

Light

THE CHRISTIAN LIFE COMMISSION OF THE SOUTHERN

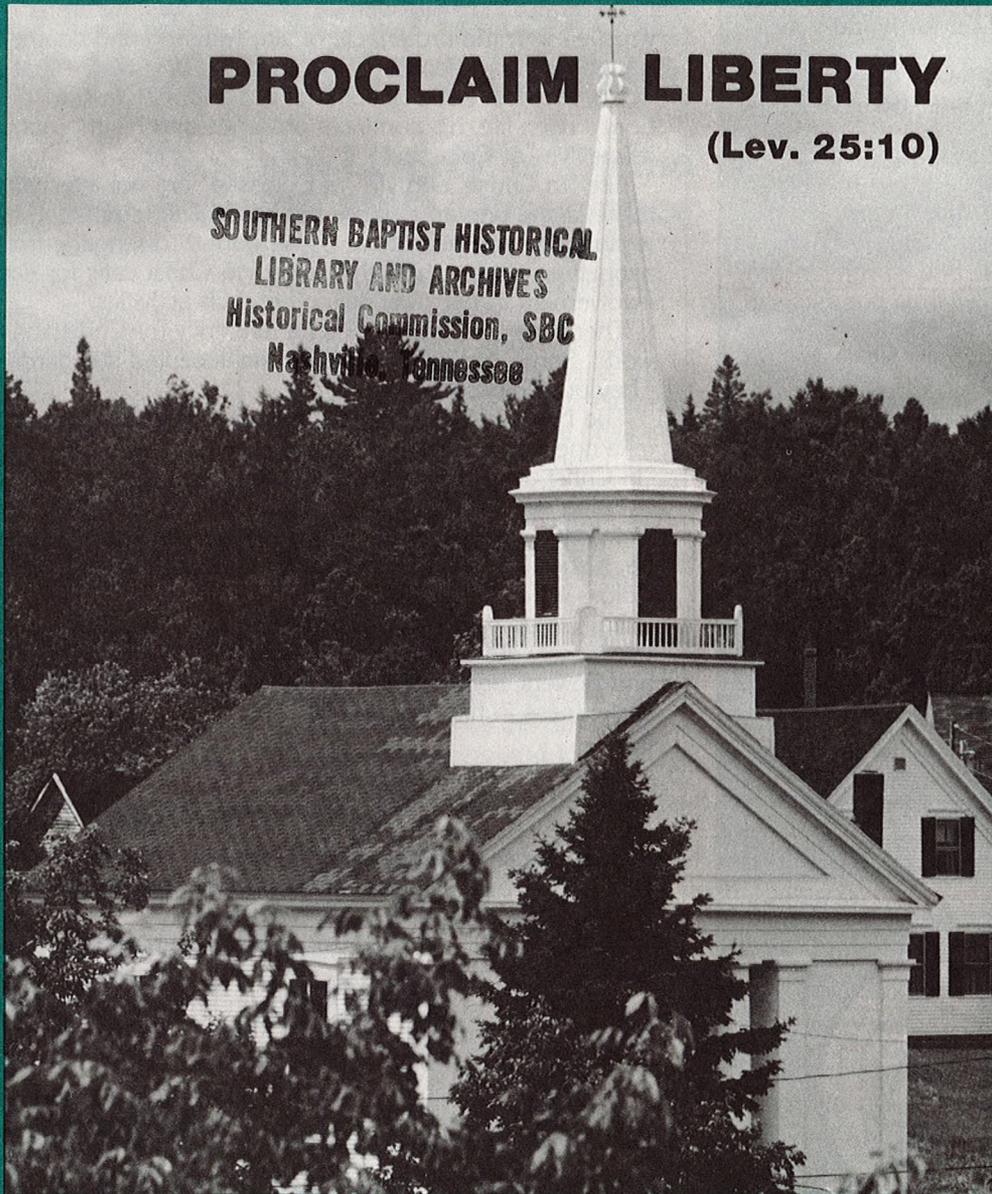
BAPTIST CONVENTION

JUNE/JULY 1987

PROCLAIM LIBERTY

(Lev. 25:10)

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



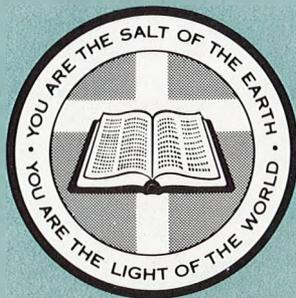
Observe Christian Citizenship Sunday
June 28, 1987

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Reflections

"In our era," wrote Dag Hammarskjold in *Markings*, "the road to holiness necessarily passes through the world of action." He was saying that practical action and spiritual vision belong together.

This should be true about each of us. By faith we have been made citizens of a kingdom not of this world. Yet, we are in this world, called to live our lives in a material environment.

Paul, writing to the Colossian Christians, illustrated this truth in his opening address: "To the saints and faithful brethren in Christ at Colossae." "At Colossae"—that was one world. It was the city in which those Christians lived, worked, played. It was the arena in which they wrestled with the brute facts of sin, suffering and death; it was the realm of societal law and economic necessities. "In Christ"—that was the other world, the new world of spiritual opportunity. "In Christ" believers share the Lord's risen life, his continual presence and his triumphant adequacy even as we live "at Colossae."

Life "in Christ" and life "at Colossae" are not alternatives, as though we relate to the one and ignore the other. The temptation to divorce the two is stubborn and persistent. Some want to disengage from Colossae altogether. Others think that loyalty to Christ calls for exclusive involvement in narrowly defined church activities.

There has also always been a tendency for Christians to conform to this world. Some capitulate tamely to its accepted standards and false values. They put Colossae before Christ.

The New Testament settles for none of those approaches. It won't let us take one and leave the other. Its emphasis isn't either-or; it is both-and; it is "in Christ at Colossae." We are called to live in two worlds at one time.

Being securely "in Christ" makes a tremendous difference in our life "at Colossae." It gives us a *moral vision* of what our lives ought to and can be. It shows us what our world can become when God's will is done "in Colossae" as "in heaven."

It gives us *moral strength* to overcome the temptations that press relentlessly. As long as we live, we have to wrestle against principalities and powers, against the worldwide rulers of this darkness, against spiritual wickedness in high places. But, "in Christ" we can resist and overcome that.

Being "in Christ" also gives us *moral resources* for pursuing the dream. We need courage in the face of opposition, hope in the face of discouragement, love in the face of hatred, patience in the face of resistance and the capacity to persevere in the face of defeats. We need strength beyond our own strength. The Christ in whom we live gives these, and more, in measure beyond our calculation.

In 1987, Paul's word is a word for us to hear again. In recent weeks, I have been in Washington, D.C. and Los Angeles, in Charlotte and San Francisco, in Houston and Mobile, in Phoenix and Kansas City, in Albuquerque and Fort Worth, in Klamath Falls, Oregon, and Nashville and in St. Louis and Alexandria, Virginia. The moral challenges we face defy description. The moral landscape is cluttered with issues and challenges. Being "in Christ at Colossae" is neither easy nor simple.

For forty years, the Commission has called changed persons to change the world. We have been, and are, committed to help that happen. This year is a good time for us to think afresh about being "in Christ at Colossae." Let us sit again at the feet of Jesus and let him revise and shape our visions and our values. Let us permit him, among all the misleading pressures of our time, to show us what really matters. And, let us wade into the turbulent currents of today's life and help change the world for Christ's sake and other's sake.

Larry Baker

HOW TO OBSERVE CHRISTIAN CITIZENSHIP SUNDAY

'Proclaim Liberty' is Theme for June 28, 1987 Observance

by Larry Braidfoot

Christian Citizenship Sunday has been a part of the denominational calendar of the Southern Baptist Convention since 1973. During these nearly 14 years, our nation has lived through the post-Watergate era, high inflation in the economy, tremendous growth in abortion rates, three presidential elections and almost a tripling of our national indebtedness.

The urgency of Christian involvement in politics has never been greater. During recent years, one of the most important questions affect-

Many of the issues which concern Christians most deeply are also important political issues.

ing American life has been the debate about religion and politics. Diversity of opinions abounds, both within and without the Christian community. Some would have Christians remain apart from politics altogether. Others see government as existing to fulfill some of the religious functions of the church.

As we contemplate the responsibilities of Christian citizens, several things are apparent. Many of the issues which concern Christians most deeply are also important political issues. Concerns about family life, economic life, human relations, peace, gambling, abortion

and many others are important to Christians as citizens.

Although many issues are of concern both to church and state, the nature of those concerns is different. Government was ordained of God to serve one purpose, the church to serve another. These purposes overlap, but they are not the same. So Christians are to participate in government in a manner different from non-Christians.

Christian Citizenship Sunday in 1987 does not involve the heat and emotion of national elections. It is a good time to stress the duties of Christian citizenship and to hear the Bible's message about the function of government.

The theme for this year's observance is "Proclaim Liberty." It is selected from Leviticus 25:10.

There are several reasons why Baptists in the United States should enthusiastically observe Christian Citizenship Sunday 1987.

- Americans have more liberty than citizens of any nation in history. We have many reasons to give thanks to God for the liberties we enjoy.

- Gratitude for blessings should not be replaced by apathy or indifference. If we fail consciously to acknowledge and remember with frequency our blessings, we begin to take them for granted. The precious gift of liberty, secured within our history at great sacrifice, should never be ignored.

- Because of our political liberty, we have the greatest freedom to worship God that humankind has

ever known. The opportunities of worship and service, of evangelization and mission are secured by our Constitution and are fundamental to our nation's heritage.

- Each generation of Baptists must learn the heritage of our ancestors and their commitment to religious liberty and independence from political authorities. If we fail to preach and teach the duties and limitations of Christian citizenship, we will lose our heritage.

- Above all else, Christian Citizenship Sunday is a time to remember that our ultimate loyalty is to God, not to government or any other human institution.

Christian Citizenship Sunday is a means, not an end. It is a time of worship and study which will produce action. It is a time to encourage practical involvement of church members in a variety of ways:

- A Christian Life Committee in the local church can provide a focus

Above all else, Christian Citizenship Sunday is a time to remember that our ultimate loyalty is to God . . .

for informing the congregation about many social issues and for organizing action on the part of its members.

- Although most of the attention about government gets focused on Washington and national affairs, the most accessible levels of government are city, municipality and county government. These are not only closer to us as citizens, but are also the levels of government which we can most easily influence.

- Citizen involvement makes a difference. Many of the moral problems of our day—pornography, gambling, poor education, teenage pregnancy—are problems we can do something about.

Christian Citizenship Sunday is a time for many things. It is a time for **prayer**. It is a time for **preaching**. It is a time for **Bible study**. It is a time to call for **commitment**. It is a time to "Proclaim Liberty." ■

THE TEENAGE SUICIDE CRISIS

Suggestions for Curbing the Alarming High Rate of Teenage Suicides

Editor's note: This article is adapted from John Q. Baucom's address to the Christian Life Commission's national seminar in Charlotte, North Carolina, in March.

by John Q. Baucom

The crisis of suicide is not only a crisis in America, it is an international crisis.

Every hour of every day more than 228 teenagers in the United States will attempt to take their lives. These statistics come from the National Youth Suicide Prevention Center in Washington, D.C.

Two million teenagers attempted suicide in 1986. The National Institute of Mental Health projects that

Two million teenagers attempted suicide in 1986 . . . 6,300 teenagers died.

number will be higher still in 1987 if trends continue.

In 1986, 6,300 teenagers died. I spoke to someone on the phone at the National Institute of Mental Health recently, and they said if current trends continue, teenage suicide could surpass accidental deaths related to alcoholism and drug abuse and become the number one cause of death among our teenagers. The suicide rate among adults in the last five years has decreased. Among teenagers, it has increased

from the fifth leading cause of death to the second cause of death. So the trend continues and grows.

Over the last four years, I have seen teenagers in the Chattanooga, Tennessee, area in counseling, and before that I counseled in Los Angeles and San Diego, California. During that period of about seven years I have done surveys, studies and questionnaires with those people with whom I came in contact in counseling and in speaking across the country. I talked to a lot of teenagers.

One of the questions I asked was: "What are your three main fears?" Now think about this from your own perspective as an adult. When I was 12, 13, or 14 years old, if someone would have asked, "What do you fear?" I would have said, "My English teacher" or "That the Lone Ranger will be taken off television." Those were the kinds of things I feared. "That football season would end," or something tragic like that. Teenagers today are much more globally oriented. Over the past seven years, of the teenagers with whom I came in contact, their number one fear is nuclear war. Their number two fear is cancer.

We have a major problem in our country today. Suicide is indeed a problem, but I believe that teenage suicide, teenage alcoholism, teenage promiscuity, teenage eating disorders such as anorexia and bulimia, and teenage runaways are all symptoms of an even more serious problem.

I want to let you know how I got involved in all this. I do not have any special education in suicide. I did an interview at KABC in Los Angeles,

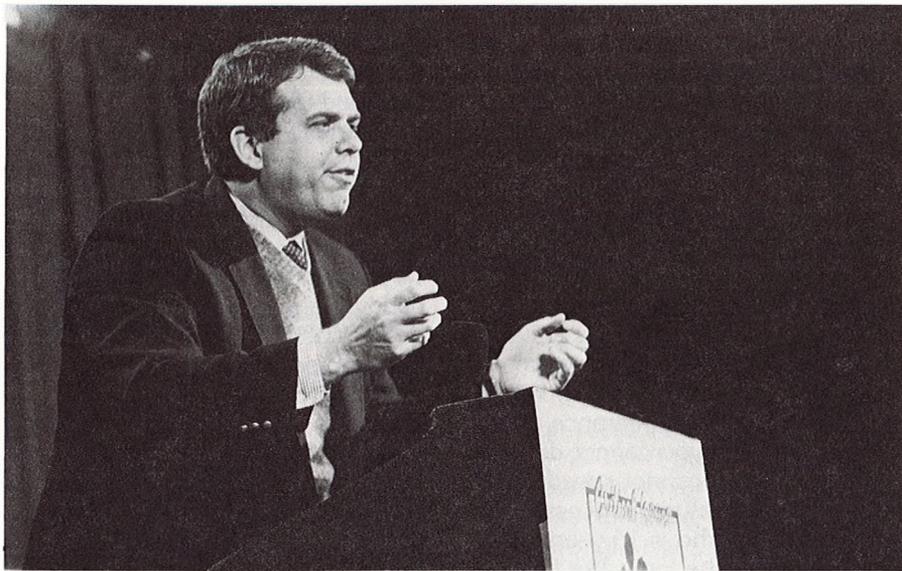
and when the host of this program introduced me, he said, "This man probably knows more about teenage suicide than anyone else in the country. Isn't that right?" I said, "I don't know. I've been told that, but I don't know how you measure something like that." I got into this like I've gotten into a lot of other things, through the back door, or the side door.

I was in Chattanooga, Tennessee, in February of 1985, and I got a call from a local high school principal who was a friend of mine. He said, "Hey, we've got a problem. Can you help us?" I said, "What's going on?" He said, "In the last three weeks we have had two students who died from suicide." Now this is a high school with about 1,000 students. I didn't know about these suicides. He said, "Not only that, in the same three-week period, we have had five suicide attempts that have ended in

. . . of the teenagers with whom I've come in contact, their number one fear is nuclear war. Their number two fear is cancer.

hospitalization." I said, "That's terrible. You get the students together, and I'll be there." But he said, "No, you don't understand. I don't want you to talk to the students. I want you to talk to the faculty. We have a major crisis going on here, and our faculty is totally demoralized. They can't even help the students." I ended up spending two days that week with the faculty of that high school. I commend the principal and faculty because they came together and did a terrific job. From that day until this, there has not been another suicide attempt at that particular high school.

I came back to my office after the second meeting with the faculty at that school, and my secretary said, "We have some real problems here. The phone is ringing off the hook. People are scared to death their kids are going to commit suicide. I think Chattanooga has a real problem." I



"The teenager who has multiple, significant, adult relationships does not commit suicide," John Q. Baucom tells Christian Life Commission seminar participants.

said, "I guess we do. What are we going to do about it?"

I do have Marine Corps training, and my orientation is always to do something—go, charge the hill, do something, don't sit there. Because my orientation was to act, I called some of the agencies in Chattanooga, and their answers were things like, "Oh, it's just a trend. It will pass." Another agency said, "We'll form a committee." I said, "No, you don't understand. These kids are dying. We have to do something." They said, "This takes a long time; we have to get our statistics together. We have to do a study." That didn't sit too well with me, so I called my best friend, who happened to be my pastor, Dr. Winford Hendrix, who is now pastor of First Baptist Church, Fort Myers, Florida.

He got me together with some people. We got Congresswoman Marilyn Lloyd of the district up there in Chattanooga involved. We involved the general manager of the largest television station and the disc jockeys of the teenage favorites of the local radio stations. We got the newspapers, the schools, the churches and all the resource centers involved. We got everybody involved to lick this problem because I found out that between January and March of 1985 in Chattanooga, Tennessee, we had nine teenage suicides. We had the highest suicide rate per capita in the country, according to the National Institute of

Mental Health, as of March of 1985.

We all got excited. The community pulled together. When you have leadership like your congresswoman, the mayor, the chief of police and the pastors of the large churches in the area involved in something and you get that kind of energy together, you can believe things are going to happen, and those things are going to be good things. That is what happened in Chattanooga.

The suicides stopped in Chatta-

Teenagers today . . . are growing up in a world that is absolutely filled with stress.

nooga. The last teenage suicide was in April of 1985. But we had ten between January and April of that year. The local news apparently informed the networks, and the networks ran stories on it. Moody Press called and asked me to write the book, and I have been talking about teenage suicide ever since then.

I thought the problem stopped because we educated the parents. I thought we had a teenage suicide problem, and the way to solve that problem was to educate parents and the problem would go away. I was

wrong. Teenage suicide is not a teenage problem. Teenage drug abuse is not a teenage problem. Teenage runaways are not teenage problems. My second guess was that it was a family problem. My basic background is family therapy in marriage counseling. Wrong again. It is not a family problem.

We're experiencing a crisis of society. What we see are the teenagers. The problem goes far, far deeper than that. Teenagers today, my children today, your children today—whatever their ages—are growing up in a world that is absolutely filled with stress. Stress is just a word, and I think you know what it represents. The basic dilemma is that society is changing so rapidly and technology is increasing so rapidly. We are all going so fast, our whole society is on that kind of schedule, and the children in it have not had an opportunity to hang on, or to stay up, or to catch up. So what do they do? They do a lot of things, and some of them we are reading about in the newspapers and hearing discussed on television. One of them is suicide.

I think another factor with teenagers today is they are faced with fears such as nuclear war and cancer that I never had to face until I was an adult. One of the fears of children today under the age of 10 is of being stolen or kidnapped. Teenagers and children are exposed to it, and it leaves them in a state of despair, hopelessness and fear. We add to this the fact that parents as a generality, for whatever reason, are not as available to their children as they once were. We're just not there as much as we used to be, and children are growing up in a society which is absent of significant adult relationships.

One of the people I was trained by is Dr. Carl Whitaker, who is probably one of the premier family counselors in the country. He is a medical doctor and a leader in the field of family therapy. Dr. Whitaker was speaking at a conference several months ago that I attended. Someone asked him a question about single parenting, and his comment was, "I think anybody who tries to raise a child in a single-parent home is crazy." Now this man is the

most-quoted family expert in the world. That raised some eyebrows, and he put a period there. He paused, and then he said, "But I also think that anybody who tries to raise a child in a two-parent home is crazy!" And then he went on to say—and I believe this and have said it myself hundreds of times: "It takes more than two adults today to raise one healthy child." It takes a cadre of significant adult relationships if you are going to have a healthy child. One of the problems is that adults

One of the problems is that adults are just not as available to children as they need to be.

are just not as available to children as they need to be.

Self-esteem comes, hopefully, from within for most adults. I hope self-esteem doesn't come to you because you wear certain clothes or you drive a certain car. It comes internally. But with children and teenagers self-esteem comes externally. If there is a mathematical formula to this, children's self-esteem will equal the amount of attention and the amount of affection they get from significant adults, and that has to be plural. One person cannot do it. I have two children of my own right now. I have had several different foster children live with me. My nephews lived with me for awhile. I have adopted uncles, aunts, grandparents and cousins. I have commissioned people; I give them a certificate to become part of my children's extended family. They need that. These people spend time with my children.

In our hurried society, the value is "Hurry up and grow up!" You can do that. You can dress a child up to look like an adult.

The values today are placed not on being 10 years old and playing dominoes or playing with Barbie dolls. The value is on looking like an

adult. You can do that with clothing. You can do that physiologically. If you go to a high school football game, you see these guys. Their necks are bigger than their heads, they run the 43-yard dash in nothing flat, they bench-press 325 pounds and they're huge. They even have beards.

You can hurry the growing-up process intellectually. Children and teenagers today are brilliant. Schools are doing a great job in our country today, in my opinion. You can hurry up physically, with appearance and intellectually, but you cannot do it emotionally. You cannot speed up the emotional maturity process. So you have a kid who is 15 years old chronologically, he looks like he's 20 and dresses like he is 25. Intellectually, he is probably 19, but emotionally he may be 12 or even 11 years old. That incongruence, that lack of consistency in development of children makes them feel flaky. It makes adults feel flaky, too.

At one level of development, you are mature, you look good and you look like a man or a lady. You are smart, you are articulate, you have a tremendous vocabulary, you dress like an adult, but still emotionally you are a child. That is normal for a teenager, but that kind of incongruence is difficult for them to process and difficult for them to understand.

All of this leads to an era of what I think is just despair, a time of hopelessness for a generation of children who are scared, who are angry and who are burned out. A TV report about the suicides in Bergenfield, New Jersey, points this out. The day of the funeral they interviewed a lot of the other children who were friends with these kids. Did you see how angry those kids were? Did you hear the words they had to say? I videotaped it. It was beautiful. They were saying things like, "If somebody just cared, this wouldn't have happened." I think teenagers are the experts on what they need. It probably wouldn't have happened if somebody had paid attention. We could probably avoid most of the 6,300 or more deaths that will occur this year if we didn't live in this hurried society. And I think it is a society we adults have created.

We can learn to prevent suicide by looking at teenagers who don't commit suicide. These are researched facts. It is about as mathematical as we can get, as far as statistical data goes. The teenager who has multiple, significant adult relationships does not commit suicide. Why not? Why should he? A 14-year-old boy gets upset at his daddy. He goes to his uncle, to his grandfather, or to his dad's friend, to his adopted uncle, and he says, "I'm mad at my dad. My dad's a jerk." The adult says, "Well, yeah, he's imperfect just like the rest of us. Come on, you can stay with me for a couple of days and then we'll go home and we'll talk to your dad. OK?"

Those kinds of children do not commit suicide—children who are involved with things like Boy Scouts, organized athletics, adult-supervised activity and church youth groups. A university study shows the child who attends church on a regular basis—and they even have it down to number of times—is less likely to use drugs, less likely to commit suicide. Why? They don't know.

Teenagers don't commit suicide if they have a high degree of self-esteem and feel okay about themselves.

There are a lot of different opinions. But going to church is a good thing for children to do, and it is a sign of health for those children. Children don't commit suicide who are integrated or involved in society.

We find that the teenagers today who are abusing drugs and drinking large quantities of alcohol are teenagers who feel alienated. They don't feel integrated. They don't feel a part of what is going on. Teenagers don't commit suicide if they have a high degree of self-esteem, and feel okay about themselves. Have you ever asked your kids, "Do you like yourself? Do you think you're okay?" Now, that is not vanity, and we are not talking about narcissism here. We're talking about basic self-esteem. I ask my children that

Accept your child unconditionally . . . accept the 'behavior' not the behavior.

regularly, and I pay attention to their answers. I ask all children I am with that question, and most of the time I get a negative answer. Most of them don't like themselves too much. It is difficult to like yourself when you are a teenager. Basically, we are looking at a well-balanced kid, a child who is not dependent, a child who has a degree of independence and a child who does have high self-esteem.

I have some ideas about first aid to help our children. These ideas are based on research. These ideas can help to stress-proof and suicide-proof our children.

1. **Accept them.** Accept your child unconditionally. What it means to me is that you accept the "behavior" not necessarily the behavior, not necessarily what they do but accept them as a person. Accept them unconditionally. If you do that, you can talk to them about the bad grades, you can talk to them about staying out late, and children will not feel criticized if they believe that they are unconditionally accepted.

2. **Be caring.** Put your love into action. Love is not enough. We all have good intentions. I have never yet met a parent who didn't have good intentions, but that is not enough. Do things that are caring. Teenagers are behavior-oriented. Show them love. Verbalize it, yes, but act like you care. Do things with them and do things of intensity. We have tough competition out there. Look at television. Look at what programs appeal to teenagers. Listen to the music they listen to. Look at the entertainment they are exposed to. We parents have difficult competition. We have to do something intense to get their attention.

3. **Communicate.** Keep those channels open. I have another formula here for communication. As a psychotherapist, as a counselor,

I've learned that if I invest quantity time in a child, eventually I'll get the quality in return. Talk about things like soccer, or music, or boyfriends, or girlfriends, whatever. Communicate with them about whatever they want to communicate. Invest quantity time, and then when it comes time for quality, they will give you that.

We have to communicate. I think part of that is making it safe for the child to communicate.

4. **Don't push.** I think children today have enough stress, they have enough pressure, they have enough problems. Don't push. Just don't do that. Don't push for grades. Why? I spoke in Huntsville, Alabama. Somebody brought me a brochure that an insurance company had published. The little brochure had the caption: "Some children would rather kill themselves than bring home this report card." It showed a report card—A, A-, B+, B, C, A-. It was all crumpled up. I made some phone calls about it, and I discovered that the child who got that report card took his life. He is dead because he'd rather die than bring home a "C," and that is totally disgusting to me.

. . . the child who got that report card took his life. He is dead because he'd rather die than bring home a 'C'.

What is a grade worth. Don't push. They have enough problems as it is, and they don't need us as parents, or Sunday School teachers, or aunts, or grandparents or concerned adults putting more pressure on them. We need to be taking some of that stuff off today.

5. **Each child is an individual.** We need to respect them as an individual and respect their uniqueness. Children are not going to be alike. They are different, and what works with one is not going to work with another.

6. **Find time to spend with your child.** A study that was done at Penn State University found that the average American parent spends seven minutes per week in quality time with each individual child. Now to be fair, they didn't count breakfast

or supper or watching television or driving back and forth in the car. When they said seven minutes a week, they meant one-on-one, so that the child knows you are there. Seven minutes a week.

There are other studies that say Penn State was wrong. It was actually eleven minutes per week. Big deal, it is not enough, whether it is seven minutes or eleven minutes, I don't care. It is not enough. We have to find time and make time to invest in our children's lives, and if we do that, we will see some of this crisis disappearing.

I was speaking at First Baptist Church in Cleveland, Tennessee, in February of 1986, and someone asked me, "Why did the suicides stop in Chattanooga?" I said, "I think it is because we educated the parents, and they figured out what was going on and were watching out for it, so it stopped." I looked way in the back and a little bitty 15-year-old skinny arm went up, and I said, "Yes, you have a question?" The little boy stood up and said, "I am one of those who attempted suicide at that high school you were talking about. We live here now, but we lived in Chattanooga then, and I am one of those who ended up in the hospital." He said, "I want to tell you that I disagree with you. It wasn't educating the parents that made the difference. This is what made the difference. When you've got your Congresswoman talking to you; when you've got the television anchor guy talking to you; when you've got the disc jockeys talking to you; when you've got the newspapers talking about teenagers; when you've got all of these people paying attention to you, then we finally figured out that you all really do care. That is why we quit taking our lives." And I said, "You are right." And I do think he was right. As soon as we adults in this country get that message, then we can send the teenagers back a more powerful message. The message will be received, and they will quit taking their lives and doing all of these other things you have been hearing about. ■

John Q. Baucom is a family counselor, author and lecturer from Chattanooga, Tennessee.

BUILDING HOMES FOR THE HOMELESS

Habitat for Humanity Helps the Homeless Help Themselves

Editor's note: This address is adapted from Millard Fuller's address to the Southern Baptist Christian Life Commission's annual seminar in Charlotte, North Carolina, in March.

by Millard Fuller

There is a crisis in our country today in shelter needs. There are between 30,000 and 60,000 homeless people in New York City, with 250,000 more on the brink of homelessness. Across the country in Los Angeles, more than 30,000 people are homeless. Thousands more are crowded into inadequate shelter.

In Chicago, Boston, Miami, Atlanta, Cleveland, Washington, D.C. and every other large metropolitan area, we now see hundreds and even thousands of people making their "home" in the streets and on the sidewalks and on park benches. There are increasing numbers of homeless folk in smaller cities such as Charlotte, Memphis, Pensacola, Columbus and Richmond. In the past, skid rows in large cities were frequented mainly by drunks who lounged on the streets, but today increasingly there are young men and women and even families that are homeless.

William R. Barnes, the principal architect of a recently released report of the National League of Cities, based on a 444-city survey of housing needs said, "The nature of local situations varies, but we are finding more and more families and children without shelter—not your stereotypical homeless." These folks have fallen through all the safety nets of our society, and they have landed

at the very bottom, homeless and hopeless and desperate. These are the visible homeless.

We are told by experts that there are at least 300,000 of these visible homeless in our country and maybe as many as 3,000,000. You can see these people in the streets, on the park benches, lying on the grates.

In the United States there are many more people who are not yet in the streets but who are living in substandard houses, in shacks,

Applications for public housing . . . have increased dramatically in nearly every city.

falling-down tenements, or in overcrowded apartments.

In a February 23 article in *The Christian Science Monitor*, the mayor of Charleston, West Virginia, James E. Roark, is quoted as saying, "For many Americans, finding shelter has become more urgent, more difficult, more costly and more frustrating." These needs are not isolated. They exist in all parts of the nation in communities large and small. Applications for public housing, one barometer indicating the shelter situation in this country, have increased dramatically in virtually every city. At the same time, living conditions continue to deteriorate in many of the 1.2 million units of

public housing, and thousands of units are being demolished because they are beyond repair.

A March 1987 *New York Times* article, entitled "Outlook for Sheltering the Poor Growing Even Bleaker," pointed out that in 1978 there was a net gain of 68,000 public housing units. Now more units are being destroyed each year than are being built.

Furthermore, according to Robert W. Mappin, director of the National Association of Housing and Redevelopment Officials, other housing stock available to low-income people has also been declining. The Reagan administration has promised to revolutionize housing programs by giving poor families vouchers so they can find their own accommodations on the private market, but this plan has not moved beyond small demonstration projects. The total annual budget for federal housing assistance has fallen from \$30 billion to less than \$10 billion since 1980.

It is estimated that between 20 million and 30 million Americans now live in substandard housing. Some are better off than others, but all lack at least some of the basic necessities which make for adequate shelter. These are what I call the invisible homeless. You don't see them. They are back off behind some walls somewhere in a slum neighborhood. They are not out on the streets; but for practical purposes, they are homeless. They are just as homeless as the visible homeless; the only difference is they are hidden from our easy view unless we go and look for them.

The United Nations reports that between 1 and 1.5 billion people in the world live in substandard housing, with 100 million of them without any shelter at all. In many cities of the Third World, half the people live in slum and squatter settlements. In some cities over three-fourths of the population live in such conditions. In Latin America alone, it is estimated that 20 million children live in the streets with no place to call home.

Furthermore, the United Nations estimates that the world population will increase by 1.5 billion by the year 2000. Eighty percent will be city dwellers, most in developing

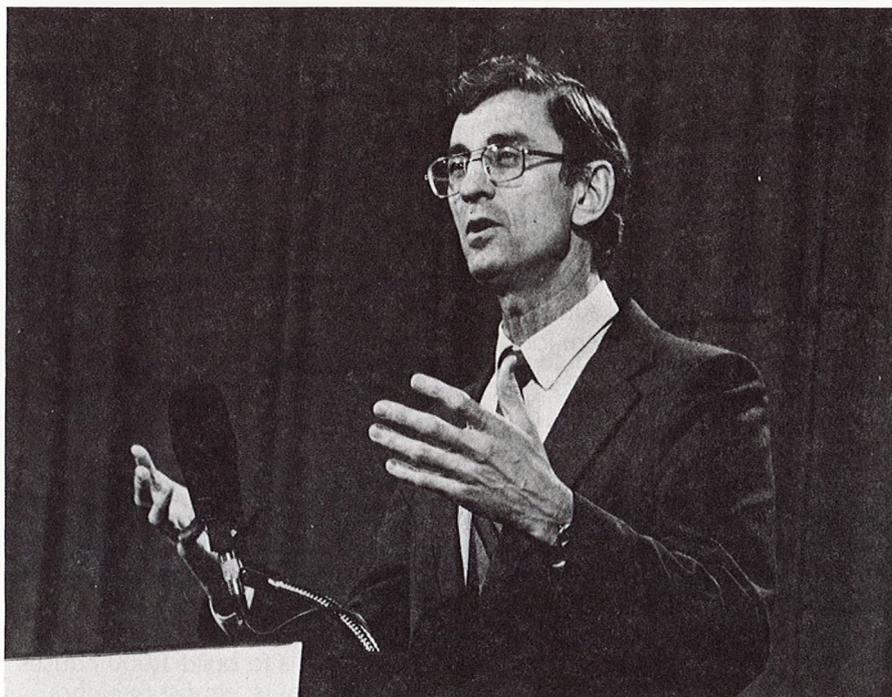
countries. The population of slum and squatter settlements in these cities is increasing four times faster than the population growth. To understand the magnitude of this situation and the coming challenge,

It is estimated that between 20 million and 30 million Americans now live in sub-standard housing.

consider the effort necessary to build housing for 120 cities the size of New York City in 15 years. What is the answer to this growing problem?

What did Jesus say when he was confronted with needs? He told the story of the good Samaritan. You will remember he told that story in response to the question, "What must I do to have eternal life?" He was asked that same question by the so-called rich young ruler, "What must I do to have eternal life?" And what did he tell the rich young ruler? "Give your money to the poor and come follow me." You might have thought Jesus, the Son of God, would say "You want to know what to do to have eternal life? That is simple. Believe in me." Why didn't he say that? Why didn't Jesus give them the simple answer? Why did he talk about sharing your goods and your money and your possessions with the poor.

For the past two decades I have been involved in ministry to both the visible and the invisible homeless, starting at Koinonia Farm in South Georgia with the late Dr. Clarence Jordan in 1968. Through Habitat for Humanity, I have been involved with a growing number of people around this country and around the world in seeking to reach out to these people who don't have a simple, decent place in which to live and to say to them, "We care enough to actually try to do something." You know, everybody cares. Everybody, for example, is for peace, but we need to do those things which show, which demonstrate to the world that



Millard Fuller addresses participants at the Christian Life Commission national seminar on "Critical Issues Facing Today's Families."

we really do care, that we are a people of Christ.

We need to reach out loving and caring arms and do specific things, but I remember very well when we announced this program in South Georgia that we were going to build homes for the poor, for people who didn't have a decent place to live. We set a goal that we would try to eliminate poverty housing from Sumter County, Georgia.

We live in a county with about 27,000 people. About half our people were living in very, very sub-standard housing. As people learned about what we were doing, they asked, "What is it you are planning to do?" And we said, "We are planning to build simple, but decent, houses and sell them to people, using what we called the economics of Jesus—no profit, no interest, giving people a long term in which to pay the money back. It gives them the concept of partnership. We're not going to ask the government to give us any money. We're going to call on Christian people to provide non-interest loans or gifts or materials or to donate their labor.

They said, "And you're going to do what with this program?" I said, "We're going to eliminate all the

poverty housing in our county." They said, "How are you going to do that?" I said, "I just told you. We are going to build houses at no profit and no interest." They said, "That won't work. You are in America. We live on interest in this country and profit, and you're going to have a program that doesn't have either interest or profit? There is no way that can work."

Well, everybody laughed at us. They said we were Utopian dreamers and thinkers and that we had gone off the deep end and were taking our Christianity and religion too seriously.

Well, even though it shouldn't work, we started building houses, and God has blessed that little humble effort. Today you can come to see Habitat for Humanity in Sumter County, in Americus, out at Plains, out in the countryside. The original partnership housing program of Koinonia is still building houses every day the Lord sends. We take off to go to church on Sunday. Habitat for Humanity has now grown out of that. We've built over 200 houses for the poor in our county, and we are building a house every two weeks. We are well on our way to getting all of our people in a decent house, and every one of them

is a sermon showing the love of Jesus. That which couldn't be done is being done, and we have done it by the power and the might of the blood of Jesus.

We were there almost five years when we felt God tugging at our hearts to see if this idea would work somewhere else. It worked in South Georgia. Would it work somewhere else? We took it to Central Africa. We went to Zaire and stayed there for three years. We began building houses there. We launched a program to build 114 houses in one place and 300 houses in another place. Then we came back to Americus in 1976, and that is when we officially organized Habitat for Humanity. We began to invite other people to join us and become a part of this movement of God's Spirit in our times. I really believe that is exactly what we are dealing with.

My neighbor, Jimmy Carter, who lives in Plains, became involved with Habitat for Humanity in 1984, and he has been a tremendous partner. We have gone on three work camps, two to New York City and one to Chicago. During the last week of July

1987, we will build a city block in Charlotte—fourteen houses in five days. We are already talking about possibly going to the Mississippi Delta in a couple of years and building a whole city in a week. Why not? With God, all things are possible, even building a whole city.

In connection with the work camp in Charlotte, we are having what we call Habitat House Raising Week. In all of our various projects across the United States—and we are now working in 170 U.S. cities, one city in Canada and we have work in 18 countries overseas—we are going to try to build 300 houses in five days, all of them using the economics of Jesus which are no profit, no interest, 20 years to pay, every house a sermon, demonstrating and showing the love of Jesus.

Our goal is to build 1,000 houses this year; that is, almost three houses a day. In 1988 we intend to build 2,000 houses. Our goal is to eliminate poverty housing and to do it in the name of Jesus.

I'm proud of the Baptists who are helping in Charlotte. In Richmond, and Waco, and New York City, and

Jackson, Tennessee, and Chapel Hill, North Carolina, and Clarkesville and Valdosta, Georgia, and in many other cities, Baptists are in the forefront of building houses through the program of Habitat for Humanity. But I want to tell you something, and I can't leave this out. I am sad to tell you that in most cities where I go where we have Habitat for Humanity projects, the project leaders say to me, "The Baptists won't get involved." That ought not to be.

I want to challenge all Baptists to become a part of this new mission field. But if for whatever reason you don't want to join Habitat for Humanity, that's all right. Do something else. But in Jesus' name, do something. We have a crisis.

May we have the courage and the faith to open our doors and our hearts to the homeless poor whether visible or invisible and invite them in. ■

Millard Fuller is founder and executive director of Habitat for Humanity, Inc., Americus, Georgia.

MORAL SCENE

CEOs Express Concern About Drug Problems

Drug use is a problem for most companies in the country, a Random House survey of 150 chief executive officers discovered.

Eighty percent of the CEOs said drug use is an on-the-job problem, and 42 percent called it "serious."

However, one-third of the companies surveyed do not have drug use policies; 81 percent do not have internal drug treatment programs and 80 percent did not conduct drug screening tests on current employees.

—USA TODAY

35% of Movie, TV Workers Use Drugs, Counselor Says

More than one-third of people who work in movies and TV are addicted to drugs and/or alcohol, according to Tom Kenny, director of Studio 12, a substance abuse program funded by the Motion Picture & Television Fund.

Kenny cited a variety of reasons for substance abuse among entertainment industry personnel: stress caused by the long hours and high pressure of making a movie or TV series, rejection that goes

with the work, peer pressure, influence of "unscrupulous people."

Although abuse is 35 percent, up from 25 percent four years ago, Kenny said more people are willing to seek help.

—Associated Press

Nine of 10 Americans Like Jobs, Poll Says

Jokes about "Monday morning blues" are not based on fact, according to a Media General-Associated Press poll of 1,464 American workers.

Nine out of 10 respondents said they like their jobs, and 63 percent said they are paid fairly.

But money isn't the main reason people enjoy their work. That topic ranked third behind "the work itself" and "the people I work with" as reasons why people like their jobs.

Nearly 75 percent of white workers said they are paid fairly, while only 44 percent of black workers said they receive a fair wage.

Of workers who said they dislike their jobs, 42 percent expressed dissatisfaction with the money, 21 percent said they wanted a greater chance for advancement and 15 percent dislike their bosses.

—Associated Press

Americans Taking Cities, South Over The Countryside, West

Cities and the South are "in," and the countryside and the West are "out," at least if migration habits of Americans are any indication.

A U.S. Census Bureau study of Americans moving to new homes revealed metropolitan areas experienced a gain in migrants, reversing the 1970s pattern of movement to rural areas.

Also, the South gained 426,000 people during 1983-84, the period covered by the study. The West lost 53,000 residents, marking the first time in years that region has not gained residents from other areas.

The Midwest lost 282,000 people to other regions, and the Northeast lost 91,000.

Trends do not indicate that unemployed factory workers are finding jobs elsewhere, said Donald C. Dahmann of the Census Bureau. Rather, people with specialized skills are moving to areas that need their expertise. Dahmann calls this the "migratory elite," who can find jobs with relative ease.

—Associated Press

Blessed are the Peacemakers (Matthew 5:9)



Observe Day of Prayer for World Peace August 2, 1987

by Larry Braidfoot

Day of Prayer for World Peace is a Sunday on the denominational calendar which provides a special opportunity for Southern Baptists to join together in praying for world peace. It is a day to:

- Celebrate the Lordship of Jesus Christ as the Prince of Peace.
- Emphasize the centrality of peace as God's desire for humans and the urgency of his servants working for peace.
- Search with other believers, with whom we may disagree politically or theologically, for paths to peace.
- Encourage the formation and

active ministry of Christian Life Committees within the local church and association as a means of applying the gospel to moral issues.

Some suggestions for planning your observance of Day of Prayer for World Peace include the following:

- Use the emphasis photograph as a poster for display.
- Sunday School lessons and assemblies, sermons, literature distribution and special studies can focus on peace during regular activities of the local church.
- Plan a time for reflection and meditation which will lead to some commitment to a particular action of

peacemaking by the individual worshiper or class member.

• The Christian Life Commission of the Southern Baptist Convention has produced study materials related to peace with justice, planning materials and a videotape which can be used in the observance.

Day of Prayer for World Peace presents the opportunity and challenge to hear anew the call of Jesus to be peacemakers. Few teachings from the ethics of the Bible have been so little emphasized among Southern Baptists. Yet being a peacemaker is at the heart of biblical ethics.

Resources for Christian Citizenship Sunday and Day of Prayer for World Peace

The following resources available from the Southern Baptist Christian Life Commission are especially appropriate for use during Christian citizenship and peace with justice

awareness/action emphases in the local church. Please complete the order form below and mail it today.

Quan.	Resource	Price	Total
	Christian Citizenship Awareness/Action Guide —a five-session awareness/action emphasis for groups in the church who want to know more about Christian citizenship. Appropriate for adults and youth. This guide is coordinated with the four pamphlets below.	1.50 each	
	Christian Citizenship Pamphlet Series —four pamphlets which coordinate with chapters in the Christian Citizenship Awareness/Action Guide above.		
	• Christians and Politics	.20 each	
	• How Christians Can Be Involved in Politics	.20 each	
	• The Christian Hope for Government	.20 each	
	• Patriotism and Civil Religion	.20 each	
	The Bible Speaks on Christian Citizenship —this pamphlet explains what the Bible has to say about Christian citizenship.	10 for 1.50	
	Christian Citizenship Sunday undated 5½" x 8½" bulletin insert —this bulletin insert supports Christian Citizenship Sunday. Devotional copy is entitled "Do Justice and Love Kindness."	20 for 1.00	
	Peace with Justice Awareness/Action Guide	1.25 each	
	The Bible Speaks on War and Peace	.15 each	
	Critical Issues: Nuclear Doomsday	.30 each	
	Issues and Answers: War and Peace	.15 each	
	Day of Prayer for World Peace Planning Guide	1.00 each	
	Peace with Justice Bulletin Insert (8½" x 11")	20 for \$1.00	

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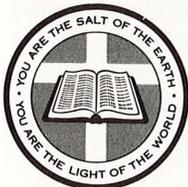
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