

LIGHT

Christian Life Commission of the Southern Baptist Convention
June 1984



“Seek Peace and Pursue It”

(Psalm 34:14)

Observe Day of Prayer for World Peace

August 5, 1984

Sponsored by the Christian Life Commission
of the Southern Baptist Convention

CHRISTIAN CITIZENSHIP 1984

A Call to Involvement

1984 is getting away and I haven't yet tried to utter anything profound about it. Maybe it would be better if I just left well enough alone. But the political primaries have been dominating the news, July 4 is coming up soon, the hoopla of the great political conventions will shortly be our daily fare and November 6 is just about 20 weeks away.

Politics is in the news and certain to be building to a powerful crescendo in the months immediately ahead. There's no use fighting it; politics is here to stay; we are political creatures; the media will not be denied this orgy; and moreover this is the way Americans govern ourselves.

Christians, of course, have a very special stake in all this political business. What government does affects not only our jobs, our economic prospects, our housing, our schools and our prospects for peace with justice or war with catastrophic loss but also our families, our churches and our mission programs. It would be folly for us to leave the running of the country to the wisdom of unbelievers.

In George Orwell's *1984* a tiny minority of elite—true-believer

ideologues, bureaucrats and scientists—ruled a barely literate vast majority, kept tranquilized by a combination of chemical soma, basic creature comforts and all-pervasive propaganda.

As in Orwell's *1984*, we are confronted by elite true believers whose ideologies invariably promise more than they deliver, whose simplistic formulas invariably fail to solve complex problems and whose devilish propaganda devices invariably seek to manipulate the masses for the vested interests of the elite.

As in Orwell's *1984*, we are ourselves preoccupied with creature comforts, addicted to our own brands of chemical and psychological soma and tranquilized by the monotonous dronings of the propagandists.

Through our response to the challenge of citizenship, the Orwellian nightmare can be brought significantly closer to us or pushed perceptibly away from us. In a democracy, the power is in our hands.

In this year of political destiny and to the limit of our abilities, Christian citizens ought to be engaged in careful study, thoughtful discussion,

creative dialogue, prayerful deliberation and responsible political activity.

Here are some practical things that Christian citizens can do.

- Use consecrated common sense to discern between simple truth and political propaganda.
- Recognize the fact that in our political tradition with its two-party system each party has a vital contribution to make to the life and well-being of the nation.
- Refuse to identify God Almighty as either a Republican or a Democrat and reject the idolatry of a civil religion that would politicize Christ and deify Caesar.
- Accept the fact that politics, the business of deciding who gets what, when and where, is the art of the possible and that democracy is like a raft: the thing doesn't sink even though your feet are always wet.
- Press for progress toward liberty and justice for all.
- Support both the candidates and the party of your choice with money, work, witness and prayer.
- Learn what you can about the most pressing issues and discuss them freely and frequently with others.
- Pray for those principals who most directly affect the political process: commentators, journalists, policy makers and the candidates themselves.
- Vote on election day and be an enabler to help other thoughtful Christian citizens to vote.
- Continue your political involvement after election day in order to keep on being the salt of the earth, the light of the world and heaven for the lump.

It seems to me that at least these things are needed if we are to move toward the realization of the American dream and away from the Orwellian nightmare.

Foy Valentine

Foy Valentine
Executive Director

LIGHT

What is the relationship between one's faith and the work-a-day world of economics? The question is intensely personal because every individual's fate is somehow related to issues of wealth, vocation, work and economic injustices. It also is philosophically complex because of competing economic ideologies, systems, traditions and values.

Though many valid approaches could be taken on this subject, I have chosen to examine briefly several dimensions of the Christian faith in relation to the business ethos.

What is the business ethos? As many definitions as businesspersons could likely be found. I am using the framework of the ideological background of democratic capitalism as my definition since that is the dominant framework of business in the United States.

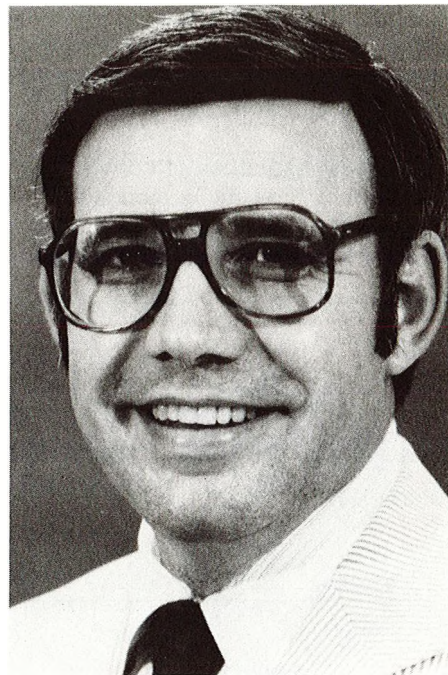
Adam Smith is the founding theoretician of capitalism, though contemporary business practices do not follow Smith's theory with the

emphasis upon freedom he envisioned.¹ Behrman summarized Smith's theory in terms of six economic institutions: economic motivation, private property, free enterprise, free market, competition and limited government.²

*Seek Ye First
the Kingdom of God:
**Business in Its
Proper Relation***

Scripture contains neither an anti-business bias nor an uncritical affirmation of any given economic practice. Christian faith is inherently "materialistic" for it affirms the goodness of all creation and the worthiness of work and production.

Furthermore, it is characterized by a totality or corporeality which includes every dimension of existence under the judgment of God. The modern separation of ethics into "personal" and "corporate" spheres, or into "individual" and "social" realms, was foreign to the Hebrew



Larry L. McSwain

mind. Indeed, much of the practical guidance of prophetic and wisdom literature in the Old Testament was addressed to economic practices.

Thus, "to separate from 'personal ethics' any autonomous area of 'business life' where God does not rule would be unthinkable in biblical theology."³

In the New Testament the concept of the "will of God" becomes more sharply focused upon the meaning of God's rule and reign in all of life. In Jesus Christ the kingdom of God is revealed, stands above all realms of life, and brings judgment to every arena of living. Thus, there is tension in the relationship of the spiritual and the economic.

This tension, however, has an ultimate resolution. In Matthew 6:24-33, Jesus addresses the issue of the priority of their relation. For him there can be no equal loyalty given to both God and wealth. "You cannot serve God and mammon."

To prioritize one's life and decision making in terms of the kingdom of God is to live in the righteousness of God while also enjoying the sufficiency of the good earth: "But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things shall be yours as well." To prioritize life around mammon is to choose a

THE BIBLE AND BUSINESS

Applying Christian Ethics To the Business Ethos

By Larry L. McSwain



mutually exclusive path to reality. To prioritize life in terms of the kingdom of God is to live a mutually inclusive life-style with respect to economic necessity.

The business ethos of contemporary economic systems stands in stark contrast to the kingdom ethic of the Christian faith. Whether the

munity of faith obedient to the will of God. For one to take seriously the claims of Christian discipleship requires living "above the market" of the capitalistic system. The result is a dialectic of both affirming and judging human systems, including economic ones.

The ethos of the business com-

age, unfair labor practices and injustices in employment are usually social ills which managers foster in their quest for a more profitable "bottom line."

A realistic Christian ethic would not reject the necessity of profit. But it would insist that capitalism can function ethically only if limits are placed upon the profit motive. The issue is one of ends and means. If the principal end of economics is profit, any system of ethics in that system will be subordinate to the question of profit. Spiller suggests that such a view defines any action facilitating profit as ethical. Thus, monopoly and exploitation become ethical means for achieving corporate goals.⁴

Business structures are more than economic entities. They are economic-politico-moral structures. To succeed economically and to fail politically and/or morally is to function unethically in the modern world.

How much profit is profitable? Average corporate return on invest-



"The ethos of the business community must be affirmed at the points of its just delivery of needed goods at competitive prices. When that same system becomes dishonest . . . , the Christian stands in judgment against it."

system is a variant of capitalism, traditionalism or socialism, it functions as a "principality and power" seeking autonomous loyalty to its values.

But the business ethos also includes within it the demand for freedom. It is this systemic insistence upon autonomy that leads to idolatry. No system of the world can claim autonomy in relation to the kingdom of God.

At this point all three major economic systems become idolatrous. Traditional economic systems claim the autonomy of religious organizational control as their primary right. Consequently the church, rather than the kingdom, becomes the means of economic salvation. Socialist systems claim the autonomy of state control as their primary right. Thus no individual has freedom in relation to the state domination of one's means of livelihood. Capitalist systems claim the autonomy of the marketplace as their primary right. As a result, freedom in the marketplace becomes the mechanism for exploitation of consumers and laborers.

All freedom for the Christian requires a certain kind of bondage. The truest form of freedom is to be found in being bound to the com-

munity must be affirmed at the points of its just delivery of needed goods at competitive prices. When that same system becomes dishonest, exploitative or unjust to create the market for its products, the Christian stands in judgment against it. There is no truer capitalist than a cocaine dealer, but the Christian must work to deny his right to sell.

The business ethos demands freedom for the system of marketplace control to work; the Christian must demand a freedom which limits even the marketplace, whether by individual choice, the creation of alternative markets or insistence upon governmental intervention. The market is not infallible!

How Much Profit is Profitable? Appropriate Means for Limited Ends

Certainly there is no inherent evil in profit. What must be challenged is the business ethos which works for and justifies unlimited profit or resists accountability to social needs in the name of profit. The reality is that racial, sexual and age discrimination in employment are often justified in the name of profit. Cutthroat competition, bribery, environmental dam-

Special Resources from the CLC

Special resources available from the Christian Life Commission have been designed to help churches, families and individuals cope with the ethical dimensions of economic issues. These materials include the following:

Issues & Answers: Business Ethics, Issues & Answers: Inflation and Issues & Answers: Taxation.

(Single pamphlets: 15¢ ea.)

Critical Issues: Inflation. An in-depth treatment of this complex and important economic issue.

(25¢ ea.)

The Bible Speaks on Money. Gives a brief, biblical survey on the issue.

(15¢ ea.)

Proceedings of the Christian Life Commission's 1974 national seminar in Houston: "Christians Confronting the Economic Crisis." Includes addresses by Ernest Campbell, William Dyal, Jr., William Pinson, Jr., Carl Madden, Harvey Seifert, George Schweitzer, Ralph Nader, Julia Montgomery Walsh and others.

(\$1.25 ea. while supplies last)

ment in the United States in 1978 was 14.3 percent.⁵ Is that enough? Or too much? Numerical standards cannot be given. But a moral principle can be stated. Any business that enhances the human worth of individuals, that produces goods and services essential for survival, that provides honorable work at a just wage for its employees, that bears responsibilities for the costs of its existence, and that works for the improvement of its social setting deserves enough profit to continue functioning at improved levels of efficiency.

Profit must never become the sole justification for the Christian in business.

*Christian Employee
as Change-Agent:
**Sacrificial Living in the
Corporate Context***

A third dimension to which the Christian faith must be addressed is the business employee. The business employee has, to a considerable degree, no different ethical responsibilities than employees of any institution. Indeed, one of the least explored areas of ethical concern is the treatment of and responsibilities of employees of religious institutions.

Ethical concerns must speak to both small and large business contexts. There are some 15 million

employment sector is governmental, employing or contracting for the services of 20 million people.⁶

Churches can hardly decry lack of ethical concern in the corporation if they do not exercise their own responsibilities in giving educational and spiritual leadership to developing sensitivity among laypersons to Christian moral values. Indeed, any business person who would function as a change-agent in the corporate context must have groups of support for dealing with the pressures of work in ethically ambiguous settings.

The ethical ambiguity of the workplace is not so much knowing the right as knowing how to be influential in encouraging right behavior. What is the ethical responsibility of the female employee who is aware of sexual relationships between her male supervisor and another female employee who receives special treatment for her favors?

To report such behavior to company superiors jeopardizes relationships with the supervisor and may result in the loss of future advancement or employment. Not to report such behavior creates internal morale problems for the employee. To complicate the situation further, proving the indiscretion may be more difficult than knowing it exists.

A host of other kinds of behavior from petty stealing of company property to price fixing, producing unsafe

either. What are the ethical responsibilities of the employee, whether of governmental, business or church-related institutions?

The Change-Agent as Innovator

Creativity in response to the needs of any work setting is the most important quality of the Christian employee. There is hardly any job imaginable in which better service or products, improved processes of functioning or new sets of policies for greater efficiency are not possible.

One of the ethical responsibilities of the Christian is to assist the business context to function profitably in a highly competitive atmosphere without resorting to unethical practices. The temptation to lower one's values can be met by more innovative ways of doing business. Such innovation becomes its own reward as the creative business delivers a finer product than its unethical competitor. The scriptural guide "whatever a man sows, that he will also reap" (Gal. 6:7c, RSV) applies to the corporation which trades the short-term unethical profit for the long-term ethical value as much as it applies to individuals.

Facilitating change is, therefore, an ethical stance for the Christian. To resist technology needed for a more qualitative life or to oppose processes of change which offer the potential for achieving ethical goals may be among the most unethical forms of human behavior the worker can commit.

Thus, one important role of the church must be the encouragement of attitudes of flexibility, adjustment to change, and innovation. If our God is the creative God who brought the world into being and charged humanity with the responsibility of developing its resources in a responsible manner, innovative leadership in developing new products and services and making them available to the peoples of the world is itself an ethical demand.

The Change-Agent as Example

The Christian employee can stand over against the prevailing amoral and immoral behaviors encountered



"Churches can hardly decry lack of ethical concern in the corporation if they do not exercise their own responsibilities in giving educational and spiritual leadership to developing sensitivity among laypersons to Christian moral values."

small businesses employing 46 million people and 700,000 large corporations employing 38 million in the United States. The largest single

products, and shoddy work are observed daily by persons of honesty who do not participate in them, but do not resist such actions by others

in the workplace. Given the extensive participation Americans report in the religious life of the United States, one cannot but wonder about the reporting of industrial theft, employee injustice and discrimination. Either the reports are exaggerated or church members are responsible for many of these ethical problems.

Surely the Christian has a responsibility to function within the framework of those Christian values of honesty, fairness in dealing with persons, giving work equal to one's compensation and working with established procedures to promote those policies reflective of the highest human values. Regardless of the behavior of others, the light and salt qualities of Christian living dispel the darkness of iniquity and leaven the evil of our world. To such commitment every church must call its members.

The Change-Agent as "Whistle Blower"

In extreme cases of unethical business conduct, the Christian change-agent may need to risk employment

life would call for following the sacrificial example of Jesus Christ in doing the good. It was a welder going to the newspaper to report shoddy work at a nuclear power plant who may have saved the nation from a future tragedy. Yet he lost his job.

Norman Bowie offers an excellent definition of the ethical whistle blower who is not acting to fulfill his or her own ego:

A whistle blower is an employee or officer of any institution, profit or non-profit, private or public, who believes either that he/she has been ordered to perform some act or he/she has obtained knowledge that the institution is engaged in activities which (a) are believed to cause unnecessary harm to third parties, (b) are in violation of human rights, or (c) run counter to the defined purpose of the institution and who inform the public of this fact.⁷

There are dangers in encouraging Christians to engage in such behavior. It can lead to self-righteousness or incorrect or inadequate informa-

3. *The whistle blower has made certain that his or her belief that inappropriate actions are ordered or have occurred is based on evidence that would persuade a reasonable person.*

4. *The whistle blower has acted after a careful analysis of the danger: (a) how serious is the moral violation, (b) how immediate is the moral violation, (c) is the moral violation one that can be specified?*

5. *The whistle blower's action is commensurate with one's responsibility for avoiding and exposing moral violations.*

6. *It has some chance of success.⁸*

Each of these change-agent roles requires a higher loyalty in terms of value than the ethos of the business community alone. The creation of that kingdom ethic of obedience to the One who must be served, whatever the consequences, is the task of every church and every minister.

To apply such a value to the business community is a risky task. But to do less is to fail to serve the Christ who is the Lord of all of life—including the life of work.

Notes

¹Adam Smith, *An Inquiry into the Nature and Causes of the Wealth of Nations*, ed. Edwin Cannan (New York: The Modern Library, 1937 [1776]).

²Jack N. Behrman, *Discourses on Ethics and Business* (Cambridge, Mass.: Oelgeschlager, Gunn and Hain, Publishers, 1981), pp. 20-30.

³Foster R. McCurley and John H. P. Reumann, "Ethical Guidance Provided by the Bible"—Confusion, Chimera or Prophetic Realism?" in *Corporation Ethics: The Quest for Moral Authority*, ed. George W. Forell and William H. Lazareth (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1980), pp. 35-51.

⁴Earl A. Spiller, Jr., "Profits and Ethics: Colleagues or Adversaries?" *Ethics and Standards in American Business*, ed. Joseph W. Towle (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1964), p. 52.

⁵Michael Novak, *Toward a Theology of the Corporation* (Washington: American Enterprise Institute, 1981), p. 15.

⁶*Ibid.*, p. 13.

⁷Norman Bowie, *Business Ethics* (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1982), p. 142.

⁸*Ibid.*, p. 143.

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"To apply [the Kingdom ethic] to the business community is a risky task. But to do less is to fail to serve the Christ who is the Lord of all of life—including the life of work."

itself to bring the ethical wrong to public awareness. Such a role is a sacrificial one. No corporation or government agency will reward the person who goes outside the channels of internal authority to correct a wrong.

Yet some situations are critical to the point of danger if someone is not willing to make the sacrifice of risking employment for the public good. Certainly the nature of the Christian

tion being made public.

Bowie, in fact, offers several important guidelines for the justification of this type of action.

1. *It is done from the appropriate moral motive, namely, as provided in the definition of whistle blowing.*

2. *The whistle blower, except in special circumstances, has exhausted all internal channels for dissent before informing the public.*

PRAYERS FOR PEACE

Baptists' Special Emphasis

Who? The Day of Prayer for World Peace began as a grass-roots idea among concerned Southern Baptists. It was recommended to the Southern Baptist Convention Calendar Committee by the Christian Life Commission.

It was approved by the Southern Baptist Convention meeting at Pittsburgh in June 1983 and placed on the official convention calendar. All interested Southern Baptists are urged to participate.

What? The Day of Prayer for World Peace is one day a year on which Southern Baptists are asked to pause to remember the "wars and rumors of wars" in our world and to pray for peace.

It is a day for increasing awareness among Baptists of the horrors of war in our world. It is a day for educating ourselves about issues related to peace with justice, and the impact of social and political unrest on missions. Most of all, as the name suggests, it is a day to pray for peace.

When? The Day of Prayer for World Peace has been placed on the convention calendar for the first Sunday in August, beginning in 1984. Each year, the Christian Life Commission will suggest a theme and make available bulletin inserts and other resources for observing the day. Baptist Bulletin Service will also have a special issue for the first Sunday in August each year.

Some state conventions

will choose to emphasize peace on Memorial Day weekend in May. Each church should choose the most appropriate day for its own observance.

Why? Southern Baptists believe in prayer. We believe that prayer changes things, that God brings power to bear on human situations when we pray.

In a world which seems so close to self-destruction, praying for peace will give us hope and strength to endure. In a world in which so many feel helpless and confused about how to establish peace with justice, praying together will give us direction. In a world which so desperately needs the peace of Christ, praying will clear the way for Christian witness.

Let us join together to pray for peace.

Churches to Help Launch Observance

Churches representing at least 26 Baptist state conventions will help inaugurate the denomination-wide observance of the Day of Prayer for World Peace.

The inaugural churches will focus on peace with justice in their worship services on Sunday, Aug. 5.

The Christian Life Commission will provide the churches with special bulletin inserts, a Day of Prayer for World Peace planning guide and other resource materials.

Ronald D. Sisk of the CLC explained that the congregations were enlisted "as a way of saying to all Southern Baptist churches that this important emphasis is for everybody."

"Prayer," he said, "is always local. It finds form and substance only when practiced by someone, some place at some particular time. The Day of Prayer for World Peace is designed to find expression in local congregations throughout the Southern Baptist Convention.

"We hope every Southern Baptist church will accept the challenge to pray for peace and to work for peace with justice as part and parcel of their ongoing witness for Jesus Christ."



LOVING OUR ENEMIES

A Bible Study on Peacemaking

By Ronald D. Sisk

Ye have heard that it hath been said, Thou shalt love thy neighbour, and hate thine enemy. But I say unto you, Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you. Matthew 5:43-44

Whom do you love? For whom do you pray? The Day of Prayer for World Peace challenges Southern Baptists to rethink both our loving and our praying. As we pray for peace, we open ourselves to hear with new ears Jesus' instructions about how to be peacemakers. This portion of the Sermon on the Mount is neither an impossible ideal, nor a collection of spiritualized platitudes. Rather, it is practical instruction from the Lord about how to treat those with whom we differ.

1. "Bless them that curse you." The Revised Standard Version, working from earlier manuscripts, does not contain this phrase or the one which follows it, from the King James. In this case, however, the meaning of the scripture is not substantially altered by using either version. If one chooses to use the verse as it appears in the RSV, "Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you," then the acts of blessing and doing good may properly be treated as aspects of loving. *Agape* love, as one scholar has described it, means "to will and to work for the well-being" of others. Willing someone's well-being is equivalent to blessing them. Working for their well-being is equivalent to doing good. In this case, the textual prob-

lem does not create a problem of interpretation.

We are to bless our enemies, to will the best for them. Some interpreters, of course, claim that Jesus is establishing a strictly personal ethic. The direct answer to that idea is found in the parable of the good Samaritan (Luke 10:29-37). Our neighbor is both that person who is closest to us and the one who is most alien. A member of an enemy nation, the parable teaches, is nonetheless a neighbor. "Enemy" in the present passage also, therefore, should be given both a personal and a political interpretation.

The point is that we are to will our enemies' genuine well-being. That does not mean we should surrender to them. It does mean that we should be as genuinely concerned for their welfare as we are for our own.

2. "Do good to them that hate you." The second part of loving our enemy is to turn will into action. How do we actively work for the best for our enemies? We work for justice, for equity, for those eventualities which are most likely to create genuine peace. We learn to look not at our emotions but at the facts of the situation in order to be sure that each side's legitimate claims are heard.

Along the Kentucky-West Virginia border, the Hatfield and McCoy families kept an Appalachian blood feud going so long that neither side could remember why it started. They finally ended the feud, not because they felt better about each other, but because the fight was costing both families too many wasted lives. They began doing good to their enemies for their own good.

In many ways, this same principle underlies such concepts as arms control negotiations. A costly, increasingly deadly arms race benefits neither side in the current East-West confrontation. Both American and Soviet economies stagger under the load. Neither side will allow the other to gain a clear advantage. Equitable, verifiable agreements would be to the advantage of both sides. In order to really make peace with our enemies, we must learn how to do good to them that hate us.

3. "Pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you." Some situations seem to have no solution. Some enmities seem etched in stone. Sometimes we simply do not know what to do. For many people in our day, the world situation causes great despair. "I'm only one person," they complain. "How can I hope to make any difference?"

One of the major goals of the Day of Prayer for World Peace is to help Southern Baptists gain a sense of hope toward the world situation by remembering that God is in control.

When we pray, we begin to learn that there are indeed things we can do. Even in a world on the brink of nuclear destruction, we can continue to pray for peace with justice for all people. We can work as concerned citizens for policies which support peace with justice for all nations. We can support human rights where they are denied or infringed. We can continue our efforts to extend the peace of Jesus Christ into human hearts and lives everywhere.

And, when we can do nothing else, we can still pray. God's authority is confirmed at the limits of human abilities. His strength is made perfect in our weakness. In praying for those from whom we expect nothing but evil, we bring God's power to bear on our infirmities, and somehow things change. God changes both us and those who persecute us. That is why we pray.

Sisk, director of program development for the Christian Life Commission, has written a planning guide on the Day of Prayer for World Peace.

Pentecost is upon us. This year, in fact, the "birthday of the church" falls on the very eve of the Southern Baptist Convention, June 10. It may be prayed that the coincidence of those dates this year be more a portent than an irony.

One of the few homegrown Baptist affirmations of Pentecost itself is one of those old Rodeheaver gospel songs they used to belt out in the Billy Sunday meetings: "Pentecostal Power." Many of us still sing it. It's the kind of song that for its full effect requires accompaniment on a rinky-tinky piano and direction from a cheerleading music man who makes you hold the high note 'til your eyes bulge. "Lord—" (hold that note 'til you're one gasp short of glory, then swoop down the next like a hawk on its dinner)—*send* the old time power, the Pentecostal power That sinners be converted and thy name glorified!" Musically it's hardly the best but this old song heartily and rightly connects Pentecost with the issue of power.

Pentecost points us to that distinctive Power that converts human

beings from the powers of this age and glorifies God. Pentecost points us then to the pursuit of peace, for what is the issue of peace if not the issue of this Power?

In the New Testament the transformation wrought by the Power of Pentecost is focused on the person of Simon Peter. This is fitting, for prior to Pentecost Peter personifies the disciple entangled in the wrong kind of power. Take for instance that incident with the sword. Having failed to persuade Jesus to keep safe from his enemies, Simon boasts his courage too loudly and secures a sword. Then, as Jesus gives himself to his enemies, mighty Simon swings his sword, managing to wreak havoc on somebody's right ear.

So much for peace through strength. It was fear of the powers that slung the sword, the same fear that had him shortly screaming denials of Jesus. He needn't have shouted. The sword had been denial enough.

Contrast Pentecost. At 9 a.m. the door of a house blows open, and out into the world charge 120 people

with fire in their eyes and a message on their tongues to turn the world upside down. At the lead is Peter. He is chastened now, forgiven and, for the first time, fearless.

With no sword, no brag, no flair, just fire, he preaches to the powers. He tells them they have crucified Jesus but God has raised him. He offers forgiveness and appeals for their conversion. Some said he was drunk, but 3,000 were, says Luke, "cut to the heart," and chose to be immersed in whatever he was on fire with.

Peter had learned what Zechariah had long ago said: "Not by might, nor by power, but by my spirit says the Lord." It is the Truth still to be learned, not only by power mongers but by would-be peacemakers. If Christians seek peace by means of or alongside of worldly power, peace doesn't have a prayer. Our proclamation of the gospel should fore-swear every kind of latter-day sword slinging, whether against others or one another.

One Power wins reconciliation, just one; and it's not ours to wield, though it graciously wishes to wield us. The quietly explosive Spirit of God—if we are utterly devoted to that Power, daily converted ourselves by it, then peace has a prayer. Is it strategy we now need? Is it even courage? Or isn't it something more like being drunk on the Living Spirit of the Crucified One?

I have stood in a Jesuit chapel in St. Louis in which the light fixtures are converted cannon shells. Part of the exterior of the shells has been melted or stripped away, and where the deadly insides used to be are lights for people to pray by. How about that for swords to plowshares: ammunition to lumination!

It's a fair parable of what the Spirit worked in Peter and what may yet be worked in us. The fear and self-seeking and misguided zeal that have loaded us with destructive power are subject even now to being crowded out by the fire and light of God's Spirit. May we know how to pursue this peace—and, with Power, to proclaim it.

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PENTECOST, POWER AND PEACE

Pursuing Peace Through the Power of the Spirit

By Paul Duke

12 OF THE BEST

Current Resources on Peace

The following compilation includes a selection of the most recent works on peace and nuclear war. The growing mountain of new books in this area makes such a list necessarily incomplete. You won't agree with everything in these books. Neither do we. But, if you've yet to do serious reading concerning the nuclear peril, or, if you're looking for the next place to go, these books should both stimulate thought and challenge you to action.

Darkening Valley: A Biblical Perspective on Nuclear War, by Dale Aukerman. New York: The Seabury Press, 1981. *Hitler as the woman caught in adultery and the laughter of God in a world gone mad: Aukerman's recasting of biblical imagery will threaten, inspire and challenge you.*

The Darkness of God: Theology after Hiroshima, by Jim Garrison. Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1983. *At work even in the tragedy of Hiroshima, God confronts humankind through nuclear weapons with the reality of divine wrath and the necessity for transformation of human society.*

Facing Nuclear War: A Plea for Christian Witness, by Donald B. Kraybill. Scottsdale, Pennsylvania: Herald Press, 1982. *Ample facts and clear Christian thinking about nuclear war characterize Kraybill's nuclear pacifism.*

The Fate of the Earth, by Jonathan Schell. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1982. *The seminal secular work in the recent surge of interest in nuclear war. Schell tells us what would happen, then speculates concerning how to prevent it.*

The Journey into Peacemaking, by Glen Stassen. Memphis: The Brotherhood Commission of the Southern Baptist Convention, 1983. *In the only specifically Southern Baptist*

work on this list, Stassen provides an excellent 13-session guide for small groups in local churches.

No Easy Answers: Christians Debate Nuclear Arms, by Robert L. Spaeth. Minneapolis: Winston Press, 1983. *More good discussion, with questions, for your small group. Spaeth deals with the arms race background, current political issues, and the various Christian views.*

Nuclear War: What's in It for You? by Ground Zero. New York: Pocket Books, 1982. *A primer on the strategic issues involved in the nuclear arms race. Deliberately chatty and almost too cute, this is nonetheless the best non-technical treatment available.*

Nuclear Weapons and the American Churches: Ethical Positions on Modern Warfare, by Donald L. Davidson. Boulder, Colorado: Westview Press, 1983. *A Southern Baptist Army Chaplain's official War College review of Christian positions on nuclear warfare. This book is balanced and helpful.*

Peace-Ways, edited by Charles P. Lutz and Jerry L. Folk. Minneapolis: Augsburg Publishing House, 1983. *This compilation of 16 essays with questions designed to speak from the tradition of the American Lutheran Church provides a valuable comparison for Southern Baptists.*

Waging Peace: A Handbook for the Struggle to Abolish Nuclear Weapons, edited by Jim Wallis. San Francisco: Harper & Row, Publishers, 1982. *A collection of essays on the whole spectrum of issues being addressed by the American Peace Movement. Names like Nouwen, Sider, Wallis, Hinson, Cosby and Yoder are but samples of the wealth.*

War, Peace, and the Bible, by J. Carter Swaim. Maryknoll, New York: Orbis Books, 1982. *Swaim interprets the Bible as a call to peace and justice for both individuals and nations.*

What about the Russians—and Nuclear War? by Ground Zero. New York: Pocket Books, 1983. *Must reading for everyone who's afraid of what the Soviets might do if we tried to be friends. The book brings common sense and helpful information to bear on an extremely emotional issue.*

Practical Help from the Christian Life Commission

These new undated resources can be used to enhance a local church's emphasis on peace with justice, including observance of the Day of Prayer for World Peace. The resources are also useful for individual or group study at home or in a retreat setting.

Planning Guide: Day of Prayer for World Peace — Gives suggestions for conducting a local church observance on Aug. 5 or an alternate date. (\$1.25 ea.)
"Seek Peace and Pursue It" — A 5 1/2" x 8 1/2" bulletin insert for use in a peace with justice emphasis. Includes article, "Peace Is a Bible Word," written by Foy Valentine. (40 for \$2.00)

Peace with Justice Resource Guide — Six-session emphasis for adults and youth in individual or group study. (\$1.25 ea.)

"Peace with Justice Videotape" — This 27-minute videotape gives biblical views and Baptist positions on peace with justice and suggests a Christian approach for dealing with controversial issues. Available in 1/2" VHS or 3/4" U-Matic formats. (Rental \$10, Sale \$35 for 3/4" and \$25 for 1/2". Please specify show date when scheduling rental.)

Order peace with justice resources by sending title and quantity along with your name and address to: **The Christian Life Commission, 460 James Robertson Parkway, Nashville, TN 37219-9990**. No postage charge on cash orders. Postage will be added to orders to be billed.

No change. No change at all. Same role as always."¹ So a prominent Southern Baptist elder statesman is reported to have replied in 1974 to a question concerning the proper role of women among Southern Baptists. In 1984 many would still agree with his assessment.

In fact, in many ways the prominent role of women in Southern Baptist life is a time-honored tradition. Women have generally constituted more than half the membership of the churches affiliated with the Southern Baptist Convention. History teaches that it was women who taught us to tithe, women who undergirded the expansion of both home missions and foreign missions and women who led in

making Sunday School an established part of Southern Baptist life.²

The leadership role of women in Southern Baptist life is nevertheless changing and seems likely to continue to do so. That change is at least partly related to changes in American society as a whole.

Over half of all adult women are now part of the nation's work force. Six million American women earn more than their husbands. In the 1980s women marry later, have fewer children and account for a higher percentage of earned doctorates than ever before in American history.³

Inevitably, women who receive respect for their experience and expertise in the workaday world

expect to receive it at church, and they do. They are moving beyond the flower committees to the finance committees, and they are doing well.

Change also has resulted, however, from an increased willingness on the part of churches to use women in traditionally male places of service and on the part of women themselves to enter such arenas. Females constituted 18.6 percent of the enrollment of the six Southern Baptist seminaries in the 1983 fall semester.⁴ Hundreds of Southern Baptist women serve as deacons, and between two and three hundred have been set apart by some local Southern Baptist church for the gospel ministry.

Unresolved issues remain. Only six percent of the 1983 appointees of the SBC Committee on Boards were women. The theological debate about the propriety of ordaining women continues. Nonetheless, more and more Southern Baptists are interpreting the Bible and the leadership of the Holy Spirit in ways leading to significant new opportunities of Christian service for Southern Baptist women.

"No change?" Hardly. In both traditional and innovative fashion, Southern Baptists are responding to the spirit of the 1983 SBC resolution on women. They are continuing "to explore further opportunities of service for Baptist women, to ensure maximum utilization of all God-called servants of our Lord Jesus Christ."⁵

WOMEN AND THE SBC

A Status Report



on Changing Roles

Notes

¹Louie D. Newton, quoted in Harry Leon McBeth, "The Role of Women in Southern Baptist History," *Baptist History and Heritage*, January 1977, p. 23.

²McBeth, pp. 3-25.

³Suzanne M. Bianchi and Daphne Spain, *American Women: Three Decades of Change*, U. S. Census Bureau report, 1983; and The 1982 Survey of Earned Doctorates.

⁴This figure is computed from information supplied by the registrars of the six Southern Baptist seminaries.

⁵*Annual of the Southern Baptist Convention*, 1983, p. 71.

TRIVIALIZING THE HOLY

A Baptist Journalist Comments on School Prayer

EDITOR'S NOTE: Though President Reagan's hotly-debated prayer amendment was defeated in Congress, discussion of the issue promises to continue as Christians try to sort out the practical implications of religious liberty and its corollary, separation of church and state. The following commentary by television journalist Bill Moyers was aired the same day legislation was introduced to legalize structured, vocal prayer in public schools. It is reprinted with special permission from Moyers.

BILL MOYERS: You would think that at least today, senators in favor of school prayers would turn out in force for the daily prayer that opens the Senate. But no, only four senators were present. Four of 100.

Apparently, what's thought necessary for children is merely optional for grown-ups in public life. Otherwise, the chaplains of the House and Senate would not routinely have to intone to chambers almost empty of the champions of public prayer. Surely so poor an attendance record, which we've monitored now for days, speaks to the emptiness of ceremony when it becomes custom instead of conviction.

This is what puzzles me about my cousins in the faith who clamor that we have to get prayers back in the schools. I know they sincerely believe that culture is being deprived of a rich and uplifting symbol. But true prayer is no ornament of culture. It's an act of conscience, the deepest and most intimate essence of religion expressed in the simple but powerful address of adoration, petition and confession.

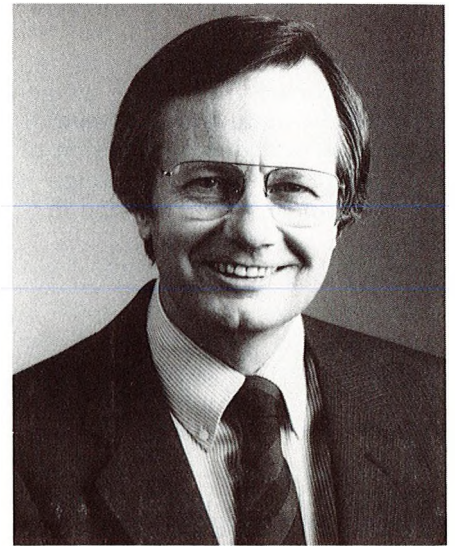
Any prayer officially sanctioned, tailored to fit a public circumstance, is faith with strings attached.

I know that when I was growing up, I was relieved that the public ritual of a corporate act could pass for the real thing. I preferred to hide from God in the company of my classmates, between the Pledge of Allegiance and the multiplication tables, rather than be left alone and unguarded contemplating the immeasurable mystery of the holy.

A minister in town was opposed to school prayers for just that reason. His favorite text was from the Gospel of Matthew, where Christ says that "when you pray, go into your room and, when you've shut the

door, pray to your Father who is in a secret place."

We kids didn't much like that. We weren't eager to go one-on-one with the Lord when there is safety in numbers. So that little banality every morning satisfied our appetite for religion with the edge taken off. It did to faith what the rote repetition of the pledge to the flag did to patriotism—made it a kind of collective narcotic that spared us from

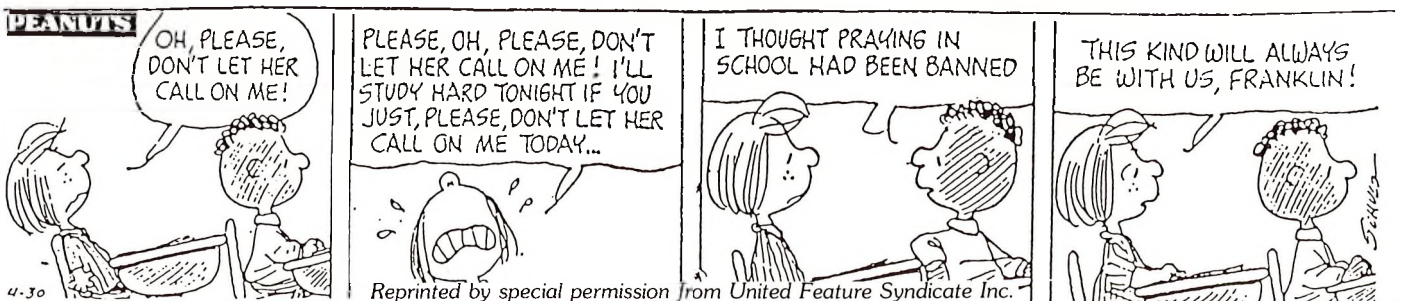


Bill Moyers

thinking about what we were saying and from acting on it.

Fortunately, my Baptist parents and other elders believe with Saint Theresa of Avila that prayer "is an intimate friendship, a frequent conversation held alone with the beloved"—or, as a Protestant ancestor once put it, "a silence full of reverence."

It seems to me that religious folk ought to be especially grateful to the Supreme Court for not allowing the state to make something so trivial of something so sacred.



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PARTY LINE

Could 1986 Bring A New Right Party?

By Larry Braidfoot

Political activists who fashioned the New Right alliance with media religious leaders which gave highly visible support to Ronald Reagan's 1980 presidential campaign have become sharply critical of Reagan's performance. In fact, they appear to be looking beyond this fall's election to the formation of a new political party.

Richard Viguerie, Paul Weyrich, and others successfully recruited TV personalities such as Jerry Falwell, Pat Robertson and James Robison to vocal, often strident, support of Reagan's presidential campaign in 1980.

These media religious figures and many other conservative Christians were attracted to Reagan's campaign statements in support of tuition tax credits, organized public school prayer and in opposition to Supreme Court decisions about abortions. Their support at times tended to portray Reagan as "the Christian candidate" and the Republican party as "the Christian party."

But in recent months Reagan's real commitment to these issues and other campaign promises has been criticized more openly by the political wing of the New Right alliance.

Prior to Reagan's announcement of his plans to run for reelection, a number of opinion polls on the President's performance were conducted by and reported in *The Conservative Digest*. Published by Viguerie, the *Digest* is perhaps the most accurate barometer of the religious-political alliance. In an October poll, 63 percent of those surveyed expressed disappointment with Reagan's presidency and 62 percent labeled it

either moderate or liberal. Conservative leaders responding to the survey gave Reagan an overall failing grade in his efforts to implement campaign promises.

Subsequent polls reflected the same dissatisfaction as seen in the October poll. A poll reported in November reflected a 90 percent negative response to the handling of the Korean air lines disaster. Sixty-seven percent were disappointed in the Reagan presidency, and 51 percent would prefer an alternative candidate.

The low marks continued in a December poll in which only 44 percent of those surveyed were pleased with the Reagan presidency and only 38 percent regarded him as conservative.

In October, while Reagan was still mulling his options, both Viguerie and Howard Phillips, chairman of The Conservative Caucus, openly stated that he should not run for reelection. After surveying discrepancies between Reagan's promises and his performance, Viguerie reluctantly concluded, "It is time for a change."

Phillips was far more strident in his criticism. He faulted Reagan for talking one way and acting another. He criticized Reagan for pulling apart the 1980 coalition by ignoring the religious agenda pushed by the New Right alliance and giving merely rhetorical support to those issues. He labeled Reagan's verbal support of such causes as "worth less than the teleprompter it's written on."

Viguerie and Phillips have both stated that much of the enthusiasm for Reagan's 1980 campaign is now missing. Also, Morton C. Blackwell, formerly of Reagan's staff, stated

recently that many groups that had worked actively in 1980 are doing little or nothing.

Viguerie and Phillips have been saying openly for several months that a new political party for their brand of conservatism might be necessary. In an October *Conservative Digest* poll, 69 percent of those surveyed said they would consider supporting a new conservative party if the Republican party continued its present orientation. This same level of support for a new party was reflected by "conservative leaders" in a December poll. Among readers the level of support was 82 percent.

Viguerie would mold such a party around issues such as pornography, crime, abortion, school prayer and taxes. While talk of the formation of a new party may sound farfetched in an election year, the first step may have been taken on April 16 with the formation of a Populist Conservative Tax Coalition.

These trends in recent months have more clearly indicated that the New Right coalition of political activists and media religious personalities was a coalition within the Republican party but not necessarily an ongoing part of the Republican party. Also, it is clear that the "conservatism" of Viguerie and Phillips and the New Right is not the conservatism of Senators Dole or Goldwater or even President Reagan.

Although 1984 is a presidential election year, it is ironic that at this stage the clearest trend on the political scene is not in terms of the candidates, platforms or focus of campaign issues. It is the formation of the groundwork for a new political party which could emerge by 1986.

In this election year, all major candidates will make appeals to different religious groups. Christians will be a major group. Christians are not unified in one political belief or party. Neither are Southern Baptists. This year is certainly a time to test ideas, to beware of the entanglements of civil religion and to work for justice, public righteousness and compassion.

Braidfoot is general counsel and director of Christian citizenship development for the Christian Life Commission.

SEARCH FOR CELEBRITYHOOD

Denominational Status Game

By William M. Tillman, Jr.

Before the dust settles from the 1984 Southern Baptist Convention, perhaps we should reflect on a perennial agenda item that never appears in the printed program. Anyone who is a more than casual observer of the SBC scene will recognize Southern Baptists' incessant attempts to create and adulate our own set of celebrities.

Most SBC celebrities are related to large churches. Some are denominational executives. Others fit neither of these categories. Indeed, some manage to attain celebrity status by their very projection of being an alternative choice.

How does our celebrity system work? Principally through the media, just like other celebrity systems. Newsmakers generate attention. And fan clubs thrive on the newsmakers.

Before indicting our media too hastily, though, we need to remember we Southern Baptists suffer from spectatoritis. We enjoy watching our present-day knights errant (no pun intended) jousting on the convention floor or platform. Vicariously, we are they.

There is an informal pecking order by which this celebrity system operates. Possibly the baseball farm system, with its minor league celebrities and major league celebrities, would be an analogy. Yet in some ways we also pine for a denominational feudal system. Some of us are ready to give adoring, almost royal, attention to those who have "made it." Just listen to introductions at the SBC.

Part of the problem is that we Southern Baptists, reflecting our cul-

ture, suffer for a lack of heroes and heroines. Rather than living life out in its cycle of peaks and valleys and sensing the miracles of God's presence in everyday, ordinary events, we almost insatiably insist on hankering after those who, on a continuous basis, are able to project a bigger-than-life image.

But do not forget those individuals who have convinced themselves that they deserve such treatment. They of their own volition covet the spotlight, in order to be able to say they were there. It is almost comical to observe the preening and grooming for such opportunities. Pre- and post-convention public relations networks have developed to sell these personalities and their issues.

How should we respond? Do we simply reject anyone with charisma, leadership ability or creativity offered for the supposed good of individuals, churches or the convention? No, for in many instances prestigious places have sought individuals rather than vice versa. Yet we must recognize some dynamics at work when place and people are misused in the search for celebrityhood.

- We have caught the contagion of our upwardly mobile society. One symptom is the usually well-packaged but still tiredly the same "bigger is always better." Sometimes that phrase depicts truth. Yet we also must recognize the needed tension between quantity and quality.

- We need to evaluate the motives and methods for our involvement in the life of the SBC. Some have not realized that the language and actions of advancing the cause of Christ can easily be prostituted in

order to advance our own individual causes. An overriding concern is, what does this search for celebrityhood communicate about us to those outside the SBC, even outside the Kingdom? Paradoxically, a system known for its mission emphases frequently has provided a spawning ground for dynamics that are detrimental to those emphases.

- We should be careful of our role models. Southern Baptists have not passed a resolution on cloning, but we often practice it. This "look-alikeness" may take the form of hair or clothing styles, particular doctrinal positions, or whatever else gives the "in" look and smell of "success." To the extent we are only the reflection of another, we are that much less uniquely ourselves. Some of the breakdown in our contemporary understanding of soul competency or priesthood of the believer can be traced to this.

- As a whole, we do not understand power very well—when we have it; how much we have; what it entails as obligation and freedom; or how, if out of control, it can consume us. Too often we hear about the power of the cross-resurrection event, but what we see lived out is more on the order of Nietzsche's will to power where might makes right. A large part of the ferment in the SBC in recent years has been a power struggle camouflaged more often than not as doctrinal differences.

- We each need to be concerned about egomania. It is not only "in them." We can each sense the drive toward celebrityhood for its own sake. Let us not ignore the powerful theme that courses through the New Testament, not of celebrityhood, but of servanthood. Whether it be the attitudes or actions of Jesus, the fruit of the Spirit in Galatians, or the kenotic hymn of Philippians—the message is, we serve.

It is not a particularly popular theme. But the call to servanthood must be heard and heeded in the midst of the pervasive search for celebrityhood.

Tillman is assistant professor of Christian ethics, Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, Fort Worth, Texas.

Ten Forces Reshaping America

U.S. News and World Report (3-19-84) has identified 10 major forces that promise to reshape America in the next two decades:

1. *A Maturing Society.* For the first time in U.S. history, people 65 and over outnumber teenagers. By 1990 the number of older citizens is expected to surpass 31 million. Contributing factors: relatively stagnant birth rates, increased life expectancy and the aging of the baby-boom generation, born between 1946 and 1964.

2. *Lure of the Sun Belt.* The South and West get bigger, richer and more powerful, at the expense of the Northeast and Midwest.

3. *Computer Revolution.* The tiny electronic chip moves America deeper into the Information Age.

4. *Foreign Competition.* American economic supremacy could become a luxury of the past.

5. *Women on the Move.* They're moving out of the house, up the economic ladder and into new roles. They're also running into new obstacles. The trend surfaces many issues: equal rights, political influence, child care, single-parent families, two-career marriages, economic disparity between sexes.

6. *Rise of Minorities.* As their numbers grow, minorities continue to gain power and influence. Blacks, who account for 12.1% of the population, soon will be surpassed by Hispanics as the largest minority. Asian Americans are the fastest-growing. But civil rights activists fear a backlash among whites could jeopardize recent progress.

7. *Declining Superpowers.* Both the U.S. and the U.S.S.R. face new global

realities of less dominance and more interdependence.

8. *Government Under Fire.* Confidence in government wanes and skepticism and frustration increase.

9. *Education Boom.* Learning undergoes its own revolution in response to the demands of an era of change.

10. *Medical Miracles.* Thanks to medical advances, Americans will live longer and healthier lives. But runaway health costs and frightening ethical questions add a sobering note to any hymn of medical praise.

Grim News from Africa

Africa, deprived of rain for the 1984 plantings, may be headed for the "drought of the century."

According to one report, conditions in 22 nations are "far more serious now than during the famine of 1973-74, when perhaps 500,000 Africans starved to death and several millions more were permanently scarred by malnutrition. . . . Crops are failing, livestock dying, and reserve food stocks dwindling."

Since 1960 the processes of planting, harvesting and marketing have been disrupted by "more than 12 wars, some 50 coups, the assassinations of 13 heads of state, widespread refugee problems, cyclical drought, and the spread of the desert."

—Atlantic (3/84)

Two-Income Families Increase

More than three-fifths of all married couples in the U.S. have become two-income families, a significant increase over earlier decades, the Census Bureau reported.

Some 26.3 million couples, or 62%, had both husband and wife employed in 1981. That contrasts with 50.1% a decade ago and only 40% in 1960.

An income study in *American Demographics* magazine noted that while the number of married couples in the U.S. increased only 2% between 1975 and 1979, the number of families with wives in the work force jumped 14%.

Most working wives were employed only part-time, but 46% did have full-time, year-round jobs. Average yearly earnings for the 40.2 million working husbands was \$20,870; for the 27.7 million working wives, the average was \$8,600.

—Associated Press

Pollution Choking America's Forests

Air pollution, including acid rain, has been blamed for increasing damage to American forests.

Worldwatch Institute, an international resource research group, reports that some U.S. forests are exhibiting signs of dead, dying and damaged trees like those in broad areas of central Europe.

Extensive damage in some European countries could foreshadow similar effects here because pollution patterns are parallel. In Germany alone, more than \$1 billion in timber has been lost.

Scientists do not have a complete explanation for the forest destruction, but industrial pollutants and acid rain are cited as major contributors.

Policymakers, meanwhile, have been stymied by the difficulty in pinpointing precise effects of specific contaminants and in devising workable strategies for controlling them.

—The Washington Post (4-1-84)

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Glorieta Baptist Conference Center
July 2-7, 1984

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The Drug Culture: Why Some Baptists Do

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Biblical Perspectives on Alcohol and Other Drugs: New Testament

WEDNESDAY

Neo-Prohibition: The New Movement for Alcohol Control

Drunk Driving: Death on Wheels

Drunk Driving: Getting (And Keeping) Them Off the Road

THURSDAY

Action in Your Church: Christian Life Committees

Working With Legislators

Local Option Elections

FRIDAY

The Drugs Supermarket I

The Drugs Supermarket II

Abusers in Your Church

SATURDAY

Educating Youth About Alcohol/Drugs

Educating Children About Alcohol/Drugs

Alcohol/Drugs: The Next Generation

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