

# Light

THE CHRISTIAN LIFE COMMISSION OF THE SOUTHERN

BAPTIST CONVENTION

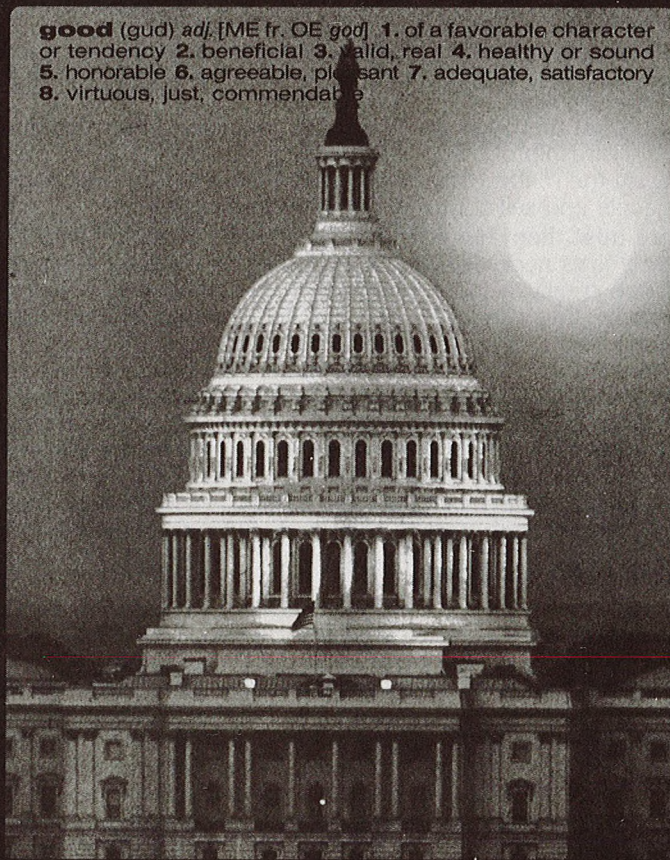
MAY 1985

## CHRISTIAN CITIZENSHIP

### What Does 'Doing Good' Involve Today?

"Then do what is good . . ."  
(Romans 13:3 RSV)

**good** (gud) *adj.* [ME fr. OE *god*] 1. of a favorable character or tendency 2. beneficial 3. valid, real 4. healthy or sound 5. honorable 6. agreeable, pleasant 7. adequate, satisfactory 8. virtuous, just, commendable



Observe Christian Citizenship Sunday  
June 30, 1985

Sponsored by the Christian Life Commission  
of the Southern Baptist Convention

By Larry Braidfoot  
**D**oing the good works of a Christian citizen sounds so simple and easy when one reads the words of Paul: "Would you have no fear of him who is in authority? Then do what is good, and you will receive his approval...." (Rom. 13:3, RSV).

The simple order of Romans 13 had not yet given way to the persecution which is to be found behind Revelation 13. Absent the active persecution of the Roman government, the Christian was faced with a sea of immorality in the Roman world and with enormous hostility from the Jewish community from which Christianity was springing as a new force which would change the world.

Because participation in the authoritarian government was limited, the direct responsibilities were few: pay taxes and obey the authorities. The early admonitions about matters of personal morality, however, distinguished the Christians as persons who had a transforming effect on the world around them. They were characterized by standards of conduct which differed dramatically from the Roman culture.

Paul's contrast between the desires of the flesh and the fruits of the Spirit exemplifies the manner in which Christians were a "set

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SOUTHERN BAPTIST CONVENTION  
LIBRARY AND ARCHIVES  
Historical Commission, SBC  
Nashville, Tennessee



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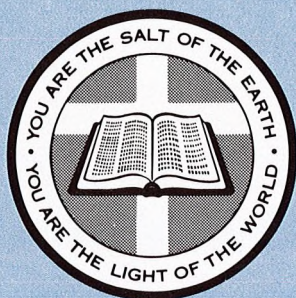
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## Politics: Redeeming the Genre

President George Washington in his farewell address solemnly warned against the baneful effects of a party spirit which he feared would tear apart the fabric of the tiny nation then aborning. He could have saved his breath. Partisan politics were already there.

The origin of the two-party system goes back at least to Oliver Cromwell and his hymn-singing 'roundheads,' Baptist and otherwise, who won the right to oppose the government in the open without facing the scaffold as the penalty. Out of this hard-won right has grown the two-party system in which there is a governing party and an opposition party, with one being everlastingly checked and balanced by the other.

Partisan politics, moreover, is not a bad thing. Where there is a measure of freedom, human beings inevitably politicize their interests and convictions. Those who deny, reject, spurn, or pretend to rise above politics may be both its most dangerous practitioners and its most hapless victims as they end up leaving the exercise of power to others.

**Politics is the science of government** variously defined as the art of the possible, the pursuit and exercise of power among groups, and the business of deciding who gets what, when, and where. Its essence is compromise. If people get in charge who want absolute power, who view compromise as an affront to their ideals or, worse, to the Almighty, and who want personally to decide, often arbitrarily and capriciously, who gets what, when, and where, then a dictatorship prevails; and neither the people nor history are, in the long run, kind to totalitarians.

Politics is the lifeblood of a democracy. Two of the worst things the people can do in a democracy are to trust the leaders too much or to trust them too little.

**If we trust them too much** without scrutinizing their actions, examining their stewardship of office, and keeping the strong light of public accountability on them, they can more easily drift away from full responsibility to the people and sell-out to special interest groups.

**If we trust them too little** without granting them freedom to engage in compromises necessary to the well-being of the entire body politic, strategize creatively in the public interest, and act decisively on behalf of all the people, they can easily become ineffective hacks who spend their time and our money, taxes or tithes, testing the water, checking to see which way the wind is blowing, and polling their lowest common denominators instead of acting consistently on principle for the public good.

Democracy and the parties that maintain and use its machinery deserve the understanding, support, and informed involvement of the citizenry; they need the rigorous scrutiny of the media; and they should be sobered by prospects of the next business meeting, convention, or free elections when the voters can make it clear that we have been alert to what has really been going on and that we have the sense and the will to move things in the right direction.

As eternal vigilance is the price of liberty, so responsible exercise of political power is the key to a healthy democracy.

**Our Baptist forebears hammered** out an essentially democratic ecclesiology that holds pastors and all other leaders accountable to the people who vote them in and who can vote them out. It isn't the neatest, most efficient, decently-and-in-order system that has come down the pike. But it works pretty well when the people behave responsibly, refuse to be manipulated, don't wallow in excessive individualism, accept the larger implications of being church, go to business meetings, speak out, and stand up for what is right as the Holy Spirit gives light to see the right.

*Foy Valentine*

Foy Valentine  
Executive Director

# 'DO WHAT IS GOOD'

*Continued from Page 1*

apart" group of people (Gal. 5). They were an enormous threat to Roman paganism and to the life styles prevalent in that day, as well as to the official Roman religion and to Judaism.

Our Baptist ancestors sprang up in an environment in which they felt perhaps as ostracized as the first century Christians. Originating in the radical wing of the Reformation, their beliefs about believer's baptism and the separation of church and state earned them the distrust of established Christian traditions such as Catholicism, Lutheranism and Calvinism. Small in numbers and rejected as a splinter group by the dominant political groups and their established churches, our Baptist ancestors developed a sectarian view of citizenship which, in my opinion, is a part of our tradition to this day.

When the Baptist heritage was transplanted into the American experience, this minority status gave clear direction to the needs of citizenship. The strong passion for religious liberty was rooted in a struggle to secure the toleration necessary to practice a non-established faith which differed from the established state churches.

Although the struggle for religious liberty was successfully completed by

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***Southern Baptists have tended to focus more intensely on issues of "personal morality."***

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the adoption of the First Amendment and the gradual disenfranchisement of the state churches, the sectarian heritage from which our Baptist ancestors came is still a part of our understanding and practice of citizenship. Southern Baptists have addressed a wide range of issues in our history, through resolutions and actions of churches and individuals. But we have tended to focus more intensely

and continually on those issues which we refer to as "personal" morality.

We have tended to be sectarian both in the issues about which we have been most concerned and in the manner in which we have expressed our concern. The issues of legalized beverage alcohol and legalized gambling are a good example.

**Baptist churches** and individuals have been in the forefront of public policy decisions on these issues for decades. It seems clear that both issues have represented serious challenge to the moral fiber of society and have posed a realistic threat to the personal moral character of the members of our churches. Probably Baptists have been more unified in their willingness to work both with other Baptists and with members of other denominations on these issues than on any other issues. In something of an irony, the opposition we have expressed, shaped by our sectarian heritage, has encouraged us to be nonsectarian in dealing with the issues.

**The manner in which** we have to deal with the issues has also been somewhat sectarian. Our reasons for opposing legalized beverage alcohol and legalized gambling have ranged from the moralistic to the intuitive. We have often verbalized our opposition in a pluralistic context, in terms which were shaped by the moral reasoning more appropriate to a church congregation than a voting public.

At other times we have used approaches which have appealed to a general sense of the wrongness or harmfulness of these behaviors. In doing this, we have appealed largely to the sense of morality generated within American culture by our Christian heritage.

**In recent decades** a transformation has begun in the manner in which we deal with these kinds of issues. We have discovered the possibility of articulating moral concerns within a

pluralistic context without utilizing specifically religious terminology or rhetoric. Beliefs rooted in personal morality may very well have a corollary in a public policy which is supported by evidence available from health sciences, economics and legal concerns.

We have become more skilled in discovering that there are many reasons for being concerned about public policy matters such as alcohol consumption and legalized gambling which go beyond religious morality. The current awareness of the problem of drunk driving and of the connection between gambling and organized crime enables Baptists and other Christians to find a means of expressing moral concerns in the pluralistic arena of modern politics.

**Our Anabaptist predecessors** and early American Baptists, because of their minority status, did not embrace some of the citizenship challenges which go with the status of being power brokers. We have found it much harder to be leaders in dealing with issues of "social" morality. At present, Baptists are vastly underrepresented in Congress in comparison to our numbers in the total population. Although Baptists are the largest Protestant denomination, there are fewer Baptists (47) than Episcopalians (72), Methodists (74), or Presbyterians (57).

**We have lacked** the vision and the expertise as a religious body to argue vigorously for economic policies which embody justice and humanitarian concerns. Our vision of working for peace has not been as clear as it might have been. In such matters, the strongest leadership has come from other sources. Experiencing something of a carry over from our sectarian heritage, we have not been at ease in the halls of power.

Paul called us to "do what is good . . ." The challenge for us as Baptists is to continue to discover, as we have been doing, through our history, what is "good" in our time. Having been faithful in much, our need is to be faithful in even more. ■

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*Braidfoot is legal counsel and director of Christian citizenship for the Christian Life Commission.*



**A**t first glance, it might appear that SBC resolutions, 1954-1984, left hardly any ethical stone unturned. On closer examination, however, it is apparent that Southern Baptists have been quite selective about the issues resolved on.

No recent annual convention, for example, has spoken directly to divorce. A few family life resolutions have mentioned divorce in passing. Yet, this subject has no resolution of its own. Facets of domestic violence have received only a nod of the convention's head—one resolution in 1978 on child abuse and one in 1979 on domestic violence as a broader concern. Where are the position statements which decry emotional and physical abuse and neglect within families?

Issues of life and death have been largely overlooked. War and peace have been a consistent part of the resolution witness. Abortion has been a perennial resolution matter since 1971. But other biomedical areas are not addressed.

A resolution presented on genetic engineering and one dealing with in vitro fertilization, artificial insemination and human cloning did not come out of committee discussion in Kansas City in 1984. Generally sporadic attention has been given to

the global ecological crisis with all manner of "pollutions" going on. Suicide has not been considered.

The issue of capital punishment was raised as a concern in the survey period only through a Christian Life Commission recommendation in its 1964 Annual report. By vote of the messengers, that portion of the report was amended out.

Economic considerations fail to show up often, although resolutions related to taxation, even tuition tax credits, and one on inflation came along. Interestingly, only two resolutions, 1983 and 1984, dealing with gambling have been passed.

One is left in many instances only

## PART TWO In a Two-Part Series

to his or her imagination as to why some areas have not been addressed. Is it because Southern Baptists are not in tune with our larger social context? If John Eighmy's thesis is correct in *Churches in Cultural Captivity*, it is possible we are so much a part of our culture that in some areas we fail to sense any ethical tension, or the need for it.

## 'Resolving' the Issues: A Review of SBC Resolutions and Ethical Concerns, 1954-84

# RESOLUTIONARY CHRISTIANITY

—By William M. Tillman, Jr.

There is a real sense, however hard to prove, in which some concerns have not been acted on because the resolutions committee in particular or the convention in general has known little about an issue. Sometimes resolutions submitted are merged. This can have helpful consequences. But if two resolutions are ill-fit for one another and joined, the wording can be confusing or so vague as to lack any appreciable constructiveness.

Fortunately, the resolutions committee often acts as a filtering mechanism to deem some resolutions inappropriate for convention action. Some resolutions are referred to agencies which can deal with the matters as a part of their ongoing responsibilities to the Southern Baptist Convention.

The committee is supposed to report but not required to tell why specific resolutions are not recommended. Lists of those submitted but not reported on can be found, particularly in later *SBC Annuals*. (See, for instance, 1981, pp. 56-57; 1982, p. 64; 1983, p. 71, and 1984, p. 66.) It is possible with a two-thirds majority vote from messengers to bring the resolutions back for consideration.

Along this line, one resolution in 1983 (referred to the Executive Committee) would have required a three-quarter majority vote before any resolution passed. This approach may be worth considering further. Such a requirement might lead to more floor debate (which we do not need) or it might reduce the number of resolutions coming out of a committee.

Of course, some Southern Baptists believe the convention ought to consider a more basic question: Why have resolutions, anyway? This question is impossible to answer satisfactorily. As in all of life, there are some higher and some not-so-high motives for why we do things.

- **Resolutions draw** attention to issues to which the gospel needs to be applied. Through statistics, facts and thought-provoking statements, resolutions may be educational or consciousness-raising.

This consciousness raising may take many forms. A resolution may ask, for example, that the substance of its content be communicated to

government officials. The consciousness raising may be a message sent from some Southern Baptists to other Southern Baptists via the resolution.

- **On occasion** resolutions prompt action which results in profound consequences. In 1977, for example, a resolution asked the Executive Committee to study SBC responses to world hunger. This resolution focused attention on the hunger issue and probably assisted SBC agencies as they turned their energies to the problem.

- **Resolutions can** be opinion-shaping tools. While this function is limited, many Southern Baptists feel that if a convention speaks on a matter that settles it, and everyone should fall into line. It must be remembered that resolutions are still primarily *statements* of sentiment and that they are never binding on any local church.

The importance of the latter point has been underscored in recent years as some persons have distorted

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*Little attention has been given to issues such as ecology, suicide, divorce, domestic violence, economics.*

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the purpose of resolutions. That is, the strategy for some has been to present an item which they hope to use as a "test case" in the ongoing power struggle within the denomination.

- **It must be** remembered that cooperative missions is still the primary cohesive factor for the Southern Baptist Convention. Yet, as Southern Baptist historian Leon McBeth correctly observed in a recent interview, "The resolutions tend to overshadow the stated work of the convention itself. Messengers will come to debate a resolution on a hot issue but stream out when the agency reports come. There is not as much hearing for the mission boards, for example, whose work is

at the heart of who we are."

- **The cultural train** is moving faster. And the SBC is trying to get on board more quickly. In many cases there is now less gap between, or less lag behind, the emergence of an issue and a Southern Baptist response through the resolutions system.

- **The resolutions** process, which has developed partly like Topsy and partly by design, needs constant re-evaluation. Some positions on issues have been affirmed and reaffirmed to the point of distraction. Possibly a moratorium on any issues addressed in previous conventions should be implemented. This may prompt more creative thought on some matters. As well, it would give us a much needed break from some of the issues perennially resolved over.

- **The appointive** powers of the SBC president are critical. The visibility of the work of the resolutions committee makes this factor even more apparent. The president and vice-presidents cannot take lightly who should serve on this committee. Within the guidelines given, attention should be paid to appointing people with experience in participating in and observing the convention at work. Members need to be persons who have a sense of the ebb and flow of resolutions over the years. The resolutions committee, with its difficult assignment, is no place for neophytes, no matter what their name recognition might be in other circles.

- **There is** probably a need to state and restate the definition and purpose of resolutions. Southern Baptists have come to a de facto definition, not unlike our cultural approach, which perceives resolutions as single issue oriented with a single position that is *the* Christian stance.

In addition to these conclusions, several other impressions begin to emerge from a survey of ethical resolutions. These are more apparent when considered against the backdrop of the longer and larger history of the Southern Baptist Convention.

Most of these impressions cannot be documented as in the case of the previous material. You may not agree with them. If not, I suppose you could read through 30 or more years of the *Annual*, attend the conventions, read histories and contemporary commentators on the SBC and converse with observers—and then draw your own conclusions. But here are a few of my own impressions.

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### **One particular area, separation of church and state, shows some peculiar shifts.**

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*A more strict dicotomy is developing between church members and professional ministers.* Notice how many of the messengers to SBC meetings are rank-and-file church people. Notice how many are pastors. We are developing almost a priestly class among ourselves. The priesthood of the believer concept and the principle of religious liberty are definitely in jeopardy.

With this priestly class coming into place there have developed in one sense bishops and bishoprics with their accompanying hierarchy. Of course, the bureaucratic hierarchy is what the ultraconservatives say they are reacting against. And, perhaps there is something to be said for the need for SBC agencies to be more attuned to the grass roots. In my experience, though, our agencies are working very hard at doing just that.

Indeed, some of those yelling the loudest about the "Establishment" have been the busiest at working themselves into the pecking order, or perceiving themselves as the makers of the pecking order among pastors and churches; hence, a new Establishment.

*"Of creeds and authoritarianism" could be a slogan to describe another trend.* The late 1970s and the first half of the 1980s reveal a distinct tone of coercion coming into many of the resolutions. The heavy implication is that a resolution becomes the "law of the Medes and Persians."



It should be plain that authoritarianism is not the same as authority. Authority is earned and is respected. It influences and persuades. Authoritarianism smacks of hobnailed gestapo boots. The larger society is lacking in heroes, and we are lacking in those who can persuade while maintaining their integrity of personhood.

*Few resolutions have dealt directly with the Bible.* That possibly indicates a shallowness we are not too comfortable with. In my opinion the constant harangue about the inerrancy of original autographs actually has the effect of pulling Bible study out of the hands of average Southern Baptists. Those who use this phrase as their *modus operandi* are those who in reality are arguing more over the inerrancy of their interpretations.

Most Baptists only know as much of the Bible as their pastor or Sunday School teacher tells them. It follows that for all practical purposes more and more of us are becoming increasingly biblically illiterate.

*One particular issue area, that of separation of church and state, shows some peculiar shifts.* There are those among us who fancy themselves to be power brokers with the American political establishment. That establishment is one which out of ignorance and design is willing to have the SBC delivered on a platter like John's head to Herod.

There is a shift toward more acceptance of essentially a Baptist parochial system. This blurring of church and state is one in which historically the church has never gotten the advantage.

Perceptive observers of these factors will see some historical parallels. Some will perhaps see something developing in our midst that is virtually stunting the Baptist movement. In its place is, to the discomfort of many, the almost methodical development of a very Catholic system.

Now, isn't *that* interesting...? ■

*Tillman is assistant professor of Christian ethics at Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary. He was assisted in the research for this article by his brother Jeff, an M.Div. student at Southwestern.*

## ETHICS LIBRARY

### Reviews of Works in Applied Christianity

Three books on hunger deserve special attention this year. The first focuses on public policy. The second provides a biblical basis for a Christian response. The third critically looks at organizations responding to worldwide hunger.

**Bread for the World**, by Arthur Simon. Eerdmans, 1984, revised edition.

Simon rightly believes many Christians who want to do something about world hunger frequently neglect the role of public policy. Ordinary Christian citizens have the power to impact public policy for the betterment of the hungry. But they must exercise their political leverage. Here's a primer designed to help Christians understand the causes of hunger, the nation's role in the profoundly tragic problem and how ordinary people can influence governmental policy.

While the revised edition contains the same title and structural outline as its 1975 predecessor, it has been expanded and updated. One particularly informative section offers examples of where Christian advocacy has made a difference in congressional legislation for the hungry.

**A Guide to World Hunger Organizations**, by Louis L. Knowles. Seeds/Alternatives, 1984. Fund raising for the hungry of the world has become big business with intense competition and sharp advertising. Not surprisingly, allegations of financial impropriety have arisen. The situation of one particular group, International Christian Aid, is so serious that investigations are underway by the California State Attorney General's office and the federal government. In such a shadowy environment, Knowles' 104-page book places the spotlight on hunger organizations.

Eight questions are suggested for donors to address to hunger organizations. For example: "What's the stated purpose of the organization?", "Who's in charge" and "Where does the money go?" He then applies these questions to

some 20 groups.

His study of total revenue and fund raising and administrative expenditures of various hunger organizations is most informative. A valuable reference work for colleges and church libraries.

**Rich Christians in an Age of Hunger: A Biblical Study**, by Ronald J. Sider.

InterVarsity, 1984, 2nd edition. Southern Baptists believe the Bible "is a perfect treasure of divine instruction." More often than not, however, the treasure chest remains locked. Sider's book helps to unlock the biblical message about the causes of hunger and poverty and the Christian response.

A revised and expanded version of the 1977 work with the same title, this book updates statistics, graphs and figures, expands the biblical study and enlarges the section on structural change.

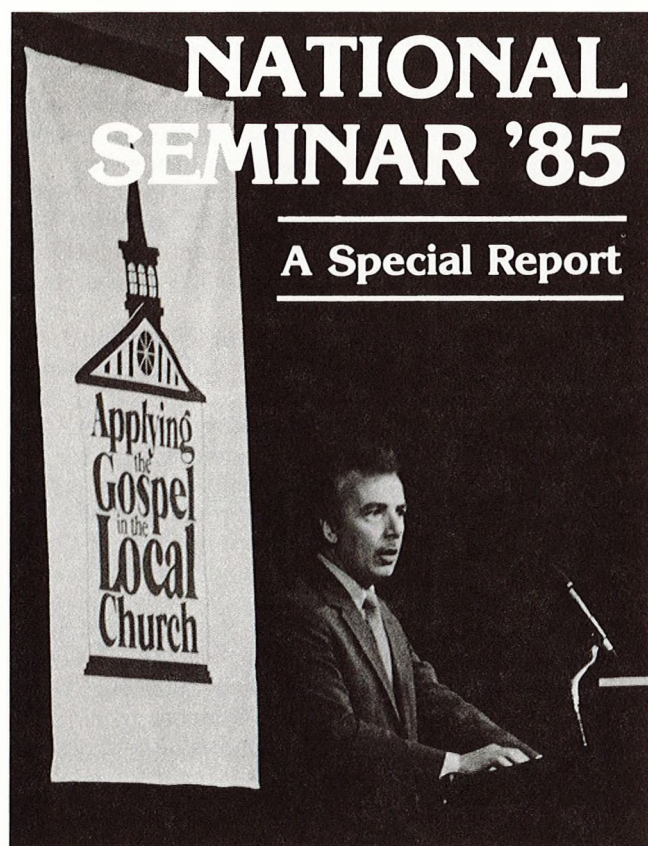
—Robert Parham

**Pastor as Person: Maintaining Personal Integrity in the Choices and Challenges of Ministry**, by Gary L. Harbaugh.

Augsburg, 1984. Posits that many pastors experience problems in their churches not because they forget they are pastors but because they forget they are *persons*. Harbaugh uses resources of theology, anthropology, philosophy, the behavioral sciences and his personal pilgrimage to investigate this dilemma and prescribe some cures. He discusses the pastor as a physical, thinking, feeling, relating and choosing person. Book is not for those in search of easy answers found in pop psychology or simplistic theology. A significant work that will prove helpful to the pastor willing to think seriously about who he or she is as a person called of God to ministry.

—Michael A. Smith

*Parham is director of hunger concerns for the Christian Life Commission; Smith is pastor of Bellevue Baptist Church, Nashville.*



*C. David Matthews presented theme interpretations.*

## APPLYING THE GOSPEL

### Excerpts from Speakers

Addressing the theme of "Applying the Gospel in the Local Church," speakers at the Christian Life Commission's national seminar called for more effective social action in the name of Christ.

More than 330 Southern Baptist leaders from across the country attended the annual seminar March 25-27 in Fort Worth, Texas.

From the opening keynote address by Cecil Sherman to the closing sermon by Dan Yearly, speakers exhorted Southern Baptist clergy and laity to lead their local congregations to a holistic, biblical understanding of authentic evangelism and redemptive social involvement.

The three-day seminar on Christian ethics featured 14 addresses by a dozen speakers:

**Kenneth Chafin**, professor of preaching, Southern Baptist Theological Seminary; **Gordon Cosby**, pastor, The Church of the Savior, Washington, D.C.; **Guy Greenfield**, chairman, department of Christian ethics, Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary; **Harry Hollis** and **Foy Valentine** of the Christian Life Commission; and **T.B. Maston**, retired professor of Christian ethics, Southwestern Seminary.

Also, **Austin McGuigan**, chief state's attorney for the State of Connecticut; **Sherman**, pastor of Broadway Baptist Church, Fort Worth; **Lewis B. Smedes**, professor of theology and ethics, Fuller Theological Seminary;

**J. Alfred Smith**, pastor, Allen Temple Baptist Church, Oakland, Calif.; **Carolyn Weatherford**, executive director, Woman's Missionary Union; and **Yearly**, pastor, University Baptist Church, Coral Gables, Fla.

**C. David Matthews**, pastor, First Baptist Church, Greenville, S.C., gave a series of six theme interpretations.

Excerpts from some of the seminar addresses are featured in this section of *LIGHT*.

Also during the conference, Valentine was honored for 25 years as executive director of the Christian Life Commission. Commission chairman **Charles R. Wade**, pastor, First Baptist Church, Arlington, Texas, announced the establishment of a student scholarship fund at Southwestern Seminary in honor of Valentine and his wife, Mary Louise.

During brief recognition ceremonies, **Jimmy R. Allen**, president of the Radio and Television Commission, paid tribute to Valentine for his leadership in applied Christianity among Southern Baptists.

The 1986 seminar will be held in Nashville, March 17-19. The theme will be "Recovering Moral Values." ■



**C. DAVID MATTHEWS**

### The Church's One Foundation: A LIVING LORD

**T**he church's one foundation is a living Lord. The problem is, we have almost completely misunderstood the nature of his life and the nature of his death; and, therefore, we have largely misunderstood that power he seeks to give his church . . .

Very few weeks pass in the life of a church when there is not some encounter with the profound problem of how you square the reality of evil with the power of God . . .

If God is all-powerful and if God is truly good, why do these [evil or tragic] things happen? Is it that God would if he could: loving but not all-powerful? Or is it that God could if he would: all-powerful but not loving? Does God lack power, or does God lack goodness?

Our problem is intensified, I think, by the fact that so many of us are largely out of touch with that one resource that can help: the Bible. In spite of our devotion to the Bible, most of us never actually stood long enough within the world of the Bible to catch that unique perspective and hear the unique word concerning the nature of God.

It is not that God lacks power or that he lacks goodness. It is, rather, that the power of God is something other than what we have become accustomed to think. We think of the power of God as we think of almost any power. We think of it largely as the ability to do just anything, even on whim or impulse . . .

H.H. Farmer, years ago, gave the simplest and best definition of power that I have found: Power, simply, is the ability to achieve purpose. That helps me. If you have the ability to do what you want to do, then you



have power. If you do not have the ability to achieve your purpose, then you lack power, even if you have at your disposal a million horsepower of force.

**A bull is a powerful creature** if your purpose is to pull something like a plow. But if your purpose is the preservation of delicate antiques in a china shop, a bull is rather powerless, and the small hands of a frail woman may be more powerful for that purpose. A locomotive engine is powerful if your purpose is to pull a train; but if your purpose is teaching a child the alphabet, a locomotive engine has no power at all. A gun is a powerful instrument for killing the enemy, but if your purpose is making enemies into friends, a gun has no power at all. Power is the ability to achieve purpose.

Leslie Weatherhead has an almost classic story about a man whose wife discovered that she was losing the use of her legs. Being a devoted husband, as her condition grew worse he became accustomed to carrying her from one room to the other and across the yard and everywhere she went. As she became increasingly dependent on him, the competent people working with her discovered that her illness was apparently psychosomatic—that she could walk if she would. Yet, because of her growing dependence on her husband and because of her own conviction that she could not walk, soon her legs would atrophy to the point that she would, indeed, no longer be able to use them again.

**There came the day when** her husband reached a difficult decision. He would carry her no more. It was pretty bad. He watched her cry. He heard her plead. He knew the anguish of watching her fall, but he disciplined himself to hold back. Now, he had the power to carry her. He had proved that over many, many days. But his purpose was that she might walk again, and so it was the greater exercise of power for him to refrain; to intervene would have been a sign of weakness. Because he exercised power that was appropriate to his purpose, she was restored to health and the use of her limbs. In this case, restraint was the strongest expression of power.

God is often like that husband, Weatherhead would say. He could step in. He could do something, but often it would not be an expression of power, but an expression of weakness. The power of God is the ability not to meet what we think are our needs or the world's needs. The power of God is the ability to achieve his own purpose.

**So, what is his purpose?** According to Jesus, the purpose of God is the establishment of his kingdom in the world. According to Jesus, God's purpose is to fashion a world like the church where people live together as brothers and sisters of each other and children of God. In other words, God's purpose is that we should become like Jesus Christ. That, not heaven, is the goal of salvation. The goal of salvation is that when salvation has finished its work, we look very much like the Savior and are, therefore, fitted for heaven.

To realize this purpose, God has imposed limitations on himself such as the limitations implied in the freedom he has given us. He could have made an automatic universe. He could have made us so that we would automatically obey, but he would not have love. We would not be in his image with the capacity of growing in his

likeness. So the self-imposed limitations are not evidences of a lack of power; they rather are expressions of profound power.

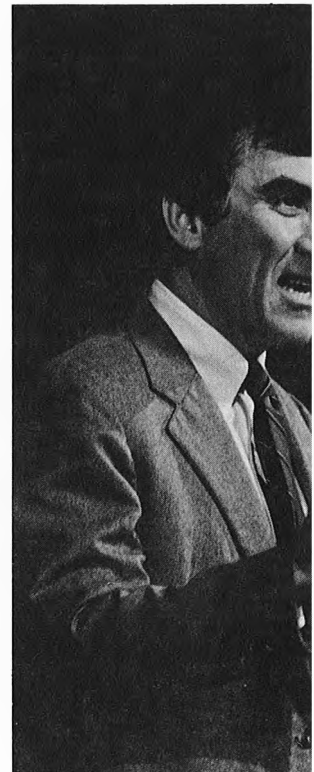
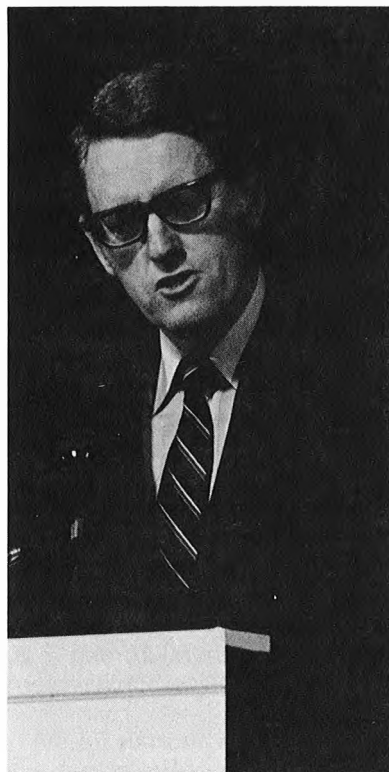
On September 3, 1939, God could have snuffed out Hitler in an instant. But God knows that what is won by force is often not won at all. And those things God desires most for us—all of the high things of the Spirit: love, character, you name them—cannot be forced. We cannot be coerced into salvation. We cannot be bullied into being brothers and sisters. This is the purpose of God. Does he have the power?

**When you reject force** as the way of influencing people and changing things, you are just about down to one alternative and that is love . . . .

The French have a proverb: "To love is to suffer." Have you noticed lately what a strange message our gospel is, not at all what anyone would expect? It is the remarkable witness of the New Testament that the power of God is seen most clearly in the cross of Christ. Now that has implications that are endless. That is an absolutely astounding truth . . . .

**The cross means such** utter love that when evil has been allowed to do all it can do, it is still love. The cross means a complete triumph over the temptation to use force. The cross means taking no shortcuts, making no compromises. The cross means achieving the divine purpose in a divine way, even when it means that God must bear in his own heart our rejection.

Paul knew the power of God: "We preach Christ crucified, unto the Jews a stumblingblock, and unto the Greeks foolishness; But unto them which are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ, the power of God" (1 Cor. 1:23-24, KJV). ■



SEMINAR PERSONALITIES—Keynoter Cecil Sherman, gambling ex





**CECIL SHERMAN**

## **Applying the Gospel in the Local Church**

**T**he reason Southern Baptists are not applying the gospel in the local church is not ignorance of "how to." We are the masters of "how-to" church work. Our problems lie at another level, and it is to that other level I want to speak.

*1. We will not apply the gospel in the local church until the gospel defeats culture in the contest for the soul of the church.*

In these days the church is showing signs of new growth . . . . But for all our new promise and strength, another question has to be raised about the new prosperity of our churches: Is the church changing our culture or is culture invading and overcoming the church? . . .

**Success in our world** is measured by growth and wealth. So, where is the successful church? It is the one that is growing in size and wealth . . . . A local church has just become one kind of American growth company.

If making the local church bigger and richer is the first goal, then how can you handle great segments of the gospel? If you offend people, you will not have the

largest or the richest church. So, you have to cut your gospel to the preferences and the state of mind of the mass to gather your church. A number of difficult themes have to be avoided or handled delicately.

**You cannot attack** civil religion, because the masses want civil religion. They are made to feel secure when they see evidence of civil religion.

You cannot separate tribe from kingdom. Rather, you will do well to blend the tribe and the kingdom. So, in the full view of all America some growth churches baptize this nation, make her to be a Christian nation, limit God to the survival of this nation.

You cannot deal in ambiguities. An authoritarian leader is required to make industry work. It is also in place to make the church grow. The old Protestant idea of asking the people to find the "mind of Christ" alongside the pastor is too loose . . . .

The model I have described is not true of all churches. But there is enough truth in it to make the saying of it uncomfortable for me . . . .

*2. We will not apply the gospel in the local church until leadership has a long-term commitment to the life of the church.*

Not all of our church leadership wants to take the local congregation toward American success standards. A strong group has a real gospel and from that gospel they are ordering, guiding their congregations toward gospel goals.

**But we have our feet** of clay too. Sometimes it seems to me our kind almost have a death wish for the local church. In reaction to a growth and American success agenda for the church, these people have refused to do anything to strengthen their churches.

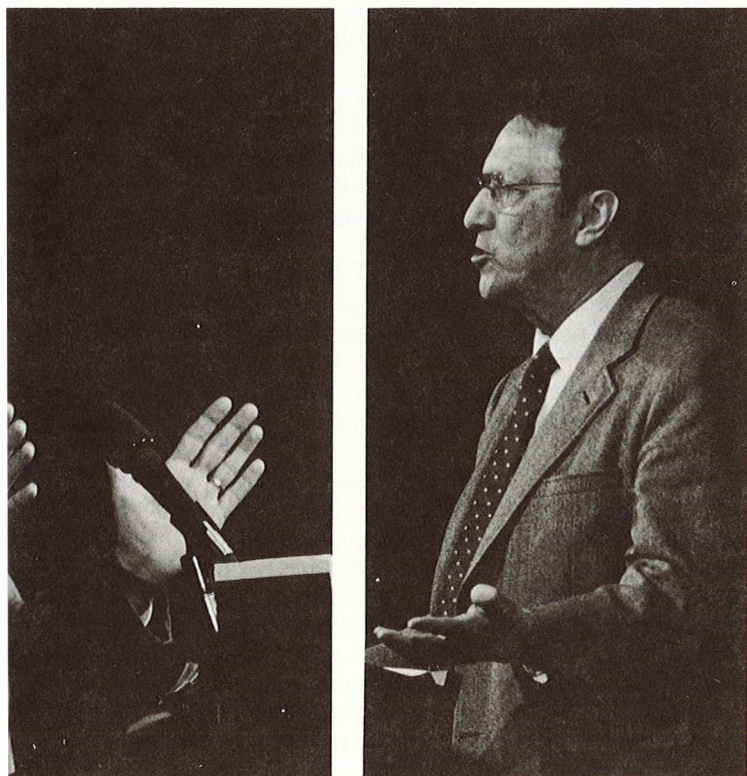
*Such persons, Sherman said, tend to be critics of evangelism, stewardship programs, administration and other important emphases. These programs, he stressed, also are part of applying the gospel in the local church.*

Holding to half a gospel is not just the sin of the right wing. We have our own kinds of half gospel. In fact, all of us suffer from small gospels; some of us just suffer more than others. All of us need to enlarge our understanding of the gospel. Until we are helping our churches to thrive, we cannot do all the gospel.

*3. We cannot apply the gospel in the local church until the interpreter frees the gospel to work in the church.*

I recall the first time I visited Thomas Jefferson's home at Monticello. In a sort of sun porch was a copy of the great man's Bible. It was open to one of the gospels, but to my amazement parts of the text had been carefully cut out. Jefferson had carefully excised the miraculous from the text. That picture has lingered in my mind.

Suppose I told you by our theology and by our hermeneutic we also have cut away parts of the gospel.



Justin McGuigan and preaching professor Kenneth Chafin.

*One way this is done, Sherman said, is by "deciding that truth is propositional rather than functional." "There is some measure of truth in propositional religion," he said. "We do have to believe and put our ideas to some form. But to leave the matter simply in believing is to risk another side of the gospel."*

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***We have a hermeneutical problem of massive proportions. It is the San Andreas fault in Southern Baptist life.***

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We cannot get the gospel to many of our local churches. It will not be applied at all. The interpreter has excised the Jesus gospel from the Bible by means of an interpretative scheme.

So, it is not a case of our people not believing the gospel. Many of them have not heard it at all in a way that required a present tense response. A breakdown in hermeneutics has cut the gospel of Jesus right out of the Bible . . . .

**At this point I want to digress from my stated subject**—but not far. The differences in Southern Baptist life are built around this hermeneutical watershed. Only occasionally is the problem believing the Bible. Rather, it is more likely to be which parts of the Bible we choose to emphasize.

I am committed to a gospel that is of Jesus Christ. I count Christ to be God's highest and best revelation. This is not just a theological principle. It is a guide to Bible interpretation . . . .

**It is more than passing** strange to me that some of the people who talk the most about believing the Bible are the very ones who cut from the Bible, cut it away quite as much as Mr. Jefferson ever did, and they cut out the words of Jesus.

If Jesus is the centerpiece of our faith, then the words of Jesus ought to be the highest authority in our faith. Again and again Jesus called us to believe and do, to hear and obey . . . .

But if the interpreter never puts the gospel of Jesus to the people, how can the gospel of Jesus be applied? We have a hermeneutical problem of massive proportions. It is the San Andreas fault in Southern Baptist life. When there is movement along the fault, sometimes our houses tumble and crumble.

**4. We can apply the gospel in the local church when we organize our laity for service from out of the church . . . .**

The kingdom of God is coming on the wings of the church. It will not be done by public schools, though they have done wonderful things. It will not come from government agencies, though some of them have aided in the compassionate work all gospel people ought to do. The church is about the work of doing Christ's work in

the world. She exists to serve. She is a grand and able servant . . . .

It is not my experience that the laity are gospel-resistant. In the main, I have found them open, curious, even willing . . . .

Most of our people want to know and are open. But many of our churches have not had the same preacher long enough to trust him. When you are setting out to change people's minds, you have taken on a long-term task. Stay with the laity. Teach them. Serve them. Love them.

**If offered in a right spirit**, I believe most of our churches would come to any Bible teaching we can put before them. We just have to convince them it was a Bible teaching; then they would be willing to honor it.

Also, organize the people to service. Very much of my pulpit gospel has been left open-ended. The people go out knowing they ought to do something, but I did not tell them how to get at it. God can say, "Let there be light; and there was light" (Genesis 1:3, KJV). But most of us cannot speak the gospel into being. We will have to organize our efforts. ■



**AUSTIN McGUIGAN**

**What the Church Should Know About the Gambling Menace**

**T**he South is now a target for the gambling industry. They [gambling supporters] are going to tell you what they told us in Connecticut. Connecticut was always known as the land of steady habits, and gambling was never one of them until 1972. Now we have dog racing, jai alai, OTB (off-track betting), teletrack (a movie of horse racing where you can bet). We have a weekly lottery, an instant lottery, a daily lottery, a lotto, and we have bingo . . . .

If you really want the people of the South to understand the problem, we ought to go up to Connecticut and film the people betting at a pari-mutuel facility. You ought to see the people in their tattered clothes, the mothers with babies dragging on to their hands, the babies crying, babies put out in the car while the mother goes in to bet.

**We have what is known** in jai alai as "Welfare Wednesday." People get their welfare check on Wednesday and then go to the jai alai fronton and give it to Mr. Fronton. You ask yourself this question: "What is happening to those children who are being deprived of clothes and milk and food because we want to beat them out of a few bucks?"

We were told when we were going to get legalized gambling in Connecticut that it was going to solve our tax problems. Well, guess what? Our taxes have gone up. We were told it was going to solve our crime problem. Crime has gone up—drugs, prostitution, burglaries, embezzlements. I can't tell you the number of



cases of embezzlement I have had to prosecute of people who have gambled away money that wasn't theirs . . . .

Some people say they're going to give you games of integrity. Well, I'm going to tell you I have probably been involved in more gambling scandals in the State of Connecticut than anybody in the country . . . .

**In the Northeast** we are fast approaching a world where we are taking the last meager dollars from people who can least afford it. The daily number in the State of Connecticut is played almost exclusively by the poor and minorities. The odds of winning are 1 in 1,000. You bet a dollar and you win \$500. The rest goes to the state and those who run the game. It's a rip-off game. Book-makers in the State of Connecticut before we opened legalized gambling paid out \$600 to the winner. They gave better odds than the State of Connecticut.

We take millions of dollars from these people on this shill game and we destroy their capacity to support their families. What does it amount to in the State of Connecticut? Less than four percent of the entire state budget . . . .

We were told the state lottery couldn't be fixed. Well, I made numerous criminal cases proving the state lottery *was* being fixed. It came to my attention that they were giving away cars, and everybody who was winning the cars worked for the State Lottery Commission. I talked to an old Italian man down at the lottery headquarters. I said to him, "Listen, do you think they're fixing this lottery?" He said, "Are they fixing the lottery! If we were giving away houses, we'd all be neighbors."

I ask you this question: If they fixed the car lottery, what do they do to the million-dollar lottery? . . .

**I want to tell you what** happens to law enforcement because you should understand this if you're dealing with the problem. Many people in law enforcement are corrupted by legalized gambling. As they begin to work on it, they begin to see the money. They begin to see the job promotions, opportunities. Our director of security in Connecticut who worked in legalized gambling went out and ended up working for the jai alai industry . . . .

When you bring in legalized gambling it corrupts the very fiber of the society and it ends up corrupting even the police. The job promotions, the money are just impossible for the police to deal with.

You'll be told there are two ends: revenue raising and crime control. You'll be told that this will reduce illegal

\$1 billion a year. The two [legal and illegal gambling] feed off each other . . . .

**What was said** when we were going to let in gambling was, "Here's a vice that occurs anyway. Let's control it and tax it." What happened is, we never controlled it. We made very little revenue on the taxes. What we actually did is encourage people to engage in the vice with endless advertising on the television telling people that they can get rich playing the lottery. If you look at gambling as a tax, if you look at it the same as an alcohol tax or a cigarette tax, what would the spectacle of a state be that encourages people to consume alcohol so it can increase its tax revenue?

Gambling is treated in a way which is truly bizarre. How can a state put on ads encouraging people to engage in an activity which is clearly not beneficial to them? The revenue is a pittance, as I have already said. They never include the cost of regulation in the revenue. They don't tell you how much money we have to pay to law enforcement officers to prosecute all these cases and the courts that handle all these cases. By the time you subtract that, we're probably losing money.

What is the spectacle of a government which sells pie in the sky to the poor to play a con man's game to make a few million dollars? What does that really say about a society? ■



**KENNETH CHAFIN**

### **Preaching on Ethical Issues**

**T**here are some formidable obstacles for a Southern Baptist pastor who seeks to preach on ethical issues.

For one thing, we have a flaw in our theology of evangelism which equates genuine conversion with spiritual maturity . . . . I think we have done with conversion theology what Israel did with the sacrifices and the rituals of worship. We have substituted conversion theology for a love of justice and a love of mercy . . . .

A second obstacle is the abhorrence of anything which reduces tension as confrontational. In our denomination, it's a greater sin to rock the boat than to steal the boat. There is a tendency not to sort out the issues and resolve them, but to attack the tension . . . . The pastor who makes waves usually loses his peer support and is made to feel irrelevant in his or her stance.

**One of the things that** I have discovered at an experiential level in the last five years of my ministry is that I know what it's like to be a veteran of an unpopular war. There have been times as I have walked in and out among the heads of the agencies in the last two or three years I have felt like a Vietnam veteran must have felt when he came home from the Vietnam war.

What is really flawed here is our concept of what peacemaking means. Jesus did not say, "Blessed are

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### ***How can a state put on ads encouraging people to engage in an activity which is clearly not beneficial to them?***

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gambling. Let me tell you what has happened in the Northeast. The second largest employer in the State of Connecticut is illegal gambling. We have doubled the amount of illegal gambling in the last five years. Illegal gambling in the State of Connecticut right now is over

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those who lack discernment." He did not say, "Blessed are those who stay out of trouble." He did not say, "Blessed are those who lack courage." He said, "Blessed are the peacemakers." Everybody I know who is involved in legitimate peacemaking is paying a very high price for it . . . .

Let me mention another obstacle: the confusion of our need to win and God's need for a faithful witness.

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***In our denomination it's a greater sin to rock the boat than to steal the boat. I know what it's like to be the veteran of an unpopular war.***

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We've come to a very materialistic definition of success in our ministry. The superchurch mentality has taken over, and most of the issues that we face are so large and so pervasive and so deeply ingrained in our society that there is no way that I can see myself winning. We have such a need for instant success. I think we forget that God has always changed the world not with majorities, but with faithful witness.

A fourth obstacle [is] the close tie of our denomination with our culture. This is our great strength and this is our great weakness. Instead of confronting it with the biblical ideal and creating tensions between the biblical ideal and our culture, the most normal temptation in the world is to create an apologetic for our culture.

**A good example is that** during the years that I pastored in Houston, one of the most devastating things I realized was what materialism was doing to young couples—to everyone, but to young couples especially. Yet, I saw in one or two of the churches of our city that the ministers were actually developing a Baptist version of Reverend Ike, a kind of "how to feel good about gettin' rich." . . .

The only thing that will keep you together in the society in which God has called us to preach the gospel, the only thing that will give you peace at night and purpose in the morning and a sense of security when people don't like what you've said is the knowledge that the God who has revealed himself in Jesus Christ is a moral and ethical God and he is on your side.

**After you begin to feel** a little more secure in this, then you need to begin to look out at your congregation and see that there is a continuing need for preaching on personal morality. Our rural roots gave us a very culturally conditioned concept of personal morality. I love my Uncle Doc who was the preacher who led me into the ministry, but morals, to him, meant preaching on drinking, dancing, smoking, playing cards, and going to Thompson's Movie Theater. It was more morals than morals.

Like many of you, I reacted to that rather legalistic understanding of the Christian religion. We have done that in our pulpit and we have abandoned our people to a ruthless, materialistic, sensate, secular society. They

need some help from the pulpit in the living of their lives. I think the pulpit needs to help God's people in so many areas of their lives and relationships, to clarify the biblical ideals, to serve as a polemic for inadequate life systems, to serve as an apologetic for Christian life style, and to give encouragement to those who seek to know and do the will of God . . . .

I would like to suggest that a pulpit that deals with the larger dimensions of world issues and neglects to build a base of support for a personal morality is just a partial pulpit . . . .

*In addition to personal morality, Chafin added, pastors also must address the great social issues of the day, including racism, classism, ageism and sexism. One the last issue, he noted:*

The best students I have at Southern Seminary are women. They've got better minds and better backgrounds, they are better at preparing sermons, and they are better at preaching sermons than anyone else I have in the class, and yet the most ill-prepared, uncommitted, limited man I have has a better chance for ministry in our denomination than some of the most brilliant people I teach. Until the pulpits of this land begin to deal with that, we are wasting not just half of our gifts, we are wasting probably 60 percent of our gifts.

**I think as you think of** rooting your preaching in the nature of God and keeping a balance between the personal and the broader social issues, the ultimate issue is what kind of person you are because the foundation to all ethical preaching is an ethical preacher. To separate yourself from the sermon creates a kind of homiletical irrelevance that is obvious to everyone, yourself included. The best preaching on ethical issues comes out of your own struggle and your own growth. This frees you from arrogance . . . .

Unless you can come to love the truth more than you love approval, you can't preach ethical sermons. You must put the love of justice and mercy above your own personal ambition and bring a shepherd's love for the people with that word of confrontation.

I think one of the most magnificent pictures of a prophet in all of the Bible is Samuel who loved Saul and after he had delivered the word, grieved for Saul so much that God had to finally go and say, "Stop grieving

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***God's need is not for a new set of sermons on ethical issues but a new set of men and women who are ethical.***

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for Saul." The truth is, you can't pastor people you don't love, and you can't bring a word that creates tension in their lives without it creating tension in your own life. So be honest with yourself and with others . . . .

God's greatest need is not for a new set of sermons



on ethical issues, but a new set of men and women in the pulpit who are ethical . . .

**But do you know what** I've decided? I know some preachers who got fired because of ethical issues they dealt with. I'm not going to back off and say like so many that if they had dealt with it a little differently they wouldn't have gotten fired. I am so tired of people wanting to edit my wars. I cannot believe the number of people who have stopped to criticize Roy Honeycutt's use of the term "holy war." It is like asking a woman who is being raped to use good grammar as she calls for the police.

I stand in awe of anyone who has ever lost his or her job because they have walked into the pulpit with honesty and preached the Word of God. But I want to tell you something. In our denomination, not a lot of that is happening. For every preacher who loses his or her job because they have dealt with a moral and ethical issue, there are a hundred who will lose their job because they are boring or because they are bored . . . ■



**C. DAVID MATTHEWS**

### **His New Creation, By Spirit and the Word: AN OPEN BOOK**

**H**owever much the Bible is discussed, however much it is praised, however much it is condemned, however much it proliferates in millions upon millions of copies, it is really, I think what Bruce Barton called it: "The Book nobody knows." . . .

Several years ago I preached a sermon entitled "What Are We Doing to the Bible?" and in it I talked about three categories of people: first, those who are worshiping the Bible; second, those who are ignoring the Bible; and third, those who are listening to the Bible. In one of his newspaper columns, Dr. L. D. Johnson referred to that sermon and amended it slightly and rightly. He suggested that many of those in the first two categories are the same people. In other words, some of the ones worshipping the Bible and some of the ones ignoring the Bible are the same . . .

What I am saying is that it may be because we have made the Bible an object of worship that we do not know it, since it was intended to be a guide to faith and practice. Maybe if we knew the Bible better, we wouldn't be so prone to worship it, but would let it lead us to its Lord . . . Even what passes for Bible study in many of our Sunday Schools is often a using of the Bible, an extracting of suitable phrases and verses and ideas to reinforce our opinions and our life styles.

But mostly we just ignore it, and this is a tragedy because . . . the Bible is our indispensable and unique connection with what God has done in history for our redemption. It is the divine resource without which we are in darkness, genuinely lost. It is the essential witness

without which our spiritual blindness and spiritual ignorance are unrelieved, chronic, and terminal. It is bread for which there is no substitute. It is light. It is the Word of Life. It is THE Book, peerless, matchless. When

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***The Book for all seasons. The Book nobody knows. How strange that they should be the same Book. Maybe that is the problem with us, with our world.***

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it is ignored, humanity strays from truth and goodness and everything that makes for life. When it is ignored, the church ceases to be the church, whether it knows it or not. History is full of documentation of that . . .

I believe God's great intention with regard to the Bible is that rather than worship it, we should read it and listen to it and respond to it. For if we will, it becomes such a precious medium of the Word of God, it becomes the principal medium of the Word of God, indeed, the only medium save Jesus Christ himself, and what would we have of him without it? The Bible is a book, and if you carry it around like a fetish, it will not do you much good. If we read it, if we expose ourselves to it, it can become the Word of Life, indeed, for us . . .

So, the Bible is an open book, meaning that it cannot do its work alone; it is in the reading of it that the Spirit of Christ himself moves. We are in trouble if we try to have a doctrine of the Spirit without a doctrine of scripture, just as we are in trouble if we try to have a doctrine of scripture apart from a doctrine of the Holy Spirit . . .

I have never known anyone who knew the Bible as one knows another person, who was really immersed in its truth—not just in its words as one might memorize a manual, who did not possess a depth and a warmth of humanity and a wealth of wisdom that had great power to bless me. It can do, when it is known, what no other book can do. And to what other book shall we go? It has the words of eternal life.

I mentioned L. D. Johnson earlier. He was, for me at least, one of those people who knew the Bible. So, let me close with words from him:

God has given us a most valuable Book, THE most valuable Book. I owe it much. It comforts, chastises, humbles, and enheartens me. It gives me hope. I do not know it well, but I know it better than any other book.

It speaks a relevant word to me about everything I experience, for it has inspired timelessness which makes it the Book for all seasons.

I can't imagine how impoverished life would be for me without the Bible.

The Book for all seasons. The Book nobody knows. How strange that they should be the same Book. Maybe that is the problem with us, with our world. ■

## Facts Paint Frightening Picture of Teen Drug Abuse

Drug abuse by today's teenagers cuts across all demographic, economic and social lines. Some of the telling facts:

- 64% of all American young people try an illicit drug before high school graduation.
- Average beginning age of marijuana use is 13 years, alcohol is 12.5 years.
- 25% of children in 4th grade report they feel "some" to "a lot" of peer pressure to try alcohol or marijuana.
- More than 3 million teenagers are alcoholics; 3 out of 4 drink regularly and heavily.
- More than half of teenage deaths are the result of drugs or alcohol.

—*"Get It Straight" Newsletter*  
Ronald McDonald Children's Charities

## Treasury Rules May Dent Casino Money Laundering

Is a casino a bank?

No, say the casino owners and people with large amounts of cash to launder.

Yes, says the Treasury Department, which has moved to bring the financial transactions of casinos under closer scrutiny.

Defined as banks, casinos would be under the jurisdiction of the Bank Secrecy Act, which requires financial institutions to report all transactions involving more than \$10,000 in cash.

Under regulations published by the department, casinos will have to start reporting the name, Social Security number and address of anyone who wins more than \$10,000 or who buys more than \$10,000 in chips.

While the move has been strongly opposed by Sen. Paul Laxalt and other members of the Nevada congressional delegation, many law enforcement officials favor the action.

"Casinos deal in cash, they perform a wide range of financial services and they are able to offer complete anonymity for customers," Gary D. Liming, a deputy assistant administrator of the Drug Enforcement Administration, told a congressional hearing in Atlantic City last year. "As a result, casinos are susceptible to exploitation by organized criminal elements for the laundering of illicit drug proceeds."

—*The Washington Post*

## Milestone: Women To Surpass White Men in Labor Force

History will be made this year as women in the U.S. labor force surpass the number of white males—traditionally the country's largest work force group.

In 1980 there were 49.8 million white males in the work force compared to 44.5 women. This year women are expected to outnumber white men 52.9 million to 51.9 million.

And experts believe that by 1990 the

gap between the two predominant work force groups will have widened to 61.5 million women compared to 52.5 million white males.

—*USA Today*

## States Provide Little Help For Compulsive Gamblers

The problems of compulsive gambling in America are multiplying daily as the public infatuation with gambling as popular "entertainment" continues.

According to the National Foundation for Study and Treatment of Pathological Gambling, there are at least 2 million pathological gamblers nationwide. Gamblers Anonymous and the National Council on Compulsive Gambling put the figure at 8 million.

Despite such alarming statistics, help for pathological gamblers is hard to find.

Experts in the treatment of compulsive gamblers point out that more than 4,000 programs exist to treat America's 9 to 10 million alcoholics, but there are fewer than a dozen inpatient programs to treat the country's pathological gamblers.

The experts also note that state legislatures which have jumped on the legalized gambling bandwagon have been slow to appropriate funds for gambling treatment programs. One example: Maryland, which was the first to budget money for such a program in 1979, has spent only \$500,000 in the last five years to treat compulsive gamblers. Yet the state's lottery advertising budget for 1983 alone was \$2 million.

—*Compiled from News Sources*

## CLC RESOURCES

### Seminar Proceedings Now Available

Copies of the printed *Proceedings* of the 1985 seminar on "Applying the Gospel in the Local Church" will soon be available from the Christian Life Commission.

Copies are \$3 each. Save postage by enclosing payment with your order.

A limited number of printed

proceedings from previous seminars also are available at the same price. These include *Christian Citizenship 1984*, *Discipleship and Ethics* (1983) and *Strengthening Families* (1982).

Write to *Proceedings*, Christian Life Commission, 901 Commerce, No. 550, Nashville, TN 37203-3620.

## Public Schools Getting More Low-Income Students

America's public schools now "stand the risk of becoming the schools of low-income, disadvantaged and poverty-level children," according to the author of a new study of public education.

The number of public school students from low-income families and single-parent homes has surged since 1970, bringing severe social problems into the classroom and making it more difficult to raise academic achievement, concluded the report entitled "Cheating Our Children."

Meanwhile, the number of middle-class children in public schools has declined as birth rates have fallen and private school enrollment has increased, the study indicated.

The report, which drew primarily on government statistics, was compiled by C. Emily Feistritz, director of the private National Center for Education Information.

According to the report, the proportion of school-age children from poverty-level



homes rose from 14.8 percent in 1970 to 21 percent in 1983. This increase amounted to 1.9 million children, compared with a decline of 6.1 million children from more prosperous homes. Households headed by women accounted for almost 90 percent of the increase in numbers of poverty-level children. Since 1970, Feistritzer said, enrollment in private schools, including nurseries, has increased by about 4 percent, while public school enrollment plummeted by 11.4 percent.

—The Washington Post

## U.S. Infant Mortality Rate Lags Behind Other Nations

In 1965, almost 2.5 percent of all American babies died before they reached one year of age. Last year, the figure was slightly more than 1 percent. But despite this progress over a 20-year period, many health care experts believe the country may now be backsliding.

America's current infant mortality rate lags behind other industrialized nations. A recent report places the U.S., with 11.7 infant deaths for every 1,000 births, in 17th place.

Among those with fewer deaths are East Germany (11.4), United Kingdom (11), Spain (10.3), Japan (6.6) and Finland (6).

A new study for the Southern Governors' Conference found that between 1981 and 1982, infant deaths in seven Southern states leveled off or even increased.

The Children's Defense Fund reports that the infant death rate for black mothers is about twice that of whites, the

same gap that existed 20 years ago.

Meanwhile, the debate continues in various circles about the implications of the statistics and what can be done to reduce the infant mortality rate.

—USA Today

## Gandhi: Counting the Costs of Military Expenditures

The late Prime Minister Indira Gandhi of India, where about 75 percent of the population devotes most of its waking hours to the sowing, cultivating, harvesting and processing of food plants, told a 1981 conference of the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization that for the price of a single intercontinental ballistic missile it would be possible to "plant 200 million trees, irrigate 1 million hectares, feed 50 million malnourished children in developing countries, buy a million tons of fertilizers, erect a million small biogas plants, build 65,000 health-care centers or 340,000 primary schools."

—The New Yorker

## Flabby Kids Concern U.S. Fitness Experts

Exercise, from dancing to pumping iron, may be popular among adults throughout the country, but studies indicate children aren't following suit.

Indeed, some experts are saying that today's children may be the fattest, flabbiest and least-fit group to come along in many years.

"Over 50 percent of today's youth do not receive enough aerobic activity to strengthen the heart and lungs," says Jim Ross of Macro Systems in Silver Spring, Md. Ross directed a study of

more than 8,000 students for the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.

He found that the kids were significantly fatter than those of the 1960s. Only 36 percent of the 5th- through 12th-graders were taking physical education classes daily.

Other studies have produced similar results. In its analysis of 18,000 kids' fitness scores, the Amateur Athletic Union found that almost two-thirds of the nation's children were unable to pass simple, basic physical-fitness tests.

Alarmed by the findings, various national and community organizations are now developing programs and educational activities to try to reverse the unhealthy trend.

—USA Today

## Virginia Beach Cable-TV Pulls Plug on Playboy

Cox Cable Co. of Virginia Beach has decided to pull the Playboy channel off the air in the wake of indictments against the franchise for distributing obscene material.

The indictments resulted at least in part from a campaign by local religious leaders who objected to the showing of sexually explicit movies on the channel.

A grand jury of four men and three women returned seven indictments against the cable television group after screening 13 hours of videotaped programming.

—Religious News Service

"Moral Scene" is compiled and edited by the editor.

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Cut out and mail to Christian Life Commission, 901 Commerce, #550, Nashville, TN 37203-3620.

OBSERVE CHRISTIAN CITIZENSHIP SUNDAY JUNE 30, 1985

## How to Take Your Christian Citizenship Beyond the Voting Booth

Many Christians think that by voting in local, state or national elections they have fulfilled their responsibilities as citizens. Although voting is a crucial part of Christian Citizenship, our Christian influence should not stop there. We as Christian citizens have a tremendous responsibility to influence the actions of government officials once they have been elected to office.

One way to involve Christians in responsible citizenship is to observe Christian Citizenship Sunday in your local church with an awareness/action emphasis. This year Christian Citizenship Sunday is set on the Southern Baptist Convention calendar for June 30. If this date is not convenient for your church, please schedule another time more appropriate for your particular situation.

Some of the questions your emphasis can help answer include: What do we expect government officials to do? How do we go about influencing those who make the decisions? What important issues confront our nation, our state and our local community?

The Christian Life Commission has a variety of practical resources for use in a Christian citizenship emphasis. Many of these undated resources deal with specific issues which your church and community may face.

Plan now to use the form on this page to order the resources you need to expand the citizenship of your church members beyond the voting booth and into the world.

### Mail This Order Form to:

The Christian Life Commission of the Southern Baptist Convention  
901 Commerce, #550 Nashville, Tennessee 37203

Quan.	Resource	Price	Total
	Christian Citizenship Awareness/Action Guide	1.50	
	The Bible Speaks on Christian Citizenship	10 for 1.50	
	Christian Citizenship Sunday undated 5½" x 8½" bulletin insert	20 for 1.00	
	Christian Citizenship 1984 (annual seminar proceedings)	3.00	
	Drunk Driving Awareness/Action Guide	.75	
	Alcohol Awareness/Action Guide (for teenagers and their parents)	2.95	
	Bible Speaks Awareness/Action Guide (sessions on 11 critical topics)	2.95	
	Drugs Awareness/Action Guide (for youth and youth leaders)	1.75	
	The Gambling Menace	.20	
	Gambling Awareness/Action Guide	1.25	
	"Biblical Insights on Gambling"	.20	
	"Pari-mutuel Gambling"	.20	
	"State-Operated Lotteries"	.20	

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