than that."

Marney's point was, and mine is, that whenever the church is removed from the world and made tangential to the concerns of humankind it has been perverted and prostituted. Church is not for saving people from the world. It is for saving them in it. Incidentally, Marney liked to say that a fundamentalist is a guy whose attic windows are stuck shut. No new meaning can get in. A liberal is a guy whose attic windows are stuck open. Everything can get in.

What then is church? It is not an artificially made socioeconomic phenomenon stuck together with a dab of middle-class civic club camaraderie and a little pinch of decency. It is a new kind of community, a corps of redemption existing within the world with a perfectly astounding vision that "in Christ there is neither Jew nor Gentile, neither slave nor free, neither male nor female" (Gal. 3:28). Jesus called people not to hover around him in adoration, but to participate with him in a holy crusade to reclaim the world. "Come, follow me" was not a call to gather in a sanctuary, thereafter to go one's way in a state of spiritual euphoria disengaged from the common human condition. It was a call to arms.

## Power and the First Amendment

John Henry Faulk

I speak before a very wide variety of audiences across the United States as an after dinner speaker, speaking to college groups. I want to say this morning in all candor that this quarter or so acre of Baptists sitting out before me represents the most intelligent, the handsomest audience that I've ever addressed in my entire career. That's not just idle flattery. It's an outright lie! I just wanted you to know that I've picked up something off my fellow Texan, John Connally, in the course of my life. Some talents.

I do have some credentials for being here that haven't been mentioned. I very seldom do mention them, but I think it might be appropriate that I do this morning. My mother, who was a pious Methodist lady (and incidentally the Georgia Faulks were all "them's the Baptist Faulks" as they used to say), was under the firm conviction that the sun rose and set in the Southern Methodist Church. She found herself with three daughters and another child on the way. She and Sister Fanny Rollins, a good sister of the Fred Allen Memorial Methodist Church, made a pledge to the Lord that if he would deliver of her a son, she would dedicate him to the highest calling that any man could achieve here on earth; namely, the Methodist ministry. And here I came. Mama had shot a blank. I asked her one time, "Mama, when did you decide I wasn't going to make a Methodist preacher?" She said, "You know, honey, I don't remember

right now whether it was by the time you learned to walk or by the time you could talk. But I do remember perfectly clearly that by the time you were six years old I was promising the Lord if he would keep you out of the Huntsville penitentiary I'd settle for you doing anything."

I was raised in Travis County down here in south Austin, Texas where you were either a Methodist or a Baptist. The whole world--our whole social, as well as our religious world--circulated around our churches. I remember there was a very dear and fine and very, very generous, philanthropic gentleman there in south Austin named Mr. Simon Gillis. Mr. Gillis was very generous to the community and well-respected, but he was never mentioned by Mama or any of the ladies. They'd say, "Oh, Brother Gillis is just such a fine man. He's a Catholic," sort of like he had a defect.

Well, this was the culture I came from. Early on I--and I don't like to boast of my background too much--became interested in law and order at the age of eleven years old. I became a Texas Ranger and rode the frontier with a sidekick of mine named Boots Cooper, establishing law and order and protecting the weak from depredations of outlaws. It was that part of the Texas frontier that stretched from Mama's back door out to our cow lot. We did it on stick horses with rubber guns. Long before the Pentagon even dreamed of body counts, we'd stack up dozens of outlaws on just a skirmish in the morning out around the hen house.

One morning Mama called out the door, "Would you mighty lawmen go out to the hen house? There's a chicken snake in one of those hen's nests out there. Get a hoe and go out there and dispatch it." We galloped up--we were both barefooted and in overalls--and charged into the hen house. The hens were in a state of acute agitation. Boots and I began to look in the hen's nests. Mama's nests were in tiers of three. The top tier was a little too high to look into. About the fourth nest we peeked into, a chicken snake peeked out of! Now, I don't know how many of you all have ever viewed a snake from the distance of six inches from the end of your nose, but although it's the size of your little finger, it takes on proportions of a boa constrictor. All of Boots' and my frontier courage drained out our heels, or rather truthfully trickled down our overall legs.

Boots and I made a new door through the hen house wall. Mama came out there and said, "Lord have mercy, I thought I was protected. You've lulled me into a sense of false security here. You two mighty lawmen have let a chicken snake run you out of the hen house. Don't you know a chicken snake's harmless and can't hurt you?" Boots, rubbing the seat of his britches and forehead at the same time, said, "Yessum, Miss Faulk, I know that, but they can scare you so bad, hit'll cause you to hurt yourself!" I thought that might be a good topic for my sermon to you this morning. Actually, it's not a sermon. I'm just pulling ya'lls leg.

I went through a period of agnosticism in college and returned to the fold, as it were, with the understanding that those experiences that I had in my church life have been the foundation of most of the positive things--and they've been all too few--that I've ever engaged in in my life. This has been a rich and rewarding experience to me. I might say in passing that Brother Johnson this morning

moved me very deeply. Brother Johnson represented and epitomized to me what the Christian church is all about. It's about facing the world as it is, not as we imagine or wish it were, but what it really is. We must deal with it from that. This is where our greatest strength lies. Thank heaven this country has been populated throughout its history with Brother Johnsons. That's what made us the great republic that we are, maintaining those positive qualities that we have.

But back to my subject now. I wanted to talk to you this morning about what happens to a people who were conceived in liberty, whose original documents deal with the love of liberty, who proclaimed liberty as the cause of fighting what is now known as the Glorious Revolution--what happens to such a people when they become so frightened at the freedoms that uphold that liberty, those guaranteed constitutional freedoms that uphold that liberty, that they turn and trample on them in panic and shut off the dialogue.

Thirty years ago as we sit here, this country was in such a tailspin. A carefully manipulated and orchestrated wave of hysteria and fear was sweeping over the land, originated and augmented by such engines of repression as the House Un-American Activities Committee. They could hail school teachers, professors, and ministers of the gospel before them, and hold an inquisition to examine them for their beliefs and associations in complete and total contradiction to not only the spirit, but the word of the First Amendment.

An outfit called the F.B.I., headed up by J. Edgar Hoover, swept over the land making it its business to surveil the political beliefs and associations of the American people. To publicly criticize it was to get into trouble. They proliferated all over the land. Vigilante groups--wrapping themselves in red, white, and blue with Bible under one arm and a flag in the other--proclaiming they were going to protect the people from the dread Communist conspiracy that had its bony hand on the throat of the White House. Its power ran right up through government. We lived under "20 years of treason." The Democratic Party was the party of treason. This was pronounced.

It played the mischief with the political dialogue in this land--the life stream. That's what the whole period of repression was about--shutting off the dialogue. A great silence descended over the land. A cousin of mine ran one of these vigilante committees. It was the Anti-Communist Committee of Precinct 8 in Bastrop County. He could point with great pride to the fact that there hadn't been a single overthrow of the county government of Bastrop County while he and his committee were collecting money to carry out their good works.

I was in the radio and television industry in New York, as you've just heard. I was choppin' in the tall cotton. I'd been carried up to New York by CBS as a folk humorist right after the War. Of course, you must understand that period was a period that we were launched into the atomic age. Willy-nilly, all of a sudden, we wiped two towns off the face of the earth. This made man stand back and gasp. We had moved into the age of instant communication around the globe, intercontinental travel by air, supersonic speeds. There was a vast uneasiness that ran through the whole land. But I'm talking about the political opportunism that seized on this political advantage. You might as well

face the truth, that the Republican Party rode to victory in 1952 on a wave of anti-communism. That's how it made it in.

I belonged, as I say, in New York. I come from old fighting stock. The word was out that you didn't discuss or take a position on any controversial issue at all under any circumstances. I was enjoying a lot of success. I had an eleven-room apartment with three and a half bathrooms in it. That was three more than we had down home when I was growing up. One of my dearest and closest friends was Ed Murrow, a brooding man. It was frightening. He saw a police state on its way, and the trappings of a police state instilling its institutions in our community.

I would battle McCarthy. I was very clever, witty, and had a steel-trap mind. I would go down there before his committee--as all of my colleagues in radio and television sat in awe, and other victims of his carrying-on would quell before him--and I would treat him to a dose of my scintillating humor, devastating wit; and he would just cower. I carried on these confrontations in the morning when I was shaving with the bathroom door locked. Otherwise, I maintained a very discrete silence, too. My business manager said, "Look ahere!" and he had a very, very real interest in my success, "Keep your mouth shut!" He knew my Methodist tendency to evangelize on subjects that I took concern in.

There had been organized in the radio and television industry in New York a vigilante committee called Aware, Incorporated. It had as its stated purpose--had it in red, white, and blue across its stationery with eagles holding on to the flag and a dread red hand grasping at a microphone--to combat the Communist conspiracy in the communications industry. That presumes two things: number one, that there was a Communist conspiracy in the communications industry; and number two, that Aware was the proper and authorized group to combat it. I accepted neither one of those presumptions. I lived along Madison Avenue. I knew that the mentality and thoughts there were to sell soap, underarm deodorants, and nothing else--certainly no ideas of any kind. Not only that, it was my understanding of our Constitution that when you saw evidence of a crime being committed, you were obligated to take that evidence to the proper authorities. The person should be confronted with the charges, be allowed to bring witnesses, and be guaranteed due process of law.

Well, that ain't the way Aware done their business, children! Aware combated this Communist conspiracy by publishing a list of names ever so often and secretly circulating it to the executives of the radio, television, and advertising agencies and sponsors. That list named persons who in the past, maybe 10 to 20 years earlier, had spoken before, signed a petition at, marched in a parade with, or entertained at, a gathering under circumstances that Aware had decided in its wisdom suggested less than a loyal persuasion on the part of that person. The networks and agencies and advertising sponsors were threatened, were queried, "Do you want to be part of the international Communist conspiracy? Please let us know by return mail what you intend to do about these persons."

It's not particularly a matter of rejoicing to say that they all responded by firing the persons. They didn't want to get involved. They never called them in and asked, "Is this true or false?" In the first place,

the persons weren't charged with any violation of the law or a commission of any crime whatever. They were charged with having associated with or having thought the wrong ideas. These people entered what was called the "blacklist." They became untouchables.

It was a dread period because dear and fine friends of mine had their careers totally smashed and destroyed. Some actually were driven to suicide because, you see, it was as Gary Moore said, "It was like being in a dark closet being hit by five different men and not knowing from where the blow was coming." It was a desolate period, a period of nothingness at its worst in this country. The engines of repression rode high. To publicly criticize them, to sign a petition for the abolition of the House Un-American Activities Committee, was to bring on blacklisting. To publicly criticize J. Edgar Hoover was beyond that. It was almost unthinkable because he had ways of taking care of you.

We belonged to a union called AFTRA--American Federation of Radio and Television Artists. It was a closed shop. You had to belong to perform on network television and radio. I began to ask questions, because I got terribly uneasy about it. Why wasn't AFTRA doing anything to stop blacklisting? I began to feel a bit unclean. I was chopping in the tall cotton, but it wasn't a satisfactory way to live. I remembered Daddy in a battle with the Ku Klux Klan one time when he was a lawyer down there. It burned a cross out on St. Edwards University campus there in south Austin. Daddy had taken them on for it, and was being congratulated by several folks for being courageous because it was in the twenties when the Klan was sky-high. Daddy said, "That isn't a matter of courage. That's a matter of necessity and responsibility as a Methodist layman, and as a citizen of this country. I have a duty. You don't congratulate a man for doing his duty. I might admire him for it. We should all do our duty to this land." Well, that began to burn and work at me that I was sitting watching my country and the engines of repression going full steam that would destroy the very fabric of this republic that has given such hope to mankind through the last 150 to 175 years.

Now don't you all report this outside. I was with some fellows who were drinking one night. We got to talking about why the union didn't do something about this terrible, terrible business of blacklisting. One of the union members--I never went to a union meeting and I want to be honest about that--but this fellow said, "Well, don't you know, you can't go to a union meeting. The board of directors of Aware. The union is the board of directors of Aware. That's how they control this union. It's pro-Aware. It's pro-blacklisting." These fellows that were drinking slipped something in my water. I got up and made a speech on how we weren't founded by cowards and we shan't be saved by cowards. Gentlemen, let's run in our union and wipe them out. And we did. They "jined" me, and we swept them out of office. That was in 1955--front page in all the papers--the first anti-blacklist slate that had taken over the union. Don't confuse this union now with SAG (Screen Actor's Guild). Ronny was president of SAG, and they were all for blacklisting. They supported it all out.

But we had taken over. There we were, officers of the union and none of us had ever been to a union meeting much. We fell to in diligent fashion to start really straightening things out in the union. A week later

the House Un-American Activities Committee sounded the alarm by issuing a press release that the Reds are coming. They've moved back into the entertainment industry. A group of Reds under the false banner of anti-black-listing has taken over AFTRA. Oh, that outraged us. We champed. I wrote a burning letter and Ed said, "That's too tacky. Don't send that one. Let Charles Collinwood--he's more literate and calm--let him send the letter."

Two weeks later Aware put out a bulletin saying this slate that calls themselves anti-Communist is due some examination from good anti-Communists. Let's look at Faulk who headed it up. He says that he is not a Communist. Let's look at his record. Then they published four or five things about me, four of which were false, but one of which was true. They said that according to the official record, John Henry Faulk is reported under sworn testimony before the House Un-American Activities Committee to have been a speaker at a dinner at the Astor Hotel in 1947 (the date and everything) under the auspices of a pro-Communist organization with a man who had an unrepudiated record of Communist activities.

It'll scare the daylights out of you to see one of these things because it's awful official looking. You say, "Good Lord, did I do all those things?" About half of them you did, and it does shake you up. It reported I gave the Daily Worker an interview. It turned out that it was an interview taken from the Republican paper, The New York Herald Tribune. They had interviewed me and it had been published in Daily Worker. That was the Communist paper at that time. But they didn't mention The New York Herald Tribune, you see, and that scared me.

I looked in my diary and sure enough, I was at the Astor Hotel that night. The item that Aware left out was that this was the Year One Birthday Party for the Security Council of the United Nations. There was a full-blooded, un-American Communist named Mr. Gromyko savoring those capitalist vittles the likes of which you never saw--just goin' to town on 'em. They didn't mention either that two cochairmen of it were Mrs. Franklin D. Roosevelt and Mr. Harold Ickes, the former Secretary of the Interior of the United States; nor did they mention that the principal speaker at that gathering was the then Secretary of State Edward Stettenius; nor did they mention that CBS had sent me there because they were broadcasting it full network over CBS radio. None of those items were mentioned because this is the way Aware operated--with its half-truths, distortions, and innuendos.

At any rate, I got hold of this. We decided this was a golden opportunity. I threw a suit on them. I got the meanest lawyer. If ya'll have to sue somebody, always get one of those jugular-vein-type lawyers. Ed Morrow and I concluded that Mr. Louis Nizer was not only a genius in the law room, but he was also a man that shared with our dear former President of the United States Lyndon Johnson an absolute, blinding enthusiasm for himself. He wasn't going to lose a lawsuit if there was any way on earth to win it. Let me tell you something, the feeling of cleanliness and decency, when I made the decision was most rewarding, although it was made perfectly clear to me that I was placing my career on the line. I knew very likely it would change my whole course in life, and that I would probably lose some of the rooms

in my apartment--maybe all of them. But the feeling of well-being and decency is to only be envied because it gave me a sense of, "By God, I do care enough!"

We sued them for conspiracy to destroy my career as a union officer because I was threatening to expose their racketeering practices. You see, Aware made a great deal of money out of furnishing this information to the networks and agencies. The networks paid them a retainer. Well, the suit was filed. We were off and running. I was absolutely astonished and dumbfounded at what fear does to people--I had never seen it firsthand--colleagues of mine who had spent the summer or time with me out at my summer home, who were dear and knew me well, became frightened of me, in spite of our long friendship. I knew none of the members of Aware. I'd never laid eyes on them. I might say they never laid eyes on me.

I established my position quite clearly in my own mind, and with Nizer, when he asked if I were ever a Communist. I said, "No, I'm not nor ever have I had an inclination to be, to answer you perfectly candidly. But if I wanted to be, it would be my right as an American citizen to be if that were my persuasion. That's my position. That's the basis for my taking on this fight. I think these fellows are a threat to our republic. They're nothing more than fascists, as far as I'm concerned." Well, this would scare some of my friends. This would happen. I discovered that people walking along Madison Avenue would get across the street from me. I'd be embarrassed for their sake. You'd walk into Toots Shores' where I was very big, and guys would say, "Hi, John, I was just leaving." I felt kind of sorry for them, but at the same time I was hurt. I was as vain as a turkey gobbler, I must confess! I was right enthusiastic over John Henry Faulk.

At any rate, CBS fired me and I was blacklisted. I had a secret weapon that they didn't know about. Their practice was to starve a man into submission. He would finally (and a great number of performers did this) go to Aware. You could send your lawyer or agent to Aware and say, "Look, you've got the wrong sow by the ear. This girl, great heavens, she's not a Communist. She's not subversive. Sure, she sang "The Star Spangled Banner" at that meeting at Madison Square Garden, but she didn't go there for political reasons. She didn't even know it was a political meeting. We read that the House Un-American Activities Committee decided it was. She's not political at all. She's never had a political thought. She's a Republican, for goodness sakes!" Not that that follows, of course. At any rate, they'd say, "Well, if this is true, we don't want to keep her on the blacklist. We'll do research on her and clear her." They had a clearance program, but there was a fee connected with it, depending on what the traffic would bear. It was a shameful, shameful, shakedown extortion racket. It was what the whole thing amounted to. Nizer was collecting information on this all the time.

But here I was blacklisted, and couldn't earn a living. My income went to zero. A lot of the guys who were blacklisted went to work in shoe stores and delicatessens, and tried to eke out an existence. They were embittered and frightened. Some went to Mexico, some went to England to try to get back in the business. I went to Texas because I had this secret weapon. It's called "kinfolks' visiting."

When I was a little boy, Aunt Edith and her three children used to come up from Magnolia, Texas. They'd come up Thanksgiving morning. Mama would say, "Oh, Edith, you must have gotten up at midnight last night to get all the way up here." Travel was slow then in model-T Fords. "But thank heavens, you're here for Thanksgiving dinner. We're just delighted you and the children are going to share Thanksgiving with us." Aunt Edith would say, "Oh now, Miss Mattie, I never writ you and I'm jist so ashamed of myself, comin' up here like this afore dinner and imposin' on you. I know you didn't expect us. Me and the children won't eat dinner. We'll just set and watch ya'll eat and then if there's enough. . ." Mama would say, "Oh, Edith, quit talkin' tacky that way. Heavenly days, you know we've just got more than we can eat. And by the way, don't even plan to leave today. Why don't you stay over 'til Sunday and let's have a good ole family gossip session and relax and you can drive back easily." Aunt Edith would say, "Oh, Miss Mattie, I just think it's so tacky for people to impose on people like that, but I reckon if you've got some quilts, the children could make pallets and I'll sleep out in the car." Mama would say, "We've got five extra rooms here, Edith. Why do you talk that way?" The point is, Aunt Edith would leave about Christmastime each year.

Old Cap'n Talley came to visit us. I never will forget when Roosevelt was running against Alf Landon. We had a radio and that was the first time I ever remember getting election returns over the radio. He came to hear it and have some supper with us. He left just after World War II.

This was my secret weapon. Aware didn't know about it. I went down to Austin, parked myself with kinfolks, and I ran a little advertising agency. It took five years to herd these brethren in the courtroom, but they did. We went back up there in 1962. Nizer had assembled the most astonishing library of wrongdoing on these people, because we'd charged them with conspiracy and this gave us great leeway, you see. It would really make you ashamed if you'd read it, what they'd been up to--the lives they had smashed; the pompous, Jerry Falwellish attitude they took toward anybody that so much as blinked an eyebrow the wrong direction; how they'd literally run the hiring practices of the radio and television industry. They had asserted their power with such arrogance and such violence. The FBI leaked them material constantly. The House Un-American Activities Committee worked hand in glove with all of these repressive forces in our society. It was a shameful thing.

The case lasted three months. Mr. Nizer painted me in red, white, and blue bunting. While preparing me for my direct testimony, he'd go over my childhood carefully with me. The poor man was trying to come up with something that would point up my virtue, but I never had done anything. I'd try to think of some awards I'd won or honors I'd won. I was the most ordinary of ordinary students. But, I finally came up with one. Nizer was dynamite at leading and going around court rules to get stuff in that shouldn't have been in. So he said, "Now when I take you by your twelfth year, you talk about this award that has meant so much to you all your life." I said, "Lou," (and by the way, the press table was loaded with friends of mine from New York, foreign press, and news wires because this case was on the front page of the

papers every day. It was a big-issue case and it was a very important one from that angle) "I don't like to attach too much importance to this honor." "Yes!" he says. He gets up in court the next day and is going along and says, "Well Mr. Faulk now, you said . . ." (and I forgot all about it the next morning. I blanked it out of my mind, I suppose) and he said, "Now Mr. Faulk, you mentioned the award that you received in your twelfth year" and the defense attorney said, "He's leading that witness. If the witness can't remember his own lies. . ." The judge said, "Sir, don't talk like that. Did you mention the award, Mr. Faulk?"

The judge, by this time was bored to death with hearing about what a virtuous boy I was--how I would spring up and run all the way across the city of Austin to help an elderly lady across the street and how I spent most of my time in meditation and prayer in my early years--that Nizer had hammered at that jury with, so the judge said, "Well, let him go. Go ahead, go ahead. If you mentioned it, just explain it, but try to make it brief."

Mr. Nizer said, "Well, just a minute. Now Mr. Faulk, raise your voice so the court and the jury can both hear you clearly. What was that award?" I said, "It was a gold star from the Fred Allen Memorial Methodist Church. I received it for 72 Sundays without a single miss." Murray Kempton sitting down at the table--he was a writer--threw his hand over his mouth. Even I got nauseous.

At any rate, at the end of three months Nizer absolutely dumbfounded me by asking for \$2 million damages. By this time this case had built up to a real crescendo where everybody was interested. All the entertainment world who had been scarred and hurt--and that included almost everybody in it--by Aware was down there watching it. It was standing room only in the spectator's area. They had to move to a bigger courtroom, as a matter of fact. It had been on the front pages of the papers all the time. Nizer comes out for \$2 million damages and I said, "Lou, my feelings were hurt, but gracious! \$2 million worth! The jury is liable to think this is just a publicity stunt and a money-making deal." Nizer said, "Don't worry."

The jury went out. Newspaper men surrounded Nizer as we walked out waiting for the jury to return. Nizer said, "If they come back soon, I think we've nailed this case down good and solid and we've put a stop to an awful, awful, awful act of injustice. The whole country will owe this lone man here a great debt." (He had repeated this in front of the jury at least 25 times.) Sure enough, here comes a runner from the court. We hadn't even sat down to eat dinner. "The judge wants you back in court. The jury's coming back." Nizer preened himself, "Well, I told you! Let's go in!"

We all go in there. We sat down. The judge said, "Mr. Foreman, have you reached a decision?" The foreman says, "No, we want to ask a question in the open court. May the jury give more than \$2 million?" Well, Nizer looked like somebody had caught him between the eyes with a ballpean hammer. He'd made a lot of mistakes in his legal career, but asking for too little never had been one of them. Well, the jury went out and came back in about less than 30 minutes with a \$3.5 million judgment. My loves, let me tell you something. No matter how long you've been plagued by aches, pains, and what manner of disorder, even congenital ones afflict you,

you let a jury stand up and pronounce that you've just won \$3.5 million and it has a therapeutic affect on you.

I didn't get the \$3.5 million. I got the reputation for having it because it was published--it was a record libel judgment--in all the papers, including the Georgia papers. There ain't nothin' calculated to scare kin-folks out of the woods like the news that you just got \$3.5 million, including my Georgia cousins from Waycross. They communicated.

I got something far more important, my dears. That's what I want to close off with and share with you. I regard this gathering quite seriously as absolutely essential to the well-being of this society. I was being described by people that I loved and respected very much as "courageous and heroic." I couldn't figure it out. Those are two attributes that are quite absent from my personality. I'm honest with myself, and I know that. I'm not saying that out of false modesty. It's just a fact. If there's a short in the lighting fixtures at home, I try to trick my wife into meddling with it for fear I might get shocked.

I was anxious to understand why a principled act was regarded as one of courage and heroism. I started to study what America really is. I became completely absorbed with who are we, the American people? I started rereading history. I regard myself as a well-educated man. After all, I had gotten my masters degree at the University of Texas. I had worked on my doctorate. I had anticipated being an educator. I had minored in history.

I made an absolutely breathtaking discovery as I reflected: I was ignorant of the real history and drama of who the American people are; what this republic really is.

I started rereading the Revolution and re-examining 1776 and the forces that preceded it--the circumstances. You must do this, my loves, because it's a breathtaking experience. Then it will come crashing down on you suddenly--what a history-making, breathtaking matter, is this something that we take for granted, listen to all the time, and never reflect on. "When in the course of human events, it becomes necessary for one people to dissolve the political bands that have connected them with another, and to assume among the powers of the earth, that separate, but equal station to which the laws of nature and nature's God entitle them, a decent respect to the opinions of mankind requires that they should declare the causes that have impelled them to that separation. We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, and are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable rights, and among these are life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness. And that to secure these rights, governments are instituted among man, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed."

This had never been pronounced to the world before. The natural rights that all humans are born with had never been made the basis for a struggle before in that form. This was history-making. This changed the whole course of human history. I'd never regarded it--I'd never thought of it in those terms. I had never realized that the men who framed that, went on to spell out these natural rights and the quarrel they had with old King George and Lord North in Parliament. Then they pledged their lives, their fortunes, and their sacred honor to achieving independence; representing less than a third of the colonies'

population at that time. A third of the people were loyal British subjects and could hardly stand that old hippie crowd of guerrillas George Washington assembled; a rag-tail revolutionary outfit with Tom Payne, that disgraceful man, running around printing those terrible things and handing them out to soldiers during the revolution to keep them fighting. But they fell to and they won that independence.

I never realized before that James Madison, that dear and beautiful little man--five feet six, modest, gentle, but a genius, a brooding genius, a member of the Continental Congress from 1781-87--was receiving boxes of books from Thomas Jefferson on the subject of confederations, on the subject of republics and all of the failures, and what part the church had played in tyranny. He became the definitive authority of all time on that. In 1787 he gathered with his neighbors. Fifty-five of them gathered in Philadelphia, and without a blueprint. Again, for the first time in the history of all mankind, my loves, they sat down and began to frame a charter of government dedicated to the proposition that the people would be the masters and the government would be the servant, dedicated to the propositions that there would never be a religious test administered in these United States as a qualification for holding office, dedicated to the proposition that there'd never be a state church or religion in this land. This was unheard of in history at that time. They were dedicated to the proposition that free men could govern themselves more adequately than any other form of government.

In September of 1787 they proclaimed to the world, "We the people of the United States, in order to form a more perfect union, establish justice, insure domestic tranquility, provide for the common defense, promote the general welfare and (again) secure the blessings of liberty to ourselves and to our posterity, do ordain and establish this constitution of the United States of America."

You and I are the posterity they believed in, that they had faith in. By the same token, we are now "we the people." You will recall that when this remarkable document was sent out to the 13 states to be ratified, the cry went up immediately, "It has no bill of rights!" Our religious freedom is not guaranteed in that. Our right to speak our minds, our right to publish our beliefs are not protected in that sufficiently." The proponents had to promise that the first thing they would do, if the people would only go ahead and ratify this remarkable document, would be to amend it and include a bill of rights that would assure those freedoms in perpetuity.

Sure enough, in 1789, June 8, the First Congress, here came Congressman James Madison saying, "I happen to have a list, gentlemen, that I've been instructed by the Virginia legislature to lay before you men--some amendments." Some congressmen said, "Oh let's do that next year. We're trying to get a government started here, Mr. Madison," or Jamie, as he was called by most of them. He said, "No, you'd better act now or there won't be a government next year. The people are very jealous of these freedoms. They've had it with old King George and Lord North. They had certain constitutional freedoms under the British constitution. I'd remind you that whenever they took a fit of stamping on them, they'd stamp on them. The people know this. They're not going to accept a federal government without these. You're just liable not to have a government next year."

The Congress obviously concurred with him because they sat down and debated. Until you've read the discussions that went on-- James Madison, the man who wrote it, describing why he worded the First Amendment as an absolute command and how he drew from the history of tyranny in Europe and understood it all so clearly and said, "Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion or prohibiting the free exercise thereof," or abridging the freedom of speech or the press or the right of the people peaceably to assemble--you really can't understand the genius of this republic. I couldn't. This was my greatest gift from that struggle I went through. Then you will understand why James Madison conceived that as the jewel in our crown, written and nailed into the basic law of this land, the guarantee that opinions we loath and despise would be defended and protected with the same power that those we cherish and love are. This is our genius. He realized this made us unique in the family of nations. No other nation had other than dreamed of this in the past. This became an operative part of our law.

I was distressed last night to hear Brother Jarmin. I was rejoiced to hear that he had the nerve to get up and speak. I believe in everybody speaking; but I was distressed to hear him misrepresent what the founding fathers said. The author, the principal architect of the Constitution and author of the First Amendment, obviously knew what he was talking about. His repeated admonitions against the government in any way, shape, or form meddling in the field of conscience in religion are so abundant to read that you can only put it down to ignorance to those who aren't familiar with them.

The Baptists, incidentally, were always in trouble back in those days. The Anglican Church--which was the respectability of the day--and Virginia in 1785 passed a law or attempted to pass a law, assessing a tax to have the state pay Anglican teachers. The Baptists just went into a frantic fit--Baptists weren't awfully well-heeled in those days--and James Madison was their great champion. He wrote his "Memorial and Remonstrance" at that time denouncing that. I'd like to read you what he said: "If the public homage of a people can ever be worthy the favorable regard of the holy and omniscient being to whom it is addressed, it must be that in which those who join it are guided only by their free choice, by the impulse of their hearts, and the dictates of their conscience. Such a spectacle must be interesting to all Christian nations as proving that religion, that gift of heaven for the good of man, freed from all coercive edicts from that unhallowed connection with the powers of this world which corrupts religion into an instrument or a usurper of polity of the state in making no appeal but to reason to the heart and to the conscience can spread its benign influence everywhere and can attract to the divine altar those freewill offerings of humble supplication, thanksgiving, and praise which alone can be acceptable to Him whom no hypocrisy can deceive and no forced sacrifices can perpetuate."

This is the author of the Bill of Rights saying this. Time and again in the communication Thomas Jefferson to the Danbury Baptists explaining exactly what the First Amendment was about said, "It was intended to erect a wall, an absolute wall between the state and religion."

I would remind you, my loves, of our great

heritage and great power that has been bestowed upon us by those men of imagination and wisdom and genius, handed to us on a golden platter really, our Bill of Rights. Those men understood tyranny because they had lived under it. They conceived of this, indeed, as a nation of Christian men, and of non-Christian men. There's no record that Mr. James Madison ever set foot inside a church, but he subscribed to Christian doctrine; or that Thomas Jefferson did either. They were deists. But they understood that we were a nation of Christian people, but not a Christian nation, because civil government has no role to play in the conscience of men.

This is our power. This is our strength. It has enabled us to have L. D. Johnsons confront the world as it really is, and to give us that kind of leadership at a time when Washington, DC is talking about a world that doesn't exist at all; that thinks you can use nuclear weaponry to resolve the problems of the world, when the real strength still rests. We are still a beacon light that the world is looking to. It's up to you and to me to use that power realistically to assume again that role as a beacon light for men from all corners of the earth, the unwanted, the ones who had it unmade. Respectability stayed at home, remember. Our ancestry came here looking for a richer life and found it.

I would remind you all, in closing, that this is our power and our glory in this country. Without knowing this--how can people fight for and defend their freedoms in this land if they don't know what those guaranteed freedoms are? How can they be outraged at the fact that the Heritage Foundation is now seeking to reestablish the House Un-American Activities Committee, unshackle the FBI, and turn loose those engines of repression again that are all the trappings of a police state--not a democratic, self-governing democracy--without knowing what their freedoms are?

This is our job: to open the dialogue in America. That's the reason I feel profoundly privileged to have been included in this program of yours because that's what this meeting is about. You are the people. You are America. Thank you.

# Christian Women and the Use of Power

Minette Drumwright

In the beginning, God did a number of amazing things. Perhaps the most awesome of his actions was that he shared his power with his highest creatures. When he created male and female in his image, he commissioned them to have dominion over all that he had created. He empowered them to carry out that assignment.

From that day to this, one of life's constant questions has been "What will you do with your power?" The issue surfaces every hour of the day, for all of us have it--in different amounts and different forms: physical power, intellectual power, relational power, economic power, political power, social power, spiritual power, prayer power, etc.

"Power" is a loaded word. It reaches out and grabs our attention. Especially when it is related to women. Most especially when it is linked with Christian women.

To define our term is important for this discussion. The word "power" comes from a Latin word which means "to be able," "to be capable of." According to the dictionary, it is the ability to be and do, a particular faculty of body and mind. Power is might, force, authority. It is strength. It is influence.

Popularly, power is defined as the ability to get what we want and get people to do what we want them to do. Power changes, alters, affects people and situations. Power is understood as that which makes things happen. It is a difference-making energy.

Many current observers are quick to say and write that women are powerless. Michael Korda, in his best-selling book, *Power*, writes that the largest group of people who do not have power is women. Many women writers agree. Pamela Butler states, "Women's lack of power permeates all of society." Phyllis Chesler writes "The modern female condition is one of powerlessness." Dr. Jean Baker Miller believes "At the present, women wield virtually no power." Indeed, many contend that wherever we look, men have the keys, literally and figuratively.

On the other hand, we have heard all our lives, "Never underestimate the power of a woman." Many contend that the essence of power can be traced to womankind, that women are indeed very powerful, although admittedly, not often directly so. Such phrases as "the hand that rocks the cradle rules the world"; "the woman is the power behind the throne"; "the man is the head, but the woman is the neck that turns the head"; are references that lend support to those who take this stance. Some even see as symbolic of woman's power the fact that the Statue of Liberty and Winged Victory are women, and that the Scales of Justice are held by a woman. Holding these divergent views in balance, let us move into the topic and see if they somehow synthesize themselves.

Perhaps "power" is too general a term. I believe it will be insightful to view the five sources of power as suggested by French and Raven in their book *Group Dynamics*:

1. Reward power: our power to give or

withhold something perceived as valuable by the other person.

2. Coercive power: our power to inflict some kind of punishment that the other person wants to avoid.

3. Legitimate power: power to exert authority legitimately, to use the influence of our title or position.

4. Referent power: power given us because people respect, admire, approve of us.

5. Expertise power: power experienced because of our special knowledge and competence.

We all draw from one or more of these power sources in our attempts to influence people and achieve what we want. Of course, the more of these sources we draw from, the stronger our cumulative ability to influence. The person who has legitimate power and referent power (both title and respect) has more total influence or control than the person who has only legitimate power (only the title). We are all aware of situations (home, church, society) where the person of real influence is not the one who holds the powerful title.

Reward and coercive powers are the ones women most frequently use. Samuel Johnson remarked "Nature has given women so much power that the law has wisely given them very little." In such a remark, he was hinting at reward power.

Michael Korda claims "Most of the women I know either try to charm or nag because they have not found the authentic voice of power." Though he uses other terms, he is saying that women use reward power and coercive power. Since women have not traditionally gone after legitimate power, or to use the current terminology, generally we have not had power strivings, we have had very little taste of legitimate or expertise power. Korda states that one reason we women find it difficult to acquire power is because "power is thought of as essentially male." I think he is accurate. Power strivings are acceptable in men, but we see them as unfeminine, and shy away from asserting our own power.

We all know that there are women who pride themselves on handling a situation "like a man," but these women are resisted, usually by both men and women. They may have expertise power, but they are given little if any referent power. They are not admired, and their influence is limited. We women need to become fully convinced that we can be capable, competent, even dynamic, and not sacrifice our femininity. A woman who wants to "handle a situation like a man does," is self-defeating. We violate the marvelous uniqueness and freedom Christ has given each of us when we try to be an imitation of any other human being. A woman who handles situations as the competent, capable woman that she is, is the one who develops cumulative power from multiple sources. (The most powerful thing we can do is to do our job well.)

There is a wide gap between men and women in referent and expertise power, the power given a person because of his or her individual attributes. I have noticed in the mixed groups where I have served on boards, projects, committees, etc., that women are uncharacteristically quiet. I can think of exceptions, but generally women make very few comments directed toward problem-solving in the presence of men. We supply very little information. We do not analyze the task and come up with solutions. We rarely reveal the extent of our knowledge, even though it might be considerable. No wonder women come out of

these meetings and have gained little, if any, referent power.

Women who do have referent power are comfortable with what Pamela Butler calls "positive self-presentation." This means letting our competence, our credentials known, not in a flaunting sort of way, but simply as a matter of fact. Most women tend to play down or even hide the power that we do have, the accomplishments that are a part of our history. Referent and expertise power are not automatically accorded. Letting it be known that we have paid our dues, the idea of positive self-presentation, does make sense for it leads to referent power. I confess a hesitancy here. It borders on "tooting your own horn," and I reject that, in myself and in others. But I fully accept Butler's valid point.

Women who choose not to have a job, but instead to devote themselves to home, church, and community involvements, find that little legitimate power is afforded by society to the role of homemaker. It is a mind-set that equates worth with earning power. Its values are distorted and materialistic. I am incensed by anything that devalues homemaking and parenting. Personally, I hold it as the highest calling. I recommend it as the choicest of vocations. I am grateful that I have not had to work in a job, for it has given me the freedom, not only to rear our children with comparative leisure, but it has given me the freedom to choose those creative involvements that I find to be fulfilling, meaningful, joyful, and powerful. Many women have chosen to invest their powers differently. I respect that. Authentic freedom is having the choice.

Today, however, many women combine a job with homemaking and feel that they have no choice. In a 1977 *Fortune* magazine article, a survey indicated that most women do work today out of necessity. In 1963, when Betty Freidan's book, *The Feminine Mystique*, swept the country and served as a catalyst for the launching of the Women's Liberation Movement, the phenomenon she described was the "trapped housewife." Today the phenomenon may be the "trapped working woman." Fulfilled or not, bored or not, for many women now, both incomes are needed, and many a homemaker has to stay with her job.

Now social observers are saying that some women are admitting that work is not the fulfilling experience they had expected it to be. Millions are at work in routine jobs. Their primary motivation is financial. This is a sad comment on the investment of women's power.

It will be instructive for us to take a few moments and get some biblical and historical perspective--or we might say--herstorical perspective.

We must go to the godly women of the Old Testament and take a glimpse of women and power there. Outstanding women with national status do surface, but they were exceptions. For generally, women were under the rule of man, and the one ruled is always without direct power. The curse, God's predictive statement "and he shall rule over you," had been prescribed as the wages of sin. It was not a commandment, not what God wanted. He was stating what would be, because of sin--not what should be. It proved to be very accurate. In fact, a woman came to be considered part of a man's property, the essence of powerlessness.

However, the exceptional women that we find on the pages of the Old Testament give

evidence that God's ideal in creation that his creatures would responsibly share his power was never obliterated. Early in Israel's history, Miriam, who is called a prophetess (Ex. 15:20), shared eminence with her brothers, Moses and Aaron.

Later Deborah is encountered--a remarkable woman. She was a prophetess and judge and military leader who delivered her people from the oppression of Jabin (Judg. 4:4-5:31).

Huldah was a prophetess during the reign of Josiah, and had a significant role in public affairs.

Esther--through her courage, boldness, and initiative--saved the entire Jewish nation from extinction.

The portrait of the virtuous woman in Prov. 31 portrays a prominent, affluent businesswoman who ran a large household efficiently. The most significant nuance of this passage is that it gives evidence that there existed, in the midst of the prejudice against women as the source of sin in the world, a positive model of a woman of power in Judaism.

The dividing line of all of history was Jesus. In the fulness of time he came and redeemed God's original intention that men and women would share his delegated power and work together in glorifying him. He lifted woman from the place of subordination and gave her once again worth and dignity and respect and power. In all his teachings, and again and again in his dealings with women, Jesus was 100 percent consistent in this. Mary and Martha, the woman at the well, Mary Magdalene, Joanna, Susanna and the other marvelous women who ministered to him, traveled with him, and supported him and the disciples out of their private means. Make a study of Jesus and women. It's a beautiful experience.

Again in the New Testament we see women who are prophetesses--Philip's four daughters for example, and Anna (Luke 2:36). Keep in mind that prophesy was a highly valued gift in the early church. The term means "proclaiming the message of God."

A close study shows that women had a significant place in the work of the early church. Phoebe was a deaconess. Syntyche and Euodia were called fellow workers by Paul. Priscilla, with her husband Apollos, helped to plant a congregation. Then there's Dorcas, Lydia, and others.

When Paul wrote to the believers at Rome, he sent greetings to 27 fellow workers in the church. Nine of them were women. It strikes me that was a better percentage than we find on twentieth century boards and committees today!

It is interesting to name some of the Christian women of power from the pages of history: Helena, Monica, Catherine of Siena, Joan of Arc, Florence Nightingale, Catherine Booth, Antoinette Brown, Hannah Whitall Smith, and Helen Keller. Their stories are varied and fascinating. I wish there were time to look at them closely, for their power made a difference in their world.

I would like for us to pause and look for a moment at several Christian women of the nineteenth century who brought the spotlight of the nation and the world on women's power in general, or lack of it, depending on your vantage point.

Sarah and Angelina Grimke were the first women on record in America to speak to mixed audiences of men and women. They were Quakers, and their cause was the abolition of slavery. Their speaking in public brought

heated reactions of scorn and contempt that catapulted them into yet another issue: women's rights. One example of disfavor was a pastoral letter written by the Council of Congregational Ministers. "The power of woman is her dependence, flowing from the consciousness of that weakness which God has given her her protection." The letter further told them that when woman "assumes the place and tone of a man as a public reformer, she yields her claim for protection, and her character becomes unnatural."

Another Christian woman of that period whose life and work made a far-reaching difference was Lucretia Mott. A Quaker preacher, she and her husband had six children. She was known for her remarkable vigor and active Christian saintliness. Her causes were temperance and peace, and she was against the oppression of the working class, and slavery. Supporting these issues, she encountered widespread prejudice against her participation because she was a woman. This led her eventually to become one of the two organizers of the Seneca Falls Convention in 1848, which marked the official beginning of the women's rights movement in America.

These three women are cogent to our discussion, for they help us understand that many of the early leaders of the women's movement were Christian women who were acting on what they felt was spiritual and moral conviction. Many men, especially clergy, were severe in opposing the women, usually using Scripture to negate the women's efforts to promote the abolition of slavery and then the rights of women. This shoved the movement, which had its roots among Christian women, outside the Christian framework where it continues even to this day. It is fascinating to wonder what might have happened if the churches would have affirmed the causes the women were supporting and joined them.

It was a secularized movement that gained the vote for women in 1920 after a 60-year struggle. Today, it is a radical and seemingly atheistic movement that is carrying the ball to liberate women. Their view of liberation seems to mean the unskackling of women by dismantling the nuclear family, supplying abortion on demand, promoting homosexual rights including legal marriage and the adoption of children, to name a few. That kind of liberation I find foreign to Christian values.

How ironic! Jesus had the idea first--in its purest form. But Christian churches failed to comprehend and apply it. Now it is distorted beyond recognition that he was its source.

What of the Christian woman of the present day?

Internationally, Mother Teresa is a classic example of referent power. Nationally, as at any other one time in history, there are very few Christian women who exercise power at that level. Some might be Phyllis Schlafly, Corrie ten Boom, Coretta King, and perhaps we could say Ruth Graham, Dale Evans, Rosalyn Carter, and Mary Crowley. Authors who influence many women are Catherine Marshall, Eugenia Price, and Elizabeth Elliot.

The most powerful Christian woman, no doubt, is Phyllis Schlafly, the Catholic woman who heads Stop ERA and Eagle Forum. She is the mother of six, a lawyer, brilliant, articulate, and controversial. Almost single-handedly, she has rallied American women to enough alarm about the ERA that today it looks destined for defeat.

From her legal stance, she believes its

wording would be interpreted by the courts in such a way that the goals of the Women's Liberation Movement would be realized. Interestingly, Women's Liberation leaders are expecting that also.

Mrs. Schlafly enjoys the highest sources of power. Notice the combination: legitimate, referent, and expertise. She is also adept at positive self-presentation.

In 1979 when the government-sponsored National Women's Conference met in Houston, an agenda was adopted which most observers agreed gained the contempt and not the support of the American woman. In fact, it just may be that the extremist resolutions and the weird participants seen in living color on TV screens across the nation did more to cripple the ERA than Mrs. Schlafly's crusade. At any rate, she called for a counter rally. In a large display of woman power, women all over the nation crowded the Astrodome. She continues her crusade against all aspects of the Women's Liberation Movement and women's rights. Now I make a distinction between the Women's Liberation Movement and women's rights. I believe they have different agendas. Mrs. Schlafly is opposed to both. She says, "Women are extremely well-treated." That, no doubt, is true of her and me, but it is not true for thousands of women in our society. As we oppose those issues that violate our Christian values, let us be careful to initiate and support every thrust toward equity and justice for women. My Christian values insist that I take a stand for the rights of every human being--and that includes women.

There are Christian women working for women's rights, though not associating themselves with the WLM. They call themselves "Biblical feminists." They are a part of the Women's Evangelical Caucus. Letha Scanzoni, Nancy Hardesty, Virginia Mollencott are prominent representatives of this perspective.

Many Southern Baptist women apparently are members of the Schlafly organization and a similar one headed by Beverly Le Hay: Concerned Women of America. Very few seem to be a part of the Women's Evangelical Caucus. On the more moderate ground in between, I would place such Southern Baptist leaders as Carolyn Weatherford, Sarah Frances Anders, Elaine Dickson, Anne Davis, Gladys Lewis. There is no organization that represents this moderate perspective. Perhaps there should be.

Let us keep it clearly before us that it is Christian to be for the rights of all human beings--and that includes women.

Among Baptists, we have our heroines, although they were not always considered so at the time.

Ann Hutchison, a Baptist mother with 16 children, was an outspoken advocate of religious liberty in New England in the early 1600s. She was the first woman preacher in America. When her influence began to spread, she was imprisoned, then banished from the Massachusetts Bay Colony. Later the principles for which she pioneered were written into the Constitution.

Ann Judson, Mary Webb, Ann Graves, Lottie Moon, Annie Armstrong, and Ethaline Cox are familiar names of women who have had powerful influence in days of open resistance.

The names of Baptist women who have used their considerable power to influence and stimulate our mission involvement in more recent years are Kathleen Mallory, Mildred McMurray, Alma Hunt, Olive Martin, Marie Mathis, Helen Fling, Carolyn Weatherford, and Christine Gregory. Mrs. Mathis also served

as an SBC vice-president, and president of Women's Department of the Baptist World Alliance. She is the only woman who has been nominated for president of the SBC.

Missions has been the traditional place for women to exercise power. It seems that everyone agrees that Southern Baptists would not be the mission-minded denomination that we are, if it had not been for the dedication and persistence of women. It was not easy. Historically, nearly every assertive effort of Southern Baptist women to lead out for any cause was opposed by many of our men. Yet women persisted in that they felt was right, and showed courage what was remarkable.

There are many stories of women establishing Baptist churches, reviving dead churches, and stimulating lethargic churches. One example occurred here in Dallas in 1872. The First Baptist Church was about to go under, as two earlier Baptist churches in the town had done. But the women organized and went to work. They raised \$500 to start a building. The church survived, and is still surviving, to put it mildly.

Missions is women's best known contribution to Southern Baptist life, but there are many others. Did you know, for example, that stewardship among Southern Baptists was pioneered by women? They were the first to encourage tithing. Women first promoted weekly giving as an act of worship, rather than the once or twice a year ingathering that was the custom. Women were the first to use offering envelopes, another revolutionary bit of progress. Isn't it interesting that these are the foundation of our successful stewardship programs today? I am amazed when I read about the bold, visionary Southern Baptist women leaders of the old days. They were not intimidated by the disapproval of men. When I look at them, I realize that most of us today are pretty bland. About one of those earlier groups of women it was said, "They obeyed God rather than men." I suppose that takes consecrated boldness.

Suffice it to say that a reading of Dr. McBeth's book Women in Baptist Life will give the full story of the difference women have made in denominational life, and in shaping our local church programs. You'll be surprised. It is an interesting puzzle to me that those early women leaders earned referent power, and even expertise power, but legitimate power was still withheld by the men. All this was happening in the years when women were relegated to the balconies during the Southern Baptist Conventions. It was not until 1918 that they were allowed to serve as messengers. It is remarkable that women were so patient and persistent when they were given such minimal, if any, cooperation and approval for their efforts.

Churches have always encouraged and approved women to do the nitty-gritty work of the church. Traditionally, women have not been a part of the policymaking and other forms of leadership roles--the places of legitimate power, except through W.M.U. Most pastors acknowledge that the work of the church goes forward largely on the cumulative strengths and efforts of women, but few pastors lead their churches to place women in the policymaking of the church. When all is said and done, legitimate power might be measured by the number of women allowed in the decision-making structures of our churches and convention. On this standard, woman power appears to be low-grade.

Let us consider together some of the obstacles to the use of women's power.

1. Fear or resistance to power--When we make any kind of change, such as giving women legitimate power, the road ahead is unfamiliar and full of risks. We might not like what happens. These attitudes invariably surface: "Let's just leave things the way they are." "Don't rock the boat!" "Besides that, if you give women an inch, they might take a mile!" The deep fear seems to be that women want to "take over." Frankly, I think that is a totally futile fear. My observation is that the big problem is to get women to accept responsibility. Many are working. Most of those not working want less responsibility, not more.

2. Men's attitudes--Some men have attitudes that are conditioned by years of prejudice concerning the validity of power in the lives of women. Through the years many men have seen women's lack of education, training, and development of gifts and have concluded that God just did not give women the capacity for leadership and the backbone for assertive action. This has changed. Today many women are educated, trained, and have highly developed skills. Men need to update their attitudes accordingly.

3. Women's attitudes--Perhaps the most serious obstacles are the attitudes of women toward themselves, and toward other women. Some women block the flow of their power and influence with their own prejudices and insecurities and age-old inferiority complexes. Eleanor Roosevelt said, "No one can make you feel inferior without your consent." Too many women simply do not feel good about who they are and the extent of their gifts and powers. They are not reaching toward growth and responsibility, and an active use of gifts. Often women do not see and appreciate that we are equal recipients of God's grace, and equal participants in his continued creativeness in the world. Too many of us do not want that responsibility. We want the easier path of noninvolvement with the world. Some of us want our husbands, and men in general, to change the world and let us attend our meetings and do our knitting. We need to mature and be open to the guidance of the Holy Spirit in the use of our power. At times we are jealous of other women's power and discredit them.

4. Lack of agreement on biblical material--The Scriptures do not give us a single pattern for women. We can find passages that reflect the subordinate place of women in the ancient culture. We can also find examples of the heroic women who led the people. We must be careful not to "use" the Bible to lend support to our favorite notions. Accordingly, we must not use the Scriptures to squelch the expression of the Spirit's gifts in the lives of women--or men!

5. The sounds of conflicting and confusing voices--Today there are opposing views loudly expressed. On the left hand, there is extreme emphasis on the liberation of women to the point of neglecting to emphasize the responsibility of freedom. On the right hand, there is extreme emphasis on the submission of women to the point of neglecting our responsibility for being redemptively involved in meeting needs in the world. Some women are responding to the left hand. Some to the right. Many in between do not know how to respond. The result is confusion.

6. Unawareness of existing needs--Sometimes power is not used because we are oblivious to the needs around us and of our responsibility to use our power in relation to those needs. Lack of awareness allows us to

be comfortable in our irresponsibility. Bold Mission Thrust is seeking to make all of us aware of the world and of each person's responsibility and accountability to God for sharing the good news of Jesus.

These are some of the obstacles. What are some of the consequences of women not using their power?

I think we can agree that women have generally been retiring and self-effacing in the open use of power. Women have been careful to make suggestions in the most discreet way. Of course, there are exceptions, and some of them are dramatic. Some of you are married to exceptions. Some of you are exceptions. Nevertheless, the blunt fact is that women in general have tended to tiptoe around the egos of men in general when it comes to power. This makes us vulnerable to at least two sins. One is manipulation.

Manipulation is the power to get what we want by concealing and camouflaging our real feelings behind a repertoire of behavior that is designed to accomplish our objective. Manipulation is indirect and dishonest. It is game-playing. When we are blocked from reaching a goal directly, we begin looking for a way around. Women historically have been thwarted so much that we have become expert manipulators. We need desperately to be redeemed from this abuse of power. We need the confidence, self-esteem, and acceptance to be straightforward, direct, above-board, honest. I am aware that many pastors and male leaders have been "turned off" by their dealings with manipulative women. I understand. I, too, deplore working with that *modus operandi*. But don't let bad experiences sour you forever. Acknowledge that there is another problem--the woman who is openly and flagrantly bossy and overbearing and stubborn. I believe that some men have these problems also! Most of us need help in learning relational skills and communication.

We women are especially vulnerable to being manipulative, and I confess it.

The other sin is irresponsibility. Our laziness or immaturity often causes us to welcome the release from confronting what the Lord wants us specifically to be and do. Again, this is not just a feminine sin. I see many situations where women are the responsible ones, and men find the ways to irresponsibility. We learn from the parable of the talents that we must use our God-given talents and powers or we will lose them. Talents or gifts are not favors. They are responsibilities. The consequences of irresponsibility are terribly sobering.

What are some of the powers that women have? Let us first name some of the traditional powers--some that have been developed over the centuries. I'll just name them even though I would love to discuss them. They are (1) power with our families (2) power to minister to others (3) power to witness (4) power to bless (5) power to nurture (6) power to be on world mission (7) power to make peace, and (8) power to pray.

These are all women's traditional powers. No one resists these.

Now let us look at some of the powers women potentially possess, but generally have not developed and used to the best advantage.

1. Power to think--Women are not famous for this power. Yet God gave us the capacity just as surely as he gave it to anyone. For too long too many of us have not developed this ability for logic and reason and rationality. We have simply assumed that we have no gifts for discernment and judgment and

objectivity. God surely expects the fullest and best use of every portion of our power.

2. Power to be authentic--With all the pulls to be someone other than who we really are, it is well to be reminded that we do have the power to refuse masks and pretenses and rationalizations, and determine to be real and authentic. There is no power in unrealness. There is great power in authenticity and credibility.

3. Power to confront--Confrontation is a power that many women have scarcely developed. Most of us would rather keep the waters smooth. Confrontation requires courage, strength, wisdom, and a willingness to risk and disturb and live with the usually painful consequences (at least in the short run). Yet we need to develop this ability to contribute to the wholeness of others by lovingly confronting them with objective reality. Confronting societal issues is an even larger arena of power.

4. Power to lead--This capacity is present in the lives of many women. Often it has not been called forth. Pastors and church leaders, I challenge you to discern the gifts of leadership in the women in your church, and call forth those gifts. They are obligations to be used. One of your most impactful responsibilities is in the area of gifts. Very little has been said about calling forth gifts, but this is a very big matter in the body of Christ. I challenge you to take this very seriously. I warn you that you won't be overwhelmed by response. Stay with it.

5. Power to be bold--Boldness has not been considered to be a feminine trait. Many of us shy away from it. Help us to see that it is indeed a Christian characteristic. Tell us specifically what you picture is bold and appropriate for women. Be bold in your thinking! Needless to say, we women are thinking through the entire matter. We are being challenged to be bold in the abstract. What about some specifics? Let's talk and think together.

6. Power to make a better world--God is calling each one of us to use our power to make a better world. The world in which many women live is a very small place. We need to broaden our vision beyond "me and mine," then be willing and ready to give ourselves to bending history in the direction of Jesus Christ.

This brings us to talking about where we can use our power. Our theme is "Power in Church and Society." Let's talk about power in the church. Years ago a woman asked evangelist Dwight L. Moody, "What can a woman do to serve Christ?" "Pray tell," he replied, "what can a woman not do?"

We have already acknowledged that women have traditionally worked in all areas of church life doing the basic tasks. Now we are saying that tasks should be more carefully matched with gifts. This is the more difficult approach, but it can be the most effective and most powerful for persons and the kingdom.

Promote the principle of complementarity as committees are formed and the power structure is set in motion. There is need for the viewpoint of both men and women. So far, we are not generally adept at working together, but I have great hopes for the future as we gain experience and respect for our own powers and the powers of one another. Pastors, lead your men and women into this adventure of complementarity. Apparently single women are often overlooked. This needs our attention, too.

May I address those of you who are pastors and leaders in large multiple staff churches? The earliest non-pastoral church employees were women. Their task was in church visitation, and it largely meant ministering to women--a type of pastoral care. Would you seriously consider an updated version of this model--a woman staff member as an assistant to the pastor assigned to ministries to and through women? I don't mean separation, but as part of total church programming. More and more, we have women graduating from our seminaries with excellent credentials and competencies--firmly believing they have been called by God to serve and minister. The ones I am referring to have no interest in the matter of ordination. They just want to serve. I am thinking of an example right now of one who finished Southwestern Seminary in December--one of the finest, most competent, mature persons I know. We worked together in a prison ministry in Fort Worth. She is in her early 30s and is working at Sanger Harris, waiting for the Lord to open a door. I am on the verge of being alarmed that the Lord is calling women to serve him vocationally, some of them as the result of your preaching and counseling. They walk the aisle of decision for church-related vocations in response to your invitation. They get training in our seminaries, and then the places of service for them are so limited that they either go unemployed or underemployed. I don't know what the answer is, but I would like for us together to give the matter some responsible consideration.

May I raise some very specific questions? Pastor, do you frequently ask a woman to pray in your worship service? On Sunday morning? How about the reading of the Scripture? Do you have her join the leaders in worship on the rostrum as she participates? In the last few years, I have been in many of your churches across the Convention and I have seen very few women have significant roles in worship.

My highest priority is attitudinal changes. I want women to be respected to the fullest degree that we are worthy; and men, also. You are persons of power. You can help change attitudes. A step that is practical, possible--and I believe, New Testament--is to include women in prayers and Scripture reading during worship. It accords referent power.

Please understand that there is no subliminal message here concerning ordination of women. I have no hidden agenda. I am simply not dealing with that today, except to say this: As things stand now, women who are ordained to the ministry give up their power among Southern Baptists. About 60 have been ordained. So far as I know, not a one is in a place of legitimate power.

Now let's talk about power in society. There are so many places in society that cry out for the redemptive involvement of Christian women and their power. One of our concerns needs to be the public schools. We need them. Many of them are in a mess, especially at the point of discipline. We need Christian women to run for the school boards, or work assertively for the election of those qualified women who do run. We must work with principals and teachers. We must come up with creative ideas as to ways to be constructive. We need to be in the PTA. We need to use all our power to find ways of dealing with discipline problems. I have great confidence in the ingenuity of women!

Volunteerism is one of the very important

"isms" in our nation. Women have done so much in the hospitals and all kinds of humanitarian institutions and projects. We are fading here. So many volunteers have started working in the job market. We need to recapture our concern for these involvements. This is vital. It includes libraries, museums, playgrounds. We can apply our power to juvenile problems, tutoring programs, child abuse, battered women, and the list is endless.

Very few women involve themselves at the level of city government. We need to let our Christian power come to bear at the level of government closest to us. Christian women who feel led by the Lord to contribute by political participation at any and all levels of government from here to Washington need the courage and support to run for those offices. The rest of us can and should discern the candidates that are most worthy of support, and work in their behalf.

Women's power needs to come to bear on the issues of pornography, television, and movies. They are sick, sick, sick. We can write letters, make telephone calls, form task forces to discover courses of action--and then we can act.

We Christians spend too much time in "holy huddles." We need to get out of the saltshaker and into the world. We've heard it all said so much!

We are in the midst of Bold Mission Thrust--the most visionary and ambitious evangelistic outreach in all of history. There is so much need for the participation of every Christian, we dare not put any limitations on anyone's power to help with the accomplishment of the objectives. Indeed, we must find every possible way to capture, channel, and enhance the powers of all God's children.

This brings us back to where we started. In the beginning, God entrusted power to men and women. Each of us has control over a certain amount. We do not have the same amount of power or the same form of it, but we do have power. Power is the ability to be and to do. It has nothing, in this context, to do with dominance. Each of us faces the hour by hour dilemma of how we will use this difference-making energy.

It is time for women to recognize, claim, and use our power. We must refuse to play the powerless game. We must remember that from the foundation of the world, God has ordained that each of us has certain tasks to do. We are where we are for a purpose. We must determine with all our beings to be and do that which God purposes.

It is time for men to recognize that we have power, but not all power. By our attitudes and actions we can encourage and affirm the full use of women's power, and then use our power to the fullest extent that God leads us.

We all need to recognize that God is calling us together to work toward a Christ-redeemed world. This must be our magnificent obsession. How can we work together to accomplish this? We can do so only by walking together on the more excellent way: the way of love--God's kind of love. I am awed by this magnificent definition of God: God is ultimate power subjected to ultimate love. In all his power, he so loved that he gave himself--his son--our Savior. Love is self-giving.

There are many qualities of self-giving love. Four of the foundational ones we find in the New Testament are humility, servant-

hood, friendship, and mutual submission. What a challenge today that men and women, in doing God's work and sharing his power, will live out these qualities in relation to one another!

Since we are made in God's image, could it not be said that a definition of Christian men and women who are working together for the glory of God in Christ Jesus could be: a degree of power subjected to a greater degree of love? "For God has not given us a spirit of fear, but of love and power." We hear the most powerful words of all: "'Not by might, not by power, but by my spirit, saith the Lord of hosts."

Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus.

# On Doing the Truth

L. D. Johnson

John 3:21

Earlier today I suggested that we have inherited a revolution. Having sown the wind, we are reaping the whirlwind. Further, I suggested that the church may be the one institution with foundations sturdy enough to survive a revolution, that it has done so before, conserving the best of the culture's inheritance while becoming the midwife and mentor for the emerging age. I suggested that this can best be done, not by the church adopting the dying world's death dances, but by the church recovering the vision of her nature and mission.

None of that do I wish now to modify. Instead, I wish to specify. We have indeed inherited a revolution. Whether historians will say of us as Henry Adams wrote of Louis XVI, that we were not up to the task, remains to be seen. One thing seems sure. We are going to have to do more than meet and talk. One of the sins of the contemporary church is that we have not only preached better than we have performed, but that we have made preaching and teaching and committee-ing stand in the place of doing. That has happened so routinely that much of the time we operate out of a context that talking is doing. It isn't. "Much cackle, few eggs." That is a proverb only because it represents a considerable slice of ordinary human behavior. The problem is that in revolution rhetoric without response is both phony and futile. In revolution, you had better put up or shut up.

In the same context in which that timeless summary of the Gospel appears--John 3:16--are found these words of our Lord: "But he who does the truth comes to the light, that it may be clearly seen that his deeds have been wrought in God." There are two kinds of responses to the Light of the world, this passage tells us. One response is to shun the light and scurry like cockroaches into the darkness because the light shows up the shabbiness of your deeds. The other response is to come to the light in order that the light may show that what the doer did was in obedience to God. "He who does the truth comes to the light." Truth, as John understands it, is not a philosophical abstraction to be discussed, mulled over, and defined. It is not a set of propositions offered as explanation of the universe; it is not a doctrine to be embraced. It may be related to all of those,

but it is also something to be done. We people in academe are forever talking about the relentless search for truth. Sometimes I suspect that there is not enough effort in the search to make even a mild sweat break out on the scholar's brow. Truth, says John, is what you are doing if you are doing God's work.

As God incarnated his eternal truth in Jesus, so truth must take on tangibility in what the man of God does. How does the church "tangibilitate" truth in the crisis of the contemporary world revolution?

To begin with, there needs to be a new disposition in the churches to embrace both sides of the Gospel--redemption and responsibility, faith and works. No older or more common issue has plagued Christendom. We just don't seem to be able to get and keep it together--the indivisible word of profession and practice. We are always connecting these with an "or" instead of an "and," suggesting that they are alternative Christian lifestyles. The result is always a crippled, one-legged, unconvincing witness.

Sometimes we emphasize evangelism and largely ignore social concern, going after men's souls while letting their lives rot in poverty and despair, meanwhile feeling no conflict in conscience over the enjoyment of our surfeiting abundance. Some years ago, for the annual hunger relief drive on our campus, an effort was made to raise money to build windmills along the Omo River in Ethiopia so that, equipped with simple pumps, the windmills could provide water for irrigation, allowing the desperately poor natives to grow food for their families. The project was being administered by an American Presbyterian missionary. Meanwhile, back on campus, one influential campus religious organization chose not only not to participate in the project, but actively to oppose it on the ground that it was "typical religious Band-Aidism"; that what those African natives needed was not windmills, but salvation (it never seems to occur to such people that the two might be connected).

About a year after the windmill project had been completed I got word that the veteran missionary had been murdered by guerillas who came one night to his door, called him out and shot him down in cold blood. Not long after this news reached me, I was waited upon one day by three members of the student religious organization which was so concerned about saving souls. They wanted a favor. We talked about it, and then I said, "Oh, by the way, remember that windmill project you people opposed? Well, the missionary who conceived the idea of the windmills has been murdered by Communist-inspired guerillas." One of them said a bit skeptically, I thought, "Do you have any proof of that?" "Oh, I think so," I said, and reached in the file and handed him a copy of the mission magazine which carried the story and the missionary's picture.

The young man took one look and his eyes widened in disbelief. In a little while he looked up and said, "I know that man! My mother was in college with his son. I have heard that missionary speak in my church." "Small world, isn't it," I said. "It cost me \$256 to build one windmill; it cost you nothing to oppose it. It cost that man his life."

No less a truncation of the Gospel is talk of Christian reformation apart from redemption. People who get stars in their eyes from talking or hearing about making the

world a better place, who are touched by the cries of their disfranchised and disadvantaged brothers and sisters, may be annoyed with all the God-talk about getting men's hearts changed through personal encounter with Christ. But for the Christian there is no other way to talk. Only talk is not enough.

In the words of George MacLeod of the Iona Community in Scotland, "We have dismembered the Cross. Churchmen carry about the vertical beam, our forgiveness in Christ, and unconsciously escape the turgid demands of its corollary in horizontal obedience. Meanwhile, the world (oh, so moral and well-meaning) carries round the horizontal, forever seeking right relations with neighbour man or neighbour nation, trying to get itself straight without that Bible knowledge about man's condition that humbles, and about the Christ that alone can totally exalt. It is precisely the conjunction of the vertical and the horizontal, that, in every sense, makes the Cross. And it is the Cross that alone can save."

The beams of the cross cannot be separated without destroying its meaning. The issue is not an either/or, calling for a persuasive evangelism or an aggressive program of social action. How could we who profess such deep devotion to "the whole Bible" have allowed faith and works to become strangers to each other in the church?

Have you preached lately from the thundering words of Amos? "Listen, you men who crush the humble, and oppress the poor. Small you make your measures, large your weights. You cheat by tampering with the scales, . . . to buy the needy for a pair of shoes, to sell the very refuse of your grain. . . . Woe to the careless citizens . . . lolling on their ivory divans, sprawling on their couches, dining off fresh lamb and fatted veal, crooning to the music of the lute, lapping wine by the bowlful, and using for ointment the best of the oil--with never a single thought for the bleeding wounds of the nation."

Or when has this text from Isaiah been wrestled with: "Cease to do evil, learn to do good: Seek justice, correct oppression, defend the fatherless, plead for the widow." If the prophets cannot reach us with the necessity to embrace both beams of the cross, consider the words of him who by his hanging upon it glorified it forever in our sight: "Not every one who says to me, 'Lord, Lord,' shall enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of my Father who is in heaven." Or remember the parable of the Last Judgment. The separation is made not upon the basis of confession, baptism, or creed, but whether that horizontal beam of the cross had been grasped. Were the hungry fed, the thirsty watered, the naked clothed, the sick and imprisoned visited? Or remember his very first sermon text: "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor; he has sent me to heal the broken-hearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised, to preach the acceptable year of the Lord." Sounds like a full-blown program of Christian social action. Or remember his answer to John the Baptist in response to John's inquiry, "Are you the Coming One, or look we for another?" "Go tell John what you see and hear: the blind see, the lame walk, lepers are cleansed, and the deaf hear, the dead are raised, and the poor have good news

preached to them."

It's been said a thousand, thousand times. Foy Valentine said it plainly in his little book, Believe and Behave. There surely are two beams to the cross.

If we are to do the truth, not only have we to remember that the Gospel is the divine Word of both redemption and responsibility, but we have also to acknowledge that responsibility is both personal and corporate. The necessity for personal moral renewal if this culture is to survive will be denied by few. We have witnessed a fundamental shift in the concept of personal morality and integrity. "Abscam," a new word in the American vocabulary to go along with "Watergate," does not really shock us. We take such behavior by elected officials more or less for granted. In our state of South Carolina, the most celebrated of the Abscam congressmen was renominated by his party after his indictment (though he was subsequently narrowly defeated for reelection). A friend of mine who lives in that congressional district said: "People around here said about voting for him, 'We know he's a crook, but he's our crook.'"

Sometimes it appears that the seamier our personal lives become the more exercised we get over large and distant problems. Students get all worked up over the environmental crisis, but every Sunday morning when I come to the campus to prepare for worship I meet maintenance personnel going about picking up the trash and beverage cans thrown down by students the night before. But young people don't have a corner on the market of inconsistency. How many of us will give generously to send missionaries to Nigeria, while being certain that neither we nor our children get to be close friends and equals with black people in our own town? The old doctor in The Brothers Karamazov has our number when he confesses: "I love humanity, but I can't help being surprised at myself; the more I love humanity in general the less I love men in particular. On the other hand, it invariably happened that the more I hated men individually, the more ardent became my love for humanity at large."

However, there is another side to Christian morality which our Baptist individualism makes it hard for us to hear. I am not just one person; I am part of a community for which I have appropriate responsibility. Further, these two sets of responsibilities--personal and corporate--are not two separate and distinct areas. They interpenetrate one another, so that the culture impinges upon and invades my living room, gets inside my head, makes me in large measure who I am, as well as my helping to make it what it is. Never was this put plainer than by Reinhold Niebuhr nearly a half century ago in Moral Man and Immoral Society. Many a person who guards his personal rectitude like an angry dog standing over his favorite bone refuses to take any responsibility for the public character of his culture, or acknowledges that either by participation in or abstention from the culture's values and priorities he helps to make them. What I am appealing for is the realization that the public good is not just everybody's business--and therefore nobody's--but rather the public good and my own private good are two parts of the same thing. Martin Luther King was on target when he said in a sermon that it is not enough to rescue victims on the Jericho Road. We must rid the road of robbers.

So, the Lord calls us to do the truth. We talk enough already. Niebuhr wrote in his

Leaves From the Notebook of a Tamed Cynic, "When I sit through a church conference I begin to see a little more clearly why religion is on the whole so impotent ethically, why the achievements of the church are so meager compared to its moral pretensions. . . . The church conference begins and ends by attempting to arouse an emotion of the ideal, usually in terms of personal loyalty to the person of Jesus, but very little is done to attach the emotion to specific tasks and projects."

To speak the truth in a world full of punk and acid rock, of angry charges and counter-charges, and of bombastic political rhetoric is hard enough. To do the truth in government hall and marketplace, in factory and classroom, at home and in the neighbor's house, is harder still. But without doing it, all professions of truth and all praise of it will be like the chaff which the wind drives away.

# Church and State: The Separation of Powers

James M. Dunn

Two hundred years after John Leland was arguing for church/state separation, we're still at it.

Leland was a rambunctious fellow who had made a mark in his corner of Virginia. He ultimately influenced James Madison, and was a major contributor to the First Amendment.

One of my favorite Leland stories is: He met head-on in public a clergyman who had challenged Leland's attacks on the established church. The Anglican said, "The minister should get tax support so that he'll not have such a hard time preparing his sermons." Leland responded, "I can expound the Scriptures without any special preparation." The High Churchman called his bluff and said, "Very well then, what would you do with Num. 22:21, which reads, 'And Balaam. . . saddled his ass?'" Leland gave the setting and said, "The passage clearly has three points: (1) Balaam, as a false prophet, represents the state-hired clergy; (2) The saddle represents the enormous tax burden of the salaries of these tax-paid preachers; and finally (3) The dumb ass represents the people who would bear such a burden."

I'll not press the analogy of the illustration. Almost exactly 200 years from that event we sit down together and discuss the role of the church and the state. I would suggest that there are four pivotal issues that we face just now: (1) the definition of church/state separation (2) the place of religion in education (3) the intrusion of government in church affairs, and (4) the changing role of the state.

First, we need to hammer away at our understanding of the relationship of church and state. Within the past year, a great deal of foolishness has filled the papers and pulpits with exchanges about church and state. Some brethren labeled "Baptists" have been severely criticized for violating the sacred Baptist principle of separation when they became actively, if belatedly, involved in social and political issues.

Now, there are some serious criticisms of the theology, ethics, and methodology of the so-called New Religious Right. But, for the

most part, one cannot fault their call for Christian citizens to be active in the political process.

We need to rethink what we believe about first, the relationship of Christians to the world; and then, the relationship of religion and politics. These two broader questions will determine the way in which we view church/state questions.

It is as if we were dealing with a three-layered cake. The bottom layer is made of Christians and the world. Upon it is the layer of religion and politics. Finally, much smaller in scope than the other two, is the level of church/state relations.

Our Baptist record of relating Christians to the world--a basic question of Christian social ethics--is not a consistent or appealing story.

In short outline, the doctrine of imago Dei--the idea that all persons are made in the image of God--has profound implications for all three layers of that symbolic cake. F. J. Sheed says: "The concept that all persons are made in the image of God is an idea of such transcendent importance that any difference between this person and that fades into nothingness by comparison." If we believe that every person replicates God, we will relate to the peoples of the world differently from the "average citizen" who knows only undifferentiated masses, nationally tagged populations, or pawns of economic systems.

The doctrine of the incarnation also powerfully affects the notion of the Christian's relationship to the world. Our favorite verse says: "God so loved the world. . . ." In taking on flesh, Jesus Christ ennobled all humankind. Yet, much of our religion is nervously nationalistic, and limiting to loving the world only as we feel required to by the missionary challenge.

I need not stay long at a theological dig with you; but it is clear that when we are true to the high calling of God in Christ Jesus, we care passionately about the world around us. Our compassion is rooted in a sense of solidarity with all mankind. We know that we all suffer the same fragmented human condition, and that Jesus came to bear it with us and give us hope.

There is a deep sense in which we are one with all sinners. Nil a me humanae alienum puto. Nothing human is alien to me. G. K. Chesterton said: "We are all in a small boat on a stormy sea, and we owe each other a terrible loyalty."

Out of this sense of responsibility for the world about him, Brunner advised us to maintain a Christian posture in the world: Bible in one hand, newspaper in the other. I fear that a good many Baptists have made a choice and read one or the other, but not both.

One of the real reasons for the confusion that exists in Baptist life about church/state relations is massive, unmitigated, pervasive, and unyielding ignorance. Not stupidity, but ignorance in the strictest definition of the word.

Will Rogers said, "We're all ignorant, but just about different things." Well, there are lots of different things about which we are all ignorant.

As a whole, we don't even do as well as Will Rogers. He said: "All I know is what I read in the papers." A quick test of any Sunday evening church crowd would reveal that we don't even read the papers. Take the "prayer in schools" issue. Never have so

many, who knew so little, continued to say so much, for so long.

Do you know about poor Bill Clark? He was up for confirmation before the U.S. Senate a few weeks ago. He's now the number two man at the State Department. They asked him if he would name the prime minister of South Africa. He couldn't. Zimbabwe? He couldn't. They asked him to describe the struggle going on in the British Labor Party. He couldn't. The Dutch papers labeled him: Nitwit. A little harsh, perhaps, but there's really no excuse for any of us not doing our basic homework about the world in which we live. Do you remember the ugly American? There's an uglier Christian American. He is the one who does not know or care about the world around him. Arrogant ignorance is insufferable, not knowing and not knowing that we don't know.

On a Baptist campus a few years ago I stayed in a dorm in which the guys bragged that there was not a daily newspaper because they were "into Jesus." I suspect that we'd all be a little relieved not to have to take the current events test of "My Weekly Reader." Compare and contrast Mugawbe and Mobutu. What are the various theories of economic development operative in Third World countries? Distinguish between Mali and Malawi. The point I want to make is simple. We do not love the world as we claim to. The irrefutable proof lies in our failure to be global citizens--Christians who know the world.

Anti-intellectualism in American life has crept over into church life and multiplied. There's a certain parochialism among us that's inexcusable.

I know a good many of you, and you know me. I am aware of the danger in this sort of meddling. Let Elton Trueblood say it: "Mediocrity is sin and heresy."

The Christian who denies the social dimension of the Gospel is putting a premium on ignorance, resting on an immoral nostalgia for things once learned, and modeling mediocrity.

The Word of God is quick and powerful, and effective. It is in context, and that context is the world; not just the inner life.

We need to rewrite the song: "Turn your eyes upon Jesus, . . . and the things of earth will grow strangely 'clear' in the light of His Glory and Grace." We've sung the "dim" heresy of the song, and acted it out in our "dim" witness.

Enough about Christians and the world. Yet, I'm convinced that we can't even begin dealing with church/state relations apart from a right understanding of how Christians relate to all human institutions.

We have to look at religion and politics because this is often confused with the church/state question. The separation of church and state has never meant the separation of Christians from their citizenship or the separation of God from government.

Hitler held: "We claim this earth, let the church have the hereafter."

We tend to agree, instead, with William Temple who said, "Since we cannot deny the existence of (the church's) power, we must simply be good stewards of that power."

For years, we've been pleading for involvement--the ethical corollary of the theological doctrine of incarnation. There is a big task before us in describing and displaying how the churches are involved in politics.

It's clear that the church is at its best

when it is teaching, motivating, evaluating, and holding up ideals. But in a democracy, a more specific engagement with public policymaking is unavoidable by churches and church people.

Fortunately, we're not expected to provide a specific prescription for every ill. Yet from the beginning the church has been involved in politics:

To say that Jesus is Lord was to register a public protest and declare that Caesar was not Lord. It was to make a political as well as theological affirmation. Proper worship, in this context, had deep political consequences as it would in our context if worship were properly understood. (Wallis, An Agenda for Biblical People, p. 76.)

First then, we have a great deal of educating to do on defining appropriately the role of church and state. Our lack of broad-based constituency who understand the difference between separation of church and state and separation of religion and politics has left our people vulnerable to the ego-driven electronic churchmen who manipulate for money the basically uninformed and drifting members of our churches.

All one has to do to identify that egomania is listen critically to their appeals to themselves--their feelings, their experiences--as their highest authority (no matter what they say about the Bible). Count the uses of the first person singular pronoun to sense their vision for America. Without any sign of understanding Christian ethics, they would impose by force of law their own brand of morality. They really want a theocracy, not a democracy. It's clear that each one of them wants to be "theo."

Without a view of Christians and the world that's rooted in the Bible, theology, history, and Christian ethics, one cannot hope to understand the interplay of religion and politics. Without understanding of religion and politics, there's not much hope for a workable definition of church/state separation.

The second pivotal issue we face is the place of religion in education. It is a serious question and not to be taken lightly. The public schools are in real trouble in some of our large cities; though they are far healthier, and more effective--at least outside the central cities--than their harping critics admit.

The focus of attention right now seems to be on the place of religion in the public schools--specifically, prayer in schools. In the history of this nation the Supreme Court has handed down five decisions regarding religion in the public schools. It is the last three of these that catch all the attention today: (1) Engel v. Vitale--school-sponsored prayer is unconstitutional (2) Abington School District v. Schempp--Bible reading and the Lord's Prayer are unconstitutional in the classroom, and (3) November 17, 1980--a school district may not be "required" to post the Ten Commandments in the classroom.

Because such heat has been generated over these decisions with so little light, let's look for a moment at the "school prayer" cluster. It is my view that Baptists should be grateful for these decisions as temporal, legal safeguards for church/state separation which is itself a fence or a hedge about religious liberty.

1. First, we should be honest about the issue. The battle is not "to put prayer back in the schools." That's offensive to theol-

ogy. It's as if we had the power to dump the Heavenly Father in a wheelbarrow and cart him around. It's also offensive to common sense. It is state-sanctioned prayer these people are really seeking. For the state to allow prayer implies that it has the power to disallow prayer. We cannot accept that. Prayer has not been forbidden. When it comes to laws and amendments to "return religion to the schools," there's a simple rule of thumb: If something isn't broken, don't fix it.

2. Then, there's a serious theological issue for Baptists regarding the nature of prayer. Genuine prayer can't be permitted or prevented. Hollow ritual is meaningless and not real prayer. All religion to be real has to be freely, voluntarily entered. Hear these simple arguments. Though I've discovered that those whose minds are made up won't listen, you might stumble upon one undecided.

a. Christians cannot fully join non-Christians in their prayers, and so non-Christians should not be expected to enter Christian worship. (It could well keep them from ever actually becoming Christian.)

b. School prayers would either be effective, in which case they'd constitute indoctrination and be therefore unfair; or they would be ineffective, in which case they'd constitute dilution. We've always seen the benefits of mechanical prayer as minimal.

3. Next, there is a very practical consideration regarding implementation. Most would agree that in the classroom there should be no compulsion to conformity, no coercion of conscience. Yet, which one of you wants to tell a little eight-year-old girl that she may leave the room and not participate, marking her as the one who doesn't believe in the God of the class? Who among us would want to be the teacher to tell an eleven-year-old boy: "Well, if you don't want to leave the room, you may play like you're praying"?

It's bad religion and bad law. There's no way to apply fairly school prayers in a pluralistic society.

4. Finally, there's an historic argument against school prayers. Look at the other nations of the world where church and state are wed and prayers are said in school. Would this ritual really make the difference some claim?

It hasn't brought church-going to England, peace to northern Ireland, vital faith to Spain, clean newsstands to Denmark, morality to Sweden, or common decency to Iran. No, the claims that everything went wrong because prayer was thrown out of school are patent poppycock.

Baptists have rightly understood that freedom of religion has to go all the way and become potentially freedom from religion, or it's meaningless. Unless every individual is free to say "no," then his "yes" is nothing. That applies even to children. A plastic doll that says "I love you" when you pull a string means nothing; but a Dennis the Menace child, strong-willed and rebellious with a mind of his own, can say "I love you" and melt a heart of stone.

George W. Truett, on the steps of the United States Capitol, said, "If by lifting one finger I could cause a man to become a Christian against his will, I would not." That's the spirit that understands that schools aren't in the business of prayer. Shouldn't be. The best thing government can do for religion is leave it alone.

The other side of the religion/education coin involves the use of public money for

private and parochial education. The particular threat just now is labeled "tuition tax credits." The various plans would allow a tax credit on one's income tax for a set amount if it were spent for education at a private or church-related school. It's just as much a tax expenditure decision by the Congress as if a line item were added to the budget. Not a deduction, a credit--taxes not paid by the individual involved, and therefore to be paid by the rest of us who claim no such credit.

What's wrong with tuition tax credits?

1. Discriminatory--help for those who need it least. The really poor do not have the \$500 to \$1,000 required to qualify for this one additional form of welfare for the rich.

2. Inflationary--offering a new initiative in federal spending with uncontrollable cost escalation. Father Bredeveg of the National Catholic Education Association testified for tuition tax credits in the last Congress because "it would enable us to increase tuition." Even Al Senske, the Department of Education's secretary for nonpublic education and a strong supporter of such a plan, lamented that "federal budget considerations and our total economy rule it out at this point." A new entitlement program would represent another ongoing drain on the treasury.

3. Unconstitutional--because, in fact, almost 80 percent of the funds would wind up in the parochial schools of one denomination. The Supreme Court in Nyquist (1973) ruled out tax credits on Constitutional grounds. Excessive entanglement with religion is unavoidable.

4. Undemocratic--because they would encourage and subsidize segregation academies at worst; and sorry, substandard schools at least. The taxpayer would have no say over the way that part of his tax dollar is spent: taxation without representation. At present, taxpayers can follow their education dollar through the thousands of freely elected school boards. The school board can be forced into premature retirement. Tuition tax credit dollars are beyond the voter's control.

5. Divisive--because they would mandate competition and infighting for the public dollar. Private and parochial schoolmen would be rooting like little pigs at the trough of tax money.

6. Dishonest--because it would use the parent as the conduit for tax dollars to flow into schools where otherwise they would not go constitutionally--a subterfuge, an attempt to do indirectly what is directly illegal.

7. Illogical--In convoluted reasoning unworthy of the United States Senate, Moynihan and Packwood argue that because parents have the right to send their children to private and parochial schools that the taxpayer must help them do it.

8. Destructive--of the public schools. It allows the nonpublic schools to skim off the best and leave the difficult, more expensive-to-educate children with the public systems. The issue is nothing less than the future of the public schools. We'd be paying a premium with tax dollars for withdrawing children from the public schools.

Discriminatory, inflationary, unconstitutional, undemocratic, divisive, illogical, dishonest, destructive--other than that, tuition tax credits are okay!

For a third pivotal issue in church/state

relations, one would have to cluster loosely labeled "government intrusion in church affairs."

In 1980, many of us in this room spent hours--some of us days--working on two specific aspects of the phenomenon: ERISA and the Overseas Earned Income tax exclusion for missionaries. Had these two government goofs not been corrected, literally millions of dollars given through our churches would have been needlessly, unfairly, and, I'm convinced, unconstitutionally diverted from the purposes for which they were given.

The Employees Retirement Income Security Act (ERISA) would have demanded a burdensome and costly division of our annuity work--a tangle of government red tape when one moved from a denominational missions job to a local church, or vice versa--and a blatant supervisory invasion of our pension plan by the Internal Revenue Service. Incidentally, the cluster of corrections required in ERISA legislation has not been completed. We must respond to Dr. Darold Morgan's leadership to finish the job.

The income tax placed on our missionaries in developing countries would have cost the Foreign Mission Board at least \$8 million annually, and thereby penalized missions advance that much. If it were fair, legal, and Constitutional, however, we would simply have had to pay it. All three of the tests mentioned above were at least open to debate. Is it fair for not-for-profit workers going into serving vocations in developing countries to have to pay taxes both in the sending country and the host country? Is it consistent with our national policy--with complex tax laws, credits, and incentives--for those who are engaged in charity with the hungry to be penalized? Is it honoring the free exercise of religion to exact a burden not even placed on some entrepreneurial ventures in the same underdeveloped nations? December 24, 1980, President Carter signed into law the exclusion giving relief.

We'd probably better remain alert, however, because other evidences of intrusion may be more serious in the long haul than these two just mentioned. In fact, when you look at the time, money, and effort that it took to correct these two federal foul-ups, prospects for the future are not bright.

William P. Thompson, stated clerk of the United Presbyterian Church, has said it well:

A pervasive pattern of governmental activities at all levels constitutes a serious threat to the free exercise of religion. . . . We must protest vigorously the growing tendency by government to distinguish between 'churches' on the one hand and the agencies, institutions, and programs created by churches in the exercise of their faith on the other. The protection of the Constitution should extend to both. We must oppose the progressively narrower definition of religion appearing in regulatory, legislative, and judicial decisions. This tendency, if unchecked, would restrict the shield of the First Amendment to a shrinking sphere of religious activity. . . private, sacerdotal, and liturgical aspects. . . . The similarity of these developments to the restraints imposed by totalitarian regimes of the right and left, as they have ruthlessly privatized religion, should give us pause. What are the manifestations of this trend?

1. Lobby disclosure legislation is trying

to make church groups accountable to the federal government for its witness in public affairs. Such monitoring is unacceptable for prophetic religion in a free society. We attempt to influence legislation as an integral aspect of our faith.

2. Tax exemption of the churches allows the IRS to apply its self-devised, sometimes secret, inconsistent, "substantiality" tests to church organizations bearing public witness. Churches and other not-for-profit organizations may speak up only so long as the IRS in its wisdom is convinced they have not spent a "substantial" portion of their budget attempting to influence legislation.

3. There is the "integrated auxiliary" question requiring filing annual informational returns (Form 990). In this issue the IRS arrogated unto itself the highly questionable role of determining what is and what is not "religious." (A word of caution: All church-related agencies which do not qualify as integrated auxiliaries need to file Form 990, but clearly mark it Under Protest. The failure of any agency to file would enable IRS to pick the weakest delinquent and bring suit against it. If IRS won that case, regulations would be legally established for all agencies.)

4. Unemployment taxes and parochial schools--at issue is the government's authority to define the nature and mission of the church.

5. The IRS and enrollment of parochial schools--controlling admission policies of church schools, ignoring the membership patterns of the churches themselves.

6. The EEOC and church schools have the government attempting to control employment practices in schools dedicated to the training of ministers, even at the seminary level where no tax dollars are involved. (Federal District Judge Eldon Mahon, January 23, 1980, ruled in favor of Southwestern Seminary.)

7. Investigation and evaluation of the "cults." We Baptists were considered a cult not long ago.

8. The National Labor Relations Board has determined to take jurisdiction of labor/management relations in Catholic schools.

9. The Worldwide Church of God has been placed in receivership by a California court claiming civil jurisdiction over its exercise of religion.

10. Several cases have the courts involved with church splits in which presbyterial or episcopal church government systems are threatened by the government imposing congregational polity on the local church by judicial fiat.

11. Responsibility of the parent religious group for contacts and liabilities of subsidiaries--the Pacific Homes Corporation of the United Methodist Church.

12. Solicitation in public places by the Hare Krishnas and the Seventh-Day Adventists.

13. Disclosure of income by religious groups.

14. Conflict of employment schedules with religious beliefs.

A fourth pivotal issue that merits consideration is far broader and more overarching than the sort of particulars just mentioned. Ultimately, this last issue may be the most significant. It involves the changing role of the state in regulating the lives of its citizens. Some of the very persons pleading and working for less government are contradictorily pushing for laws that, to be enforced, would push us close to the 1984 portrayed by George Orwell.

William Buckley suggested on a recent program that the teaching of the Bible in the public schools shouldn't pose any problem. "It should be taught as an allegory. That would satisfy any intelligent, informed citizen." Old smarty pants Buckley doesn't understand the problem.

If the so-called Human Life Amendment to the United States Constitution were passed and consistently enforced, we'd have government in the doctor's offices and the bedrooms. To insist that personhood commences with conception has implications that even ardent anti-abortionists may not have considered. The IUD would be unconstitutional. Taking a morning-after pill would be murder. Each miscarriage would have to be federally examined. Every "D & C" would bring the obstetrician/gynecologist under the scrutiny of constitutional law.

Disturbing to me are the thousands of therapeutic abortions received by children 10 to 15 years of age that would be stopped. All are victims of rape or incest--few promptly reported, none legal under the sort of laws proposed by hard-line anti-abortionists. With them a one-hour-old zygote or one-week-old embryo is the same as a fetus or the life of a mother. One specific brand of theology would be written into the Constitution of the United States if the Human Life Amendment people had their way. It is a church/state issue when the sex ethic of one theology is pushed as the law of the land.

A good many attempts to regulate the lives of private citizens sound more like Calvin's Geneva than the United States of America.

Eighty-three amendments to the United States Constitution are currently under consideration. Some of them would alter the First Amendment. Others would call a new Constitutional Convention opening "Pandora's box" to the whim of public sentiment at the particular second.

It is at least illustrative of the danger to note how last year's ardent advocates of the balanced budget, the subject incidentally of one of the Constitutional amendments proposed, were suddenly this year's reasonable promoters of an increased debt limit. It was "necessary," "practical," and "our turn now." What will happen if the fickle winds of political popularity begin to misshape the Constitution?

We face a situation in the nation in which we must decide if we want to start writing into the Constitution whatever the majority of the moment may demand. We must determine if we are willing to allow the state to regulate in a way that we have no escape even in the courts. We have to judge if we are ready to abandon the rights and guarantees given us in the Constitution and the Bill of Rights.

Baptists have stood for religious liberty, rooted in soul freedom based on our voluntary approach to matters spiritual. Now is no time to turn back.

We dare not panic and succumb to the loud voices that would drown out dissent.

We dare not allow the apparent public tide of security seekers to run roughshod over freedom.

We dare not betray by our apathy and inaction the blood-bought liberty that is our Baptist heritage.

## A New Fundamental

L. D. Johnson

John 13:34

If you ever made a promise you later found hard to keep you know the trouble I've seen trying to write a sermon from the text of John 13:34, "A new commandment I give unto you, that you love one another, even as I have loved you." If you are a preacher, I need say no more, for you, too, under the mandate to report a subject, have promised what subsequently seemed impossible to deliver. You, too, have wrestled and gyrated, maybe even dodged or sidestepped a bit, trying to cope with a text that will neither respond to your urgency nor turn you loose.

"A new commandment I give unto you. . . ." It sounds simple and direct enough. No ambiguity there. Why am I having trouble with it? I figured out that three things were bothering me:

One is that the words are indeed simple and direct--no mystery to be revealed to the uninitiated, no convolutions of language to be untangled, no opportunity for me to show you how smart I am. Texts that need only to be declared and not explained give me the most trouble. How can I say for 20 minutes what is obvious in the text itself?

As I asked myself, "Man, what is with you and this beloved text?" I discerned something else even more disturbing. I don't know enough to preach on this text. I haven't

practiced it enough. Oh, I hear a lot of talking and singing which use the word, and I do my share of that activity. And that is part of my dilemma. We've talked and sung the word "love" into near meaninglessness. The hazard of excessive use of language is that, like the currency, it gets to the place where it no longer buys anything worthwhile. Such is the word "love." What a number we have done on that beautiful word.

One of my wife's favorite shows is "Loveboat." The reason she likes it is that it always turns out right. I don't fault that scenario, so little these days does. But if you watch "Loveboat" you have seen some of the most inane displays in the name of love imaginable. Two total strangers meet on the cruise ship, have dinner, go on deck in the moonlight, stare soulfully into each other's eyes for half a minute, then are drawn like magnets into a long and passionate kiss, from which they finally come up for air and say simultaneously, "I think I'm in love!" Little wonder nobody recognizes love anymore.

Or I listen to two teenage girls ecstatically declaring their love for some punk rock hero who screams at the microphone and gyrates his hips in the name of music. That is love?

Or I read the Sunday Parade magazine--that middle-class version of the National Enquirer--and am titillated by revelations of which movie or TV personality who has been "in love" a dozen times before is now "in love" with which producer or director who also has a dozen or so notches on his or her "in love" tree. The Hollywood game of musical beds continues its tiresome and pathetic round. That is love?

Or I attend a convention of peers of my denomination and listen to some brother who has been outmaneuvering and out-politicking his brothers to get where he is, and reassure us about the profound love he has for the brethren. And the more he reassures me, the words emitted through shark's teeth, the more uncomfortable I become. Is this love?

This text wouldn't come across for a third reason--one I confess with some guilt and embarrassment. It defies me because I haven't practiced it much. My own lovelessness, my own penchant for judging, condemns me. Like the pilgrim in Herman Hagedorn's poem, "The Bomb That Fell on America," "I have talked about love, but I did not love." How can I talk about unconditional love, when my own is so conditional?

About the time I was resigned to give it up and try to con you by flying an oldie-but-goldie, it occurred to me that while I could not honestly tell you that I am greatly experienced at obeying this commandment, I do know about love from being on the other end of it--the receiving end.

There are grandparents on an Oklahoma farm who when our parents died took my two brothers and me to raise--little boys two, four, and five--and they respectively 70 and 65. Incredible love, the willingness to take on such a burden at such an age so that three little brothers might not be parceled out among the relatives but grow up together. And that is love.

I have been on the receiving end of other loves--that of a brother who stayed on the farm to work so that I could go to college, I being the one called to preach and perceived as therefore the one greater in need of education. He didn't get to go to college until he was 55. That was love. A wife of

43 years who has loved me when I was unlovable, encouraged me when I was discouraged, put up with me when I couldn't stand myself, and generally has been my most loyal cheerleader and wisest critic. That is love. And I have been on the receiving end of love from children who honored me even when I neglected them in order to look after other people's children in my mistaken self-importance and indispensability. And now I am experiencing that special serendipity known as grandchildren who enjoy with me a mutual admiration and mutual indulgency society.

I have experienced the love of a church in dark hours of immeasurable grief, and in stressful times of misunderstanding, and in joyous times of the marriage of a daughter. I have been favored with the unmerited love and trust of students, some of whom do not wait to graduate and then come back, before saying, "Thanks for being who you are to me. I love you."

All such relationships, and many more, I see as images and reflections and perhaps even manifestations of the ways in which God has reached out to me in love. But most of all, I am more and more aware that he reaches out to me in love through Jesus Christ, who says, "A new commandment I give unto you, that you love one another, even as I have loved you."

I called this effort to talk about love "A New Fundamental," because it is fundamental to the Christian life and because he called it a new commandment. We are experiencing much sentiment for going back to fundamentals. Nostalgia is the mood of the time. The once proud word "liberal" now cringes and slouches in the shadows of American politics, religion, and even academic life, having been stripped of respectability and often regarded with suspicion of being subversive. And what once was its promise now belongs to another word "fundamental," a code word and catchall for religious bigotry and perverse meanness of spirit meaning in its correct usage "basic," "foundational." In that sense, love is a fundamental. "God is love." "God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son." "Beloved, if God so loved us then we ought also to love one another." "We know that we have passed out of death into life, because we love the brethren. He who does not love remains in death." "And this is his commandment, that we should believe in the name of his Son Jesus Christ and love one another, just as he commanded us." No doubt about it. Love is fundamental to our faith, as basic as life and death.

Maybe that is why it is a commandment. But it is more than a commandment. It is also an enablement. "We love, because he first loved us." It was he who lifted us from the lethal fumes of the world's self-destructive, brother-devouring Cain/Able existence, and breathed into us the breath of love. It was his liberating love which through Christ, the means and the witness of that freeing act, makes it possible for us to fill the lungs of the spirit with the oxygen of love in a world choking itself on the poison of hatred, suspicion, and fear. Love is a command performance for the Christian, but only because love has first come to him. Because he can love, he must. Not to love when he can love is to choose to remain in death.

And it is also to elect to let others choke to death. Not to love means not only a stifling death for ourselves but death for our brothers. The world is the City of Death

where we all grope and gasp together, breathing in and breathing out its noxious fumes. A miraculous new element has been introduced by God himself--redemptive, purifying grace which takes the deadly fumes and converts them into life-giving and liberating love, love breathed in and loved breathed out, releasing into the atmosphere of the City of Death the clean oxygen of his love for somebody else to be able to breathe, too. God's plan is this: Those who have the breath of life don't turn it back into death-dealing fumes for their fellows who are already suffocating, but release it as breath of God.

I grew up in Oklahoma in depression and dust bowl days. Settlers, such as my own family, had plowed up the sod and dealt recklessly with the thin soil, until in drought the ponds dried up and the topsoil blew away. Then came soil conservation. Lakes were built, crops were rotated, the land contoured, and best of all, thousands upon thousands of trees planted. The trees broke the force of the blowing winds across the prairie, and more importantly, released into the atmosphere life-giving elements to produce moisture. Could that be God's program, that through those who breathe in his divine grace, breathe out his love? If so, no wonder we are under mandate to do it. If we can, we must.

There is yet another part of this saying that must be considered. "Even as I have loved you." "In the same way as I have loved you." How has he loved us? He has loved us without consideration of our merit. He has loved us unconditionally. "Having loved his own, he loved them to the end" (that is, to the utmost).

One suspects that most of what passes for the currency of love in or out of the church is really a barter. "If you hold your mouth right and say the right words, you are accepted, you will be loved." Whenever we put "if" at the head of our declarations of love we have already put conditions of which the Gospel knows nothing. In the words of the "even as I have loved you" is the wild and reckless abandonment of self-protection; in the words are the risk of rejection and deep hurt. But in the words also are our single hope for the City of Death becoming the City of Life.

Let me risk one more metaphor of love. Cancer patients are being taught now not just to follow the doctor's orders and swallow their pills or take their injections on schedule. They now are being instructed--with very promising success, I might add--to visualize the process of the body's healthy cells attacking the enemy cells of cancer with the weapons of medicine. "Sic 'em," I say to my healthy cells. "Get 'em today; I'm sending you more ammunition, three times today," and I can see in my mind's eye the evil citadel that is trying to capture the empire of my body being itself under attack from the loyal troops which with the help of modern medicine, surround the foe, contain him, and slowly disarm him.

That is love. One healthy cell after another throwing itself at the enemy to turn back the malignant evil that threatens to devour the body of the world.

I can do that with my life. You can do that with yours. I know there are many things beyond my doing. I know historical process seems inexorable. But I can love. I can light one candle of love to resist the darkness.

Bonaro Overstreet has a little poem called

"To one who doubts the worth of doing anything because you can't do everything." Her editor thought the title was too long, so she agreed to call it, "The Stubborn Ounces." It goes thus:

You say the little efforts that I make will do no good--they never will prevail to tip the hovering scale where justice hangs in balance. Well, I never really thought they would. But I am persuaded beyond debate in favor of my right to choose which side shall feel the stubborn ounces of my weight.

Christ of love, who loved us to the utmost, make us stubborn in love. For by this shall all men know that we are your disciples, if we love one another.

## Power and Peace

Richard Barnet

The topic of this seminar is one that is crucial in spiritual and political life. In this country, especially in the last few months, we have been doing a lot of talking in the political arena about power, about the loss of American power, and about how to get it back. For a nation that is supposed to believe in the power of God, we do a great deal of talking about the power of death, and the power that comes from the ability to buy and to deploy the instruments of death.

I suppose it may come as a surprise to some that the world today is spending almost \$1.5 billion a day on armaments. That is a little bit over \$500 billion a year. In doing that, we are not simply buying weapons of mass destruction, but we are, as President Eisenhower once put it, stealing. We are stealing food from the hungry. We are stealing educational opportunities from the young. We are stealing the possibilities of investment from the future.

Somehow as a nation and as a church, we have not confronted the real significance of the national preoccupation with what I have called the economy of death. We assume that the system we have worked out for preventing war and keeping peace is going to work. I think we should understand that there are--at least at the conscious level--no rational, sane people who want war, not nuclear war. When the Strategic Air Command takes off in its bombers or puts its missiles on a state of alert, on which is written on the side of the fuselage on the plane or on the missile, "Peace is our profession"; we can assume they mean it. The question arises, are they right? Are they right politically? Are they right morally? We somehow think that there is no alternative to the system that we have grown up with now in almost 40 years of the nuclear age. Because we don't think there is any alternative, we don't like to look at what that system is. We don't confront it. But, what is it?

Over the last year there has been a great deal of talk in this country, and very great and anguished concern, about the taking of 52 American hostages; yet, we have failed to recognize that the system of war prevention that we live with is itself based on a giant system of hostage-taking. The United States proposes, in the event the men of the Kremlin move in a direction which we feel threatens

our security, to cause what the National Security Council estimates at something like 140 million Russian casualties--men, women, and children. The Russians, aiming several thousand missiles at the United States, implicitly makes the same threat--to kill at least 100 million Americans if the leaders of this country take action which they view as detrimental to their security. Now in neither country can the hundreds of millions of people who will become the targets of a nuclear attack control the action of the one or two or maybe six individuals in either Washington or Moscow who will make the decision whether there is war or peace.

The fundamental moral problem of the nuclear age has not been addressed or confronted in almost 40 years because somehow we don't know how to get out of it. Because we think we don't know how to get out of it, we have developed a kind of political theology to justify a system which I think fundamentally challenges the sovereignty of God. The Bible says that vengeance is mine. This is the first generation in the history of the world that has the physical power to destroy the world. It is a discontinuity with history which raises an issue for our country and each of us that we have not confronted either as individuals, or as a church, or as a nation. We talk a lot about stewardship, but we are developing a strategy for the destruction of a creation which is not ours to destroy. We are doing this under the illusion of power because we have come to believe that the ability to destroy and the ability to threaten destruction is the same thing as power. When we look at our political debates we see over and over again that we descend to the level of counting hardware--so many missiles, so many tanks, so many ships--and equating that all with power.

What has happened in the last two years has taken us to a new and, I believe, extremely alarming stage. On top of a generation and a half of preparation for war now approaching \$3 trillion in cost since 1945, there are some new disturbing signs about war itself. This present administration has already made a number of extremely dangerous statements about the inevitability of war, not sometime, but in the 1980s. There was not only the statement that was publicized by Mr. Pipes of the National Security Council, but other statements not yet reported--by generals and other high-level officials of the same general tenor--that war is coming, war is inevitable, and we must be prepared. The Secretary of State has stated to a Congressional committee that confrontation with the Soviet Union is inevitable unless the Soviet Union makes some undefined but fundamental change in its national policy, even its national identity. The strategy of the administration appears to be that we will delay our negotiations until that happy day arrives.

Perhaps the most disturbing indication is a redefinition of what war is, the descent upon Washington and the country of a veil of illusion that literally can bring death to this country and to civilization itself. We are now hearing from people in responsible quarters that nuclear war is not so bad. You can have a limited nuclear war. One of our advisors says that a limited nuclear war in which 20 or 25 million people would be killed would not be so bad because, after all, there would be 200 million survivors.

The fact is, nobody knows what will happen in a nuclear war, except that even a so-called

limited war will produce catastrophic consequences beyond anything that has ever been known in history. According to the Office of Technology Assessment Study of last year, one nuclear weapon falling on Detroit will produce immediately 2 million casualties, hundreds of thousands more casualties from radiation, and perhaps additional casualties in the millions due to the secondary effects of a massive breakdown in the economy and society in the wake of such a phenomenal disaster.

The idea that a war is a basis for maintaining or restoring power is the most dangerous fantasy. It is the kind of illusion of power that has brought empires in the past to destruction. The present situation is unique in that we will not have the margin of error that we have had in the past. We are still talking about politics and about the relations between nations as if the nuclear age had not happened. We are forgetting what Albert Einstein, whose theoretical work made the atomic bomb possible, said when the first nuclear weapon was exploded. He said that with the unleashing of the atom everything has changed, except our way of thinking. Lord Mountbatten, the great British general who was killed a couple of years ago, said the same thing just before he died. To talk in the old terms about the way to have peace is to prepare for war is nuclear nonsense. It may have been true in the past. It may have been true in the days of spears. It may have been true in the days of tanks. It is not true today. The illusion that we are living in a time which is simply a continuity of the past is a fantasy with implications that are indescribably dangerous. But somehow we don't like to talk or think about it.

A recent poll in California indicated what I think is the real depth of concern of people in this country just below the level of consciousness. In that poll, 85 percent of the people said they thought there would be a nuclear war in their time. The same percentage said they thought they would not survive such a war. We treat this phenomenon by denial. We somehow like to think we're safe because we have gotten by so far. After all, there have been Cassandras around since 1945 talking about the dangers of a nuclear war. The only change is, however, that some of the Cassandras today are the principal scientists who have helped to develop nuclear weapons over the years.

The situation is a bit like the old story of the man who jumps off the Empire State Building. As he gets down to the sixtieth floor, he says, "No problems yet." I think we're in that situation because the bottom floors are very different from the top. The reason is that the 1980s are not like the 1970s and they're not like the 1960s and they're not like the 1950s. Several things have changed.

One thing that has changed is that technology has raced ahead in a way that has made both sides less secure. Today both the United States and the Soviet Union are targeting each other's missiles, creating a situation in the ugly jargon of the weaponeers where there is enormous pressure on military planners on both sides to "use them or lose them." The pressure for a preemptive strike increases. The decision-making time of the political leaders to decide which way to go, contracts. We are now approaching the time when the decisions of war and peace--the decisions on how to react to a crisis, how to react to an ambiguous sign on the radar screen--are going to be made by computers.

It's time now to look at our war prevention strategy which we as taxpayers and as loyal Americans support not in the name of war, but in the name of peace. We need to ask ourselves whether we can have any confidence in a world in which there is no negotiation on arms control and disarmament; in which the political climate heats up and strong, belligerent statements are being made now in Washington, and one must assume soon in Moscow; and in which we have a tremendous increase in an arms race which in the 1970s had leveled off a bit. Can we really assume that a system in which we base our security on submarines (each submarine submerged for months with the power at the push of a button to destroy 350 cities in the Soviet Union or wherever else) and depend on computers (which must work miraculously better than those that operate in our department store billing departments or the telephone company) is going to keep us at peace from here on into the next century? I think we have to conclude that this system of maintaining our security is exceedingly dangerous. In the long run it cannot be expected to produce security. We have to begin, I think, to look at some rather basic points.

One is that there is no technological solution to the arms race. We are now about to spend another \$1.5 trillion in four years. That is what the administration proposes, to supposedly redress a balance of the Soviet Union. Do we really think that the Soviet Union is not going to spend their equivalent or more as they go to the next round of the arms race, and that both of us will not be by that token substantially less secure than we are now? When we started this whole thing, the United States had a monopoly of nuclear weapons. It was the most powerful country in the world. It had for a brief instant at the end of World War II, a power beyond any other nation, perhaps in the history of the world. That power based on tremendous aggregate of killing technology did not, could not, last. Why is it that we can have any confidence that continuing that game--now that the Russians have rearmed, now that they are indeed a formidable and dangerous military power--will produce any greater security?

The fact is that in the nuclear age, the security of the United States cannot depend on the insecurity of the Soviet Union. We are locked into a situation in which the security of one absolutely requires the security of the other. There is simply no other way. The Russians, whatever one may think of them, have the same interests in survival that we do. I think the lesson about loving neighbors suggests that we have to look at people who cohabit the planet with us as human beings, not devils. It's too easy in our political philosophy, and particularly around campaign time, to find devils and to base a national security policy on the existence of the immoral other.

Well, we ought to stop and look at who we have put in that category, and how quickly it changes. There was Japan. There was Germany. Twelve years ago former National Security Advisor Zbigniew Brzezinski stated before a committee that the greatest power for evil in the world, the one that was absolutely incorrigible, and the one that we probably and eventually would have to fight, was Communist China. They were the source of all evil in the world. That same national security advisor within ten years was beginning the conclusion of a military alliance with that great source of evil.

We ought to recognize, I think, for our own security, that we cannot afford to look at the world in those terms. We cannot forget when we look at terrorism in other parts of the world--and there is terrorism--what we ourselves have done to condone terrorism even on the shores of this country. Today there are forces in the United States, with the approval of parts of the American government, training to conduct military terrorist operations in Nicaragua, Cuba, and in other countries whose governments we may not like. National security in the 1980s requires something better than a double standard in thinking about rules of conduct by which great nations conduct their affairs. Security, real security, is in the stability and strength of the country. Fundamentally, it is in the spirit of the people.

We have assumed that we can spend what we need and what we like on the military without paying a fearful cost. The great national security threat to the United States, to the people of the United States, is not the extra missiles which the Russians are building. The Russians have, and have had for several years, more than enough missiles to destroy the United States utterly. One hundred nuclear weapons falling on either the United States or the Soviet Union (these are figures from the Department of Defense) would bring about the death of at least 40 million Americans, and the destruction of something like two-thirds of the industrial capacity in either country. The United States today has over 9,000 nuclear weapons aimed at the Soviet Union. The Soviet Union has over 7,000 nuclear weapons aimed at the United States.

If we spend what we are talking about in the vain pursuit of security through a race of technology, we will do again what we did in the Vietnam war; that is, import into the society something which is as destructive of the social fabric as an enemy attack itself, certainly as a conventional enemy attack of the past. That is inflation. That's what happened, of course, in the Vietnam war. We built up a military capacity very fast, and we did it without raising taxes. Virtually every economist--conservatives, liberals--have pointed to that era of the Johnson administration as the source of the incredibly damaging virus of inflation which was imported into this economy at that time in the late sixties.

We are now preparing to make almost as rapid an escalation in the military budget, and at the same time, cut taxes. We are saying that government spending in general is bad and inflationary, but \$1.5 trillion in four years for the military is healthy. We are failing to see that is directly related to national security. We are saying as a nation that we cannot afford to invest in schools. We cannot afford to invest in the cities of the country which are literally on the verge of bankruptcy, in the Northeast and in the Midwest, because the money is needed for the security budget.

This is a view of national security which fundamentally mistakes the priorities of our people. How can we believe that we are safer or better off by building a gigantic subway system for missiles--which is what the MX system is--and be totally unable to get the appropriations for a mass transport system in our major cities, or other measures which are desperately needed to reduce the other great national security problem facing this country; that is, our energy dependence?

Three presidents of the United States have

made direct threats to go to war to preserve our access to the oil of the Middle East on which we and our allies in Europe so greatly depend. We do not examine the fact that our military experts are on record as saying that military power will not produce the oil. The system is so vulnerable to sabotage, the possibilities of actually delivering oil in a Middle East aflame with war is exceedingly remote.

The more important point, we don't have to be that dependent on the Middle East oil. We shouldn't be that dependent on the Middle East oil. We ought to see that a national security requirement, a national security priority, is reducing that dependence. We can do it by making the investment in society, in conservation, and in alternative energy sources that will keep us from the dangerous posture of having to make a threat; a bluff, which, if called, might very well vaporize the oil along with the civilization that it is supposed to fuel.

I think that we need to look with new eyes both at the morals and politics of this kind of national security. We need to understand that the nation cannot be strong if we sacrifice the hopes and dreams of people to an arms race that offers no solution at all. I think we in the church and as citizens must first do the unpleasant work of looking at this issue. Don't believe what I say because I say it, or what anybody says about this issue. Your life, your children's lives, your grandchildren's lives depend on it.

First, I think we have to learn. Then I think we have to speak. I think we have to speak to each other. We have to speak to those in power. We have to summon the great resources that are in this country--resources of spirituality and resources of innovation, inventiveness--to come up with a national security strategy that does not depend on the collective suicide. We can do that if we are prepared to have the courage not only to speak, but to protest a strategy which is destructive of the basic possibilities and hopes of the country. I think that we have no choice but to stop, look, and then say--if we believe it--that this must not be; that we have obligations as citizens--citizens not only of the country, but stewards of the earth--to keep the inevitable the administration is talking about, from happening.

It is a dangerous world, much more dangerous than the fifties. Not only do we have these two countries glaring at each other, but we have 150 countries, a world much less subject to the control of either the United States or the Soviet Union than in the past. We have the nuclear weapons soon to be in the hands of at least 20 countries. Already the shadow of the nuclear weapon is hanging over real life and death disputes such as we never had with the Soviet Union. I'm talking about South Africa. I'm talking about the Middle East.

In this dark time the great danger is that we accept the idea of inevitability, that we accept the notion that we have neither the responsibility nor the power to preserve God's earth. The only way, I believe, war will really come is when people lose faith that it can be avoided. In this time, the great danger is that we scare ourselves into powerlessness, and then perhaps oblivion, because we have forgotten why we became a nation, and we have forgotten that fundamental commandment in which we are commanded to base our lives that we love one another or die.

# The Christian Pulpit and Secular Power

Ernest Campbell

As I heard the story, one of those self-styled prophets was moving around in the Loop section of Chicago crying out, "Bad news! Bad news! The world isn't coming to an end. You're going to have to cope!" We are here because we believe that we are called to cope. I have been helped in my coping by what I have heard so far today. I should also like to say that it is always good for a person's reputation to be on the same program with L. D. Johnson! I want L. D. to know publicly that I have been touting his Pastor's School up and down the land. We will talk about my commission later on!

Every weekend 18 million Americans attend church or synagogue. This is more people than gather voluntarily on a regular basis for any other cause. Why, then, does not our national life, not to mention our international policy, reflect more fully the values of the Hebrew-Christian Tradition? I mentioned this anomaly to a friend whose background is in electrical engineering. He described the situation as an instance of "line loss." Line loss is the condition that exists when voltage is lost somewhere between the generator and the outlet. But, to say this is to put it all on our lay people. They are not living out what they hear. But maybe they are!

What if the problem lies with the generator? Many services of worship in this country--north, south, east, and west--lack any public reference at all. An introverted worship gives unwarranted stability to unjust and repressive systems. Would that we could say of our churches what Pericles was able to affirm of Athens: "Here each individual is interested not only in his own affairs, but in the affairs of the state as well. Even those who are mostly occupied with their own business are extremely well informed on general politics. This is a peculiarity of ours. We do not say that a man who takes no interest in politics is a man who minds his own business. We say that he has no business here at all" (Thucydides' *Peloponnesian War*, Penguin Edition, p. 147).

Where does one go to hear prophetic preaching, preaching that addresses itself to the common good? Who do we know who speaks truth to power as Moses did to Pharaoh, as Nathan did to David, as Amos did to Jeroboam, as Jeremiah did to Jehoiakim, as John did to Herod, as Jesus did to Pilate?

Let me suggest a few reasons for our silence.

First is the fear of conflict. Too many ministers have reduced their calling to a career. Speaking truth to power is a high-risk, low-yield proposition. Thus, the Church Growth Movement, a cause that bears watching, cautions clergy people against declaiming on controversial issues. A successful, career-oriented pastor wants to see his church grow. If you want to grow, stay away from the hot issues.

A minister who had made his pilgrimage to Pasadena returned in time to hear one of his parishioners say, "We hear about the problems of the world all week. We don't want to hear

about them on Sunday." The point is that when they "hear about them all week," they do not hear about them in the context of the kingdom of God!

On the Sunday following the release of our 52 hostages I happened to be in a church where the minister stated publicly that was the first in his more than 20 years in the ministry he had ever deviated from a previously chosen theme. Without in any way trying to minimize the exaltation that was ours on that powerful Sunday, one wonders whether other events in our nation's life over the past 25 years did not call for a break with expected practices.

When we avoid the prophetic, then our "other constituency" is neglected. I speak of the constituency that Jesus laid upon our hearts in Matthew 25: the hungry, the thirsty, the sick, the naked, the imprisoned, those without civil rights. These are the very ones for whom we are here.

I have always enjoyed romancing the dictionary. I can get high tracing a luring etymology. I recall the day when I got interested in the word "preposterous." Most preachers use the word six times a year! What does it mean? Something is preposterous when the back end is where the fore-end should be; when the "pre" is where the "post" should be and the "post" is where the "pre" should be. A train with the caboose up front would be preposterous. A meal that opened with dessert would be preposterous. The biblical faith is preposterous in many ways. Most religions hold that if we obey and follow we will be accepted at the end. The gospel announces our acceptance now. Most people live from the present forward. Christians are called to live backwards from the end to the present. And what is significant for our purposes here, most ethical systems focus on the rights of the strong. The "up front" people are a prime consideration. The Bible reflects ethically on those who are in the rear.

Just yesterday *The New York Times* carried a stirring letter from a gentleman who is uncomfortable with the new administration's social policy. He wrote in response to Budget Director David Stockman's recent address on the Small Business Administration. "This was the first time that I had watched Mr. Stockman perform live. I was fascinated by his glibness, coolness, and wide range; but I soon realized that I was watching the emotionless destruction of all that was worthwhile in the Small Business Administration program. I was listening to a philosophy that was saying, 'Off with the heads of the weak, the hindmost, and the marginal members of our business community.'" Then he went on to conclude, "As I left the hearing, I wondered if Mr. Stockman remembered how during his days as a divinity student he had studied that part of Deuteronomy which dealt with social justice and those laws which had been enacted to protect the poor, the aged, the widows, the orphans, and all the disadvantaged. I wondered if he remembered the following passage from Deuteronomy 25: 'Remember what Amalek did unto thee by the way, when ye were come forth out of Egypt; how he met thee by the way, and smote the hindmost of thee, even all that were feeble behind thee, when thou wast faint and weary; and feared not God'" (Oscar Weitzberg).

We have ministers in large numbers around the country who take social reflection and social action to be mere electives. Often one hears the question: "The 60s were the

decade of activism, the 70s the decade of introspection; what will the 80s bring?" The presumption here is that social action is a programmatic emphasis that can be voted in or out. In the Scriptures, social righteousness is an intrinsic part of the message and a center of gravity! When ministers seek to avoid controversy in the interest of peace, the very peace they produce is spurious. It is not the healthy peace that comes with creative tension, but the peace of the cemetery.

Another reason why we lack prophetic utterance is theological confusion. Consider what is at stake when one is asked whether salvation is a means or an end. This is a watershed question. It forms the new divide. This new divide cuts through Romanism, Orthodoxy, and Protestantism. It is beyond dispute that most American Christians regard salvation as an end in itself. They see it as the be-all and end-all of life. Grace is understood as vertical in its force with few horizontal implications or external applications.

It is implied in this view, if not stated, that the world has been "X-ed" for death. It is under irreversible condemnation. God's concern is to salvage the souls of those who will believe. The Jehovah's Witnesses frequently hold regional convocations at Yankee Stadium. The New York Times seems always to admire their logistics and cleanliness. One day a reporter from that paper covered one of these gatherings for a whole morning. Before he left he turned to a young Witness and said, "I have been here for hours and I have not heard anything about poverty, or the arms race, or inflation, or racism." The man replied, "When a house is marked for condemnation you don't put new knobs on the doors or new glass in the windows."

This point of view is not peculiar to the Witnesses. It lies at the heart of the political inertia of American Christians. History has no intrinsic worth. It is only a disposable backdrop before which my experience of grace can take place. This approach to salvation is gathered up in the spiritual, "Get on Board, Little Children, Get on Board." The gospel is a train. When the train comes to a station those on board shout for others to board the train. But what if one of the new arrivals should ask what one is to do once aboard? She would be told, "Turn around and get others on board, so that they can get others on board, so that they can get others on board" ad infinitum. Presently other questions arise. What is the purpose of the trip? What is the affect of the train on the surrounding countryside? Why are some eating steak in the dining car while others are munching stale cheese sandwiches in the coach?

There is another scenario. God creates humankind, Adam and Eve. It is noteworthy that the earliest commands given to us had nothing to do with going to church, preaching sermons, saying prayers, or attending seminars on power. The earliest commands were of the earth--earthly. Have dominion over the birds of the air, the beasts of the earth, and the fish of the sea. Take care of the garden. Multiply after your kind. In other words, we were intended to be gardeners. We were made to be co-creators of history with God.

Sin came into the picture. The relationship between the human pair and God was damaged. So God, in Marney's term, became "bent on rescue." Abraham is called, Moses is given the law, prophets are raised up, a priesthood is established. Eventually Jesus

comes. He lives and dies and is raised from the dead by the power of God so that two things--not just one--can happen. First, that we can be restored to God. Second, that we can resume our primary vocation. The poverty of much American religion lies in its inability to affirm the second of these results. It is not enough to be back in God's good grace. God did not put us on the earth to save us. We have what Henry James, of all people, once called a "natural mission."

Why do we struggle to discover why we are here as members of Christ's body? Is it all that complicated? I have some Pentecostal friends who are into a quest for the second blessing, into speaking in tongues, into deliverance. This is very esoteric stuff in a world that is convulsing in pain. We have a natural mission. We are here for the increase of love. Justice is an expression of this love.

Dr. Theron Price, the resident sage of Furman University, graciously directed me one night to B. F. Westcott's commentary on the Epistles of John. He was anxious that I read an excursus in the back entitled "The Gospel of Creation." Bear in mind that Westcott was a conservative and highly respected Greek scholar. This excursus turned on the question, "Would Jesus have come had we not sinned?" After canvassing an impressive number of church fathers and reformers, Westcott concluded in the affirmative. It belongs to love to share itself. God enjoys being with us. He did not put us here to save us. He put us here that we might join him in caring for his garden.

Incidentally, one of the major differences between biblical religion and electronic religion is this: electronic religion encourages us to let God enter our story, biblical religion invites us to lose ourselves in God's story! Those testimonies on religious television seem to run in the same direction. An insurance broker says, "We were struggling along on a plateau of \$40,000 a year, not going anywhere. We fell to our knees and invited God into our lives. Now I am running the entire operation on the West Coast!" Another says, "I was the third-string quarterback at the university. I invited God into my failing life. Now I'm first-string all the way." Are we to bring God into our story or are we to deny ourselves and become immersed in God's story? Is he there for us or are we here for him?

Additional theological confusion gathers around our eschatology. This stems in large measure from our tendency to privatize Christian experience: "Christ came for me. Christ died for me. Christ rose for me. Christ comes for me." This is gross distortion of the gospel. It fails to connect with the cosmic significance of the Christ event.

As I listened to Richard Barnet in the previous hour, helping us to see the stakes involved in the arms race, I could not help but think of a gospel ditty that is still in vigorous circulation:

What though wars may come with marching  
feet and roll of the drum,  
I have Christ in my heart;  
What though nations rage as we approach  
the end of the age,  
I have Christ in my heart.  
God is still on the throne, a mighty God  
is he,  
And he cares for his own through all  
eternity;  
So let come what may, whatever it is I  
only say,

I have Christ in my heart, I have Christ in my heart.

I don't know what that eschatology makes of Romans 8 or Colossians 1 and those sections of the Ephesian letter which point to the cosmic scope of redemption. Jesus had a world on his heart. Any view of the "Second Coming" that negates the values of the "First Coming" is spurious.

Privatized eschatology assumes that history will be stopped. Biblical eschatology teaches that history will be consummated. When a marriage is said to be consummated it means that a hitherto established relationship is now carried to a new level. To hold that history will be consummated is to believe that no good is ever lost. The new will be recognizable in the old!

It is largely because of our confusion with respect to soteriology and eschatology that we have allowed Jesus to fall captive to the American dream. There are two major assumptions regarding our nation that we have allowed to stand. In fact, we have even confirmed them.

One can be described as "Exceptionalism." This is the view that we are an exceptional nation. We have a God-given destiny to lead and dominate the world. Paul Harvey in a broadcast last fall said that God had given the United States and Canada atomic and nuclear capability so that our 6 percent of the world could hold its own against the unlimited millions of the East! Our numerical inferiority has been offset. "Why, then are we so hesitant to use those weapons?" It happened on a radio talk show in Houston. A well-spoken man dialed in to remind us that as a nation we are short on cobalt, uranium, bauxite, and other vital minerals. He wanted a beefed-up military capability so that we could take such minerals if our needs ever became acute.

On a PBS program not too many months ago some well-known reporters were discussing the Ayatollah. One asked, "What do we do if the Ayatollah hangs on?" The answer was not long in coming: "We topple him." Instead of questioning the audacity of such an answer, the next question was, "How long would that take?" Answer: "Three years." At work here is the notion that we have a mandate from heaven to exercise a global right of eminent domain!

I was in Mexico when Gerald Ford acceded to the presidency. I listened to his acceptance speech on foreign soil. The earlier part of his message was gracious and modest. Then, likely to keep peace with the hawks in Washington, he went on to say that we were Number One and that we would always be Number One. I wondered how my Mexican friends were expected to react to that. What number would they draw?

The other assumption gathers around the philosophy of entitlement. Because we are exceptional we are entitled. Entitled to live at the high level of consumption to which we have grown accustomed.

President Ford called on Americans to drive at 55 to save gas. One commentator said, "He has finally called us to bite the bullet." A wiser voice said, "No, he has only invited us to munch the marshmallow." Even that 55 mile limit has been resisted. "By God, no one's going to tell me how far down my foot can go on the accelerator!" Joe Clark tried it in Canada, sought to bring that country to some kind of discipline, and he was voted out. Jimmy Carter in his early presidential years talked about the need to

restrain our appetites. He soon changed his tune. No minister can be prophetic until he makes two discoveries. First, the discovery that Jesus was not a Christian. Second, the discovery that God is not an American.

Where does the Moral Majority stand in all of this? I would have to say, "Two cheers for the Moral Majority." This may surprise you. The fact is that we will never be able to bring this country to where we wish it to be without the help of conservative evangelicals. Progress is being made. I have in my hands a sermon by Jerry Falwell. It was preached at the Thomas Road Baptist Church in Lynchburg on March 21, 1965. The title is "Ministers and Marches." Let me read part of it to you.

As far as the relationship of the church to the world, that can be expressed as simply as the three words which Paul gave to Timothy, 'Preach the Word.' We have a message of redeeming grace through a crucified and risen Lord. This message is designed to go right to the heart of man, and there meet his deep spiritual needs. Nowhere are we commissioned to reform the externals. We are not told to wage wars against bootleggers, liquor stores, gamblers, murderers, prostitutes, racketeers, prejudiced persons, institutions, or any other existing evil as such. Our ministry is not reformation, but transformation. The gospel does not clean up the outside, but rather regenerates the inside. Our citizenship is in heaven.... While we are told to render unto Caesar the things that are Caesar's, in the true interpretation we have very few ties on this earth. We pay our taxes, cast our votes as a responsibility of citizenship, obey the laws of the land, and other things demanded of us by the society in which we live; but at the same time we are cognizant that our only purpose on this earth is to know Christ and to make him known. Believing the Bible as I do, I would find it impossible to stop preaching the pure, saving gospel of Jesus Christ and begin doing anything else, including fighting Communism or participating in civil rights reforms. As a God-called preacher, I find that there is no time left after I give the proper time and attention to winning people to Christ. Preachers are not called to be politicians, but to be soul winners."

Well, Jerry Falwell has crossed the Rubicon! We ought to rejoice. Granted, there are some very naive presumptions at work in the Moral Majority. Like children who are discovering a new world in their first day of school, they are moving in ways that are not congenial to my ethical stance. I worry about people who say that they are going to put God into the schools because others have taken him out; who intend to put God back into the courts because others have taken him out. What kind of God is this who can be thus controlled? The agenda of the Moral Majority lacks the proportion of the biblical ethic. It is largely a projection of bourgeois values. There are no warnings against wealth. There is nothing about the need for peacemaking. One looks in vain for a word for the poor, the elderly, the widow, the orphan, the afflicted. One listens for some groaning of anxiety for the unemployed youths in our ghettos. But at least the Moral Majority is beginning to take history seriously. It is asserting a correlation between a

nation's conduct and its professed religious faith.

I should like to end on a positive note. Imagine the good that could be achieved were we to recover the primacy of the kingdom of God. The kingdom of God is an idea whose time has come. The kingdom of God is the reality around which all segments of the Christian community can gather. It was the dominant category in Jesus' teaching and the foremost reality of Jesus' life. Why do we hear so little about the kingdom in the church today? When did you last preach on the kingdom of God?

The kingdom is not an inner state, but a state of affairs. It has an economic, cultural, social, and political side. Too often we have misread Jesus. He did not say, "The kingdom of God is within you," as though it were a possession that we could feel warm about inside! He did say, "The kingdom of God is in your midst." That is, the kingdom is among you and around you--in New York City and in Tampa, and in Dallas. Hans Kung has given me the finest definition of the kingdom that I have ever seen: God's creation healed! That is why he saved us. So that we might work with him for the healing of his creation. The kingdom is the only present that has a future. Our job then, is to resist all that stands in opposition to the values of the crucified. We cannot shuck our evil off on God. During Charles Kingsley's years as pastor, London was stricken with an outbreak of cholera. Prime Minister Palmerston refused to allow a national fast day. Such a day would suggest that God was responsible for this disease instead of man's selfishness and laziness and ignorance. Kingsley applauded. I like to ask my friends in the ministry who are gung ho on ecclesiastical maintenance and expansion, "What kind of evil would it take for you to break your silence?" We are here to resist what we can of all that stands in opposition to the values of the crucified and to confirm what we can of that which structures and embodies love.

The Scriptures tell us that where there is no vision the people perish. A vision has a way of becoming a controlling metaphor. America has no greater need tonight than the need for a vision that will join us together rather than separate us. The visions that motivate us now are generally privatized. My son, the doctor. My daughter, the judge. My nation, number one.

We need a conjunctive vision. One reason why there is so much strife in our cities is because the poor are withholding their compliance with order. They do not see a vision that includes them! Every society depends for its order on voluntary compliance with the unenforceable. If every motorist in Dallas were to get up tomorrow determined to drive on red and stop on green, there are not enough policemen in Dallas to prevent chaos. A presumption of compliance is necessary to the life of the state. A society will begin to unravel when there is no overarching vision that will induce men and women to put the common good above private gain.

I have always liked the imperative mood. When you are redheaded and Irish and a Leo, you like to preach the imperative. "Give 'em hell, Harry." But I have recently concluded that the indicative mood creates more lasting good. It is easy preaching, telling people that they ought to be good. What is difficult is so to exalt goodness that people will want it for themselves!

This is why the vision of the kingdom of God is the vision for our time. Where can you go to find it delineated? To no single place. It is a metaphor and we see it in hints and flashes. In this kingdom there is no regional domination: they will come from the north and the south, the east and west to sit at the table with the Lord. There is harmony within the order of nature: the lion and the lamb lie down together. There is no extreme of wealth or poverty: every valley shall be exalted and every mountain and hill made low. There is no strife: swords are beaten into plowshares and spears into pruning hooks. There is no more religious education: everyone possesses a knowledge of the Lord. There is no church: its Temple is the Lord God almighty and the Lamb.

In the 5th chapter of Revelation we are given a foreglimpse of the kingdom. The Almighty sits enthroned with a scroll in his right hand. The scroll has to do with history and the meaning of our years. But none can open it. None is worthy to break the seals. Between the throne and the four living creatures and among the elders John sees a Lamb, standing, as though it had been slain. He takes the scroll and opens it. He alone is worthy. Suffering love is the meaning of it all!

We live and work toward that day when the kingdoms of this world are become the kingdom of our God and of his Christ. When the will of our Father shall be done on earth even as it is in heaven.

# A Future and a Hope

L. D. Johnson

Jer. 29:1-14

In olden times when there was only radio, one of America's most popular evening stars was a news reporter named Gabriel Heatter. Many among you would no doubt be loathe to admit that you remember the name, because it gives away that you have seen a few springs come and go and may, like myself, be enacting the parable of Eccl. 12. (I only dare to throw that scriptural reference in because I know what a biblically well-informed congregation I address, having been for a brief time one of your teachers in biblical literacy.)

In any case, Heatter frequently opened his newscasts with an enthusiastic announcement, "There's good news tonight!" On that upbeat note he reviewed the day's events. I often long for those good old days when there was some good news. Nobody I know tries to sell that kind of "good news tonight" merchandise. It is in such short supply that one wouldn't have enough to last to the first commercial break. About the best I hear is some version of "there's good news and bad news" humor, most of which is unrepeatable in church, certainly from the pulpit.

But mainly the news is bad, depressing. From the local level to the international level, with regional and national news thrown in for good measure. Recent issues of leading news magazines scared the daylight out of us with the chronicle of violent crimes raging out of control across this country. Frightening statistics such as a murder in the United States every 24 minutes, a rape every 7 minutes, a burglary every 10 seconds, make us want to crawl into a hole and pull it in after us.

The sale of guns to private individuals is a land-office business. You don't have to travel any further than Atlanta to find groups of vigilantes, angry citizens who, wisely or not, are threatening to take the law into their own hands. "The fear of crime is slowly paralyzing American society," a city police chief is quoted as saying. "We have allowed ourselves to degenerate to the point we're living like animals." One cannot avoid asking oneself, "What is there about American society that produces such violence in its citizenry against their families and neighbors, not to speak of violence against the total stranger who just happens to be the victim?"

Is it television, night in and night out vomiting ugly violence all over the living rooms and minds of Americans, violence both make-believe and real? Is it the result of a growing drug culture in which both the pusher and the addict lose all respect for law and for the dignity of human life? Is it the breakdown of the legal system in this country, so that the hardened criminal who robs or rapes or murders, not out of passion but for profit or simply kicks, knows that the chances of his being apprehended are small, and of his going to the penitentiary and staying there perhaps even remote? Is it a seething anger of have-nots who see the comforts and gentility of the upper and mid-

dle class and feel themselves shut out of those possibilities, so decide to take what they want? Is it the result of decades of neglect of the family and failure to teach moral values? Somebody has said that we have lost an entire generation in America. I sure don't want to believe that, and I don't believe it when I look around such a place as this. But something is happening and there aren't many bright spots of good news concerning the incidence of violence of Americans against one another's persons and property.

There is not only violence in the streets, but violence on the planet. Here we sit, well-dressed and comfortable while for every one of us Americans who have it made there are at least seven or eight beings who don't know where the next filling meal is coming from. Were we not lulled by mistaken notions of our own virtue, and were we not dulled by overexposure to the news of hopeless despair, that would be bound to give us a queasy conscience.

Besides the peril of world revolution all about us is the uneasy suspicion that many Americans have lost the will to pay the price of survival. We are too close for comfort to a soft, drugged, self-centered, undisciplined society. If you wanted to destroy a people's will to resist, could you conceive of a more certain method than to introduce large quantities of will-destroying, mind-confusing drugs into that society? That is exactly what is happening right at this moment. A study of American armed forces stationed in Europe reveals the alarming fact that 40 percent of the troops we have there, presumably as a deterrent to Soviet expansionist ambitions toward the West, have a drug or alcohol problem.

We are not exactly broken out with good news. But there is some important good news. It is that mankind has been to the brink before, many times. The good news is that we don't have to survive for mankind to go on. The destiny of the human race does not rise or fall upon our survival. A journalist friend of mine in Virginia writes in response to a piece I wrote recently deploring the selfishness of so-called "survivalists" who have stored caches of arms and food to try to ride it out when the sky falls. "My heart aches for my dear grandchildren. . . . The best piece I ever wrote. . . was about a professor at William and Mary who built a fallout shelter for the children in his neighborhood and played in it with them so they'd feel comfortable there. . . . I still think God and our intelligence might save us if we were dedicated to Him. . . . I'm 70, so I don't grieve for me. I do for others and this wonderful planet."

I hear that grandmother loud and clear. Yet we must not give in to despair. Too much rides upon our being awakened to the peril, noting its gravity, and then putting aside our self-interest to preserve if possible the values of this culture. If, as in other end-of-the-age eras, the church can be the repository and preserver of the best hopes of mankind it will have served its Lord as it never did or could in times of peace and urbanity.

One of the values of knowing Scripture is that it comforts you with the Word of God addressed to your own time, no matter what its circumstance. Such a scene comes to mind when we think about living at the end of this present age.

Nearly 2,600 years ago Judah and Jerusalem ceased to exist for nearly a hundred years.

The awesome power of an alien and pagan nation overcame the people of God. Their national, religious, and personal identity as a people had presupposed that God would always come through for them before the final blow. Were they not Judah, God's chosen? Did not the presence of a descendant of King David on the throne guarantee their preservation? Was not the city of Jerusalem herself, proud symbol of the presence of the Divine, the assurance that nothing really too devastating to recover from would happen?

Yes, they believed all those things. Scripture promised it. The prophets preached it. All save one. His name--Jeremiah. He kept lamenting the nation's ruin. "The wound of the daughter of my people is incurable," he cried. They said, "Shut up, old fool! We've got morale problems enough without your discouraging words. So they rejected the bad newscasts of Jeremiah and turned to the promises of the good news false prophets with eager ears. Jeremiah, indeed, barely escaped with his skin intact. There were some in high places who wanted not only to muffle him but stifle him altogether.

Sure enough, the Babylonians came and captured and destroyed the city of Jerusalem, taking as prisoner to Babylon most of the literate and creative and responsible people in the little kingdom of Judah, leaving the rag-tag remnants of a people without leadership ability, plus Jeremiah who chose to remain.

It would be hard to describe such a scene to an American who has never known an invading army or been the victim of foreign occupation on these shores. John Hersey has a novel called White Lotus which fantasizes the successful invasion and destruction of the American nation by the yellow people of the earth. His vivid imagination will give some idea what it must be like to lose everything, including your freedom. Anyway, the destruction of the nation of Judah and its capital, Jerusalem, had a profound effect upon the thought life of the Old Testament writers. Just as the Exodus had been a kind of watershed of Israel's thought in that it marked her birth, so the Exile became a watershed marking her death.

When the smoke of burning houses cleared and the dust of devastation settled, and the cries of the dying and bereft were all silenced, there wasn't much left--no Temple, no king, no leadership, no walls to protect, few houses to give warmth, no crops standing, no commerce, and worst of all, no hope.

The good-time preachers, the don't-you-worry purveyors, the why-should-you-have-to-come-to-church-and-be-upset cutesy entertainers, were now all gone. Gone where? Oh, they now were in Babylon. Only Jeremiah, source of all those jeremiads, remained with the ruined people amid the ruins of their once proud city. The fancy preachers hadn't learned a thing from the experience. They had predicted it would never happen. It had. Never mind, they only shifted their posture slightly, not their message. "Cheer up!" they kept saying. "We are still God's people. Soon we shall wake up and realize that this isn't as bad as it looks. Sure, we are here in Babylon 600 miles from home, but it is only a temporary inconvenience. You don't think God is going to let his chosen people be treated like this, do you? Of course not. In just two years we shall be back home and resume life there again."

Somehow the word got back to Jeremiah in Jerusalem. He wrote a letter to the exiles

that has become, thank God, an everlasting monument to a realistic approach to bad news. That letter is recorded in the 29th chapter of the Book of Jeremiah. It is clear, it is strong, it is straightforward, and it has a ring of the authentic word of God in it. In this letter are four important things to remember when you are trying to survive in an end-of-the-age situation.

First, beware of easy, simplistic answers to thorny, complex, and dangerous situations. Listen to the words of Jeremiah: "Do not let your prophets and diviners who are among you deceive you, and do not listen to the dreams which they dream, for it is a lie which they are prophesying to you in my name; I did not send them, says the Lord." I don't think you can draw any infallible conclusions that the modern-day prophet who always has an answer for everything is per se a false prophet, but I will say that Jesus must have had something in mind when he asked his own generation, "Which of the prophets (the real prophets) did your fathers not persecute?" It does seem that there is some line of connection between being popular and being phony.

"Easy answers to hard questions" is one of the biggest growth industries in America. Whether it be selling automobiles ("Was it me or my Toyota?"), breath mints, toothpaste, or peddling religion, it's often inseparable in methodology. Some form of reductionism is practiced on the theory that people are so uptight and so pathetically in need of reassurance about their virility, their copeability, their attractiveness, their chances for even survival itself, that they will hear anything and buy anything just so long as the answer is simple and the promise is for immediate positive results. "Why, I took this pill and lost ten ugly pounds in two days!"

If you don't believe we are suckers for the easy answer, listen to your radio and watch TV. Or listen to the next two sidewalk philosophers you pass on the street as they tell one another what is wrong with the world and how it can all be cured. I remember a war-time story out of Britain during the dark days of the blitz. Some factory workers are discussing what is wrong with the world. One blames the people in office, another the writers, teachers, and thinkers. Finally one says, "I don't believe any of 'em knows, for if they did they'd come runnin' with the answer." We've got plenty of answers, all right, but they all seem to be to questions that are irrelevant to our problems.

No institution in society is more susceptible to, and probably none has been more guilty of offering, the easy answer than the church. "Christ is the answer!" Sure he is, but how do we fit that answer to the questions? Thus the electronic evangelist hauls in a nifty take that would make a Madison Avenue advertising firm green with envy. Why? Because he is an answer man. People are frightened; they're beginning to panic. "Give us the answer," they say. Don't worry, there are plenty who will accommodate.

The second thing Jeremiah says in his letter is more positive. Don't suppose that just because there are no easy answers there are no answers. "For I know the plans I have for you, says the Lord, plans for welfare and not for evil, to give you a future and a hope."

God has plans for us. They may not be, probably are not, in fact, the plans we have for ourselves. Nor am I going to believe that we are all helpless pieces of the game he plays, that we are merely puppets pulled

by the divine strings, that willy-nilly God is going to work things out his way, whether we want him to or not. I don't think we can ultimately dam up the channel of his purpose. He will go around us if we do, or the waters may inundate us. We are actors in his drama, if we will be.

Such faith is a source of the sense of destiny. It gives one a feeling of comfort, consolation, even comradeship with the divine. Most of all, it makes one aware of being part of an ongoing covenant. God is working out his purpose. He has plans to give us a future and a hope.

On my desk is a small plaque with the words, "Please be patient. God isn't finished with me yet." I am confident that he is not finished with me as an individual nor with me as part of his redeemed human family.

You may be saying, all that is very nice. You set us up to think about the dark, foreboding things happening and then you console us with a nostrum. Maybe. But it can be more than that, if you decide to believe it. God has not abdicated, I feel sure. But there is more to the prophet's letter than I have yet pointed out.

A third word is this: You discover God's purpose for you, not in some high-flying scheme, but by settling in to live the best, most fulfilling life possible in all the multitude of ways in which life is lived by decent, God-fearing people. How does Jeremiah put it? "Build houses, plant gardens, take wives, have children, marry off your daughters and have grandchildren, seek the welfare of Babylon. That's where you are, not in the land of promise."

It is a good piece of advice. "Life is not lost by dying," wrote Stephen Vincent Benet. "Life is lost in all the thousand, uncaring ways." Do not tell me about what you would do if circumstances were different. Tell me what you plan to do today, to redeem a tiny bit of the rottenness of this world, to sweep back some speck of the encroachment of despair and evil.

Finally, Jeremiah makes an important point about the relationship which the man or woman of God has with the Lord. It is this: Your closeness to or distance from God will be determined by the measure of your own devotion. "When you seek me with all your heart, I will be found by you, says the Lord." "With all your heart." Do you know what it means to say, "I love you with all my heart?" Do you know what it means to say, "I really want this to happen, I want it with all my heart"?

R. L. Stevenson once observed that most people suffer from "the malady of not wanting." How much do we care about what happens to this country, to this planet? To our children and our grandchildren? How much we care may well determine the chances they will have to participate in God's plans and God's future.

On the wall of a village church in England you will find a plaque which reads as follows: "In the year 1653, when all things noble in this country were being either demolished or profaned, Sir Robert Shirley, baronet, built this church; whose singular praise it is to have done the best things in the worst times, and to have hoped them in the most calamitous."

# The Power of a Church in Community

Daniel Vestal, Jr.

Perhaps I should begin by setting the context of my ministry, because much of what I say today will be in a biographical framework. I pastor in a west Texas community of about 75,000. It sits in what is called the Permian Basin--a geological term to describe what has been one of the richest mineral basins in the world. There is a 10 percent Black population and a 10 percent Hispanic population, and the rest is Anglo. It is basically a white-collar town with more downtown office space than Ft. Worth because of the administrative offices of oil and oil-related companies. Its culture is a blend of west Texas ranchers and energy-related executives. Midland has the third highest per capita income of any city in America. It is not ostentatiously wealthy, but it is impressively affluent.

Midland is a politically conservative community. Ronald Reagan carried Midland by a large margin. The son of our Vice-President, George Bush, is a young oil man, and one of President Reagan's state campaign chairmen was our Mayor up until nine months ago. It is interesting that a pastor in that kind of city has been asked to speak on "The Power of a Church in Community," for as you can imagine a church partakes of its culture far more than anyone of us would like to admit. First Baptist Church, Midland is an institution with power. It is by far the largest church in our city. It has a wider cross section of the city's population than any other church in the city. Though we have surely not realized our potential and on very few occasions exerted our power in a concentrated effort, I believe that except for the school system and the banks it is the most powerful institution in the city. With these facts in mind I want to articulate some convictions on my subject. I would like to do it with a two-fold focus--The Influence of Power and The Power of Influence.

## The Influence of Power

A local church is an institution of power. It may not exert or harness that power. It may not even recognize its power. But it does have power in the life of a city. As I see it, a church makes a dreadful mistake if it does not use its power to influence the structure of its culture, the institutions and the other power bases of a community.

Power is not a bad word in the vocabulary of church life. Nor is the possession and use of it evil. Though I do not see the Scripture teaching us to seek power, neither do I see the Scriptures teaching us to run from it.

Power is a sacred trust that is to be used wisely. If an individual, a church, or a denomination is entrusted with power, then that power is a stewardship responsibility and should be accepted with humility. Jesus' parable of the talents applies to a church when it is entrusted with power just as it is entrusted with other gifts. Could it be that we as Southern Baptists have refused to admit

our power, or even worse have refused to accept it as a responsibility to be fulfilled unto God? Have we failed to face up to the influence power can have for the welfare of people, for the good of the community, and for the kingdom of God? Have we been afraid to use our power because there are those who would accuse us of mixing politics and religion, or would accuse us of replacing our evangelistic fervor for the social gospel, or of making unholy alliance with liberals? We must not bury in the ground what God gives us to be developed and used.

Now let me say at the very beginning that if we seek to exercise the stewardship of power as influence, it will not be easy. For we are sinners with mixed motives and impure ambitions. We will not be immune to the snares of the devil that come in the form of greed and pride. We will be tempted to be manipulative and devious, or to use our power in some other spirit than in the spirit of a servant. We will also be criticized and misunderstood by those who sincerely believe that the church has no place trying to use power. We will at times suffer defeat and outright rejection. Faithful stewardship of power is not easy. It will require diligence, discipline, and above all, dependence upon the Holy Spirit.

But how does a church use its power to influence community? Let me suggest three ways and illustrate it from our own church life.

First, it can use its budget. Where a church puts its money says a lot about that church. How it spends its money says a lot about its values, its priorities, and its goals. Money is power and how we spend it is important. First Baptist, Midland is a great mission church and displays that mission commitment through its budget. And I believe we are learning how to be bold in the use of our money within the city.

Up until two years ago our City Council, because of political philosophy, would not accept federal funds to deal with a very real problem: low-income housing. So in order to express some solidarity of concern, a special commission on housing was formed. I served on that commission with two other ministers and several business people from the community. That commission recommended and implemented a program aimed at improving the living conditions of the aged, the handicapped, and the poor in our city. It was an ambitious goal, and somewhat unrealistic, but we committed ourselves to it. The involvement of our church in that project was discussed and debated for several weeks. Finally we decided to amend our budget to contribute \$20,000. And the church probably gave half that amount again from designated gifts. Now I don't want to give you the impression that we solved the housing problem in Midland. We didn't. But the point I wish to make is that our church said something to our community when it used its budget to meet a real human need.

When the church "put its money where its mouth is" and was willing to use the power of its financial base, it had a profound influence in the city. Other churches followed with contributions. A consciousness of need was aroused. And eventually different political and economic decisions were made by our City Council that were influenced in part by what happened from the churches.

Another way a church can use its power is in its buildings. I do not know what the to-

tal worth of church buildings would be in this country, but I imagine it would be a staggering figure. And in my community church facilities are a source of pride. They represent power and position. When a church is willing to use those buildings in a compassionate and unselfish way, the result will be influence.

In our city another real problem has been the use of drugs and alcohol, especially among teenagers. We have seen a sharp rise in the use of drugs and all of the related problems to drug abuse. That rise has caused deep concern in all levels of our community. Eventually it resulted in the invitation to the Palmer Drug Abuse Program to come to our city. That invitation did not come from the churches but from some civic and social organizations. However, from the very beginning the churches were involved. I don't know how much you know about this particular program, but it operates in church buildings. So the question immediately arose as to which churches would house the program. It was common knowledge from the beginning that in the meetings of the support groups there would be smoking. There was the danger of vandalism and the risk of building abuse. The involvement of our church in this project was debated and discussed for weeks. When our church made the decision to invite the PDAP to headquarter in our building, it was a shock and surprise to many. That decision has given the church a greater credibility in our community. It has communicated concern. It has given us influence and input into other areas of community life. Whether we admit it or not, buildings are a symbol of power, and when we use those symbols redemptively and compassionately we will have profound influence.

But the greatest resource a church has for power is not its money or its facilities, but in its people. In the church there is a great reservoir of intellectual insight, creative thinking, and capable leadership that could impact the community. But in most of our churches, it is only a reservoir--untapped and unused. Many pastors do not really trust the laymen and do not really believe in the power of the laymen. Part of the equipping of the saints is to motivate those in the church who are thinkers and those who are doers to become involved in the decision-making processes of a community as well as the church. The church should encourage those gifted and talented individuals to be on the school boards, the city councils, and committees and commissions--and to do it as an expression of their Christian commitment. The church should develop some strategies for informing its membership about political decisions that have moral import. The church should provide forums for the exchange of ideas and convictions about applied Christianity. The church staff should do some reading and thinking and talking about the community of which it is a part and how to affect it. The church program should reflect biblical instruction and practical training in Christian involvement in the affairs of the community.

Let me be very honest with you and share what is happening where I live. A lot of people are genuinely concerned about our country. It seems to them that things are out of control. And the rallying point for their concern is to do something about humanism. And what has emerged is an organized

plan to combat those influences. That plan involves seminars, literature distribution, and even political organization. And though I may not agree with all of the presuppositions or procedures or all of the conclusions of those involved, I applaud the fact that these Christians have become concerned about some things other than the maintenance of the church property and the color of the choir robes. They are concerned about education, television, government, and they're willing to use the power base of the church to voice their concerns.

Now I pray that the day will come when we would be just as concerned about being informed and involved with the problems of world hunger, human rights, and racial justice. And I pray that it will be soon when the church can see itself as a body, an army of people learning and working in other areas besides humanism. I pray that we might not be afraid to use our power in other areas to affect our culture, to impact the decision-making processes in our city, or if necessary to be a voice crying in the wilderness.

A local church is an institution of power. It not only has symbols of power. It has substance of power. And though there is danger in the exercise of it, we will be poor stewards if we do not develop it and use it.

#### The Power of Influence

There is another side to "The Power of a Church in Community." Up to this point I have spoken primarily of the influence of power, such as the conscious attempts to use the symbols and substance of power for the good of man and the kingdom of God. Power is a stewardship responsibility--to be fulfilled intentionally and purposely.

But there's another kind of power that the church exerts in community: it's the power of unconscious influence. It's the power that unintentionally results from character, convictions, and compassion. And just as we are responsible for our deliberate efforts to persuade people, we are also responsible for our involuntary influence. Do not minimize the power of unconscious influence. Do not belittle the effect or the real results of prayer and piety. Do not underestimate the impact of a church in a community when the worship and ministry and love and life of that church is healthy and vibrant. Horace Bushnell, the 19th century pastor, wrote in one of his finest sermons:

Let me ask of you, first of all, to expel the common prejudice that there can be nothing of consequence in unconscious influences, because they make no report, and fall on the world unobserved. Histories and biographies make little account of the power men exert insensibly over each other. They tell how men have led armies, established empires, enacted laws, gained causes, sung, reasoned, and taught--always occupied in setting forth what they do with a purpose. But what they do without purpose, the streams of influence that flow out from their persons unbidden on the world, they cannot trace or compute, and seldom even mention. . . . The outward endeavors made by good men or bad to sway others, they call their influence; whereas it is, in fact, but a fraction, and in most cases, but a very small fraction, of the good or evil that flows out of their lives.

There is unbelievable power in unconscious

influence. That's true of an individual, and that's true of a church in a community. I submit to you that in eternity's perspective moral character and spiritual influence will have exerted more power in the world than any organized effort or structured program. Actually this is the power of Jesus Christ. His power was not primarily political or economic. The influence of Jesus Christ in the history of man has resulted because of who he was and what he was. More powerful than what he taught in his parables or what he did in his miracles, is what he was in his character. The power of Jesus is that God's love and beauty, God's truth and justice dwelt in him and was manifested through him quite spontaneously.

How much of that can be said of us? How much of the character of God unconsciously flows from us? And from our churches? How much do we reflect the holiness and love of God in our personal life and in our corporate life? Have you known some individuals who may have wielded great power, but the closer you got to them, the less you respected them? Have you known some organizations or churches which seemed always to be where the action is, but the more you found out about them the less you respected them? Those of us who are serious about the influence of power must be equally serious about the power of influence.

Jesus said to his disciples, "You are the salt of the earth. You are the light of the world." Jesus said, "You shall know them by their fruits. Do men gather grapes of thorns or figs of thistles? Even so every good tree bringeth forth good fruit; but a corrupt tree brings forth evil fruit. Wherefore by their fruits you shall know them."

The apostle Paul said, "But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, goodness, gentleness, meekness, temperance, and faith." These qualities have to do, first of all, with character before they have to do with works. And as these qualities blossom in a person's character, that person has influence. And as these qualities blossom in a church, that church has influence--on people, on institutions, on culture, on the world. And that influence is power.

I would like to conclude with one final observation. It seems impossible to me to speak of the church and power without speaking about the Holy Spirit. As I understand the Scriptures, Jesus promised and fulfilled his promise, that in order for the church to fulfill its mission it would be given the Holy Spirit. And the result of that gift would be a dynamic to be and to do.

If a church is to exert the influence of power or the power of influence in a way that truly glorifies God, that church will need divine dynamic. The needs are great. The enemy is real. The flesh is weak. The problems are complex.

And those of us in the church who have a deep yearning in our hearts to be a faithful steward both of our power and our influence recognize how inadequate we are. And if we're honest at all, we feel that inadequacy so keenly. But let me remind you that this is the purpose of the Holy Spirit. He was given to us to energize us, to enable us, to empower us. God does not expect us to fulfill our destiny in our own power or in our own strength. It is to be done in total dependence on God by his Spirit. For almost a year I've been preaching through the book of

Isaiah, and one of the things it's done for me is convict me as to how narrow and petty is my vision of God. The God we love and serve is a God of majesty. He is a God of infinite, incredible power. Worship him and let him use you.

# Race Relations in America: The State of Affairs

Andrew Young

It's a pleasure to be here with you, and to share with you some of my concerns about the state of race relations in America. I'm always in trouble when I talk about this, for the same reason I'm in trouble when I talk about what's going on in the world. I tend to see things a little differently than most of the people who write for our newspapers.

Particularly I would say that I did not open the doors to Africa. I found out where those doors were. When President Carter went to Nigeria, he stood up in the First Baptist Church of Lagos, Nigeria to read the Old Testament scripture. He mentioned to the congregation that the first time he heard of Nigeria was as a young man, or little boy, in Sunday School. He raised money in his Sunday School class for a Baptist training school in Nigeria. That was his first introduction to Nigeria. When the head of state of Nigeria got up to read the New Testament scripture right after him, he said, "Mr. President, I want to thank you for the money you raised for that training school because that was the training school that gave me my primary and secondary education.

Everywhere in the world that I saw trouble, I didn't see Russians. I saw missionaries. They went around the world with that revolutionary notion that all men and women were children of God, and that my Father has cattle on 10,000 hills. People began to wonder why they should be hungry. When you view the world from that perspective, then almost everything looks a bit different. I tend to view race relations from that perspective also.

I'd like to go back to just say how far we've come, before talking about how far we have to go. In the thirties and forties, which were my childhood, we were still by and large struggling to break down legal barriers which separated people on the basis of race in much of our nation, and particularly in the southern part of our nation. I think we established two strategies for doing that which have been enormously successful. One was an educational strategy. The other was a legal strategy.

The leadership coming from the black community in the thirties and forties was almost all college presidents and the predominantly black colleges of the South. Almost all of those colleges were founded by our churches. They gave us the broad base of leadership in the Judeo-Christian tradition. Then the sixties began to produce the Martin Luther Kings. Before that, they produced a generation of lawyers which went into the courts of our land. In the period from 1955 particularly to 1960, we saw the legal structure of segregation dismantled by law. We saw the possibility of the desegregation of our society begin to be implemented. It was implemented massively by the movement of

Martin Luther King in the sixties. Once again we saw basically preachers giving leadership to a nonviolent movement--a movement that broke down barriers between people, but did not destroy either person or property.

When people forget what it was like and wonder what it would have been like if we hadn't had that period of 1955 to 1965, I like to remind them that nobody thought of the South as the Sun Belt in those days, but the sun was there. There could not be the economic growth and prosperity for blacks or whites in this region so long as the predominant problem was our relationship to each other. It was the breaking down, or the beginning of the breaking down, of the problem between blacks and whites that made it possible for this region to begin to put forward its best leadership in political and economic arenas; and begin to transform not only the South, but perhaps also the nation.

When I look at what's going on in Poland today I see another example of nonviolent action. It makes me all the more convinced, if I hadn't been convinced already, how right we were in knowing that by mobilizing a people around their religious and cultural values--not against anybody, but for themselves and for their own integrity and their own humanity--that you really have an unstoppable and irrepressible force.

People said that nonviolence could work in the United States, but it wouldn't work in Germany. I don't know. Massively it is now working against the Soviet Union and the Communist Party in Poland. They are not moving in with tanks because they know that it wouldn't work. They see now that they are faced with a general strike of the entire nation simply because three workers were beaten up.

The object of the Communist Party and of the Soviet Union is to get Polish citizens to go back to work and continue the productive capacity of that nation. Polish citizens are saying, "We are not going back to work if you dehumanize us. We are not going to work if you don't recognize our human rights, and our rights to bargain collectively as an organized labor force." When the entire society says that, it's not the same as it was in Czechoslovakia or in Hungary where it was a small political movement, a radical movement on the fringe of the society.

What you see in Poland is a massive uprising growing out of the church. In fact, the Communist Party's attempt to repress the Catholic Church put such vitality into Roman Catholicism in Poland that they generated a Polish Pope. Probably the best church attendance per capita anywhere in the world is in the nation of Poland, in a situation of repression.

That was similar to the kind of religious and cultural awakening which occurred in black America in the 1960s--black America and white America--for we were a 10 percent minority in this country. We could not have produced the massive changes had there not been a majority of people who began to be aware of race as a moral and ethical, indeed a religious, problem in our society. Our ability to get civil rights acts passed in 1964 and 1965, by and large, was the result of the creation of a coalition of conscience.

Now I like to point out all the time, because people tend to be romantic about the sixties, that the sixties were divided rather sharply in half. From 1955 to 1965--which was the period in which most of the civil rights acts, most of the affirmative action,

most of the expanded education programs of the Great Society, and most of the positive things that have happened in our government came into being--that in that period, up to the passage of the 1965 Civil Rights Act in July, there was no violence from the black community. The period that began in 1965--which was characterized more by the riots of Watts and of Chicago and of Newark, and which culminated tragically in the violence and aftermath of Martin Luther King's assassination--was basically a period that produced very little. In fact, there was almost no governmental or private sector response.

If you go back to those communities which experienced the violence, a decade later there has been almost no change in what happened in those communities. Watts is essentially the same in 1980 as it was in 1965. Detroit is only now beginning to make some changes under the leadership of Mayor Coleman Young, but some 15 years later.

The other thing that is important to point out for people who romanticize violence, and who misinterpret power as violence, is that in no city did the violence occur twice. I would contend that if this had been a valid strategy for change that had produced some results for the black community, it would have been repeated. It would have occurred again and again. It did not. I think for two reasons. Primarily it was not a conscious, planned strategy on the part of the black community. The second is that nothing good came out of it for the black community.

Even in the case as recent as Miami, we saw a community literally at the end of its rope. But, they were in the process of marching nonviolently to the county courthouse. It was a police car driving through a nonviolent demonstration, the policemen thinking they had to get hurriedly to the courthouse for fear that somebody would tear them apart, that rolled over a little girl's foot. It was that incident that triggered the violence.

In Chicago it was a simple incident of black children on a hot day in front of a fire hydrant. They could see two blocks down the street some white children also playing in front of a fire hydrant. The police came and turned off the fire hydrant in the black community. The children asked, "Why don't you turn their's off?" The police gave them no answer. When the police left, the children turned the fire hydrant back on. When the police came back, the incident erupted, which made a bunch of little kids mad. They began to go around throwing rocks and breaking bottles. Before long the police reaction and the fury of children over being at a fire hydrant on a hot day erupted into a riot that burned down millions of dollars of property in the city of Chicago.

But, nothing changed. People were not empowered by violence. In fact, what we got as a result of the violence in the last half of the sixties was Richard Nixon, the beginnings of a cutback of the very programs that produced the possibilities of change in the early sixties, and a lack of implementation of many of those programs that had been enacted in the first half of the sixties in an attempt to redress a historic grievance against people based on race that had occurred for several hundred years in this nation.

The response of the black community was very interesting. It was one that began perhaps most profoundly the week before Martin Luther King was assassinated. The Sunday before he was assassinated, after preaching

up in Harlem, he held a meeting in downtown New York with John Conyers, the congressman from Detroit; Richard Hatcher, the mayor of Gary, Indiana; Harry Belafonte; and myself. Basically what he was talking about then was the need to translate the power that had been generated in the nonviolent movement into a more productive kind of political empowerment in our society. He was terribly disturbed about the violence. He saw the violence as having set back and neutralized some of the progress we had made in the sixties. He said that what we've got to do is find ways to channel the energy and enthusiasm, as well as the frustration, of the black community into politics.

That's where it will begin to build on the progress that we've made in the early sixties. It was a very conscious strategy that emerged that led to much of the energy of the civil rights movement in the sixties, moving into politics in the seventies. I think we saw a proliferation of political leadership in the seventies that began at the state and local and congressional levels to become a power factor in the American political system. That was also a period in which we ran into some international frustrations. The fact was politicians could not deliver on the domestic goals and desires of their citizenry because of international events which we found impeding our economic growth and prosperity.

Our analysis of the period of violence in the North was that people in the North, until 1960, thought they were free. In fact, I remember being in Los Angeles in 1963 in the wake of Birmingham. People from Watts rallied to raise money for us to keep our movement going in the South. They always looked at us with such pity. "Oh, you're so brave to live down there. How do you do it?" We would say jokingly, "Well, you know, we're dealing with our problems, but you've got some problems up here, too." They didn't understand it then.

By 1965, as they began to see us making progress rapidly in the South, they began to realize that they were not making progress in the North. The barriers to their progress were not social and political as ours had been in the South, but essentially they were economic barriers. It was the frustration over the economic depression that was already being caused in the black community by the war in Vietnam that led to the heightening of tensions in our cities, the increase in unemployment, and the beginning of the problems of our society.

Dr. King then contended very prophetically that the bombs we drop in Vietnam will explode at home in unemployment and inflation. Go back and read the statement that he made in Riverside Church in 1967 on April 4, one year to the day before he was assassinated. He talks about the problems that Vietnam will bring to our country. He was bitterly attacked for that position, but nevertheless stood by that position. He saw that we could not have guns and butter, and that the movement which had attempted basically to produce progress within the context of the geographic United States could not isolate itself. In fact, he said that he could not segregate his moral concerns and be for justice in America and ignore injustice as it occurred in Southeast Asia.

We saw in the black community an emergence of foreign policy concerns that were really based on the fact that we began to realize very early you could not have guns and butter

in our society. I would go back to that period and say that's where our economy went wrong. It is right that inflation is caused by too much government spending, but it was not government spending on the poor. Lyndon Johnson's budget in 1964 was really less, just about \$100 billion, but during that period and just afterward our country spent over \$150 billion on the war in Vietnam alone. That essentially was to feed the hungry or to clothe the naked or to heal the sick through Medicare and Medicaid. It was spending that we spent to maim and destroy that created not only a moral contradiction in our society, but an economic contradiction from which we are still suffering.

Looking at the problems of the black community as we face it now, we say we've made enormous progress in terms of breaking down the dividing walls that legally segregate us. We have desegregated our society. We have not quite integrated our society. We have produced political and educational opportunity, and this is proceeding almost on schedule. We have not yet been able to solve the economic problems that our society faces, largely because our society as a whole has not been able to solve those economic problems. It was relatively easy in the early sixties to accommodate the growth factor of a new movement coming into being because we had an expanding economy. From the time of the war in Vietnam on, we have had an economy that has been somewhat shaky. That shakiness in the economy, that inflation factor, has produced a national insecurity which tends to threaten the progress of black and white alike.

I would contend that the challenge for race relations for the 1980s is the challenge to produce economic justice. We've desegregated everything but the money. In spite of the progress that is being made, the income gap between black and white Americans is widening. That's not to say we've made no progress. The gross national product of black Americans in the sixties was only about \$50 billion. It is now about \$127 billion. There were only about 250,000 black Americans in college in 1965. Now there are over one million. That's made for a steady increase in the black middle class that should continue through the years. We have not had the possibility of bringing still a small sector of black America, as well as a small sector of white America, into the economic mainstream in spite of all the progress that some of us made. It seems to me to be the crisis that we now face. The unemployment of black teenagers and black young adults essentially is related not to job training, not to dropouts, not to drugs, not to crime, not to any of those. It's simply that our economy isn't expanding rapidly enough to include them.

In World War II, you and I remember that when we needed people in shipyards, we got people right out of the cotton patch. In two weeks we had them welding. We had women right out of the kitchen becoming "Rosie the Riveter." When the job market was there, people were trained almost on the spot because the pay was good and the opportunity was there. The problem in our society now is that the opportunity is not there for large numbers of young black and young white people. It's that absence of an expanding, growing economy that's creating problems in the black community of hostility and frustration and despair; that's leading to crime and, in some instances, to violence. It's

not a systematic, calculated, planned violence; but a violence of frustration and despair.

The same thing is true in the white community. There are many white people who have been left behind. The majority of poor people in this country are still white. What we see is those white people who are being left out of the job market, who find the benefits that they expected of the society not available to them and their children, going back to those antiquated ways of hiding themselves in sheets and blaming their problems on the progress of black people rather than on the inability of the government to extend its services to poor whites as well. The resurgence of the Klan, I think of as essentially an economic phenomenon. I said at the community college over in Fort Worth this morning that basically when poor white people can be sure that their children are going to get a college education and have an opportunity for a decent job, they'll come out of those sheets and act like folks just like everybody else.

Black and white America have a vested interest in dealing with the problems of poverty in our society because usually the problems of poverty are very easily demagogued and exacerbated into a kind of psychotic racism very quickly when times become hard. I think times are becoming hard. They're becoming hard not because of anything that's happening in the United States, but essentially because we have not yet internationalized our economy.

It's a strange world in which we live, but the Lord in his wisdom put his resources where he wanted them. We have used wisely the resources with which he entrusted this country. I don't have any fault with the way we have utilized our oil and our coal and our agricultural potential. We've fed more people, clothed more people, and provided more opportunity for more citizens in this country than any other country in the history of humankind. But, we are basically using up most of the resources we have. There are resources, though, untapped under the Persian Gulf and off the coast of West Africa and off the coast in Mexico. By and large, we also--you--went around educating those people years ago telling them they were God's children and inviting them to come to school here. They came to school here, and they know how to make our economy work for them.

When the price of the dollar was devalued in 1971 by Richard Nixon, and the Soviet wheat deal ran the price of food up in 1972, and there was a conflict in the Middle East in 1973--we ended up with an oil embargo. The Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries took over the pricing of oil from American companies which had kept oil prices down below \$4 per barrel. Now we've seen them rise to close to \$40 per barrel in less than ten years. Now that's a gigantic shock to our economy because almost everything in our economy is involved in some way in the petrochemical case--even the polyester clothes that we wear, the wash and wear shirts, the shoes, and many of the materials. The plastics that go into our automobiles and our television cameras, and the things that have made our economy and our society what it is, all are based on petroleum. When petroleum jumps from less than \$4 a barrel to \$40 a barrel in less than ten years, that's an enormous economic shock even for a society as great as ours.

In order to be able to integrate the money

and continue the expanded and economic growth, it seems to me that the Lord is telling us that we have to get along with our brothers regardless of what their color and regardless of what their religious faith. That's the challenge for us in this day and age.

You know, Nigerians were hard to get along with when they were poor because they are some of the biggest and burliest and most arrogant people you ever want to meet of any color. Now they have oil, and some of the best oil in the world in terms of its low sulfur content. How are people--who have not yet learned to get along with nice little colored folk like me, and who still consider me controversial and radical--going to get along with folk like that?

This year we are running a greater trade deficit with Nigeria than we are with Japan. Now we're making a fuss about the trade deficit with Japan but there are a hundred million Nigerians with oil, with money, speaking English, many of their leaders educated in this country, wanting very much to develop their country along the lines of our country with a civilian government and a democratic constitution based on ours; and we haven't been able to do business with them. That's a serious problem for our economy, but you have a hard time doing business with Nigerians if you are not clear on human rights and racism in South Africa.

The same thing is true with the Saudis. They have about \$150 billion in surplus dollars of ours that we've paid for oil in the last few years. Now, that's where inflation comes from. They can run up the price of gold if they decide that the dollar is no longer solvent, and they want to go to gold. Gold was \$35 an ounce when I was in Congress in 1973 when we de-linked the dollar from gold. That's what gold was. This morning gold trading was \$533 per ounce. That enormous inflation is artificial. Gold is still gold. It hasn't changed any, but the people with the excess money have decided that's where they want to put the money. They ran the price of gold up, and that devalues the dollar even further. Not only have they done that with gold, they've done that with copper. They've done it with aluminum. They've done it with cobalt. They've done it with almost every product that we use. They are hedging their currency against inflation, and are going into mineral assets. That's where our inflation is coming from. It's not coming from just government spending.

The Germans and the Japanese import much more of their oil than we do. The Germans import almost 90 percent, and the Japanese even more than that. The Germans and the Japanese tax their citizens at a higher rate than we tax our citizens. There is a greater percentage of gross national product in both Germany and Japan going into government spending than in the private sector; yet their economies are thriving. There are two things that they are doing that we are not doing. One is that their economies are mobilized for export. The other is that they are using their research and development not to make war, but to make peace--peaceful goods and services.

Take these little \$20 Japanese watches for instance--we make this kind of minicircuitry, but we put it on the space shuttle and sent it to the moon. The Japanese put them in these little \$20 watches and they sell them all over the world. Everybody here has a Japanese camera. They made small automobiles. They developed goods and services for peace-

ful exports, and most of our research and development and productivity increases have gone into increased military technology and hardware.

I frankly think that the present economic program of the government is sort of like the wrong prescription for the disease. Our race problems are very definitely connected in the 1980s with the future, and state of our economy. Until we begin to export and relate honestly and fairly to Nigeria, to Mexico, and Saudi Arabia, we're going to continue to have the kind of economic destabilization which is really where our country is now being threatened. I don't see anybody threatening our geography militarily. I don't see us weaker than anybody in the world.

You know, nothing has changed except the President. We're the same country militarily now in March that we were back in November. No more troops have been trained. No more tanks have been built, no more missiles. The President convinced us we were weak before November, but now we're talking bad, like we're strong. Everything's basically the same. We really weren't weak prior to November, nor are we any stronger now. Images in politics sometimes are more important than realities. The images will not change the economy of this nation. The only thing that will change the economy of this nation, I think, is more production of peacetime goods for export and better political relations with these countries in the world with which we now have to trade in order to grow.

In order for us to develop the next level of economic leadership, and in order for the black community and race relations to take the next strides in this country, we're going to have to solve the economic problems that we as a nation face. The eighties have got to be a time when all God's chillun have shoes and when the hungry are fed and when the naked are clothed and when the sick are ministered unto. Nothing is going to change that does not include an international vision that continues to project the prosperity and the hope for the future of this nation.

Now, I haven't said things about the children in Atlanta, but neither have I said things too much about the sporadic violence. Maybe that will come out in the questioning. Briefly, when times get hard there are isolated pockets of racial violence and sickness. I would contend that's not the sickness in the body politic. I would contend that race relations now are better than they have ever been in my lifetime.

As a young preacher in south Georgia trying to run a voter registration drive, I was met with Klansmen by the hundreds. I don't think of the 15 or 20 Klansmen who march every now and then around the country getting a lot of publicity as the resurgence of the kind of Klan I remember from south Georgia in the fifties; or the Klan by the thousands along the road to Selma and Montgomery in the sixties. When the Klan marched last year the same route from Selma to Montgomery, they had a hard time getting a hundred Klansmen. I don't like to see them, but I don't see them as a mass phenomenon. I see them as poor white people, who are also my brothers, who need to be ministered unto as well; and not to be feared, but to be pastored.

I think the same thing is true of my black brothers who get bitter, and who are despairing and beginning in some ways to give up on the society ever producing good for them. I don't see that as revolutionary. I see that

again as young men and women who are seeking opportunity, and are seeing their youth and vitality withering away without that opportunity coming.

I see the society as still being able to minister to them in some way. If the government decides that it's not going to do it, what we've decided in Atlanta is that locally we're going to have to do it. We're going to have to have the kinds of partnerships between the city and the private sector to generate new small business opportunities just as the colleges, the banks in the black community, the insurance companies, and the civil rights movement all came out of the black church. What we're seeing in Atlanta is black churches beginning to talk in terms of economic development of small businesses that will employ their members.

We maybe can't wait for the multinational corporations. I mean, in fact, it's kind of naive to expect Chrysler to create jobs for poor black folk. They can't keep the folk they've got working. Business in America has always depended on a constant generation of new businesses and small businesses. You've got the Wang Computer people out here meeting in the same hotel with you. That was a small business a decade ago. Now it's sweeping the world. What small businesses can we generate in our communities that will employ our members and give hope to our youth, and will also have the possibility of becoming growth industries in America's future?

Involving the church in economic justice is something that some of us are approaching very carefully, not as churches necessarily, but the church being instrumental in forming the kind of community corporations--like at one period we formed credit unions--that would enable people to find meaningful employment and to express their humanity in a way that is economically productive. It looks like a difficult challenge, but there's a modern spiritual that kind of expresses to me the times in which we live, both as a Christian and as a part of the black community. It says very simply:

Lord, I don't feel no ways tired.

I've come too far from where I've started from.

And nobody ever told me that the way would be easy.

But I don't believe you brought me this far to leave me.

God bless you.

## Summary and Evaluation

W. David Sapp

At the close of our time together, and as we enter a period of worship, let me say on behalf of the Christian Life Commission that we are very glad you have come. You have ministered to us by your participation. We recognize fully that it has been difficult for many of you to attend. Demands at home are heavy, travel expenses are high, and there really are too many meetings. It is our hope that this meeting has been worth your effort and that you will go away with fresh grist for the mill of your own creativity, and with fresh motivation to make your own contribution to the movement of the king-

dom of God in the world.

Drawing a bottom line on this seminar is something which must be done personally. Only you can pull together what you have heard and make any sense of it for yourself. But allow me, if you will, to share a few very preliminary thoughts I have had as I have tried to make sense of what I have heard here for my own life and ministry.

To begin with, power is a reality which cannot really be escaped, abdicated, or ignored. Any person who wishes to have any impact whatsoever on the social ills of our world must be tainted with power.

The catch is that power is a dangerous tool and church persons by and large have been poor stewards of power whenever we have managed to get our hands on a little of it. Two hundred years ago, long before the Moral Majority, Thomas Jefferson wrote: "In every country and in every age, the priest has been hostile to liberty. He is always in alliance with the despot. . ." Was he right--not just about those you and I perceive to be irresponsible religionists--but about us?

Jefferson put his finger on something vital in this quote, and it is this: Questions about power always raise questions about freedom. Power gives a kind of freedom to those who hold it, but it tends to possess its holder. When it does, the freedom of the holder is gone. Power also shackles those against whom it is used, and so it often enslaves in one fell swoop both the powerful and the powerless.

But one of the subtle notes I have heard playing in many of the speeches of this conference is that the opposite may also be true if we let it. Power may be used to free us all. For power, you see, frees those in whose behalf it is used. It also frees those who are willing to use it for others. The person willing to use power in the service of the poor, the hungry, the discriminated against--that person is free from powerlessness and is also free from power. This is the freedom for which the truth sets us free. This is the freedom of the "man for others." This is the freedom of the gospel.

"Power is the only fact," said King Henry in Lion in Winter, but he was wrong. Power is only a fact, perhaps. It is a means to an end. Nothing more. Love is also a fact. But it is more than a fact. It is an end, and not a means, or else it is not love. Power must be the servant of love.

"Power tends to corrupt," said Lord Acton, "and absolute power corrupts absolutely." Perhaps we can add to that after these days together: "Power as the only fact, power without love, power without God--that power corrupts absolutely."

But thank God power is not the only fact. If it were, like King Henry and his family, we would assuredly all destroy each other--with bombs or slavery or poverty or oppression of the spirit. But because power is a fact, we have real hope for dealing with the ills discussed so poignantly from this platform.

The word I take with me from this year's conference is this: Grab the tiger of power by the tail and hang on. The tiger is the only way to get there; but fear not, God the all-powerful and all-loving One is ultimately in control.

# They Were Not Able

Roger Lovette

Nothing has set me to thinking, as of late, more than Barbara Tuchman's A Distant Mirror. Ms. Tuchman, a historian, writes of the most powerful disaster ever recorded in history--the Black Death of 1348-50 which swept across the world killing over one-third of the population from India to Iceland. She writes of that tortured fourteenth century and the causes of their maladies: "plague, war, taxes, brigandage, bad government, insurrection and schism in the church."<sup>1</sup>

What has intrigued me about her work were the parallels that the author has drawn between the 50 years following the Black Plague and what has happened to us since World War I. She says that almost the same complaints can be found in both ages: "economic chaos, social unrest, high prices, profiteering, depraved morals, lack of production, industrial indolence, frenetic gaiety, wild expenditure, luxury, debauchery, social and religious hysteria, greed, avarice, maladministration, decay of manners."<sup>2</sup>

The central struggle of the Middle Ages was the reach for the divine and the lure of earthly things. There we find a time much like our own when powerlessness seemed to sweep over people, nations, and even the world like a great tidal wave. They did not know what to do. In a two-year period, one-third to half of the population of Europe had died from the bubonic plague. Twenty million people. In Avignon, four hundred died daily; seven thousand houses were emptied by death and shut up; a single graveyard received eleven thousand corpses in six short weeks. Half the city's inhabitants died. Is it any wonder that people whispered one to another, "This is the end of the world."<sup>3</sup>

For two days now we have struggled with the winds of our own time. Powerlessness is everywhere, too. Arthur Schlesinger writes: "Indeed, no social emotion is more widespread today than the conviction of personal powerlessness, the sense of being beset, beleaguered, and persecuted."<sup>4</sup> How well we know this sense of powerlessness.

Runaway inflation, voodoo economics, hunger so large and monstrous that we cannot even fathom the depths of the dilemma, terrorism, global fundamentalism, tribalism, energy and the lack of it, and then all those personal battles fought day in and day out in our offices and in our churches and out there in little and big houses that make up your community and mine--what, then, are we to say to this subject of power in these final moments before we check out and make our way back home?

Our text comes from a fragment in Mark's Gospel. First, we see Jesus on the mount of transfiguration. At the bottom of that same mountain we find another scene. Nine disciples huddle together around a convulsive boy. A father stands nearby wringing his hands and pleading with Jesus' commissioned disciples. We are told the boy has an evil and dumb spirit. Exorcism, for which the disciples had been granted power by Jesus, was demanded; but those followers could do nothing. Whispering, wondering, wishing they could help, the disciples stood powerless as this

child grew worse.

To this scene, Jesus came fresh from his retreat on the mountain. He could not understand all the confusion. When he discovered the convulsive child and the impotence of his disciples, he became very angry: "O faithless generation, how long am I to bear with you?" He ordered the sick boy brought to him and he healed him.

Later, when the crowd had scattered, the nine pressed in upon him with their questions. "Why could we not cast him out? Why could we do nothing?" Jesus told them: "This kind can only be cast out by prayer."

Powerlessness was at the heart of the problem.

At the foot of the mountain, Christ confronts a crowd of people. Here and there he makes out a disciple. He wonders out loud: "What is going on?" A troubled man begins his litany: "My son is very ill. I brought him to your disciples to help. My boy falls down and convulses and hurts himself and grows worse. I begged your disciples to do something but they were not able." Another version says: "And they could not."

The word "power" comes from the Latin posse, "to be able." Here we find the opposite of power. They were not able. Running through that phrase is a commentary of so much in the life of the church. Some wild power we do not understand wrenches the strength and health and hope out of people and nations. In droves, they come to us because they've exhausted their resources only to find what those nine disciples experienced that day in the foothills. They were not able.

No one writes more powerfully about this problem than Will Campbell in his love story, Brother to a Dragonfly. The story is Will's attempt to save his brother Joe, a druggist, from destruction. Joe is a drug addict, and brother Will tries everything to save him. Church, friends, M.D.s, psychiatrists, family, pleading, hospitals, mental institutions--all are tried to no avail. As you read his words, powerlessness settles over you; for we all know it. The child convulses and we do not know what to do. They were not able.

Just six weeks ago I stood by dear Catherine's bedside one morning to say good-bye. She had fought for a year and a half the cancer in her stomach. All those months all I could really do was to stop by and sit and listen and cry sometimes and pray sometimes. One day I told her I wished I had a magic wand to make her, and so many others like her, well; but I did not. Standing there beside the brittle bones and sunken-in cheeks of her 48 years, I thought she looked like a hundred. She kept squeezing my hand and moaning, "I'm so tired!" Her husband sat at the foot of the bed; her mother stood close by with her hand to her mouth in grief. Down the hall was a daughter who wouldn't come in because she just couldn't stand it. I stood there feeling the powerlessness of those nine disciples. I wanted to do something, but I could not. They were not able.

Twice this year I've heard the same old story. After 18 years he loses his top-level executive job in industry. He has one daughter in college, one getting ready to go, and one in junior high. He's middle-aged, burning the candle at both ends, and liked by everybody. Fired. His wife, through tears, said he doesn't know anything but work. He's worked since he was 14 years old. All he knows how to do is work. I felt so hopeless,

so powerless. I did not know what to do. They were not able.

For two days now we've talked about the convulsions of our times. Tuchman, I think, is right. Then and now the problems are mostly the same: "economic chaos, social unrest, high prices, profiteering, depraved morals, lack of production, industrial indolence, frenetic gaiety, wild expenditure, luxury, debauchery, social and religious hysteria, greed, avarice, maladministration, decay of manners."<sup>5</sup> Perhaps Voltaire is right: "History never repeats itself, man always does."

Graham Green sketched the picture years ago in his classic, *The Power and the Glory*. The central character is a burned-out, alcoholic priest who is running away from the law and himself. Impotence probably describes him better than any other word. He has broken all the rules--committed adultery, fathered a bastard child--now he is on the run. One day he stoops to wash his face in a pool of brown water. Just for a moment he sees himself as he really is. At first he laughs, but as the laughter stops, he looks again at what he has come to. Even after he has washed his face and turned aside from the pond, he cannot forget the face he saw in the mirror of that pool.

Green recounts that what brought the priest to that terrible moment was years of surrender. First he lopped off feast days and fast days and had trouble saying his prayers. In trying to escape, he had even lost his prayer book. Then, on another occasion, he left behind the stone altar so necessary for the saying of Mass. Finally, he surrendered it all. "He was a bad priest, he knew it; they had a word for his kind--a whisky priest--but every failure dropped out of sight and out of mind: somewhere they accumulated in secret--the rubble of failures. One day they would choke up, he supposed, altogether the sources of grace. Until then he carried on, with spells of fear, weariness, with a shamefaced lightness of heart."<sup>6</sup> And the point? He was not able.

Jesus railed out at the impotent disciples: "O faithless generation, how long am I to be with you? Bring the boy to me." Jesus healed him. The disciples could not understand the convulsions or the demons or even the healing. They were not able. "You dumb and deaf spirit, I command you, come out of him, and never enter him again!" He is able!

Later, toward nightfall, when the crowds had scattered and they were alone, the disciples huddled around Jesus with their questions. "Why could we not cast him out?" Jesus said something so strange and so simple that I almost looked for another text: "This kind cannot be driven out by anything but prayer." There is a powerlessness. Who, in this room, has not known it again and again? But here we find a new dimension: the power of God. If we could leave this conference understanding emotionally the footnote that the early church added later to the Lord's Prayer, it would be worth it all: "Thine is the power."

Jesus Christ himself, fresh from the mount of transfiguration, close to God, dazzled by the brilliance of the mystery, was able to effect a cure because he had been in the presence of the Almighty. There is a victory over the power, but it comes from God. This is his work.

If it be true, does it not mean that he addresses the powers both personal and corporate? "Thine is the power" takes in private

and global. For years we have preached a personal gospel: "He breaks the power of cancelled sin, He sets the prisoner free. . ." This is true. The whole history of the church is dotted with burning bushes, roads named Damascus, and streets like Aldersgate.

But like our friends in the Middle Ages, something happened from 1930 onward. The worst depression in our history happened. War became a reality over and over again. We learned about our own hatred when we imprisoned thousands of Japanese in California. We heard ugly names like Auswitz and Babi Yar and Buchenwald. We could not believe the powers of evil that broke through the crust of the most civilized societies on earth.

There was Dallas, November 22, 1963 and Birmingham and Selma and My Lai and Charles Manson and Watergate and Jonestown and drugs and ennui and despair. We suddenly began to know we could no longer think in terms of personal power only. To go to the garden alone somehow might just mean to evade too much. And did. And does. No longer could we assume that our institutions would solve our problems. Theologians, too, began to ask: "Why could we not cast them out?"

Walter Rauschenbush, at the turn of this century, would see it firsthand in the ghettos and plant seeds that still flourish. Reinhold Niebuhr, in a Detroit parish, would learn something about corporate power in the automobile industry. And then there was Jacques Ellul in Paris and a young lawyer living in Harlem by the name of William Stringfellow who would begin to teach us something about the demonic and death in corporate ways. A psychotherapist, Rollo May, from a sickbed of tuberculosis, would catch its vision. Less than four weeks ago Albert Outler, in *Christianity Today*, would write that unless we come to terms with a whole world shot through with secularity we are doomed.<sup>7</sup>

Mark's story says that Jesus is Lord. He is the power and the glory. There are some things, indeed a great many things, that can only be accomplished through prayer; but I don't like that. I want some book to read, some program to follow, something more complicated than this simple prayer business. I think the church added "fasting" to these simple words: "There are some things that can only be accomplished through prayer. . ." so that we nervous activists would have something to do. Fasting never was in the original text. Our only weapon is to stay close to him, to demonstrate with our lives--in our work, in our churches--the truth that the powers and principalities really are the lesser gods.

John Howard Yoder<sup>8</sup> says that our task as a church is to wrench ourselves away from the powers of this world. He says the church is to be a sign that the unbroken dominion has come to an end. Put that down beside the change Glenn Hinson made recently: "Essentially history shows main-line churches, like people, will choose a life-style they can afford or would like to maintain."<sup>9</sup>

Hendrick Berkhof says that our task is to hold the powers at a distance lest they seduce us; thus, he says ours is a defensive stance. Berkhof pulls out all the words that Paul uses: girdle, breastplate, shoes, shield, helmet, sword (short sword); but the theologian says there is no mention of offensive weapons: lance, bow, spear, arrow. These are not named.<sup>10</sup> Which, being interpreted, means at no time and at no place may we ever "go for the jugular!" Our job is not to attack

the powers, but neither are we to be seduced by them. As Paul reminded us: We do have weapons, but they can never be carnal.

Barbara Tuchman says that "the great gap between medieval Christianity's ruling principle and everyday life is the great pitfall of the Middle Ages."<sup>11</sup> She continues: "The clergy on the whole were probably no more lecherous or greedy or untrustworthy than other men, but because they were supposed to be better or nearer God than other men, their failings attracted more attention."<sup>12</sup> But here and there in that very dark age a light did shine. A hundred years before, Francis of Assisi had challenged the corruption and decadence of his own church. He refused to be seduced by the world. He insisted that the Christ, who had no place to lay his head, called his followers to live as their Lord. By 1350, the Franciscans had come to be institutionalized. Many talked of poverty and wore capes of ermine; but here and there we know that behind closed doors and secret places there gathered little clusters of those who refused to take their orders from the powers of the world. They were the ones who tediously copied the Scriptures and preserved what the generations before had given them. They collected books, sang songs, and prayed their prayers until a torch would be passed that would become the foundation of the Renaissance and the Reformation.

But what about us, you and me, surrounded by the powerlessness and frustrations of our time? What are we to say? What word is there for us?

Let me tell you something that I have discovered about this powerlessness and this power. Some time ago someone asked me to name some of the books that had influenced me during my first days of ministry. It was a journey down memory lane. I recalled Ernest Ligon's The Psychology of the Christian Personality, and Dear Charles by Wesley Schrader. In college, I discovered a book by an Austin Baptist preacher I had never heard of, Faith in Conflict. Later, in my first church, there would be others: Findley Edge's The Quest for Vitality in Religion; and then there was The Company of the Committed by Elton Trueblood, and Robert Raines' New Life in the Church. But the book that hit me like a thunderbolt was Elizabeth O'Connor's Call To Commitment. Reading her words over and over again I tried to transpose the Church of the Savior to the 75-year-old rural Dawson Baptist Church in Philpot, Kentucky. It didn't work. The book I almost forgot was a book by Joseph McCabe entitled The Power of God in the Parish Program. I ignored the first part of the title, but clung to his ideas about the parish program. I was young and needed help. I tried every trick, gimmick, and idea I could; mostly in failure.

After three and a half years of frustration I moved on to greener pastures in Danville, Virginia. There I continued my tireless efforts to transpose a Washington inner-city house/church on a semirural congregation in the middle of the most fertile tobacco land in the country. The parish program I had brought with me from Kentucky turned, mostly, into failure again. Through the convergence of my own father's death and problems in the church I served, coupled with my own empty workaholicism, I found myself at the edge of the abyss--my own dark ages. Finally, only because I was desperate, I turned to an old-aged physician in

town to whom I had referred many others. He helped me enormously. One of the things he gave me, among so much, was a little mimeographed card with the 23rd Psalm inscribed on it. The words read: "The Lord is my Shepherd, I shall not lack. . ." My old friend went on to say that God never gives us what we want, but always what we need. We shall never lack the basic essentials. God always provides these. Like it was a life raft, I clung to that bit of a verse. It was the beginning of a healing that continues to this day. I began, falteringly, to discover the power--firsthand--that I had been preaching for six years.

Some time later I moved on to Georgetown, Kentucky where a wounded healer and a wounded congregation helped to bear one another's burdens. In the preface to a little book that I wrote there and dedicated to them six years later, I expressed the sentiment a second time: "After a long spiritual drought, a dark night that seemed to be interminably endless, joy came to me one afternoon. An old work was behind me and something new was just beginning. The moorings were not sure, and I was not certain that I was up to it; and then joy came. On a gorgeous spring afternoon as I was walking across a college campus, suddenly it was good to be alive. Life streamed in on me, and everything sparkled with a richness that I still remember vividly. The joy left me quickly as it came, and yet such occasions have kept me going."<sup>13</sup> Again, I had come to terms with the power that is given.

I keep bumping into this power, in the middle of all this powerlessness, in the strangest of places. Last spring I was asked to preach at the 75th anniversary of my home church. This was the first time I had preached there in 16 years. I was returning to the source, and I wanted to say something special.

That church sits right in the middle of a cotton mill village where I grew up. One day an idea hit me. I had my subject. During all my growing up years, there had hung a picture in my home church over the choir, back of the pulpit. The painting was a very good reproduction of Hans Hoffman's "Jesus in the Garden." You know the scene--darkness all around, the city of Jerusalem silhouetted in the distance, the disciples sleeping some way off. In the center Jesus kneels in that garden with his face toward heaven. The only light in the whole painting comes from above and fills up the whole painting. What I wanted to say that morning was that all they did and I did was done while Jesus prayed in the garden. "I have prayed for thee that thy faith fail not." On that anniversary Sunday, standing there with my mother so proud and my brother so bored, I looked out at a packed house--people made old by spinning frames and brown lung; people who had worked hard all their lives and known many convulsions. I could hardly keep back the tears. I knew, deep in my heart, I had come full circle. I had come back to what I had left. I talked that morning about the painting, and all of life overshadowed by that towering figure kneeling in the garden praying for us all.

We are all powerless. Those in the Middle Ages who whispered as they buried their dead: "Surely this is the end of the world." We are all powerless. Those nine disciples, that convulsive child, that frantic father. We are all powerless. Will Campbell and doomed brother Joe. Dear Catherine and her

husband and her mother and her daughters. We are all powerless. That man without a job and Graham Green's whisky priest and Martin King and JFK and even our inerrantist friends. But more--a young, green pastor and his old congregation in Philpot and in Danville, and the wounded ones in Georgetown and in Clemson and all those weary cotton mill workers that cling together, Sunday after Sunday, under the picture of a kneeling Jesus. We are not able and yet, mystery of mysteries, he prays for us that our faith fail not.

As you go back to Richmond or Greenville or Little Rock or wherever, remember we cannot cast them out, ever. We really are powerless; but he is able and, like those good men and women in every age, we affirm those words of the apostle Paul: "We have this treasure in earthen vessels to show that the transcendent power belongs to God and not to us." Powerless, but power-filled. Those who really believe that could change the world!

#### Footnotes

- <sup>1</sup>Barbara Tuchman, A Distant Mirror (New York: Ballentine Books, 1978), p. xiii.
- <sup>2</sup>Ibid., pp. xiii-xiv.
- <sup>3</sup>Ibid., pp. 94-95.
- <sup>4</sup>Quoted in Rollo May, Power and Innocence (New York: Norton, 1972), p. 2.
- <sup>5</sup>Tuchman, pp. xiii-xiv.
- <sup>6</sup>Graham Greene, The Power and the Glory (New York: The Viking Press, 1958), pp. 82-83.
- <sup>7</sup>Albert Outler, "Recovery of the Sacred," Christianity Today (January 23, 1981), pp. 21-24.
- <sup>8</sup>John Howard Yoder, The Politics of Jesus (Grand Rapids, Michigan: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1972), pp. 135-162.
- <sup>9</sup>Quoted in "The Alternative," Missions USA (January-February, 1981), p. 60.
- <sup>10</sup>Yoder, p. 152.
- <sup>11</sup>Tuchman, p. xix.
- <sup>12</sup>Ibid., p. 35.
- <sup>13</sup>Roger Lovette, Journey Toward Joy (Valley Forge: Judson Press, 1977), p. 7.





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