

# Light

THE CHRISTIAN LIFE COMMISSION OF THE SOUTHERN

BAPTIST CONVENTION

FEBRUARY 1987

## BAKER ELECTED

By David Wilkinson

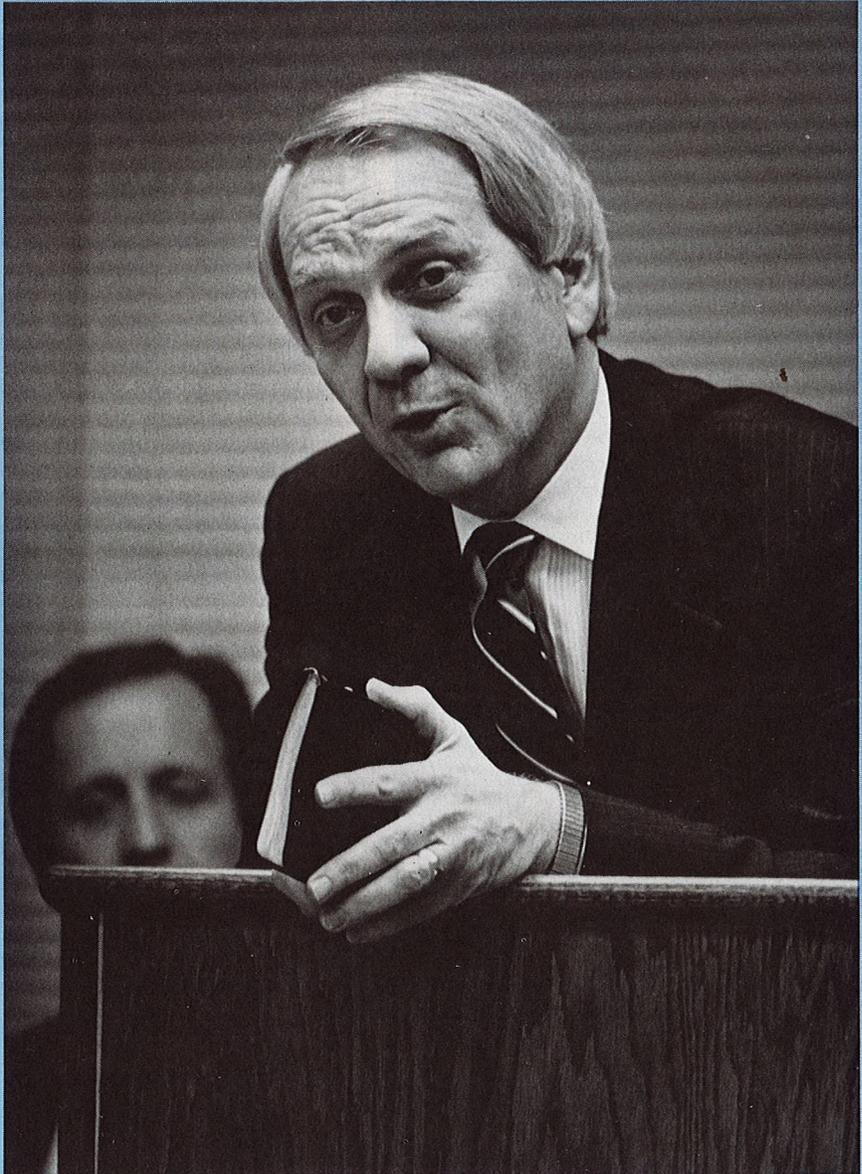
Baptist educator and ethicist Larry Baker was elected executive director of the Christian Life Commission Jan. 15 in a special called meeting of the agency's trustees.

**Baker, vice president** for academic affairs and dean of the faculty at Midwestern Baptist Theological Seminary in Kansas City, was elected by a 16-13 majority in a secret ballot vote. The election followed 90 minutes of intense questioning from trustees on controversial issues such as abortion, capital punishment and women in ministry.

Baker, 49, will begin work March 15 as the fourth executive director of the national moral concerns agency. He succeeds Foy Valentine who will move into a development position with the CLC effective April 15 after a month's overlap with Baker.

A contractual agreement spelling out Valentine's new responsibilities and compensation was approved by a 17-11 vote after debate. Valentine will be executive officer for development until July 1988 when he reaches age 65. He announced last April his intentions to move out of the executive director's role because of "personal health concerns." After discovering in 1985 significant blockage in three areas of his heart, doctors prescribed regular medication and recommended avoidance of heavy stress.

*(Continued on Page 3)*



Profile of a Compulsive Gambler Page 12

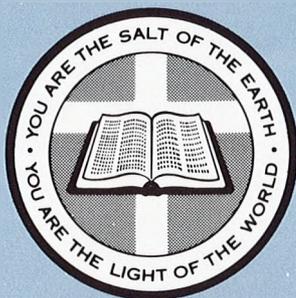
SOUTHERN BAPTIST CONVENTION  
LIBRARY AND ARCHIVES  
Historical Commission, SBC  
Nashville, Tennessee

- 2 Valentine's Viewpoint
- 3 New CLC Executive
- 5 Battle Against Porn
- 7 Politics in Perspective
- 10 History of the Lottery
- 12 The Compulsive Gambler
- 13 Book Reviews
- 14 On the Moral Scene

Cover photo by Jim Veneman

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## Larry Baker, Hail and Farewell

In the providence of God, the lines fall to us all in pleasant places. God is good and his mercy endures forever. Life is the gift of God; and that life is good. As our Lord is full of grace and truth, so his indwelling presence brings grace and truth to his believing and behaving people. In the fullness of that grace, we have been redeemed, we are being redeemed, and we will be redeemed. His call for us to be his people and to do his work in the world is extended in infinite kindness and received with joy and gladness. The Hallelujah Chorus is our song.

And yet, in some respects, the road for all of us winds uphill all the way. The journey takes the whole long day. For our Lord Jesus Christ, even in the wonderful beauty of birth there was a great beast slouching toward Bethlehem; over the Babe in the manger there was the shadow of the cross; the Son of Man would have no place to lay his head. The principle of the cross, the necessity of self-sacrifice, the concept of incarnational involvement is writ large in revealed religion. Indeed, it is the first law of all of life, an idea that dominates all creation and that is at the heart of God's universe.

It is against such a backdrop that I stand back to salute Larry Baker who has accepted the Christian Life Commission's call, issued after the unanimous recommendation of the Commission's seven person Search Committee, to be its new executive director. He perceived the call of God Almighty in the Commission's call and without delay or equivocation announced his acceptance of the call. He intends to begin his new responsibilities promptly.

I wish for Dr. Baker an ungarbled grasp of the clearness and definiteness of God's call to him to do this work. Such a mystic, spiritual, deeply religious conviction about his call from God will cover a multitude of slings and arrows of outrageous fortune that may be visited upon him in this kind of work in this kind of world.

I wish for Dr. Baker the unqualified support of a great host of friends, friends who will stand with him, friends who will work with him, friends who will support him, friends who will counsel with him, and friends who will pray faithfully for him. The work of a prophet can be pretty hard work but real friends can make the yoke easy and the burden light.

I wish for Dr. Baker the unqualified affirmation of his wife and children and parents and other family members for their perceptive understanding of his godly work can communicate a measure of strength and blessing that can come to his heart and soul and life in absolutely no other way.

I wish for Dr. Baker the unfailing vision of new heavens and a new earth, of a better world, of the kingdom of right relationships, of justice, of righteousness, of integrity, of truth, of honesty, of goodness, of purity, and of peace on earth and good will among men. The Bible says that "where there is no vision the people perish"; and it is to the end that we not perish that we wish for you clear vision.

And I wish for Dr. Baker the assurance and affirmation and acceptance of the providence of God together with the calm knowledge that things are everlastingly working together for good for them that love God and are called according to his purpose. The Christian Life Commission work is a marvelous ministry, an incredibly rewarding calling, and a uniquely blessed position of service.

Larry Baker, we honor you today and will support you, help you, and pray for you tomorrow.

*Foy Valentine*  
 Foy Valentine  
 Executive Director

# Baker Elected

Continued from Page 1

In the midst of open divisiveness which has marked the last two meetings of the agency's trustees, Baker pledged to be a "team player."

Asked how he "proposed to work with a divided board," Baker said, "My judgment is that you may be more united than divided. As executive director, I would attempt to lead this body. I have never claimed to have all the wisdom on all the issues."

***"The widespread practice of abortion in this society has become a national tragedy and a national disgrace."***

"Disagreement on some issues," he added, "does not preclude us from being sensitive and open."

Throughout the question-and-answer session, trustees repeatedly returned to the abortion issue in a discussion mirroring the commission's annual meeting last September. In that meeting, trustees by a one-vote margin rejected a recommendation which would have instructed the staff to produce materials allowing for the possibility of abortion only when the physical life of the mother is endangered.

**Baker told trustees** "the widespread practice of abortion in this society has become a national tragedy and a national disgrace." When questioned about permissible exceptions to moral and legal prohibitions against abortion, he stressed that "exceptions are just that. They are rare in occurrence and few in number." But I think there are exceptional occasions when, while abortion may not be justified, it may be excused. Because we live in a broken and sinful world . . . , there may be occasions when the exception needs at least to be an option."

Baker spelled out "four cases" where he believes abortion "may be allowed as an exception"—threat to the life of the mother, rape, incest and "perhaps in the case where traumatic and sever deformity to the

fetus is involved."

Rudolph Yakym, a layman from South Bend, Ind., pressed Baker about "when an unborn child becomes a person or a human being."

"I don't know," said Baker. "That's why I hold such a strong line with reference to the sanctity of human life. I do know that life is a gift from God, and he has given us the privilege of being co-creators with him and we ought to be good stewards of it."

After a series of questions about his stance on "exceptions," Baker told Gary Crum, a layman from Washington, D.C., that "we are faced with the limitations of human language. You want me to put more precision in my answer at that point, and I can't. The exceptions are few and rare in occurrence, and that's what I want to emphasize."

**Alma Ruth Morgan**, a layperson from Bartlesville, Okla., asked Baker to "give me some of the moral courage we've heard about" and "just tell us whether you're for or

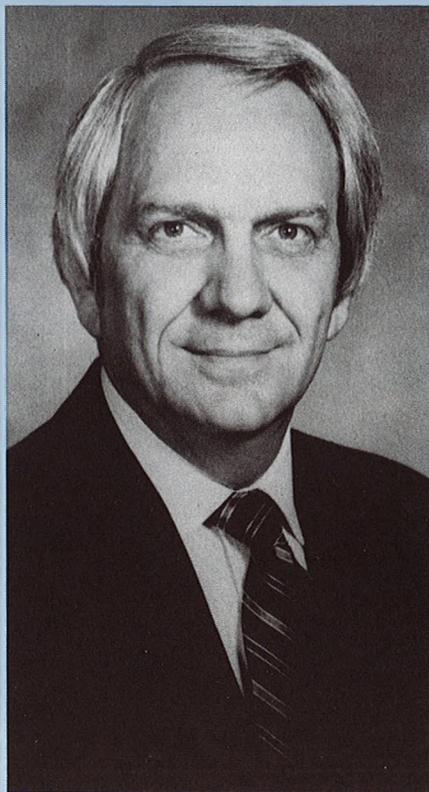
against" issues such as women in ministry, capital punishment, secular humanism and the sanctuary movement.

On the role of women, Baker told trustees that "God calls women to serve him in ministry as he calls men to serve him in ministry." Questioned by Crum as to whether he would agree that the Bible specifically prohibits women from serving as pastors, Baker said, "No, I do not agree with that position," and outlined his views on New Testament teaching related to the role of women.

**Baker also stated** his personal opposition to capital punishment. "I believe capital punishment runs counter to the Christian ethic and the Christian gospel," he said. "I am also aware that Christians of conscience hold a different opinion."

In discussion before the vote, several trustees questioned Baker's ability to lead without consensus on the board, expressed opposition to Baker's views on several issues and voiced disappointment in the composition of the search committee which brought the recommendation.

"The committee is monolithic," said Alabama pastor Fred Lackey. "I



## Baker Profile

1937	Born, Frierson, La.
1959	B.S., East Texas Baptist College
1959	Married Wanda Marie Campbell
1963-65	Director, Baptist Student Union and Instructor of Bible, Texas Women's University
1963	B.D., Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary
1966	Th.M., Southwestern Seminary
1970-73	Pastor, Parkview Baptist Church, Monroe, La.
1973-75	Assistant Professor of Christian Ethics and Pastoral Ministry, Southwestern Seminary
1974	Th.D., Southwestern Seminary
1975-78	Pastor, First Baptist Church, Fayetteville Ark.
1978-85	Associate Professor of Christian Ethics, Midwestern Baptist Theological Seminary
1982-86	Academic Dean, Midwestern Seminary
1985	Professor of Christian Ethics, Midwestern Seminary
1986	Vice President for Academic Affairs and Dean of the Faculty, Midwestern Seminary

feel that my point of view at least was not represented."

"The diversity on the board is not represented in the committee," added Arkansas director of missions Joe Atchison. "It immediately makes us suspicious. It would have helped if you could have added just one or two from our side of the aisle."

Search committee chairman Charles Wade of Arlington, Texas, noted that nine trustees were added to the 31-member commission after the search committee was appointed. "And, frankly, until this year we never had many divided votes even though we've had differing opinions."

**Hal Lane, pastor** from Eutawville, S.C., said he feared a split vote would bring "extreme division. If a church gives me a 60/40 vote, I would not move."

Wade said that while Baker would have to make his own decision, "I think if he gets a majority vote, he will be able to work with this board and will be able to increase the

support as he works with you."

**Richard Elkins**, a layman from Albuquerque, N.M., voiced a "practical question" about "what happens to Dr. Baker and to the commission in September (at the next annual meeting). We're dealing with a human being here. What kind of assurances can we give him?"

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***"God calls women to serve him in ministry as he calls men to serve him in ministry."***

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Commission chairman Lynn Clayton, editor of the *Louisiana Baptist Message*, said Baker "is not operating under any illusions or delusions. He understands the situation. If he feels God's call, then he'll

deal with whatever eventualities may come."

At the end of the meeting, trustees approved unanimously a recommendation from the commission's executive committee "to pray for and work with" the new executive director.

**Baker, a native of Louisiana**, has been dean at Midwestern Seminary since 1982. He holds the B.D., Th.M. and Th.D. degrees from Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, Fort Worth. He has taught Christian ethics at both seminaries and has served as chairman of the Missouri Baptist Christian Life Committee. He also has served as pastor of churches in Arkansas, Louisiana and Texas. He and his wife Wanda have three children. ■

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*This story was released through Baptist Press on Jan. 16. Wilkinson is director of news and information services and editor of LIGHT for the Christian Life Commission.*



**CRITICAL CHOICE**—Search committee chairman Charles Wade introduced Larry Baker to Christian Life Commission trustees

during a special called meeting in January. Baker was elected executive director, succeeding Foy Valentine.

(Photo by Jim Veneman)

# THE PORN PROBLEM IN LARGER CONTEXT

## A Consistent Ethic of Human Life Links Pornography with Other Important Issues

By Cardinal Joseph Bernardin

Pornography has become a problem of such mammoth proportions that it can no longer be ignored or dealt with peripherally by the broader religious community. That is why I gladly joined the discussions which led to the formation of the Religious Alliance Against Pornography. (See *January 1987 LIGHT*.)

I believe the growing efforts against pornography can be made more credible and more productive by providing a context for our actions. I would like to emphasize three related points which I believe ought to be a part of this context.

**First, it is important** that we approach the evil of pornography not as an isolated phenomenon, but rather as one that is linked to many other issues about which we have a concern and have spoken forcefully

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***Human life is diminished when women or men, and especially children, are exploited in the production of pornography.***

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on earlier occasions. In the past three years, I personally have articulated the need for developing, both conceptually and practically, a consistent ethic of life that seeks to build a bridge of common interest and insight that links a broad range

of social and moral questions.

The theological basis for such an ethic is the inherent dignity of each human being in all aspects and dimensions including sexuality. Created in God's image and likeness, the human person is the clearest reflection of God's presence among us.

**Because human life is sacred**, we have the duty to protect and foster it at all stages of development and in all circumstances. Because human life is also *social*, we must develop the kind of societal environment that protects and fosters its development.

This is why we must confront *life-threatening* issues such as genetic manipulation, abortion, capital punishment, modern warfare and euthanasia. These assaults on life cannot be collapsed, of course, into one problem. Each is distinct and requires its own moral analysis and solution. But they must be confronted as pieces of a larger pattern.

Because human life is both sacred and social, we must also address what I would call *life-diminishing* issues such as prostitution, sexism, racism and pornography. Again, each is a distinct problem and calls for individual attention and action. Nonetheless, understanding that they all contribute in some way to a diminishment of human dignity provides the theological foundation for more specific reflection and concrete action.

**Human life is diminished** when women or men, and especially children, are exploited in the produc-

tion of pornography, whether in print, film or television. A sacrilegious note is added when the sacred persons and symbols of religion are exploited.

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***Pornography, prostitution, sexism and racism can all too easily lead to violence and death.***

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Diminishment of human dignity also occurs in the lives of those who purchase or use pornography. Even more serious diminishment can occur because pornography is not so much an outlet for the baser instincts of the human person as it is a stimulant. Violence, degradation and humiliation are simply not compatible with the true sexual nature of the human person.

It is relatively easy to make a case against certain kinds of sexual propaganda as corruptive of human freedom and dignity. They destroy or diminish rational freedom either by damaging the capacity of personal reflection or by exciting the passions to the extent that they interfere with rational control of thought and behavior. They diminish human dignity by reducing human persons to sex objects.

**We must also** acknowledge that life-diminishing issues can become life-threatening. Pornography, prostitution, sexism and racism can all too easily lead to violence and death.

I emphasize this linkage because I am convinced that it will give greater credibility to our efforts to combat pornography, which profanes so perversely and sometimes viciously human dignity and the sacredness of our sexuality.

**There are many people** who will applaud us when we condemn the arms race or apartheid or economic injustice. But they often prefer that we look the other way when the issue is pornography. Somehow they see this more as an individual than a social problem, one that is somehow an unfortunate byproduct of human freedom which nevertheless must be protected.

Emphasizing the linkage of pornography with other life issues will give our efforts, I am convinced, both consistency and credibility. It will cause people to take notice. It will prevent us from being labeled, as is sometimes the case, as single-issue advocates, out of touch with the other ills of society.

The second point in providing a context for our emphasis on pornography is this: We must differentiate between morality and law.

The premises of law are surely found in moral principles, but its scope is more limited, and its purpose is not the moralization of society. Moral principles govern personal and social human conduct and cover as well interior acts and motivation. As religious leaders, we have the responsibility to preach and

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teach moral principles in season and out of season.

Civil statutes, on the other hand, govern public order and concern external acts and values that are formally social. Moreover, the civil statutes in our country must be drafted, passed and implemented to fit the framework of the Constitution.

We cannot, in other words, translate into law everything that our religious tradition teaches. History has shown over and over again that people can be coerced into moral action only minimally. Sometimes, however, people do not understand this, and when their expectations are not fulfilled, they are frustrated and may be inclined to undertake counterproductive initiatives.

Having said this, I hasten to affirm that within the framework of the Constitution as well as existing legislation and possible changes in legislation, there is a great deal that can be done. The 1986 report of the Attorney General's Commission on Pornography is very helpful in

delineating the possibilities. For example, it points out that state and federal laws against child and hardcore pornography in many cases may be strengthened and stringently enforced without violating the protections of the First Amendment.

Proceeding with great care and deliberation will help ensure an effective solution to the corruptive influences of pornography in our society. Public opinion can be changed regarding an issue like pornography to the extent that it encounters well-reasoned arguments and personal witness to Judeo-Christian values.

The third and final point is this: I see our responsibility and role primarily in terms of teaching and motivating. As religious leaders it is not our task to draft the laws or implement them. But we can and must help our people understand the legal dimensions of the problem of pornography and what their responsibility is in this regard.

Our efforts will be more effective if we do all in our power to portray beauty and not simply unmask ugliness. We will be more effective if we promote virtue and not simply scorn vice, if we proclaim the truth of human dignity and freedom and not simply attack falsity and illusions.

In a consumer-oriented society we need to remind each person that our worth derives from who we are rather than what we own. In a society that prizes individualism, we need to

promote the common good as well. In a society that is preoccupied with sex, we need to stress that human value or worth consists in much

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***Our efforts will be more effective if we do all in our power to portray beauty and not simply unmask ugliness.***

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more than physical attractiveness, that the value of actors and writers and filmmakers is more than their ability to meet particular public demands. When these values are taught and assimilated, our people will understand their responsibility, and they will be motivated to do what is expected of them.

Our personal witness as men and women of faith includes fidelity to our vision and values as we carry out our social ministry. We know that pornography is primarily directed at the weaker members of our society, the immature and the inadequate, frequently children and teenagers. Our biblical tradition calls upon us to defend the rights of the more vulnerable members of our society. We are called to defend the rights of the widows, orphans and resident aliens who too easily can become the objects of oppression, degradation and devaluing. The scriptures also tell us that it is a serious matter indeed to lead the little ones astray.

I am confident that we will remain faithful to our pastoral mission and our religious heritage. Working together, we can arrive at solutions that will improve the societal environment in which we seek to protect and foster human life and dignity in all of its circumstances and in all stages of development. ■

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*Bernardin is Cardinal Archbishop of the Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Chicago. He is a founder and vice chairman of the Religious Alliance Against Pornography. This article was adapted, with permission, from an address delivered at RAAP's national strategy conference in Washington, D.C.*

### **CLC Resources**

Interested in the facts about pornography and ways you and your church can combat this critical moral problem?

The Christian Life Commission can provide the following resources for private or group study or for distribution through your church's literature rack:

- *Issues & Answers: Pornography* pamphlet
- *What to Do About Pornography* pamphlet
- *Help for Families: Pornography* videotape

Write or call the CLC to obtain a free catalog listing these and other helpful resources.

# PUTTING POLITICS IN PERSPECTIVE

## Pastoral Admonitions About the Role Of a Free Church Within a Free State

By Daniel Vestal

Last summer the Vestal family decided to do the historical tour of New England. We saw Freedom Trail in Boston. We went to Sturbridge and Plymouth Rock and Providence. Almost as a lark we decided at the last minute to go to New York City on July 4 and observe the celebration of Miss Liberty. We have some friends who live there, and we called them up and asked if we could stay with them.

We watched the Centennial events from the Brooklyn Bridge. As I stood there, shoulder to shoulder with people from all over the world and watched that spectacular fireworks display around Miss Liberty, the words "liberty" and "freedom" and "opportunity" came to have new meaning for me. Those are more

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*We championed liberty by calling for a free church in a free state even when that idea wasn't popular.*

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than just words. They are ideas upon which this country was founded.

Baptists have been champions of those ideas. We championed liberty

by calling for a free church in a free state even when that idea wasn't popular. We argued for it, we fought for it and on occasions we suffered for it.

A free church means that people enter into the church freely; that is, each person must accept Jesus Christ for himself. Each person must confess that faith publicly in the waters of baptism for himself. No one can do it for another. No one can enter the church for you, not by proxy, not by infant baptism. The privilege and responsibility of individual salvation must never be put into the hands of another person, no matter how well-meaning that person may be.

A free church means that people of the church, once they have voluntarily entered it, are then free to respond to the Holy Spirit individually. No one can dictate doctrinal convictions or moral behavior for another person. Each one of us must arrive at those convictions of conscience for ourselves. Each one of us is responsible for the formulations of our own convictions. Each one of us must pray and ask for the Holy Spirit to guide and direct us in the formulation of those free convictions.

A free church also means that the people of the church are free to

determine the life and the ministry of their church. Under this sovereignty of God, the Lordship of Christ and the guidance of the Holy Spirit, we believe in a democratic polity that is born out of a conviction of soul freedom and soul competency. Each person in the church has access to God, and that means each person in the church should be a part of the decision-making process of the church. We do not need a Pope or a ruler. We each individually are a part of a decision process.

Democratic polity is often cumbersome. It is inefficient. It is tedious and sometimes borders on being unbearable, but it is part of the price we pay for liberty.

A free church also means that we reject the state church. E.Y. Mullins in his classic little book, *Axioms of Religion*, wrote: "State churches stand on the assumption that man without the aid of the state is incompetent in the matters of religion."<sup>1</sup>

Baptists believe that the individual is competent in himself to relate to God and does not need the state to dictate how that relationship should be. We believe that under Christ man has the capacity for self-government

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*A free state protects believers and unbelievers. The liberty of each is guarded; the freedom of each is protected.*

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in the church and does not need the state to determine the life and the ministry of the church.

Finally, a free church means that our mission is fulfilled under the premise of freedom. We do not evangelize with manipulation or coercion. We cannot and must not be deceptive in any of our methods. We must maintain integrity of motive and method so as to protect the integrity of the one we seek to evangelize.

Our mission is accomplished as we appeal to people's conscience and not as we coerce them with laws, intimidate them with culture or combat them with rhetoric. We

preach so as to persuade. We pray so as to convince. We live and minister so as to authenticate the message we preach and the prayers we pray. But we always leave the choice to the one we are seeking to evangelize.

**As Baptists, we also** believe in a free state. To say we believe in a free state is to say we reject the church state. The church state is one in which the government is no longer neutral in matters of faith, but has become an advocate for the church. In the church state, Christ is elevated to the throne of Caesar and uses Caesar's power and position to extend the heavenly kingdom.

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***How do we recognize the pluralism of our society and the necessary neutrality of the state and at the same time refuse to be neutral about truth as we understand it, about the gospel as we believe it?***

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While Jesus was on this earth, he refused Caesar's throne. The extension of his kingdom came by other means and in other ways—not through political power, coercion or intimidation.

**If history has taught** us anything, it has taught us that when a state ceases to be free and comes under the control of the church, then it is not long before the church ceases to be free.

On the other hand, to say we believe in a free state is to say that the state should not discriminate against the church. The state is not to act hostile to the church, to rival the church or to entangle itself in the affairs or the life of the church.

Some Baptists believe that in recent years the state has moved away from being neutral about religion and has become increasingly hostile to religion. In its place, it has endorsed another religion—secularism.

Reinhold Niebuhr, a man who was surely no fundamentalist theologian, wrote in a letter to former Supreme Court Chief Justice Felix Frankfurter that, "the prevailing philosophy which is pumped into our public schools day after day is itself a religion . . . [which] preaches the redemption of men by historical development and . . . 'scientific objectivity.' It does not have to worry about the separation of church and state."<sup>2</sup>

**A free state is one** that recognizes a pluralistic society and then seeks to protect that pluralism. It is not an advocate for the church but neither is it antagonistic to the church. The rights and the privileges of each are guaranteed. A free state protects believers and unbelievers. The liberty of each is guarded; the freedom of each is protected.

Another value, just as precious to us as religious liberty, is Christian citizenship.

**Just as Baptists** have championed a free church and a free state, we have also championed personal involvement by Christians in the affairs of state. We have believed and sought to practice the words of Jesus, "You are the salt of the earth. You are the light of the world." We have believed as Baptists that the gospel ought to affect and permeate every area of life, including politics, government and public policy. In short, we have never believed that the separation of church and state means the separation of God from government, Christ from culture or faith from life.

The question then is *how*. How is the church to influence the state? How can Christians act as responsible citizens in a way that affects the

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***Our methods of influence and our patterns of involvement in politics must always be consistent with the gospel itself.***

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actions of government without manipulation?

How do we who believe in a free church in a free state act like salt

and light and leaven in the sinful world? How do we guard our freedom and the freedom of those with whom we disagree and at the same time fulfill the mandate of our Lord? How do we recognize the pluralism of our society and the necessary neutrality

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***The political agendas of a party or group, however noble, are not identical with the gospel of Jesus Christ.***

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of the state and at the same time refuse to be neutral about truth as we understand it, about the gospel as we believe it and about injustice as we see it?

**As a pastor, I have** watched my people struggle with this question of how. I pastor a congregation of both Democrats and Republicans, a congregation that holds differing views on probably every political, social, economic or ethical issue that comes up. From this pastoral perspective and from a very existential perspective, I offer three pastoral admonitions.

First, be careful not to engage in politics with the attitude that the end justifies the means. Our methods of influence and our patterns of involvement in politics must always be consistent with the gospel itself. We must be faithful to our mission and to our message.

**Our goal is** redemption and reconciliation, not winning at any price. We are to be prophetic when necessary, which requires courage. We are to be priestly when necessary, which requires love. But we are always to be honest in purpose.

We are to promote individual and corporate involvement of our members without any hint of manipulation. All of us have seen Christians on both sides of the political/theological spectrum whose personal morality simply did not match their public rhetoric, whose rhetoric stretched the truth, whose methods bordered on being deceptive.

Niebuhr, in Richard Fox's biography of him, defined a Christian politician as, "the one who engaged in the statesmanlike compromises that a sinful world demands but who re-

lently subjected his actions to the test of the standard of justice. The Christian leader made use of the world's methods but did not resign himself to the world's ways. He cultivated an uneasy conscience—not merely a matter of breast-beating but of real self-criticism. His career was a perennial struggle, personal and political, to bring justice to bear in human relationships.”<sup>13</sup>

**In our zeal to influence government, let us be very careful that we never sacrifice character.** Let us do all we can to make sure that our motives are pure without judging the motives of others. Let us refrain from rancor or revenge. Let us subject our actions to the standards of decency and honesty and just plain Christian character. In other words, as we practice zeal in our politics, let us practice Christian integrity.

Second, be careful not to reduce or identify Christianity with any particular political program. The political agendas of a party or group, however noble, are not identical with the gospel of Jesus Christ.

### **New Congress Reflects 'Healthy' Religious Mix**

The 1986 U.S. Congress displays a "healthy religious diversity," according to a survey by Americans United for Separation of Church and State.

"The religious diversity of Congress represents the vitality and diversity of the religious enterprise in America, as well as the tolerance and fairmindedness of the voters," said AU research director Albert Menendez. "Those groups who want to impose an unconstitutional religious test for public office are not likely to win favor with the American people."

Breakdown by religious affiliation: 141 Roman Catholic, 74 Methodist, 60 Episcopalian, 57 Presbyterian, 54 Baptist, 37 Jewish, 23 Lutheran, 16 United Church of Christ, 11 Mormon, 10 Unitarian and 7 Eastern Orthodox Christian.

Another 22 members indicated Protestantism without specifying any denomination; 19 adhered to 11 other denominations and four indicated no religious affiliation.

In comparison with the 99th Congress, Baptists added five new members.

To be sure, certain issues that are political in nature have moral and even biblical implications. But be careful not to equate the social causes of the moment with the eternal gospel of the kingdom of God.

In the '60s, if you didn't protest the Viet Nam war, you were considered by some to be less than Christian. In the '70s, if you believed in gun control or the Panama Canal treaty, you were considered by some to be less than Christian. In the '80s, if you don't subscribe to the political agenda of the Moral Majority, you are considered by some to be less than Christian. The problem with all of these positions is the same: The eternal, unchanging gospel is too closely identified with the current political social agenda.

**In our zeal to influence government, let's be very careful in equating our own political and social agendas with the gospel.** Let's be very careful that we do not label those who disagree with us as less than Christian or less than biblical. In other words, in the practice of our zeal, let us also practice charity.

Third, be careful not to be triumphal in assuming that God is on your side of the issues. I found it interesting that early in the presidential race, there were two Baptist preachers (Pat Robertson and Jesse Jackson) running for office and both claimed a moral, biblical mandate.

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***We must be careful of making God the champion of our cause, of assuming that we alone understand his ways, of acting as though we alone have discovered divine providence.***

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Which was right? Maybe both were right. Maybe neither was right.

**We must be careful of making God the champion of our cause, of assuming that we alone understand his ways, of acting as though we alone have discovered divine providence.**

I am not saying we should take passion out of political debate or moral turpitude out of political decisions. I am not denying the reality of knowing and doing the truth. But I am asking that we acknowledge that our political debate and our political decisions and our pursuit of the truth

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***Let us ask God to deliver us from triumphalism and from a pharasaical self-righteousness about our position.***

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may be influenced by our prejudices and our presuppositions.

In the pursuit of right, we should do well always to add the words "as we understand the right." Let us ask God to deliver us from triumphalism and from a pharasaical self-righteousness about our position. In other words, as we practice zeal, let us practice Christian humility.

**The prophet Micah** asked the question, "What is good, and what does the Lord require of thee?" (*Micah 6:8*). That question, it seems to me, is not only appropriate for our lives personally, but it is appropriate for public debate and for the practice of politics in particular. Micah then answers that question: "Do justice, love mercy, and walk humbly with thy God."

Integrity, compassion and humility are the essence of biblical faith. We would do well to believe these truths deeply, to embrace them lovingly and to practice them doggedly. ■

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*Vestal is pastor, First Baptist Church, Midland, Texas. This article was adapted from an address at the 1986 religious liberty conference of the Baptist Joint Committee on Public Affairs, Washington, D.C.*

### **End Notes**

<sup>1</sup>E.Y. Mullins, *The Baptist Faith (The Axioms of Religion, A New Interpretation of the Baptist Faith)* by E.Y. Mullins, Rewritten and adapted by H.W. Tribble) p. 26, The Sunday School Board of the SBC, Nashville.

<sup>2</sup>Richard Fox, *Reinhold Niebuhr, A Biography*. (Partheon Books, New York, 1985), p. 296.

<sup>3</sup>Fox, p. 277.

**T**oday 22 states and the District of Columbia have lotteries. In 1985 those 22 states and the District of Columbia grossed \$10.2 billion off the state lotteries with profits of about \$3.9 billion. That is up from \$7 billion gross sales in 1984 with a profit of \$3.6 billion.

California today has the world's largest lottery. In the first 11 months of its operation, it had \$2 billion in sales. To put that into context, the California lottery is about the same size as Hershey Foods.

**How did we get to the point where we are today?** As a means of raising government revenue, lotteries appeared in feudal Europe. Francis I, for example, in 1539 used a lottery to finance his court. History records that it was a profligate court. Elizabeth I used the first English

lottery to finance harbor repairs in 1566.

Lotteries were generally supported in Colonial times in this country. You will hear that the founding fathers all played lotteries. It was certainly true with Washington and Franklin. What you do not normally hear is why they supported lotteries.

**Lotteries were supported** in Colonial times for three very clear reasons. First, there was a public purpose for use of the money. In its Colonial and post revolutionary period, the United States was an underdeveloped country. It did not have roads or canals or schools. Therefore, when a lottery was used to finance these, it was a matter of public-spirited citizens coming together to do what needed to be done.

Second, alternative means of raising revenue were simply not available. There was no income tax. There was no sales tax. Public finance was not as mature as it is today.

Third, there was a shortage of money in Colonial times that resulted from an unfavorable balance of trade between the colonies and England. There was a conscious mercantile policy pursued by the lords of trade in London.

**In the period** following the Revolution, of course, we were no longer controlled by London, but the lack of an alternative means of raising revenue and the need for public construction of one kind or another meant that the lotteries continued for a substantial period of time. But there was a dramatic shift in the way the lotteries were run.

Instead of being sponsored by public figures, the institution of a lottery broker developed. The lottery brokers were a lot like a stock underwriter today. They would buy tickets at a discount and then sell them at face value. Lotteries were no longer publicly run by private citizens, but rather commercially run. When that happened, a series of frauds and scandals soon followed. This led in the early 1800s to a people's movement against the lotteries.

**It is widely believed** that the lotteries were done in as a part of a religious reaction. My own reading of that history does not deny that there were church movements against the lotteries. But the church groups alone would not have carried the day. The reason the lotteries died in the 1800s is all part and parcel of Jacksonian democracy.

## The Historical Development of Lotteries Provides Insights Into the Current Craze

# THE REAL STORY BEHIND LOTTERIES

—By Robert Blakey




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*Instead of being sponsored by public figures, the institution of a lottery broker developed.*

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In the period of our early history, there was a great argument between President Jackson and the banks. There was a feeling among small farmers and merchants that

somehow a special privilege made a difference in whether you succeeded in the United States. That special privilege very often took the form of charters obtained for banks from state legislatures. That is what you had to have to run a lottery in those days. The legislation had developed so that all lotteries were prohibited except those specifically permitted by a state legislature. So if a particular group wanted to run a lottery, it had to come to the legislature in petition for permission to run a lottery.

It was widely believed that the process of granting these petitions was accompanied by corruption, and indeed it was. It was a form of special privilege, to be objected to on the state level precisely as the national bank was to be objected to on the federal level. It was out of that

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***By 1930, 45 states had prohibited lotteries, 35 of which did so by actual constitutional provision.***

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corruption and special privilege that Jacksonian democracy rose up and struck out at the lotteries. They did it in the only way they could. If the state legislature was the source of the corruption and the privilege, it wouldn't do any good to pass the statute prohibiting it, because as the legislature sat in the next session, it could simply get around it.

It was a legislative abuse that was being remedied, not a people abuse, and that is why, beginning with New Jersey's constitution in 1844, provisions against lotteries were written into state constitutions. It wasn't so much a moral concern as it was a practical experience with corruption. The legislatures themselves led the people through constitutional provisions to prohibit lotteries. By 1930, 45 states had prohibited lotteries, 35 of which did so by actual constitutional provision.

Thus, the 19th century people's movement viewed a lottery as an activity of government that simply could not be worked. As soon as a lottery became a commercial activity,

as soon as it became regularly run by government bureaucracies, it became a source of fraud and corruption. It was then struck down by

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***Thus, the 19th century people's movement viewed a lottery as an activity of government that simply could not be worked.***

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the people, not necessarily because it was wrong in the biblical sense, but because it was a bad idea for the government.

Unfortunately, people have short memories. What was learned in the 1800s was quickly forgotten. Beginning about 1963 New Hampshire decided, for all the wrong reasons, that it would institute a sweepstake.

It was sold to the people of New Hampshire on a couple of grounds. One, lottery proceeds would be used for education. The other was for the best of all possible reasons: People from New York, Connecticut and Massachusetts would pay for education. The theory was that New Hampshire would sell the tickets out of state. For a while it did sell 80 percent of its tickets elsewhere. But, of course, between 1963 and 1986 another 21 states and the District of Columbia have added lotteries.

Today, the argument is still made that state lotteries are voluntary forms of taxation. Nobody has to play if he or she doesn't want to. Then one must ask: In what sense are you using the word "voluntary"? It is true that nobody is taking somebody else's arm and twisting it behind them. On the other hand, why spend \$22 million in California to induce people to do something that they would otherwise do voluntarily?

It is a poverty of language that suggests that modern forms of advertisement which tell people that this is fun and profitable and good for the state are not a subtle means of coercing people. To tolerate the government manipulation of people's choices about recreation or how they spend their money ought to be, in a

free society, an anathema.

Why should the government be stimulating me into any form of consumption? Why should it tell me the lottery is a good one? It seems to me that the people should tell the government what to do rather than the government telling us what to do.

I have no problem with the government telling me cigarettes are bad for my health. I have no problem with the government talking to me about pollution and rivers. All those things are negative for me. When the government says a lottery is a good form of recreation and advertises and stimulates consumption, that is the beginning of government excessively influencing our lives. We ought to be very, very concerned. I don't find that the lottery is truly voluntary.

If a lottery is to be truly voluntary, then pass it and prohibit any advertising. Then only those people who truly wanted it and looked out for it would play. If what government wants to do is fight organized crime and displace organized crime's presence in it, then return all the money to the players. Why should they take their own cut out of it?

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***Unfortunately, people have short memories. What was learned in the 1800s was quickly forgotten.***

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If you set up a lottery with no advertising and with all the money returned to the players, you might be able to argue in some sense that that serves the public purpose. But when you advertise it and the government takes the cut that it does, you are simply displacing organized crime. The government is becoming the godfather. ■

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*Blakey, professor at the Law School of the University of Notre Dame, is an expert on the history of gambling laws with a special interest in lotteries. This excerpt was adapted from a presentation at a meeting of the National Coalition Against Legalized Gambling in Tampa, Fla., in October, 1986.*

# PORTRAIT OF THE GAMBLING ADDICT

## An Expert on Compulsive Gambling Offers A Profile of the Addict and His Family

By Monsignor Joseph Dunne

Addiction to gambling is failure to resist the impulse of gambling and gambling behavior that compromises, disrupts and damages personal, family or vocational pursuits.

All studies show that accessibility to gambling determines the ratio of people who become addicted to it. The more accessible it is, the more people who become involved. That's really the problem with the lottery as differentiated from racetracks or casinos. Among those people, at least two percent of the adult population will become addicted.

In sports there are people who are sore losers, people who cannot tolerate losing. They have a need for recognition because of factors such as the loss of a parent by death or divorce, or a heavy emphasis upon material possessions and success.

**Compulsive gamblers** usually start between the ages of 10 and 14 and find in gambling a means of recognition, the means of becoming a big shot. They find excitement in gambling and need to be a part of the "action." This action takes over their lives.

Once they have a big win—particularly after all their fantasies of being a big shot—they are actually hooked by gambling because now they have proof that they are lucky. They have an unreasonable optimism that nothing is going to happen to them.

**They brag about** wins even when they are losing, constantly thinking about gambling. In order to maintain the position of a big shot, they bet longer odds. The laws of chance are against them. Little by little, losses mount amid the lies and brags. Gambling takes up more and more time.

Indication of pathological gambling are trouble with the family, loss of money and funds missing from the

home. Compulsive gamblers are never at home. They are at the track, out gambling or getting ready to gamble or raising money to gamble. There's not much time to spend with the family. They are busy covering up, lying. They are careless about the family's welfare. When the baby is born, the father wants to know how much the baby weighed. "Twelve pounds! Oh, boy! Number 12 at the track is going off 50 to 1—that's the one to bet on!"

**Then borrowing money** begins—from relatives, friends, the finance company. All the savings go; the insurance goes.

Then they have to raise money to pay debts. They don't know who they owe money to. They go out the door and look up and down the street to see if there's anybody waiting they owe money to. When they meet you, they have to remember the lie they told you to get you to loan them \$100. It's a terrible life of lying, cheating, double crossing every relationship they ever had.

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***Compulsive gamblers usually start between the ages of 10 and 14 and find in gambling a means of recognition.***

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The fatal mistake comes when the family gets together and decides to pay off the gambler's debts. That's a terrible mistake. Plenty of families do it to protect their name, particularly Orientals and other different ethnic backgrounds. They don't want the shame. They also don't want anybody to get hurt. "They're going to break his legs," they say. "They're going to kill him."

Anybody who has access to money with little supervision is a candidate for this type of illness. Lawyers have access to a lot of money in escrow. They can get into a lot of trouble, as well as insurance salesmen and stockbrokers.

Reputations are affected. Compulsive gamblers are alienated from their families. No one wants anything to do with them because they owe money. More and more time is spent with gambling. There is remorse, guilt, inability to communicate, panic because of money owed. Then there is theft of money from businesses and the embezzlement of funds.

**Generally speaking,** gamblers are not violent criminals. They don't have the courage to hold up a bank. If they hold up a bank, they'll probably sit across the street and wait for the cops to get them. They're not very skillful criminals. They're schemers. They can use computers and defraud banks by taking a half cent off each account and no one will notice it. That way they can make off with lots of money.

**They can't understand** what's happening to them: divorce, arrests, emotional breakdown. Persons like this many times even need inpatient treatment to deal with withdrawal symptoms. Unfortunately, most of our programs are outpatient treatment.

Why do they go through withdrawal? Persons affected by any type of addiction suffer hyperactivity, sleeplessness, loss of appetite and bad nutritional habits. Gambling every day is a tremendous high. When they are taken off that, they also need medication. They come up with stomach cramps, diarrhea and various forms of withdrawal.

**We usually try to** bring them down little by little. They have cold sweats, tremors, insomnia. They have the shakes and blackouts.

For the most part, however, the only treatment in most states is Gamblers Anonymous. They usually go under some kind of compulsion. Most of our advertisements are directed to the wife, with a 1-800 number. (Many wives don't have enough money to pay for a phone call.) The wife gets on our phone with a woman whose husband is a compulsive gambler and who is a

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### Reviews of Works in Applied Christianity

member of GamAnon. This woman talks with her to let her know she's not alone. There is help available. We give her sources of help, particularly GamAnon meetings.

Then little by little the husband sees a change in the wife. She is not buying his stories anymore. She's not lending him any more money. Most male compulsive gamblers say, "I liked my wife better when she was

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#### **The state legislature that legalizes gambling is legalizing addictive behavior.**

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dumb." But it is through the wife that most of them go into Gamblers Anonymous. About 80 percent of them come in through pressure from the wife.

The wife now realizes she is a person. She has a right to live and love and be a full person. She relates to members of Gamblers Anonymous and GamAnon members, and little by little she tells the husband: "It's GA (Gamblers Anonymous) or go—one or the other!"

The gambler is not a hero. Many times his life is complicated with alcoholism. Twenty percent of the alcoholics we treat also have a gambling problem. In the Brecksville Hospital program, 50 percent of recovering gamblers also have an alcohol problem. So there is an interrelationship between these addictions.

The state legislature that legalizes gambling is legalizing addictive behavior as defined by the American Psychiatric Association. All gambling is addictive. The National Association of State Lottery Commissioners consistently misquotes me and psychiatrist Dr. Robert Custer by saying lottery gambling is pure joy.

Nothing could be further from the truth. ■

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*Dunne is president of the National Council on Compulsive Gambling, New York City. This excerpt was adapted from a presentation at a meeting of the National Coalition Against Legalized Gambling in Tampa, Fla., in October, 1986.*

**Beyond Betrayal, Healing My Broken Past** by Carolyn Koons. Harper and Row, 1986. Powerful story, told with both frankness and sensitivity. A painful story about hatred and rejection, it is also an inspiring story about love and acceptance, hope and healing.

Koons relates her courageous struggle for survival within an abusive family. The reader is given a clearer insight into the deep, long-lasting and destructive power of domestic violence, both physical and emotional. In her anger, rebellion and despair, Koons discovered God's love and acceptance as it was demonstrated and made credible in the lives of a few Christians who were determined not to love in word or speech but in deed and in truth.

This is reading that is more profitable than fun.

—W. David Lockard

**Evangelism and Social Involvement** by Delos Miles. Broadman Press, 1986.

Miles is the exceptionally perceptive professor of evangelism at Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary who in his entire life and work has combined deep commitment to evangelism and unqualified commitment to social involvement. He communicates both in this excellent book which gives practical advice as to how to be effectively involved in both evangelism and ethics. Hooray for Delos Miles for writing this book and hooray for Broadman for printing it.

—Foy Valentine

**Five Cries of Parents** by Merton Strommen. Harper and Row, 1985.

Strommen, author of *Five Cries of Youth*, turns his attention to parents. Chapters deal with the most-felt needs of parenting teens: understanding self and the adolescent, desire for close family feeling (includes nurturing, discipline and communication), cry for moral behavior among youth, responsibility for shared faith and where to go for help.

This book can help parents to strike a healthy balance between preventing difficulties as well as dealing with critical situations, to instill in youth their own value system and to be encouraged about parenting teenagers.

—Carolyn Jenkins

**Habits of the Heart: Individualism and Commitment in American Life** by Robert Bellah. Harper and Row, 1985.

Best-selling book on contemporary social ethics that presents a cameo look at the character and values of Americans in the '80s. Bellah draws from more than 200 extensive interviews with people who were "eager to discuss the right way to live, what to teach our children, and what public and private responsibilities should be." The five-year study reveals how individuals struggle to preserve or create a morally coherent life.

Major strength of the book is its focus on the relationship between private and public life and ways in which citizens do or do not participate in public life. American individualism is described with a mixture of admiration and anxiety. While unbridled individualism makes social consciousness more difficult, personal identity and character are vital in building a healthy and moral society.

If you are curious about what makes Americans tick, you will find the book interesting. If you are concerned about values and the dynamics of families and society, this book is required reading.

—W. David Lockard

**A Theology of Aging** by William L. Hendricks. Broadman, 1986. A new book of genuine substance by one of Southern Baptists' freshest, most exciting and most able theologians. Hendricks says the book "is a theology based on revelatory insights as filtered through the experiences of older Christians." Believing the aging have insights into the Bible and theology that need to be heard by all the church, he uses the experiences of daily life "as analogs to express the content of theology." A worthy addition to any good library.

—Foy Valentine

**REVIEWERS**—Lockard is director of organization, Christian Life Commission.

Valentine is CLC executive director.

Jenkins is minister to youth, First Baptist Church, Nashville. Authors Bellah, Koons and Strommen are among the speakers for the 1987 CLC national seminar, March 23-25, in Charlotte, N.C.

## 'Smokeless' Trend Alarms Nation's Health Officials

Americans may be smoking less, but they're chewing and dipping more.

The last decade in the U.S. has brought a 70% increase in the number of people who chew tobacco or dip snuff, according to sales reports from tobacco companies and surveys by the National Institutes for Health.

Dr. Durward Collier, director of dental health services for Tennessee's Department of Health and Environment, says about one-third of users nationwide are under age 21.

Collier adds that surveys in Tennessee show that 18% of boys in grades 5 to 7 have experimented with smokeless tobacco, and almost 30% of boys in grades 9 to 12 are regular users.

Other studies have shown that about 80% of users believe smokeless tobacco is a safe alternative to cigarettes.

Many people falsely believe that snuff and chewing tobacco do not contain nicotine. In reality, nicotine levels in bodies of smokeless users are just as great as for smokers.

Tennessee is one of several states to pass laws prohibiting the sale of smokeless tobacco to anyone under 18.

—*The Tennessean*

## Increase in Women Changes Work Force

The number of women in the U.S. work force has grown dramatically in the last 15 years, and the percentage of women in professional, managerial and executive positions continues to rise.

But latest Bureau of Labor statistics indicate women are still concentrated in such traditional, low-paying, female-intensive occupations as secretary, book-keeper, elementary-school teacher, cashier and office clerk.

A "female-intensive" occupation is defined as one in which 60% or more of job-holders are women.

In 1985, 98.4% of all secretaries in the U.S. were women; also, 91.5% of book-keepers, 84% of elementary-school teachers, 83.1% of cashiers and 80.1% of office clerks.

—*Parade*

## Black Americans Face Growing Family Crisis

The black family is in crisis. Consider these statistics from *Ebony*:

- Black families headed by women have soared 113% in 15 years. About 43% of all black homes are fatherless.

- Only 41% of black children live with both parents.

- Since 1960, unemployment rates for blacks have been double those for whites. (In 1985—15.1% for blacks, 6.2% for whites.)

- A black married couple's median income in 1985 was \$23,420, compared to \$30,060 for whites.

- Blacks living below poverty level rose from 8.6 million in 1980 to 9.5 million in 1984.

—*Ethnicity (Sunday School Board)*

## U.S. Prison Space Still At a Premium

States are scrambling to build new prisons, but they can't keep pace with mushrooming inmate populations, a new report says.

Capacity in the nation's 694 prisons grew 29% from 1979 to 1984, while the number of inmates jumped 45%, according to the Bureau of Justice Statistics.

Average space per inmate is 57 square feet (down 11%). Average bathroom in a U.S. household is 76 square feet.

—*USA TODAY*

## States Forego Billions In Alcohol Tax Revenue

State governments have foregone billions of dollars in revenue by failing to raise alcohol excise taxes to reflect inflation during the late '60s and '70s, says the Center for Science in the Public Interest.

CSPI, which has lobbied for increased alcohol taxes, calculates that in 1984 alone states would have received \$3.1 billion more than the \$6.1 billion collected in alcohol excise tax revenues if these levies had kept up with inflation.

The study says that in 1965 state alcoholic beverage tax revenues amounted to 6.5% of state revenues, compared to only 3.1% in 1984.

George Hacker, CSPI director for alcohol policies, noted that "had it not been for vastly increased consumption of alcoholic beverages over the last 20 years, states would have been much bigger revenue losers."

—*CSPI*

## Money Still Power Play Between Sexes

Career women feel confident about their finances, but money still represents a power struggle between the sexes, according to a survey by *Working Women*.

The survey of 3,428 readers—mostly high-salaried managers and professionals—found:

- 55% think money is harder for couples to discuss than sex.

## Want to Help Send the LIGHT?

*LIGHT's* readership continues to grow by leaps and bounds. Each issue is now being sent to more than 18,000 pastors, other church staff, denominational workers, seminary professors and students, and laypersons with special interest in applied Christianity. A number of readers have suggested a voluntary subscription program to provide a means for persons to help defray the costs of printing and mailing and to help underwrite a growing mailing list.

If you wish to contribute, a voluntary subscription is \$5.00 annually (10 issues.) Checks should be made payable to *LIGHT*. Your cancelled check will serve as your receipt.

- 75% of married women reported conflicts with husbands over money.
- 80% disagreed that men naturally are more comfortable with financial matters.
- Most respondents said men are intimidated by financially independent women.

—*USA TODAY*

## Census Reveals Jump In Unmarried Couples

The number of unmarried couples in the U.S. has risen sharply to surpass the 2 million mark for the first time, the Census Bureau reported.

There are now about 2.22 million unmarried-couple households, up from 1.98 million last year. The increase resumes a trend briefly interrupted in 1985 when the total declined slightly.

In 1970 the total of unwed couples constituted about 1.2% of all couples in the nation. By 1980 their share had jumped to 3.1%, and now it is 4.1%.

The bureau also reported that American women are postponing marriage longer than ever before.

Data for 1985 show that the typical first-time bride is 23.3 years old, the highest median age for women to marry since the government started keeping that statistic in 1890.

—*Compiled from news reports*

## Survey Reports Findings On Teen Sexual Activity

More than half of U.S. teenagers are sexually active at age 17, a new survey shows.

The survey of 1,000 teens ages 12-17 by Louis Harris and Associates was funded by Planned Parenthood Federation of America.

Other findings:

• Almost 3 out of 10 teens have had sexual intercourse. Among 17-year-olds, 57% have.

• 56% did not use birth control the first time they had sexual intercourse.

• 43% of sexually active teens talked with their parents about sex.

• Parents ranked as the No. 1 source of information about sex and birth control, followed by friends, classes or teachers, and TV and movies.

• 73% of girls and 50% of boys said peer pressure is the primary reason for sexual activity.

—USA TODAY

### Family Profile Changes With One-Parent Families

Nearly one-fourth of American children under age 18 live with one parent.

According to a Census Bureau report, 23.4% of the nation's 62.5 million children live in one-parent families—nearly double the 12% in 1970.

Of those, 90% live with their mothers.

In addition to the divorce factor, another disturbing development has been the increase in never-married mothers.

More than 3.5 million children live with mothers who have never married. And 74% of those never-married mothers aged 15 to 24 live in poverty.

—Compiled from news reports

### VCR in Every Home By End of Decade?

Nearly 40% of Americans now own VCRs. Half of us will have one by the end of this year. And nearly every home will

have one by the end of the decade.

That's the prediction of Electronic Industries Association, which expected sales of videocassette recorders to close out at nearly 14 million by the end of 1986.

EIA says this year, for the first time, dollar volume of VCR sales will surpass color TVs. Also, an increasing number of families are now buying two VCRs.

—USA TODAY

### One in Eleven Tune In To Electronic Religion

One in every eleven Americans daily tunes in to religious programs on TV or radio, says an ABC/Washington Post Poll.

The poll's results, published in *American Demographics*, indicated religious services are attended weekly by 34% of Americans, while 33% listen to radio or watch TV religious services at least once a week.

Seventy-five percent of black Protestants and 44% of white Protestants tune in weekly to religious programming, compared to only 22% of Catholics.

—RD Digest (Home Mission Board)

### Baby Born to Teen Every Two Minutes

About every two minutes in this country a baby is born to a teenager.

That alarming finding is part of a controversial report by an arm of the National Academy of Sciences after a two-year study of teenage pregnancy and child-bearing.

The study by an expert panel of the academy's National Research Council said about 1 million teenage American girls become pregnant each year, with 470,000 giving birth and 400,000 obtaining abortions. About half the mothers are

younger than 18.

About 260,000 teenagers between ages 15 and 18 give birth each year, with a birth estimated at every two minutes.

While few of the statistics cited in the study were questioned, some of the solutions proposed by the panel received widespread criticism.

The panel said the problem of teen pregnancy is so massive and the causes of teenage sexual activity so diverse that no single approach can solve it.

The report urged education to help decrease pregnancy and abortion among youth. In a highly controversial section, it also recommended "the encouragement of diligent contraceptive use by all sexually active teenagers."

—The Tennessean (AP)

### Many Americans Admit To Battling the Bulge

Still trying to trim the waistline that expanded over the year-end holidays?

If so, you're hardly alone.

In a survey by the National Center for Health Statistics, 53% of women and 37% of men said they think they are at least a little overweight.

The survey of 34,000 adults also found:

• 26% of men and 22% of women admitted to being at least 20% over desirable weight.

• 44% of women, 25% of men were trying to lose weight.

• 57% of those trying to trim the fat were increasing physical activity; 81% were consuming fewer calories.

"Our knowledge isn't bad," said health statistician Charlotte Schoenborn, "but putting it into practice seems to be the problem."

—USA TODAY

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

## SEND THE LIGHT

\_\_\_\_\_ The following persons would be interested in receiving LIGHT.

\_\_\_\_\_ Please remove my name from your mailing list.

\_\_\_\_\_ Name

\_\_\_\_\_ Name

\_\_\_\_\_ Street

\_\_\_\_\_ Street

\_\_\_\_\_ City State Zip

\_\_\_\_\_ City State Zip

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

