

Light

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THE CHRISTIAN LIFE COMMISSION OF THE SOUTHERN

BAPTIST CONVENTION

NOVEMBER/DECEMBER 1986

CHOOSE LIFE

(Deut. 30:19)



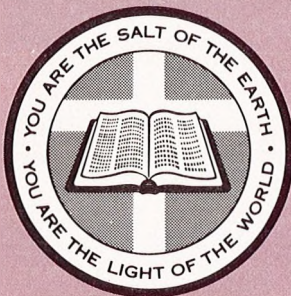
Observe Sanctity of Human Life Sunday
January 18, 1987

**Sponsored by the Christian Life Commission of the Southern
Baptist Convention**

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Of The Southern Baptist Convention

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Of Secretaries and Salaries

"What do you miss the most now that you have retired?" a preacher friend from Lubbock was asked.

"My secretary and my salary," he said. It all happened so fast that you have to assume it came straight from his heart.

Since I still have a secretary and a salary at this blessed time, I am fixing to sing a small hymn of thanksgiving for both.

How could I properly give thanks for a wonderful secretary? (She has suggested that putting her on salary would be nice. That's one of the things I like about her: she has such a marvelous sense of humor.) Mary Elizabeth Tyler is the splendid human being with whom I am privileged to work in this capacity. Her position title on our organization chart is Administrative Assistant; and in that job she does most of the everyday secretarial work of my office. She labors far beyond the call of duty. She never hesitates to go the second mile. She sees her work as God's special calling. She uses her Louisiana Baptist College education and her Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary training and her long experience as a children's worker and then as pastor's secretary for my good friend Dr. Charles Trentham at the First Baptist Church of Knoxville to splendid advantage every day of her life. She takes her work seriously having long since gone through the considerable disciplines of attaining the rating of Certified Professional Secretary. She is an involved and responsible churchwoman. She surmounted incredible obstacles to make something of herself. She has the best interests of this agency at heart in her entire life and work. She is steady as she goes, seeking always to learn, to help, to grow, to be alert to new ways of furthering the cause of applied Christianity, of helping the Christian Life Commission, and of working effectively with me in implementing my special calling from God to help Southern Baptists apply Christian principles in every area and relationship of life. I rise up now and call her blessed.

And how shall I appropriately express thanks for my salary? It is a more-than-adequate salary now. However, it was not ever thus. It was \$10,700 (every single year) when I came to this job. It wasn't much; but what there was of it was good. With it, I supported my wife and our three daughters. And with it I started making payments on the house which I've recently completed the 300th of. Doxology. But back to the salary. (Your mind wanders some as you move along life's journey.)

My job is work which through the years I would gladly have paid Southern Baptists for the privilege of doing. The salary which has gradually grown, mostly with cost-of-living adjustments for nearly 27 years, has been the bonus to my work which has allowed me the freedom not to worry unduly about food, clothing, and shelter or the other mundane necessities of everyday life such as an occasional pair of hip boots for trout fishing in the New Mexico mountains. The Christian Life Commission on behalf of Southern Baptists has generously paid me that salary while allowing me to pursue the high calling of God in Christ Jesus. I am genuinely grateful for all those who have given me the tools with which to work: my parents, my teachers, my family, my fellow laborers in the field of Christian ethics; but I am especially grateful to the Christian Life Commission for that salary without which, beyond any peradventure of a doubt, it would all have been a lot harder.

So, at this good season between Thanksgiving and Christmas and before retirement I respectfully salute my secretary and rather reverently give thanks for my salary.

Foy Valentine

Foy Valentine
Executive Director

THE BIBLE'S CALL TO 'CHOOSE LIFE'

The Tragedy of Abortion Sets the Backdrop For Emphasis on the Sanctity of Human Life

"I have set before you life and death, blessing and cursing: therefore choose life...."

(Deut. 30:19)

Fourteen years ago this January the Supreme Court legalized abortion on demand. By a vote of 7 for and 2 against, the highest court in the United States made a ruling that had a dramatic impact on the nation's abortion practices.

In 1969, prior to the Supreme Court's 1973 *Roe v. Wade* decision, the number of legal abortions in the U.S. was less than 20,000. (The number of illegal abortions is unknown although they have been variously estimated at between 200,000 and 1,200,000.) By 1981, the year with the most recent statistics, the total number of abortions in the United States surpassed the 1.3 million mark. That year 358 legal

Although the number of abortions has leveled off, some communities now have more abortions than live births.

abortions were performed per 1,000 live births.

Although the number of abortions has leveled off and even begun to decline slightly, some communities now have more abortions than live births. According to marital status,

unmarried women obtain an estimated 81 percent of all abortions. According to age category, 1 percent of abortions are obtained by women under age 15, compared to 27.5 percent for women 15 to 19, 35.2 percent for women 20 to 24, 20 percent for women 25 to 29, 10.6 percent for women 30 to 34 and 5.7

Abortion Facts You Should Know

Statistics on abortion in America in 1981, the latest year for which such data is available, illustrate the gravity of this moral issue.

- The abortion rate was estimated to be 35.9 abortions per 100 live births. This rate is about double that of Canada, England and West Germany. It is higher than the rate in some countries with more permissive sexual mores such as France and Sweden.
- 70 percent of abortions were obtained by white females, although the rate of 24 abortions per 1,000 white females was considerably lower than the 56 abortions per 1,000 non-white females.
- 35% of abortions were obtained by women who had previously had abortions.
- About 51 percent of the abortions were obtained within eight weeks of conception; 91 percent were obtained within three months of conception.
- 28 percent of all abortions were performed in the two states of California and New York.

percent for women 35 and older.

Against this backdrop of the tragic reality of abortion, Sanctity of Human Life Sunday is an occasion for Southern Baptists to concentrate on this moral issue.

Sanctity of Human Life Sunday is a time to confess. Confession based on true repentance is the bedrock upon which the church builds its witness to the world and carries out its mission in the world. As with other moral issues, the church has often failed to address abortion with the degree of moral insight, compassion and steadfastness that is needed. We need to confess that as church members we have not respected the dignity of human life with the depth of commitment called for. We have not spoken with sufficient courage against secular society's cheapening of God's gift of life.

Sanctity of Human Life Sunday is a time to choose. God has made us free moral agents. As such we must make decisions. We cannot escape, ignore or forfeit this responsibility. We must decide as individuals and as communities of faith what we think about moral issues. Even though we are free to decide which road to travel, God urges us to choose life. As the Author of Life, his bias in favor of life comes as no surprise.

Sanctity of Human Life Sunday is a time to commit ourselves. The choice for life involves a commitment to act in the world. Southern Baptists need to commit themselves to pray about abortion, seeking God's guidance for moral clarity about what to do. Southern Baptists need to study the issue, searching for the causes and solutions. Southern Baptists need to commit ourselves to work for alternatives to abortion. Southern Baptists need to commit ourselves to influence public policy through responsible political involvement.

On January 18, Sanctity of Human Life Sunday can be a timely reminder that the Author of Life beckons all of us to choose life. ■

Resources for Sanctity of Human Life Sunday can be ordered by using the form on page 12.

PIECING TOGETHER A PRO-LIFE ETHIC

Common Ground on Three Concerns Offers Southern Baptists a Place to Begin

"When it is evening, you say, 'It will be fair weather, for the sky is red.' And in the morning, 'It will be stormy today, for the sky is red and threatening.' You know how to interpret the appearance of the sky, but you cannot interpret the signs of the times" (Matthew 16:2-3, RSV).

By Robert Parham

Have Southern Baptists, like the Pharisees and Sadducees, had the tendency to see the obvious, while failing to discern the signs of God's movement in the world?

Could it be that in our social activism we have failed to see the broader tapestry that God is weaving? Could it be that as churches and church members have worked to feed the hungry, to make peace in a warring world and to stop abortion on demand, that we have not heard God calling us to fashion a consistent pro-life ethic?

Others have heard God's call. Across America a handful of Christians are piecing together a consistent pro-life ethic.

Cardinal Joseph Bernardin, chairman of the U.S. Catholic Conference of Bishops' pro-life activities committee, helped begin the process three years ago. He gave a speech at Fordham University, urging Catholics to work for the shaping of a consistent ethic of life in American culture. A similar call was repeated the next year in an address at St. Louis University.

Ron Sider, professor of theology at Eastern Baptist Theological Seminary, amplified Bernardin's call at the Christian Life Commission's 1986 national seminar. He said "a biblical 'pro-life' stance will say yes to the unborn and the underemployed, yes to justice and freedom, yes to the family and nuclear disarmament."

Sider also warned that "championing that whole agenda will produce harsh attacks from left and right. One side will attack us for our stance on the poor and the arms race; the other side for our defense of the un-

Ron Sider amplified Bernardin's call at the Christian Life Commission's 1986 national seminar.

born and the family. Being willing to be the target of both left-wing and right-wing ideological attack is the price Christians must pay today for biblical faithfulness. The acid test of the integrity of the Christian 'pro-life' movement in this generation will be whether we have the courage to let the Author of life rather than competing secular ideologies shape our political agenda."

Several months after Sider's seminar address, a few evangelical Protestants and Catholics formed a

political action committee called JustLife. The founders, who include Sider, Pete Hammond of Inter-Varsity, Edward Dayton of World Vision, David Hubbard of Fuller Seminary

Concern about hunger, peace and abortion have been inching us toward the point where we can discuss the development of a pro-life ethic.

and Tony Campolo of Eastern College, said their goal was to support candidates with a "consistent life ethic," which means being "pro-life on abortion, pro-life on arms control, and pro-life on poverty issues."

Another organization formed this year is called Pro-lifers for Survival. Made up of Catholics, Presbyterians and Mennonites, Pro-lifers for Survival was formed out of opposition to abortion and the nuclear arms race. Unlike JustLife, however, this group said its main thrust will be educational.

Although no intentional effort is underway in Southern Baptist life to formulate a consistent pro-life stance, three single issue movements have been voicing more and more concern about the sanctity of human life. Concern about hunger, peace and abortion have been inching us toward the point where we can discuss the development of a pro-life ethic.

Each movement has a singular focus, yet all three manifest remarkably similar themes in theology and tactics. Each movement has a populist origin, but has sought to work through denominational structures. Each movement, for example, contributed to the establishment of emphasis days on the Southern Baptist Convention calendar. (World Hunger Day began in 1978, Day of Prayer for World Peace in 1983 and Sanctity of Human Life Sunday in 1985). Each movement has a single-issue publication independent from Cooperative Program support: hunger (*Seeds*), peace (*Baptist Peacemaker* and *Peace Work*) and

abortion (*Southern Baptists for Life Report*). Each movement has the backing of influential pastors.

One common source of expression among the three movements has been Southern Baptist Convention resolutions. Although convention resolutions reflect only the opinion of the majority of messengers gathered in annual session and are not binding on churches or church members, resolutions can be important road markers.

Since 1975, Southern Baptists have adopted a flurry of resolutions: hunger (1975, 1977, 1978, 1979, 1980, 1982); peacemaking in the nuclear age (1978, 1979, 1980, 1981, 1982, 1983); and abortion (1976, 1977, 1978, 1979, 1980, 1982, 1984).

A survey of these resolutions indicates that under the broad category of theology four themes are repeated. First, 11 of the 19 resolutions emphasize the centrality of the Bible or biblical teachings in determining a

particular moral stance. For example, the 1978 hunger resolution says "the biblical mandate to feed the hungry is clear." The 1979 abortion resolution states "Southern Baptists have historically held a biblical view of the sanctity of human life."

Second, many of the resolutions stress the centrality of Christ. This is especially true on the issue of peace-

A survey of SBC resolutions indicates that under the broad category of theology four themes are repeated.

making. Four of the six peace resolutions identify Jesus Christ as the prince of peace, with the implication that Christians are to be peacemakers. Two of the six hunger resolutions base concern for feeding the hungry on the words and deeds of Jesus. Surprisingly, none of the anti-

abortion resolutions refer to Jesus Christ as model, guide or teacher. Anti-abortion resolutions have been theocentric rather than christocentric, emphasizing the theological idea of the image of God.

Third, the theological theme of the sanctity of human life is not only dominant in the abortion resolutions but also appears in the hunger resolutions under the concepts of either the inherent worth of human beings due to God's love or the intrinsic right to food.

Fourth, all the resolutions directly or indirectly suggest that Christians have a moral responsibility to be involved in the world, working to feed the hungry, making peace and opposing abortion on demand. These resolutions never suggest a strategy of withdrawing from the world to create islands of holiness in a sea of sin.

Besides similar theological themes, resolutions on hunger, peace and abortion reflect similar strategies toward social change. Fifteen of the 19 resolutions emphasize the special role of government in obtaining a moral end. These range from support for concrete issues such as SALT II and a constitutional amendment prohibiting abortion to support for general objectives such as sharing agricultural technologies and providing overseas development assistance.

Many of the resolutions urge Southern Baptists to pray. For example, the 1979 abortion resolution urges Southern Baptists "to pray earnestly" and the 1978 peace resolution asks messengers "to pray for

Besides similar theological themes, resolutions on hunger, peace and abortion reflect similar strategies toward social change.

peace in our churches." Prayer is identified as one way to bring about change.

This brief historical survey indicates that Southern Baptists with special concerns about hunger, peace and abortion, or any combination of the three, share more

IDEAS FOR ACTION

Responding to the Issue of Abortion

Persons concerned about the sanctity of human life can take three significant steps in response to the tragic moral issue of abortion.

You can pray. Call upon God's resources and power made available to his people through prayer. Intercede for those who feel trapped by an unwanted pregnancy. Pray for those who suffer the trauma of an abortion and for those who minister to them. Pray for those who offer alternatives to abortion. Pray for leaders at all levels of government in working for public policy which upholds the sanctity of human life. Seek God's wisdom for ways you can be involved.

You can learn. Study the issue. Get the facts about abortion. Study the Bible for insights and principles which can be applied to questions about abortion. Learn about what is being done in your community through churches and service organizations to provide alternatives to abortion. Learn about needs which still exist.

You can act. Speak out against the

practice of abortion as a convenient method of birth control and the callous attitudes which underlie the problem. Speak out against the abuse of sex and the promotion of sexual promiscuity. Speak for responsible expressions of human sexuality. Speak for the sanctity of God's precious gift of life.

Support the prevention of teenage pregnancies through sensitive action and value-based sex education.

Encourage alternatives to abortion through support of services such as crisis pregnancy centers, counseling services and adoption programs.

Work for public policy which upholds the sanctity of human life. Work to change public policies which cheapen life, contribute to the breakdown of families or foster economic and social conditions which lead to unwanted pregnancies.

Finally, set a worthy example, in both attitude and action. With God's help, you can offer the world a positive model of Christian love and commitment expressed through the daily relationships of marriage and family. ■

common theological and tactical ground than is generally recognized. This suggests that some of the necessary elements already exist for the deliberate development of a consistent pro-life ethic.

As Southern Baptists move in this direction, we need to remember what Bernardin has said: "It is not necessary or possible for every person to engage in each issue, but it is both possible and necessary for the church as a whole to cultivate a conscious explicit connection among the several issues. *And it is very necessary for preserving a systemic vision that individuals and groups who seek to witness to life at one point of the spectrum of life not be seen as insensitive to or even opposed to other moral claims on the overall spectrum of life No one is called to do everything, but each of us can do something. And we can strive not to stand against each other when the protection and the promotion of life are at stake*" (italics mine).

Out of Bernardin's wisdom we may draw three guiding principles in our quest to fashion a consistent pro-life ethic. First, Southern Baptist social activists must maintain the overarching vision of God's peaceable kingdom. We must always keep in mind the total vision of *shalom* which values human life and recognizes the threats to life at every stage. For example, to oppose abortion while ignoring the poverty which contributes to children having

Jockeying for which issue is of paramount moral importance is understandable but counterproductive.

children or children having abortions is to misread the work to which God has called us and to allow the vision to break down.

Second, reaching a moral goal in a sinful world demands zealotry of purpose. We cannot adequately care for the hungry, make peace and stop abortion on demand if we are always flitting from issue to issue. Real change requires singleness of purpose. Single issues must be

pursued with the same intensity that abolitionists worked to correct another social evil.

Third, single-mindedness of commitment must be accompanied by a

We can fashion an ethic which has a holistic vision of the interconnectedness of all human life, yet enables individuals to work on single issues.

respect for the commitments of others. Respect for human life at one end of the continuum and disrespect at another threatens what God intends. Peacemakers must retain a respect for those working against abortion on demand and vice versa. Jockeying for which issue is of paramount moral importance is under-

standable but counterproductive. The Apostle Paul reminds us of our equality in God's vineyard: "I planted, Apollos watered, but God gave the growth He who plants and he who waters are equal, and each shall receive his wages according to his labor" (1 Cor. 3:6-8, RSV).

Southern Baptists can work toward a consistent pro-life ethic. We can build an ethic where the sanctity of human life is acknowledged. We can develop an ethic which works to promote both the right to life and the quality of life. We can fashion an ethic which has a holistic vision of the interconnectedness of all human life, yet enables individuals to work on single issues.

The needed pro-life ethic is yet far off but drawing near. Can we discern the signs of the times? ■

Parham is director of hunger concerns for the Christian Life Commission.

MORE BAD NEWS

Evidence Mounts on Smoking's Dangers

Where there's smoke, there's bad news.

If "The Tobacco Menace" (October *LIGHT*) wasn't convincing enough, consider the findings of several recent studies on smoking.

Separate studies have concluded that smokers are far more likely than nonsmokers to suffer strokes, that smokers are much more likely to have car accidents and that "passive smoke" can damage the heart.

Cigarettes already have been linked with heart attacks, emphysema and cancers of the lungs, mouth, throat, bladder and pancreas. Latest research, published in the *New England Journal of Medicine*, adds strokes to the ways smoking can kill.

Researchers, using figures gathered by the Honolulu Heart Program, calculated smokers had two to three times higher risk of stroke than did nonsmokers. The study took into account differences in age, blood pressure and other characteristics.

The good news from the study is that smokers can reduce significantly their risk of a stroke by giving up the habit.

Another study at the University of

Massachusetts Medical Center found that smokers are much more likely to speed, run red lights and get involved in car accidents than nonsmokers.

Smokers, the study said, have 50% more auto accidents and receive 46% more traffic tickets.

While cigarettes can cause dangerous distractions, researchers found no evidence that smoking causes physiological changes that would make drivers less alert. But the director of the study speculated that because smokers take risks with their health in one area, they are more willing to risk their health in another area, namely driving.

Finally, another study has tied passive smoke to health hazards.

The study, one of the largest to make the link, found that female nonsmokers married to smokers are three times more likely to have heart attacks than those married to nonsmokers.

Researchers at the University of California at San Francisco and the University of Utah at Salt Lake City, studied more than 14,000 men and women.

One researcher said he hopes the study "prods a lot of people to get their spouses to quit." ■

CHALLENGE TO BE GOD'S SALT & LIGHT

Jesus' Images in the Sermon on the Mount Call His Followers to Influence the World

By Thorwald Lorenzen

Matthew 5:13-16 is a familiar passage which many consider to be the centerpiece of the Sermon on the Mount. In these statements by Jesus, the gift of salvation and God's radical claim upon our lives contained in that gift are put together.

"You are the salt of the earth; but if salt has lost its taste, how shall its saltiness be restored? It is no longer good for anything except to be thrown out and trodden under foot by men.

You are the light of the world. A city set on a hill cannot be hid. Nor do men light a lamp and put it under a bushel, but on a stand, and it gives light to all in the house. Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father who is in heaven" (Matt. 5:13-16, RSV).

The context of this passage is important for fathoming the meaning of the text.

The text is preceded by the beatitudes. Here Jesus proclaims God's unconditional and effective "yes" to the persecuted church, to the poor, to the peacemakers, to all who hunger and thirst after righteousness.

Following the text comes the rest of the Sermon which contains the moral demands of the Kingdom of God. They spell out some of the details of the "good works" which we are to show before men and by which we are to glorify God the Father (v. 16).

Jesus said, "You are the salt of the earth" (v. 13); and "you are the light of the world" (v. 14). The text does not say, you "should be," or even, you "will be."

If it had said "you should be," a heavy moral burden would have been laid upon us. Moralism is the practice of morality as distinct from religion. Moralism kills. It demands something of us without giving us the inner power and resources to fulfill the demand. Christian faith is very different from moralism.

If the text had said "you will be," it would have spoken of a future reality, and future promises mostly lead to a lack of interest in the present.

"You are!" That is what we are told. We only need to hear it. We could not say this to ourselves or about ourselves. God says it to us through his Word. It is his gift to us. We may have problems accepting that gift, but that does not alter the fact that God has declared us to be the salt of the earth and the light of the world.

The "you" in this declaration is emphatic and it is plural. The emphatic element stresses the fact that God says to us what we cannot say to ourselves. We are elected, and this election arises out of the very center of the being of God.

The plural "you" signifies that we are elected as a community. Note again the context of the text. Not the apostles or any other ecclesiastical leaders are addressed here, but the "little people"—the poor and the meek, those who mourn and who are persecuted, the peacemakers and those who hunger after righteousness. The believers, all believers, with all their spots and wrinkles, with their successes and their failures, are appointed to be salt of the earth and light of the world. Just as Jesus is the light of the world, so those who believe in him and follow him reflect his reality in

and through their own lives.

In using the images of salt and light, Jesus took pictures from everyday life and made them carriers of God's reality to the world. What was possible then is possible now. God can break into our everyday life and surprise us with joy. These two images can tease the following connotations into our minds and thereby help to define our being.

Salt conserves. It does not conserve itself. It conserves meat or fish. Jesus is telling us with these images: the world needs you.

Without you the world cannot be preserved. "You are . . . light." Without you the world will remain in darkness. What a challenge, what a privilege to be told this. And what a consolation to be told this by him to whom "all authority in heaven and on earth has been given," and who will be with us "always, to the close of the age" (Matt. 28:18-20).

Salt brings out the inherent flavor of the food. In a tasty dinner you do not taste the salt, but rather the inherent flavor of the meat and the

Moralism kills. It demands something of us without giving us the inner power and resources to fulfill the demand.

vegetables which the salt has helped to bring out.

Light reveals the inherent beauty of a building. You are appointed, Jesus says to us, not to withdraw from the world, but to bring out its inherent beauty. After creating the world, God looked at it and pronounced it good. Our mission in the world is to participate in making the world into what it is supposed to be.

Salt and light also lose themselves. Just as Jesus lived his life for God and for others, so Christians are called to be for others. In being for others they will discover the mystery of life, that "whoever loses his life for my sake and the gospel's will save it" (Mark 8:35). We are told here that Jesus needs us. He does not bypass us in his ruling over

the world, but includes us. He invites us to participate in his passion for the world.

Now Jesus raises an impossible possibility: can salt lose its taste? Whatever the chemist may say to answer this question, salt without taste is no longer salt. It would be useless. Can you hide a city set on a hill? Of course not. Theoretically it is possible, practically it is not. It is an impossible possibility. Therefore, Jesus exhorts us, realize who you are, and live it out concretely in the world.

What we must never forget, however, is that *all* people can see the city set on a hill. It is the very purpose of lighting a lamp, not to "put it under a bushel, but on a stand, and it gives light to *all* in the house" (v. 15, *italics mine*). This marks the public character and the missionary responsibility of the church. The church is salt and light in being for the world.

Verse 16 summarizes the text. It is at the same time a very controversial verse, at least in theological circles.

The "light" which we are to let

shine—the witness which we are called to make and the mission which we are to fulfill—is defined as "good works." That seems to be suspect. "Salvation by works" some theologians claim and place Matthew with James to the margin of the New Testament canon. "Presence rather than proclamation" some missiologists lament and suspect a reduction of the gospel.

Neither fear is supported by the text. That does not mean, however, that we should not reevaluate our theology and practice in light of the text. How can anyone suspect "salvation by works," realizing that the text comes immediately after the beatitudes which proclaim God's unconditional "yes" to us? And our text commences with the divine promise: "You are . . ." That is not salvation by works. It is salvation. The gift of salvation includes God's total claim upon our lives. That includes, of course, our "good works."

This middle position between salvation by works on one hand and a Christian faith without conse-

ETHICS LIBRARY

Reviews of Works in Applied Christianity

The Family Farm: Can It Be Saved?

by Shantilal P. Bhogat. Brethren, 1985. Short, extremely well organized book that explains clearly the current situation in American agriculture. Provides a concise historical overview of U.S. agriculture, and then covers the changing structure (who owns and operates land) of U.S. agriculture: how it's changing, why it's changing and what difference it makes. Chapter 1 provides biblical base for the church's involvement in this ethical issue, highlighting God's ownership of the earth and his call for justice.

People who believe "it's the farmers' own fault" that they are in trouble today need to read this book to understand reality and to understand that this is a critical moral issue which affects us all.

—David R. Currie

Parents' Guide to Sex Education by Mary Ann Mayo. Zondervan, 1986.

Seeks to educate and instruct parents in areas of adult sexual satisfaction and comfort. At the same time, Mayo, a marriage and family therapist, wife of a gynecologist and mother of three, addresses developmental needs of children and adolescents—including typical questions about sexual issues. Her approach is candid, biblical, witty and readable. Brevity is both the book's strength and weakness. While readers are less intimidated by smaller books, the author only touches on many topics that deserve fuller treatment.

Treatment of scriptural validation of our sexual nature and its goodness is

helpful, although I felt the need for some qualification in using Solomon as the model for mature love and lovemaking. Also, I hope readers will not be turned off by the straightforward approach. Some low-level discomfort is often necessary for growth. And adults certainly need to grow in understanding our own, and our children's sexuality as a "good gift" from God.

—Lane Powell

The Politics of Compassion by Jack Nelson-Pallmeyer. Orbis, 1986.

Contends North American Christians must develop compassion as a response to hunger, U.S. policy in Central America and the arms race. Affluent Christians must heed the redemptive, challenging word of the poor. Uses Parable of the Good Samaritan to call Christians to compassion. Use of the parable in contemporary terms forces the reader to consider current application of it. Concrete practical suggestions for involvement bring the book to a fitting conclusion. Highly recommended for anyone (particularly pastors) who lacks time for extensive reading yet wants to broaden a church's horizons.

—David C. Morgan

REVIEWERS—Currie is special assistant, marketing division, Texas Department of Agriculture, Austin, and a former Christian Life Commission staff member. Powell is a family life educator and assistant professor at Samford University, Birmingham, Ala. Morgan is pastor, Converse (Texas) First Baptist Church.

The challenge facing us is whether we are prepared with our lives to create analogies to Jesus' passion for the world.

quences on the other has been an important part of the Baptist heritage. The Christian church faces a credibility crisis today. Perhaps it is our responsibility to retrieve our Baptist insistence that salvation is a gift of God, but that this gift creates new people who give concrete and visible expression through their lives to what they have received in salvation.

Our works have missionary character. The challenge facing us is whether we are prepared with our lives to create analogies to Jesus' passion for the world. In doing that, we are indeed the salt of the earth and the light of the world. ■

Lorenzen is professor of systematic theology and ethics, Baptist Theological Seminary, Ruschlikon, Switzerland.

THE FRIGHTENING 'AIDS' ONSLAUGHT

Surgeon General Calls on Nation's Churches To Take the Lead in Ministry and Education

By David Wilkinson

The nation's churches can play a strategic role in combatting the dread disease of AIDS.

That message was delivered by Surgeon General C. Everett Koop to a group of Southern Baptists at a meeting in the nation's capital.

Koop met with seven Southern Baptist leaders in the last of a series of meetings with various groups about the country's growing AIDS problem. The meetings sought input in the development of the surgeon

general's report on AIDS. The report was released in October.

The group included Wendell Belew, vice president for mission ministries, Home Mission Board, Atlanta; Glen Clark, executive vice president, Baylor University Medical Center, Dallas; Kenneth Mahannes, pastor, Far Hills Baptist Church, Dayton, Ohio, and member of the SBC Executive Committee; Stephen Reynolds, vice president, Baptist Memorial Hospital, Memphis; Dan Stringer, executive director-treasurer, Florida Baptist Convention, Jacksonville, and president of the Southern Baptist Association of State Executive Directors; and Larry Braidfoot, general counsel and director of Christian citizenship for the Christian Life Commission which arranged the meeting.

According to the Centers for Disease Control, more than 1 million Americans have been infected by the virus that causes AIDS (Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome).

Koop told the Baptist group the "greatest concern" to health officials is the spread of the AIDS virus into the heterosexual community. Health officials in Africa have reported the ratio of AIDS victims on that continent is now nearly 50-50 male and female. Koop noted a recent

study in New York found that 45 percent of those who tested AIDS positive were females.

Koop said current predictions indicate that in 1991 there will be 275,000 persons hospitalized with AIDS and that 70,000 AIDS victims will die in that year alone. The year's

The "greatest concern" to health officials is the spread of the AIDS virus into the heterosexual community.

health care costs for those patients could be as much as \$16 billion.

The Baptist leaders talked with Koop about several concerns related to the upcoming surgeon general's report: the dilemma hospitals face in treating AIDS patients while also protecting employees and other patients from the disease, potential legal and insurance implications for hospitals, schools and other Baptist institutions, ministry to AIDS victims and their families and the need for better sex education through the church and the home to emphasize AIDS risks and means of prevention.

Koop said public education about AIDS faces a difficult task in trying to allay the fears of the majority of the population who are safe from AIDS while also underscoring the serious risks to a minority of the population whose lifestyles make them susceptible to AIDS.

One of the keys, he said, is teaching parents how to educate their children about sex. Churches, he said, have a "tremendous obligation" to educate children and young people about sexual behavior and specifically about the dangers of drug abuse and sexual promiscuity.

In September, trustees of the Christian Life Commission approved plans for a Christian Life Commission-sponsored task force of Baptist leaders to formulate strategies for education and action on AIDS and plans for development of resources dealing with ethical and pastoral issues associated with the dread disease. ■

Wilkinson, director of news and information services for the Christian Life Commission, is editor of LIGHT.

Education Is Essential

"Many people—especially our youth—are not receiving information that is vital to their future health and well-being because of our reticence in dealing with the subjects of sex, sexual practices and homosexuality. This silence must end.

"We can no longer afford to side-step frank, open discussions about sexual practices—homosexual and heterosexual. Education about AIDS should start at an early age so that children can grow up knowing the behaviors to avoid to protect themselves from exposure to the AIDS virus."

—Surgeon General C. Everett Koop

Number of Homeless Continues to Increase

As cold weather approaches, a study by the National Coalition for the Homeless says the nation's homeless population has grown 25% this year.

New York City, with about 80,000 homeless persons, was No. 1 among the 21 cities surveyed. St. Louis had the largest percentage of increase—100% or 15,000 people. The report compared the first nine months of 1986 with all of 1985.

Meanwhile, studies show families hit by economic or domestic crises are joining the ranks of the homeless in accelerating numbers.

At least 20% of the nation's homeless are families. In major cities, families total 28% of all homeless, according to the U.S. Conference on Mayors.

A survey of 25 cities shows 60% of the homeless are single men, 28% are families and 12% are single women.

Studies by researchers at the University of Southern California and Harvard Medical School found that families lacking social or extended family ties are likely to become homeless in a crisis.

—USA TODAY

Watching TV: Favorite Evening Pastime in U.S.

Television came up a winner in a survey of Americans' favorite way to spend an evening.

One-third of all adults in the Gallup survey rated watching TV as their favorite evening pastime.

Other choices: reading, resting/relaxing, staying home with the family, dining out, visiting with friends, going to the movies or theater, playing cards or other games.

As the age of survey respondents increased, so did frequency of a high rating for TV viewing. Among adults age 65 and older, 47% ranked watching TV as their favorite activity. Only 30% of adults age 25-29 and 27% of adults age 30-49 ranked TV No. 1.

TV watching was rated No. 1 by 44% of participants who were not high school graduates, compared to only 18% of the college graduates.

—RD Digest, Home Mission Board

Gap Widens Between Haves and Have-nots

Last year the top fifth of American families in income—those earning more than \$48,000 a year—got 43% of all income.

The bottom fifth—those earning less than \$13,200—got 4.7%, the least in 25

years.

Also, the middle class continues to dwindle. Families earning today's equivalent of \$15,000 to \$35,000 fell from 46% in 1970 to 39% last year.

As economists debate the causes, the downward movement of the have-nots continues.

—The Tennessean

Hispanics Growing Faster And Also Becoming Poorer

Hispanics are the nation's fastest growing minority group. They also may be on their way to becoming the poorest.

Between 1970 and 1980, Hispanic population grew 61% compared to 11.5% for the rest of the country. Hispanic population is expected to double by 2020 and triple before 2050, according to a new Census Bureau report.

Hispanics are also younger than the rest of the country. Median Hispanic age is 23 versus 30 for the nation as a whole.

At the same time, the Census Bureau reported that Hispanics last year set two poverty records: 5.2 million Hispanics of all ages (29%) lived in poverty, and 2.6 million Hispanic children (39.9%) were poor. These were the highest numbers in these categories since the bureau began collecting Hispanic figures in 1972.

Nearly three-quarters of Hispanic children living in female-headed households are living in poverty.

"We have a growing, young population that may never have the opportunities to escape the cycle of poverty," one expert told Congress.

On another front, a recent survey found that Hispanics hold 3,202 elected offices at all levels of government.

Although there were about 18.1 million Hispanics living in the 50 states and D.C. last March, according to latest census data, they hold a tiny fraction of the 490,000 elective public offices. American blacks, who numbered about 28.5 million in March, hold 6,424 elective offices.

—Compiled from news reports

Outlook Worsens For Poor Children

The number of children living in poverty is growing while participation in assistance programs for poor children is declining, according to a congressional report.

A document compiled by the House Select Committee on Children, Youth and Families says the number of children in poverty jumped 30% over a five-year period, from 9.9 million in 1979 to 12.9 million in 1984. During that same period, rate of participation in Head Start and

Aid to Families with Dependent Children dropped more than 20%.

Also, the report said, funding for the assistance programs has not kept pace with rising numbers of poor children or with inflation. When AFDC dollars are adjusted for inflation, the funding level was \$1.6 billion less in 1984 than 1979.

The report compiled and compared county-by-county Census Bureau statistics.

Although participation in the supplemental food program for Women, Infants and Children increased by 22%, the report showed only one-third of eligible children received WIC benefits. A total of 332 counties in 19 states had no WIC program at all.

—The Tennessean

Americans Will Spend \$45.8 Billion For Fun

Americans this year will spend a record \$45.8 billion to be entertained, projects a new study.

That's money for records, tapes, pay TV, video and audio equipment, movies, plays, concerts and sporting events.

The New York research firm of Wilkofsky Gruen Associates says the average of \$520 per household represents a 10.4% gain in a year when overall consumer spending is expected to rise only 6.5%.

—USA TODAY

Adult Daughters Likely Caregivers for Elderly

Disabled elderly are three times more likely to be cared for by an adult daughter than to be institutionalized, reports the National Center for Health Statistics.

Daughters (29%) are the primary caregivers for the elderly, followed by wives (23%), husbands (13%) and "formal services" (10%). Remaining 25% includes neighbors, other relatives, non-professionals, non-relatives and others.

The report says 14% of the wives and 12% of the adult daughters had to quit work to care for these disabled elderly.

—RD Digest, Home Mission Board

'War on Drugs' Effort Faces an Uphill Battle

The facts on drug abuse have gone from sobering to downright frightening. Consider a few examples:

- According to the National Institute of Mental Health, 10.5 million people in the U.S. have a substance-abuse disorder.

- In a Harvard study, 59% of physicians and 78% of medical students said they

have used mind-altering drugs at least once for self-treatment, to get high or to help them stay awake. Nine percent of doctors and 72 percent of medical students have tried cocaine.

- Almost two-thirds of the nation's high school students will use illicit drugs by the time they graduate.

- Cocaine has been used by 17% of them. Ten percent first used alcohol in the 6th grade.

- Deaths from cocaine more than doubled between 1981 and 1985. An estimated 500,000 use heroin.

- In New York City schools, more kids use marijuana and alcohol than cigarettes.

- Leading cause of death among teenagers continues to be auto accidents, often caused by drinking drivers.

—Compiled from news reports

Half of 'Hands' Money Will Reach the Needy

About half of the \$31.9 million raised in the highly-publicized Hands Across America project last May will be distributed to provide food and shelter for the needy.

In September, organizers were still hoping to collect another \$7 million in uncollected pledges. If those pledges materialize, about 57% of the contributions will go to charity. If they do not come in, the percentage will be about 47%.

The first charity grants for dispersing the money were to be announced in early November.

—The Tennessean

Cocaine Shows Up In Grade Schools

A 9-year-old boy in Los Angeles went into convulsions after taking a bite of "rock" cocaine in an elementary school

class, authorities said. He was treated at a hospital.

Chunks of the crystalized drug had been taken to school by a classmate; a man who lives with that boy's mother was arrested.

A teacher confiscated about 20 cocaine rocks when she saw children playing with them.

During that same week, two third-graders in Des Moines, Iowa, were caught by their parents using plastic bags of flour to "play cocaine," said their grade school principal.

The boys pretended they were selling drugs to each other and sniffed the flour when it was their turn to play "user."

—Compiled from news reports

Year of Peace Or Year of War?

Politicians may refer to 1986 as The Year of Peace, but an Associated Press survey shows 43 countries at war in the world.

The total includes five new ones since the last list three years ago: insurrection in Sri Lanka, civil war in Sudan and guerrilla wars in Surinam, Ecuador and Indonesia's Irian Jaya province.

—USA TODAY

Study Finds Ties Between Poverty and Cancer Risks

The bad news for the poor just got worse.

An American Cancer Society report says poor people run higher risks of getting cancer and dying from it.

Among the reasons: cigarette smoking and a tendency for cancers to be caught at later, less curable stages among the poor.

Research has previously found disparities between blacks and whites on frequency and deadlines of cancers, but a re-analysis shows much of that effect actually comes from differences in socioeconomic status, said Dr. Harold P. Freeman, chairman of the committee which produced the report.

"You can clearly show that poor people develop cancer more and die more from cancer simply because they're poor," he said.

—The Tennessean

Teenage Pregnancies Average 3,000 a Day

With the average American girl now sexually active at age 16 and the average boy a year earlier, more than a million teenagers will become pregnant this year.

That works out to at least 3,000 teen pregnancies a day, and the cost in state and federal welfare outlays was an estimated \$16.7 billion last year.

—Ladies Home Journal

'Sweet Success' Still A Dream for Most Women

At the rate women are being elected to Congress, more than 400 years will pass before half its members are female.

That's one of several surprising facts found in the opening chapter of *Sweet Success*, a new book aimed at businesswomen.

Two other facts quoted by the author:

- Women-owned businesses account for only 3% of the U.S. economy.

- 83% of elementary school teachers are women; 81% of principals are men.

—USA TODAY

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

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Christian Life Commission Announces New Resources for Sanctity of Human Life Sunday, January 18, 1987

The Christian Life Commission announces a new series of resources for use in support of Sanctity of Human Life Sunday set on the Southern Baptist Denominational Calendar for January 18, 1987.

These resources, designed to help Southern Baptists deal with the pressing moral issue of abortion, will be ready by December 15 and can be ordered now on the

form below. Additional resources which address other moral issues related to the sanctity of human life are available on the same order form.

Don't delay! Order the materials you and your church need to support sanctity of human life concerns on January 18, 1987, and throughout the year.

Quan.	Resource	Price	Total				
NEW ABORTION RELATED RESOURCES							
	Sanctity of Human Life Bulletin Insert—(undated—includes emphasis photo and theme interpretation) 5½" x 8½"	20 for \$1.00					
	A Dozen Facts About Abortion—5½" x 8½" (can be used as hand-out, study sheet or bulletin insert)	20 for \$1.00					
	Abortion and the Law—3½" x 8½" pamphlet	20¢ each					
	Issues & Answers: Abortion—3½" x 8½" pamphlet (NEWLY REVISED)	15¢ each					
	Sanctity of Human Life Sermon Outline—5½" x 8½" flyer	20¢ each					
	Alternatives to Abortion: Suggestions for Action—3½" x 8½" pamphlet	20¢ each					
	Sanctity of Human Life Emphasis Sunday Flyer—8½" x 11" (includes planning helps and order form)	15¢ each					
	Issues and Answers: Teenage Pregnancy—(3½" x 8½" pamphlet)	15¢ each					
	Sanctity of Human Life Resource Packet—(includes one copy of all eight resources listed above)	\$1.25 each					
OTHER RESOURCES RELATED TO SANCTITY OF HUMAN LIFE							
Quan.	Resource	Price	Total	Quan.	Resource	Price	Total
	Bible Speaks on War and Peace	15¢ each			Issues and Answers: Hunger	15¢ each	
	Bible Speaks on Sex	15¢ each			Issues and Answers: Smoking	15¢ each	
	Bible Speaks on Hunger	15¢ each			Issues and Answers: War and Peace	15¢ each	
	Issues and Answers: Biomedical Ethics	15¢ each			Critical Issues: Nuclear Doomsday	25¢ each	
	Issues and Answers: Capital Punishment	15¢ each			Critical Issues: Suicide Prevention	25¢ each	
	Issues and Answers: Child Abuse	15¢ each			Critical Issues: Abortion	25¢ each	
	Issues and Answers: Human Rights	15¢ each			Christian Life Style for Youth: Sex	15¢ each	
	Issues and Answers: Pornography	15¢ each			Declaration of Human Rights	25¢ each	

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