

Light

THE CHRISTIAN LIFE COMMISSION OF THE SOUTHERN BAPTIST CONVENTION

MAY-JUNE, 1994

CLC's '94 Seminar offers hope that epidemic of family breakdown can be reversed

By Louis A. Moore

OKLAHOMA CITY—The breakdown of American family life can be reversed by a concerted emphasis on the role of the husband and father in the traditional two-parent family where husbands and wives share mutual affection and respect and where children are disciplined in love, speakers to the Southern Baptist Christian Life Commission's

1994 Annual Seminar said here.

At the same time, speaker after speaker at the seminar criticized the elements in American society today they say are destroying the family, such as sex outside of marriage; drug abuse; pornography; homosexuality and educational institutions, government entities and media outlets that enable or glorify such immoral behavior.

Over and over speakers said the

traditional family of a man and woman with children is God's ideal presented in the Bible.

For the first time since the CLC began holding Annual Seminars, the 1994 meeting was held in a local church, First Southern Baptist Church of Del City, Okla. The seminar drew the second largest registration of any CLC seminar ever, 746, which was the largest CLC

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Here's how one state developed its Christian Life Committee structure

Mississippi's Christian Action Commission has become a model for organizing Christian Life Committees—what they call Christian Action Committees—on the local church, associational and state level. In the following article, Mississippi's CAC director describes how this was accomplished.

By Paul Griffin Jones, II

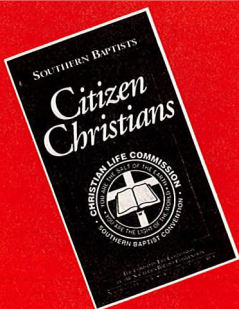
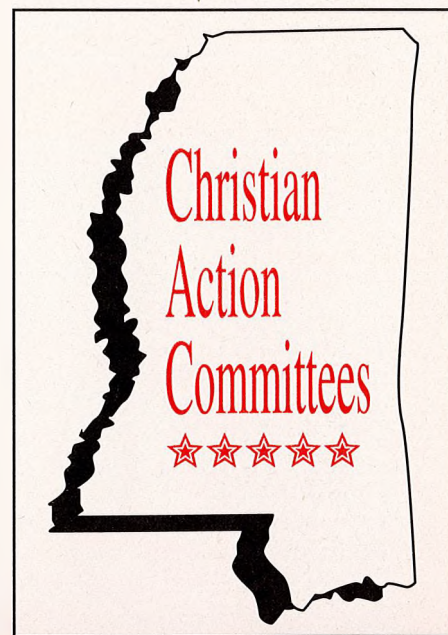
In 1982, the staff of the Mississippi Baptist Christian Action Commission could locate only six

associational Christian Action Committees in the 76 associations of the state. Moreover, there was no indication of a Christian Action Committee in any of the 2,006 churches in fellowship with the Mississippi Baptist Convention.

By the end of 1993, there were 58 associational Christian Action Committees in the 76 associations and more than 420 local church Christian Action Committees.

The growth was a reflection of the commitment of the staff of the


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New CLC video: Citizen Christians

A must-see for every Southern Baptist congregation.
It clarifies church-state issues today
See page 12 to order

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Richard D. Land, Executive Director
Louis A. Moore, Editor



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

901 Commerce, #550
Nashville, TN 37203-3696

PERSPECTIVE

'Evangelicals and Catholics?'

By Richard D. Land



The document "Evangelicals and Catholics Together" has received a tremendous amount of media attention since its release at the end of March. The document arose out of two days of intensive discussions in New York between numerous Evangelical and Catholic scholars who met to discuss common concerns on critical moral and social issues which we face as a civilization.

During the course of the meeting, some candid and intense discussions developed, which brought into focus some major areas both of agreement and disagreement theologically. The common feeling was that, as the document puts it, we should "reject any appearance of harmony that is purchased at the price of truth" (p. 4).

Consequently, the document, written primarily by Chuck Colson and Richard John Neuhaus in an editorial process of many months' duration, delineates the areas both of agreement and disagreement. While listing agreement on social issues such as being *for* religious liberty, the sanctity of human life, a reaffirmation of family and church in society, and being *against* abortion, euthanasia, pornography and racism, the document lists serious theological disagreements on things such as the nature and purpose of the church, the nature of Scripture's authority, the nature and definition of baptism and the Lord's Supper and the role of Mary. The document states frankly that on these and other subjects: "Evangelicals hold that the Catholic Church has gone beyond Scripture, adding teachings and practices that detract from or compromise the Gospel of God's saving faith in Christ. Catholics, in turn, hold that such teachings and practices are grounded in Scripture and. . . . Their rejection . . . results in a truncated and reduced understanding of the Christian reality" (pp. 10-11).

Unfortunately, some of the media reports have focused not on these statements of agreement and disagreement, but rather on a small part of the document that explains the difference between "evangelizing" and "proselytizing," often leaving the erroneous impression that the document is an agreement not to evangelize among adherents of each other's denominations. This is simply not true.

Please allow me to give my personal conviction concerning evangelizing and proselytizing. Everywhere I am asked to preach I tell people, "Christianity is first and foremost a personal relationship between an individual and Jesus Christ. If it is not that, it is not anything. Salvation comes from a personal trust in Jesus alone as Lord and Savior, not membership in *any* faith communion. My commission from Jesus is to witness to everyone, Catholic, Baptist, Lutheran, Methodist, etc.

As a Christian, I must seek to lead everyone into a personal relationship with Jesus Christ as his or her Lord and Savior or, in the process of sharing my faith, to ascertain whether they already have such a personal faith in Jesus. HAVING SETTLED THE QUESTION OF THEIR PERSONAL TRUST IN JESUS, I THEN MUST SEEK TO CONVINCE THEM THAT THE BAPTIST EXPRESSION OF THE CHRISTIAN FAITH IS THE MOST ACCURATE SCRIPTURALLY, DOCTRINALLY AND ECCLESIOLOGICALLY. If, after having done that, this person expresses a strong preference for maintaining his or her present faith communion, then stewardship of time might dictate that I should seek to find another person who may be lost with whom to share my faith, rather than spending additional time seeking to "proselytize" this

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CLC finalizes office purchase in D.C.

By Tom Strode

Having recently finalized the purchase of a building on Capitol Hill, the Christian Life Commission is moving forward in preparation for moving its Washington, D.C., staff into new offices. An architect has been hired to draw up plans for the renovation of the building.

The three-level town house will house the offices of the CLC's general counsel, director of government relations, and Washington director of media and news information/bureau chief for Baptist Press, the Southern Baptist Convention's news service. Staff members from the Nashville office also will use the office when conducting business in the capital.

The CLC's office building will be named Leland House in recognition of John Leland, who played a critical role in the inclusion of religious liberty in the U.S. Constitution. Leland, a Baptist preacher, influenced fellow Virginian James Madison, the chief drafter of the Constitution, to incorporate religious freedom in the Bill of Rights, the first 10 amendments. (For more information, see the Christian citizenship theme interpretation on page 11.)

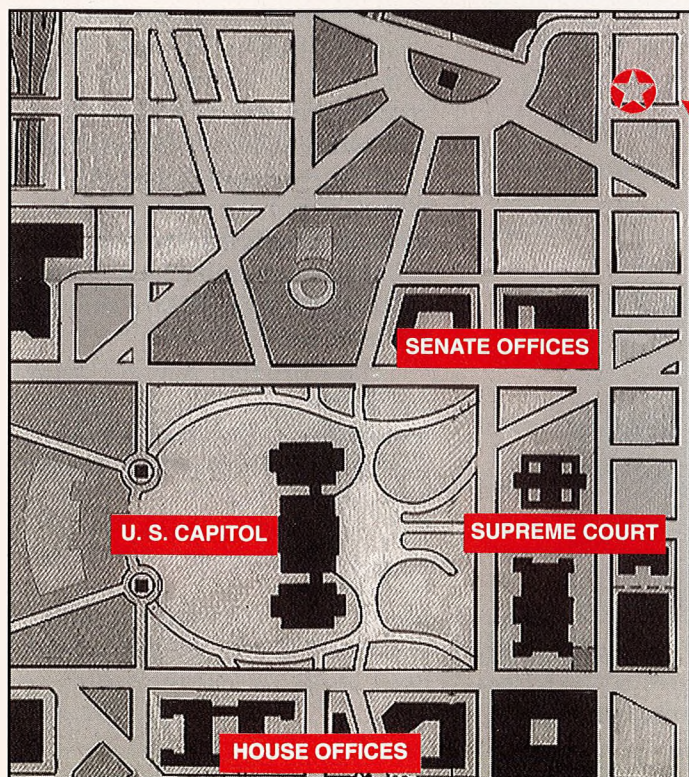
The town house, which has 2,235 square feet, has excellent access to the Capitol, Supreme Court and congressional offices. It is located at 505 2nd St. NE, which is on the Senate side of Capitol Hill.

The CLC's trustees approved purchase of the building in their September 1993 meeting, but final closing was delayed until Feb. 25.

Purchase of the building cost \$525,000. Part of the money for purchase and renovation of the building is coming from \$300,000 given to the CLC in June 1993 from capital funds set aside in 1964 for "public affairs" in Washington. The Baptist Joint Committee on Public Affairs, a multid denominational agency which included the Southern Baptist Convention until 1992, never used the funds for their original purpose, the purchase of a building. Although the BJCPA claimed the funds, the Southern Baptist Executive Committee held the funds in trust until granting them to the CLC last year for the same purpose.

The funds are expected to cover the cost of the \$50,000 down payment and renovations. The remaining cost of acquisition will be paid through an owner-financed note for 12 years at 6 percent interest. The monthly note will be about the same as the Commission is paying for rent at its current site in a large office building on Capitol Hill. Under an agreement with the seller, the CLC will not make monthly payments until November.

The CLC is expected to occupy the building by spring 1995.



CLC's new D.C. offices ready for renovation

State's Christian Action Committees flourish

(Continued from Page 1)

Christian Action Commission to develop, train and equip leadership and evidence of the acceptance of the importance of the Christian Action Committee concept by church and associational leadership.

The growth began when the Christian Action Commission set as a goal for the decade of the 1980s to establish a Christian Action Committee chaired by a committed, trained chairperson in all 76 associations of the state convention. Each associational director of missions was contacted and made a part of the plan. Each director of missions was asked to suggest possible persons for training and requested to explore creating a Christian Action Committee in the associational organization. The implementation was augmented in 1985 when the Home Mission Board added the Christian Life Committee to the associational base design.

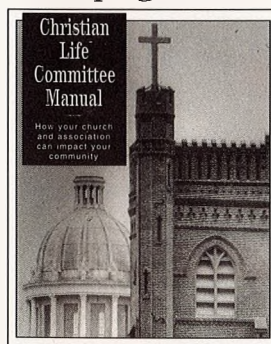
Each year, beginning in 1982, the Christian Action Commission held three regional Associational Officers Training (AOT) conferences focused on existing and potential Christian Action chairpersons and committee members. The purpose of the AOTs was to introduce applied Christianity to a wide range of persons, to share principles of establishing and organizing a committee, to suggest the most effective means of addressing ethical issues, and to introduce and interpret new materials and programs. During the 1980s, more than 550 persons were trained and equipped by the Christian Action Commission.

During the decade of the 1990s, the staff of the Christian Action Commission set as its goal to establish a Christian Action Committee in each of the 2,006 churches of the Mississippi Baptist Convention. Again, the



Paul Griffin Jones II

The Christian Life Commission has produced the Christian Life Committee Manual. This new resource will help churches and associations which want to start a Christian Life Committee or revitalize one that already exists. To order that manual, see page 12.



regional AOT was employed as the primary means of training and calling forth effective leadership. Local pastors were targeted and asked to make applied Christiani-

ty a central theme of the ministry of the church. A copy of the Southern Baptist Christian Life Commission's pamphlet *Christian Life Committee Guidelines* was included in the pastor contact along with an instrument designed to determine the issues of most concern to pastors and people.

The next stage in the implementation of the local church Christian Action Committee began when the chairperson of the associational Christian Action Committee accepted as a goal the creation of a local church committee in every church in the association. Max Loper, a CPA in Neshoba Association (Philadelphia) and Diane Jones, a concerned parent in North Delta Association (Clarksdale), set the pace for the state by assisting in the establishment of a Christian Action Committee in every church in their respective associations.

The final stage will begin with the publication of *Associational Update*, which is designed to keep associational and local church committees informed of issues, concerns and new materials and the activation of ActionLINE (Legislative Input Network). The Mississippi Baptist Christian Action Commission now has a working mechanism that can generate more than 15,000 calls in a six-hour period of time.

The Christian Action Committee is the most effective means of mobilizing and implementing the actions of committed Baptist believers. The Committee can help changed people so they can change their world.

Paul Griffin Jones, II, is the executive director-treasurer of the Mississippi Baptist Convention's Christian Action Commission.

By Mike Whitehead

They called it the Cookie Patrol. Young Baptist women, dressed in their Sunday best, stood on the sidewalk just outside the entrance to the X-rated theater, passing out tracts and treats to customers and employees.



Whitehead

Some men took the cookies and asked, "Why are you doing this?" The young women replied, "Because we believe Jesus loves you, and because we believe pornography hurts women and children, as well as the men who are addicted to it. The tract explains how to know Jesus and also how to find help for sexual addiction or abuse."

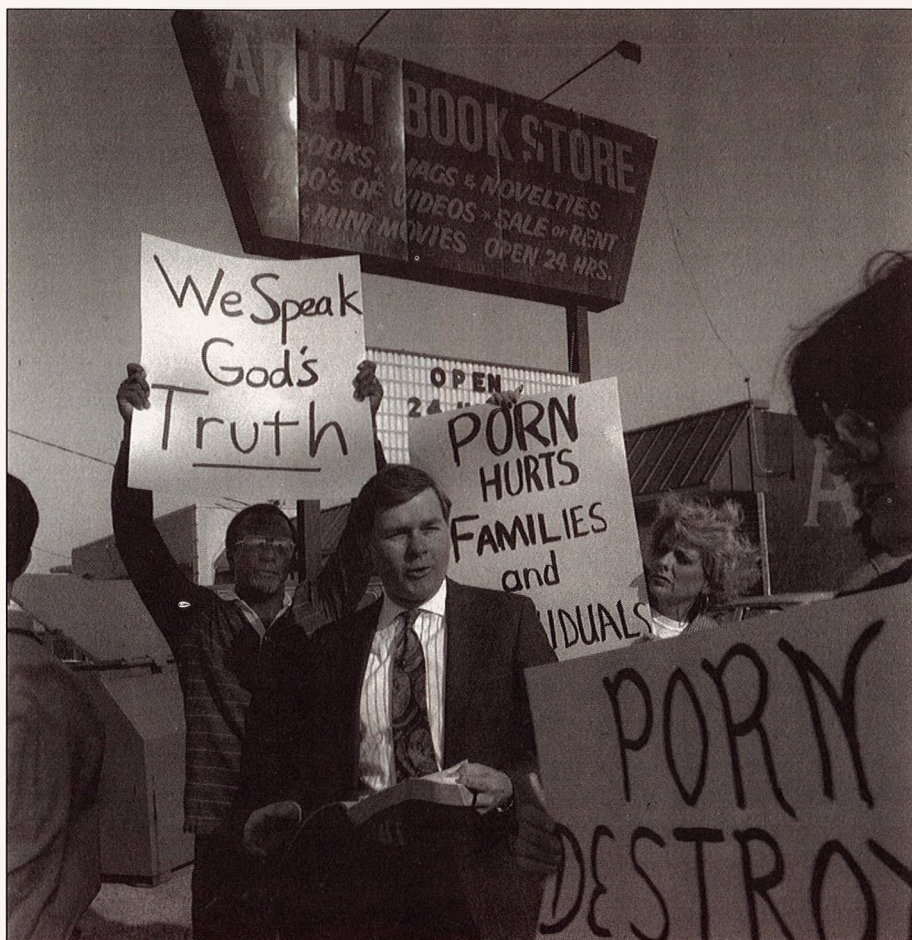
Reactions varied. One man threw a handful of coins across the street and said, "Thanks for changing my mind." A stripper asked for prayer and help to find a better job to support her children. One man with a bottle in a bag grumbled, "You have no right to be here! Haven't you heard of separation of church and state? Stop forcing your religion on people. You're just embarrassing and offending people and driving away business."

When Christians exercise religious liberty to speak about Jesus in public, someone is always offended. The gospel always contains an offense (1 Pet. 2:8). Acts 3:1 finds Peter and John on the sidewalks of Jerusalem, healing a lame beggar and proclaiming the power of Jesus' name. Some Jewish leaders were offended and jailed the preachers. Peter and John would not be compelled by legal penalty. They felt compelled by God to speak the truth of the gospel. "For we cannot but speak the things which we have seen and heard" (4:20).

Early Baptists such as Roger Williams understood that true

'For we cannot but speak'

(Acts 4:20)



Observe Religious Liberty Sunday
June 5, 1994

religious faith cannot be coerced. Yet no one more aggressively applied his convictions to impact his culture, even founding the separate colony of Rhode Island to reflect his political and religious ideals. Rhode Island Baptists freely debated Puritans, Quakers, atheists and freethinkers as to the nature of belief and nonbelief. No doubt, some were offended.

Baptists repudiate as wrong-headed and ineffective any efforts by government, church or individuals to attempt to compel spiritual life which only God can give, and which man must freely receive. Our Constitution has been interpreted to promise that government will not coerce religious

faith, but it cannot promise that no one will be offended. In fact, an essential part of religious liberty is the right of believers to be "offensive" for Christ's sake.

There is one form of compulsion Baptists value. All Christians are compelled by divine mandate to speak about Jesus to our world and to tell God's truth about sin (Matt. 28:18-20). Let us do it with speech that is seasoned with grace, but let us do it! Thank God for our religious liberty, and pray that He will spread freedom around the world. Ask God to help us fulfill our responsibility to exercise our freedom so that we will say, with Peter and John, "we cannot but speak."

Huckabee knows both sides of church/state

By Louis A. Moore

Southern-Baptist-pastor-turned-elected-government-official Mike Huckabee knows what it is like to live on both sides of the so-called wall that separates church and state.

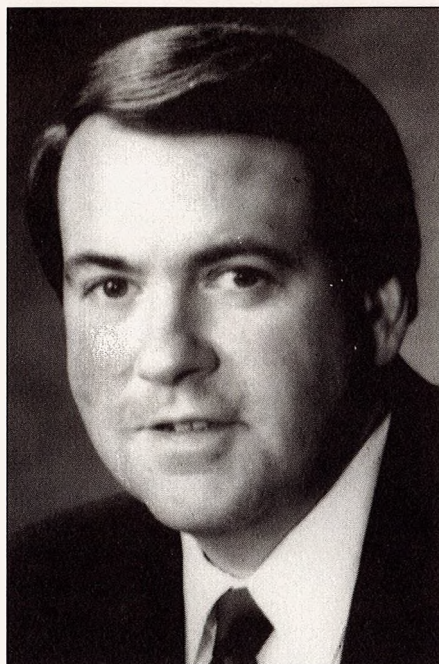
As a former pastor and former president of the Arkansas Baptist Convention, Huckabee knows firsthand how Christians feel when they look at the decadent, secular political arena and pray that it might somehow feel the influence of the salt and light of the gospel.

As Arkansas' lieutenant governor, Huckabee also knows firsthand how difficult it is to attempt to bring his faith to bear in the secular political arena while dodging the bullets shot by other Christians who think he has overstepped his bounds and left his true calling to the ministry.

In both his former and current roles, Huckabee, 38, says he has strived to follow God's direction in his life. Called to preach at age 15, Huckabee's original goal was to enter some form of Christian communications, perhaps radio and television. After graduating from Ouachita Baptist University and attending Southwestern Baptist Seminary, he worked as media coordinator for then-Southern Baptist Evangelist James Robison. He soon left to pastor Immanuel Baptist Church in Pine Bluff, Ark.

He left Immanuel Church in 1986 to become pastor of Beech Street First Baptist in Texarkana, Ark. He resigned that pulpit in February 1992 to run for the U.S. Senate.

Light: *What motivated you to make the decision to resign from the pastorate to run for the U.S. Senate from Arkansas and then later to run for the post of lieutenant governor of Arkansas?*



Mike Huckabee

Huckabee: There were several things. As a pastor I was constantly dealing with the people who were what I called victims of public policy. One example is the homeless. I would hear politicians pontificate about the plight of the homeless. Yet as a pastor I was dealing directly with these people. My perspective was totally different. I saw elderly people who were hit with incredible bills after having worked and saved all their lives. They found the Medicaid/Medicare system working against them because that system really penalizes people who have been frugal and productive and subsidizes people who have been irresponsible.

Then I saw the things happening in the areas of abortion and condoms in the schools. I spent several sessions with Joycelyn Elders, who at that time was our state's health director, and with Bill Clinton, who at that time was governor of our state. They were the prime movers in the area of contraceptive distribution as a means to combat teen pregnancy.

I realized they were sincere, but I also recognized there was an irreconcilable difference of world view between us. People who are humanistically based in their world view and believe that humans are essentially good and intrinsically kind, decent and benevolent, believe the answer to human problems is found in education and economic justice. I think that is opposite to what Jesus taught when He said, "Seek ye first the kingdom of God and all these things will be added unto you."

Light: *How did God reveal this new direction for your life?*

Huckabee: When I served as president of the Arkansas Convention, from 1989 through 1991, a number of people said to me, "I wish that people like you would run for public office." I also had, on several occasions, been to Israel, and I became fascinated by the history of the holocaust. I kept asking myself that haunting question, "Why did this happen?" I realized that a lot of people who could have done something looked the other way and were more interested in their own personal economic comfort than they were in what was happening to other human beings. Eventually my wife and I began to pray about what direction God would have us go. Finally I said something like this to myself: "Well, you've been preaching it, big boy. Are you willing to get out there and live it?" That was a tough question, a real tough question, for me to answer.

Light: *So, did God call you to run for public office?*

Huckabee: I have to be very careful when I answer that because if I say I felt God lead me into politics, some immediately jump to the conclusion that I feel I have God on my side and God is going to let me win. I don't think

(Continued from Page 6)

that's the point. It's not that we invoke God on our side. It's that we ought to be on His side as it relates to eternal principles. And just because we stand for certain things, it doesn't mean we're going to win in the temporal sense. Dietrich Bonhoeffer was hanged; he was ridiculed, scorned, considered a maverick, a kook. Fifty years later we look back and say, "Why didn't people listen to him?" But at the time, even pastors in Germany thought he was nuts. The apostle Paul wasn't exactly met with enthusiasm for his position; nor was Peter.

Light: Are you saying it's like Abraham when he heard the call of God to leave Ur of Chaldees? He didn't know where he was going. His response was simply to follow God.

Huckabee: To me, the ultimate Christian expression is not knowing where it's going. It's just knowing that I'm in the will of God. And if that means that I'm going to be defeated, murdered, whatever, that's insignificant.

Light: Would you encourage other pastors to follow in your footsteps and enter political races in their communities and states?

Huckabee: I wouldn't encourage other pastors to do what I have done. I don't think we ought to have a wholesale walk of pastors out of their pulpits to run for public office. But if God gives them that open door and directs them, then other Christians shouldn't shoot them down before they get out of the church door.

Light: Beyond pastors and staff members, how should Christian lay men and women be involved in the political arena?

Huckabee: The key is to be salt and do something to stop the spoiling and to be light to illumine the darkness. Christians who get involved in politics, frankly, sometimes embarrass us because they think it is their agenda to try to use civil government to bring

about religious ends, and that's dangerous. The purpose of civil government is not to bring a religious or spiritual end. The purpose of civil government is to create a life and an era of civility so that there can be the freedom to make one's own personal, individual choices about religion. But it should never be that we want to use the civil government as a means of imposing sectarian and doctrinaire approaches. A lot of Christians who get involved with

I don't think we ought to have a wholesale walk of pastors out of their pulpits to run for public office.

politics are naive. We have to remember that God ultimately changes the world.

Light: What about pastors endorsing a candidate or criticizing a candidate from the pulpit?

Huckabee: I think it is totally inappropriate, absolutely inappropriate. A pastor should use the sacred desk to proclaim the gospel. I would be aghast and am aghast if I hear of a pastor who gets up and says, "You all need to go vote for Mike Huckabee." No, no, no. I say, "Preach principles. Preach the unsearchable and timeless treasures of God's Word. Preach that truth, and then ask the people to find candidates who would support that truth." They ought to be bold and uncompromising.

Light: How have other Christians responded to your vocational change?

Huckabee: I've taken more bullets in the back from Christians about being in politics! More Christians have been critical

of me than what I call the "wine-sipping, country-clubbing, high-stepping crowd." If a person goes from the pastorate to being a university president, we say, "Praise God." If he goes from being a pastor to being a director of missions or even a foundation director where he's raising money for the college, "Oh, bless the Lord." But if he does something that is not conventional, particularly if it is political and particularly if he's Republican in a highly Democrat state, then he's out of God's will.

Light: Are there other areas besides politics that need the influence of the gospel?

Huckabee: We need to pray for God to raise up Christians to write movie scripts in Hollywood, to become brokers on Wall Street and to lead some of the top companies in this country. What would happen if God raised up people to go to Paris and be in the fashion industry, and if God raised up people to go to Washington and New York and be in network journalism and write editorials for *The New York Times* or *The Washington Post*?

Light: What about your future, Mike?

Huckabee: If I can survive in these shark-infested waters, I would like to continue with the process of impacting the political and governmental arenas. And I see both of them as distinct, separate entities. Without politics, there is no government, and I think we have to reform the process itself. We have to bring people into it who traditionally have not been or would not have been. The other side is that once in government, we have to serve with integrity and confidence, and we have to make sure that we understand that our task is not just to get elected, but it is to do something once we are elected. Where it is going to lead in terms specifically, I don't know.

By Gerald Davidson

Early Advice

As a young pastor, I was given advice by an elderly deacon to stay away from three topics in my preaching. He said, "Don't preach on money; that is a personal matter. Don't preach on the Book of Revelation because that is controversial and speculative. Don't deal with politics and political figures; people will get angry."

This was poor advice on all three issues. I'll deal with the issue: "Should pastors criticize public officials from the pulpit?"

Check Your Motive

Pastors shouldn't criticize public officials from the pulpit merely to be critical or because that official represents an opposing party.

However, when a politician or party opposes Holy God and His Word, we must cry out loudly against them.

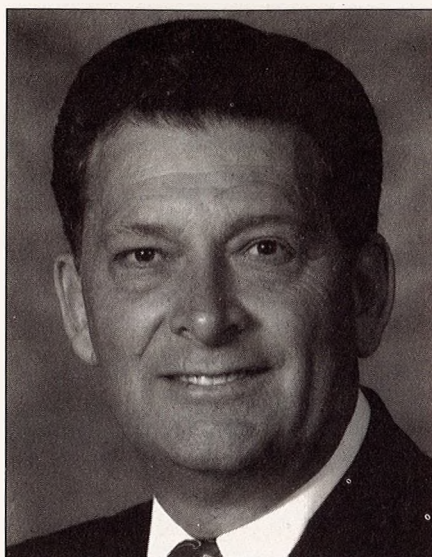
Today, the world isn't bashful about presenting its agendas, cru-

Public officials are exactly what the term implies; therefore, they are open to public scrutiny and public criticism when needed.

sading against public figures or parties who stand in the path of its godless beliefs. We don't want to adopt the ways of the world, but we need not blush when we stand in the path of a public official or a political party leading us down the road to moral ruin.

Public officials are exactly

Pastors should criticize public officials from the pulpit



Gerald Davidson

what the term implies; therefore, they are open to public scrutiny and public criticism when needed. Do believers have to fall mute? Do we not have a voice? Can't we be heard?

Last Mother's Day, House Majority Leader, Congressman Richard Gephardt, and his mother visited our church. Many said, "Pastor, I hope you give him a subtle hint as to what we believe." I thought, "Politicians tell us they want to know what their constituents believe. Why not tell them in a clear and straightforward way where we stand?" So, I addressed him personally, from the pulpit, on what our church believes about abortion; homosexuality; and God being methodically removed from our schools, government and society by government action. I endeavored to do this humbly and kindly, but firmly.

During this address, I had several standing ovations from our people, saying, "Congressman, these are our beliefs, also!"

Since then, I have heard from hundreds of members and scores

of folks outside the church, thanking me for helping them have their voice heard by a government official.

I spoke to the Congressman's mother after the service and said, "I hope I didn't offend you or your son. I wanted him to hear our voice." She replied, "Pastor, all the other groups want him to hear them, and he needed to hear what your church believes, too."

Fear has caused our pulpits to fall silent. We are fearful of those we criticize, but even more afraid of our own church people. We are afraid that we might be speaking against a party that some of our people have voted for.

Prophetic Preaching Needed

Dr. Roland T. Leavell said in his book, *Prophet Preaching*:

The importance of preaching cannot be exaggerated. God-called preachers must fulfill their sacred missions in the pulpit if the kingdom of God is to be advanced. In today's crisis-ridden world and in a nation where paganism is progressing with monstrous strides, the bugle call to a heavenly warfare must be given with no uncertain sound. . . . The ideal of preaching like the Old Testament prophets can be attained very rarely. . . . But every preacher can commune with God like a prophet, can build character like a prophet, can pray like a prophet, can abhor sin like a prophet, can love souls like a prophet, and can try under the Holy Spirit to preach like a prophet.

(Continued on Page 10)

By John S. Rogers

Pastors should not criticize public officials from the pulpit

Two political candidates were having a hot debate. Finally one of them jumped up and yelled at the other: "What about the powerful interests that control you?" The other guy screamed back: "You leave my wife out of this." This tongue-in-cheek joke offers some good advice for pastors as they seek to be prophetic and address political concerns: "Stick with the political issues and leave public officials out of this."

The public forum of the pulpit is not the place to throw stones at public officials or anyone else. Such action does not help build up the kingdom of God and draw people to Christ.

One of the clearest reasons for not criticizing public officials from the pulpit comes from a principle learned in two scenes from the life of our Lord. As His disciples sat at His feet, Jesus delivered a public discourse known as the Sermon on the Mount. In this sermon Jesus publicly and forcibly



John S. Rogers

caught in adultery (John 8:2-11). Jesus refused to publicly criticize or condemn her for her sin. Instead, He asked, "If any one of you is without sin, let him be the first to cast the stone at her." This reinforces His teaching on judging others in Matthew 7:1-5. One by one, all who had engaged in the public ridicule of the woman departed until Jesus was left alone with her. It was at this point that Jesus spoke and told her to "go and sin no more." He waited until He was alone with her before He personally addressed sin.

This principle teaches the importance of addressing issues but not attacking persons. A pastor should and needs to address political concerns from the pulpit, especially as they relate or conflict with clear biblical teaching. This is part of the prophetic mantle of the pastor. However, a pastor should not use the pulpit as a forum to criticize a public official. Jesus said those without sin should cast the first stone. (Remember Matthew 7:1-5.) They must remember that they

are not without their faults, weaknesses or sin. These two scenes from our Lord's life provide us a model to follow. Pastors should not use the pulpit as a place to personally criticize and attack another person. Criticism, when necessary, should come through a personal visit, call or letter.

Another reason a pastor should not criticize a public official from the pulpit is the danger of falling into the trap of political partisanship, which has become more common today. Such actions can alienate members from the church or even fragment the church. We have a two-party political system, and most churches have members in both parties. The danger exists that a pastor can become so partisan in his political views that he associates truth with only one political party and fails to see any truth in the other party. Such an attitude can cause one to become politically bigoted. We must remember that neither party has God on its side. God does not take sides. He wants us to get on His side. We are to preach practically on political issues without resorting to political and partisan prejudices and personal criticism.

Criticizing a public official from the pulpit tends to take the congregation's eyes off the problem and put them on a person. It is akin to arguing and quarreling. Second Timothy 2:24-25 (NIV) speaks to us at this point. "And the Lord's servant must not quarrel; instead, he must be kind to everyone, able to teach, not resentful. Those who oppose him he must gently instruct, in the hope that God will grant them repentance leading them to a knowledge of the truth." Pastors

(Continued on Page 10)

One of the clearest reasons for not criticizing public officials from the pulpit comes from a principle learned in two scenes from the life of our Lord.

addressed the sin of adultery (Matt. 5:27-30). While people may have been present who were committing this sin, Jesus did not personally accuse anyone of adultery.

On another occasion the teachers of the law and the Pharisees tried to trap Jesus by bringing a woman before Him who had been

Point

Pastors should criticize public officials

(Continued from Page 8)

We need to restudy the preaching of the prophets. They loved God with all their hearts, despised sin and its effects on society and stood in the path of sin and idolatry, even if they had to stand against the king!

Today, we need a Samuel who ripped away King Saul's mantle and said, "Saul, the Lord has rent the kingdom from you." We need pastors who will stand like Nathan, saying, "David, thou art the man." We need those like Amos, who cried, "O, Israel; prepare to meet thy God!" We need the John the Baptist who said to Herod, "You ought not to take your

brother's wife." What better example do we have than Jesus speaking about Herod, who would kill him, saying, "Go ye, and tell that fox, Behold, I cast out devils, and I do cures today and tomorrow, and the third day I will be perfected" (Luke 13:31-34)?

During Germany's Jewish atrocities the world was quiet. Many looked to the church to rise up and speak against Hitler. The church was weak, feeble and silent. As a result, millions died.

If America is going to be turned around, we must hear again that prophetic voice that is unafraid to name sin and name those who lead us down the road of death!

Conclusion

Our world will not be saved by politicians or their parties. Our priority must be preaching Jesus Christ, crucified, resurrected and coming again!

However, those in office need to know that we will make our voices heard in the pulpit and ballot box. If God's pastors are so timid, subtle and tongue-tied that we sound an unclear trumpet, the flock will not know which way to go.

Pastors must not be guilty of *almost* saying something!

Gerald Davidson is pastor of First Baptist Church, Arnold, Missouri.

Counterpoint

Pastors should not criticize public officials

(Continued from Page 9)

are instructed to be kind to everyone. They are to teach biblical truth and encourage people to act upon the truth. Spirit-led preaching on truth will do the convicting that is needed.

When a pastor is tempted to criticize a public official from the pulpit, he would be wise to

remember Ephesians 4:29: "Do not let any unwholesome talk come out of your mouths, but only what is helpful for building others up according to their needs, that it may benefit those who listen." The pulpit is the place to preach the whole counsel of God in a way that people are built up according to their needs. Yes, of course,

there are times the pulpit is the place to allow the Bible to speak forthrightly to political and public issues. However, it is not the place or the forum to personally attack or criticize a public official.

John S. Rogers is pastor of First Baptist Church, Asheboro, North Carolina.

Land: 'This is all . . . being stated in Evangelical-Catholic document'

(Continued from Page 2)

person into my faith communion.

This is all that is being stated in the "Evangelicals and Catholics" document. It simply says that once one has ascertained a person's personal commitment to Jesus as Lord and Savior and sought "to persuade others that their communities and traditions are more fully in accord with the

Gospel" that we then respect the denominational preference of "the committed Christian" (p. 22). Nowhere does it say we should not witness to everyone. It also endorses a very baptistic view of soul liberty in proclaiming our joint commitment "to full religious freedom" (p. 23) because "religious freedom is the first free-

dom, the source and shield of all human freedoms" (p. 13).

Lest anyone be in doubt about my denominational faith commitment, I wholeheartedly agree with the dear brother who was once asked, "If you weren't a Southern Baptist, what would you be?" to which he replied, "I'd be ashamed of myself."

By Richard D. Land
and James A. Smith

The apostle Paul was a preacher persecuted for his faith. During his ordeal, Paul said, "But I was free born" (Acts 22:28), claiming his *rights* as a Roman citizen. Elsewhere, he related the *responsibilities* of Christian citizens



Smith

(Rom. 13). America today suffers from a feast of individuals fighting for rights and a famine of those who understand and practice responsibility.

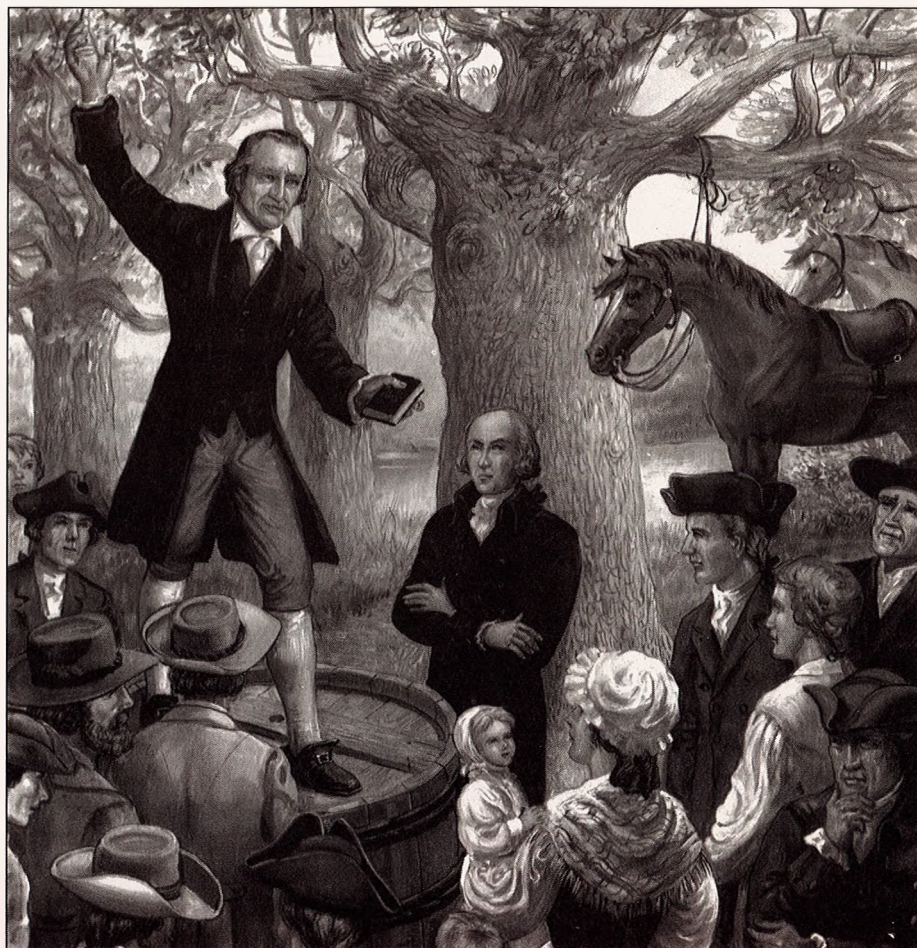
As Southern Baptists observe Christian Citizenship Sunday, we would do well to hearken back to one of our Baptist forebears who not only understood his rights, but also his citizenship responsibilities. John Leland knew that religious liberty was a right which all human beings possessed by God's providence, and that this God-given right should be protected constitutionally.

Leland supported James Madison's candidacy to the Virginia Ratification Convention in 1788 in exchange for Madison's promise to support a Bill of Rights to the federal Constitution protecting religious liberty. This agreement was a reversal for both men. Leland had opposed the new Constitution because it lacked explicit protections for religious liberty. He led the Virginia Baptist General Committee to adopt a statement on March 7, 1788, which said, "The new federal constitution, proposed to the States for their ratification, does not make sufficient provision for the secure enjoyment of religious liberty; and therefore it should be amended to make such provision."

Meanwhile, Madison, as a delegate to the Constitutional Convention in Philadelphia, had supported the new Constitution and opposed any amendments. Madison sought

'But I was free born'

(Acts 22:28)



Observe Christian Citizenship Sunday
July 3, 1994

election to the Ratification Convention from Virginia's Orange County, where Baptists were a major force. It is believed that Madison visited Leland's home in the hope of persuading Leland to support his candidacy. Baptist historian William R. Estep says, "Historians are not in agreement regarding the details of this meeting or whether Leland himself offered to become a candidate to the Ratifying Convention from Orange County or threatened to support a candidate other than Madison. Regardless of the uncertainty over the details of the meeting, from circumstantial evidence, e.g., Leland's own account, and subsequent correspondence of

Leland with Madison, it appears that an understanding had been reached between the two." If Leland had not dropped his opposition, it is unlikely Virginia would have ratified the Constitution. The new nation would have struggled to succeed without Virginia, at that time the most powerful state.

This year citizens will choose their representatives for the Congress and some local and state offices. As Southern Baptists observe Christian Citizenship Sunday, let us not just brag about our *rights* as citizens. Let us emulate our Baptist forebear, John Leland, and also embrace our *responsibilities*. Our history supports it, our nation needs it and our Lord commands it.

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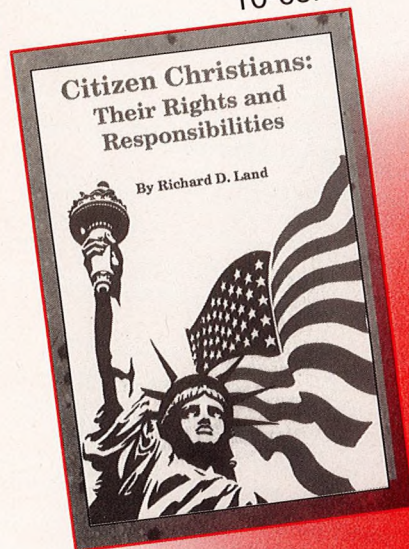
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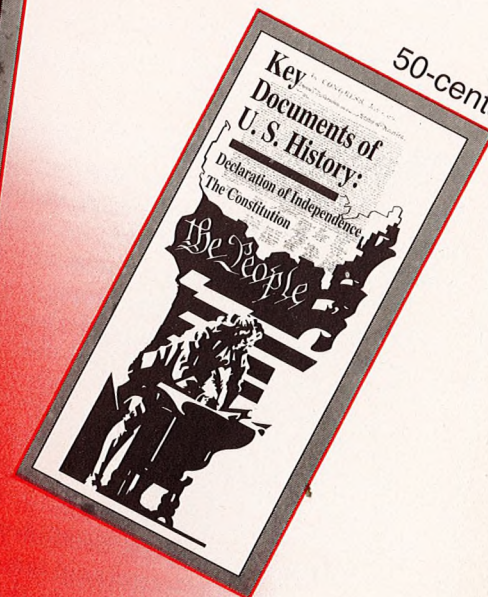
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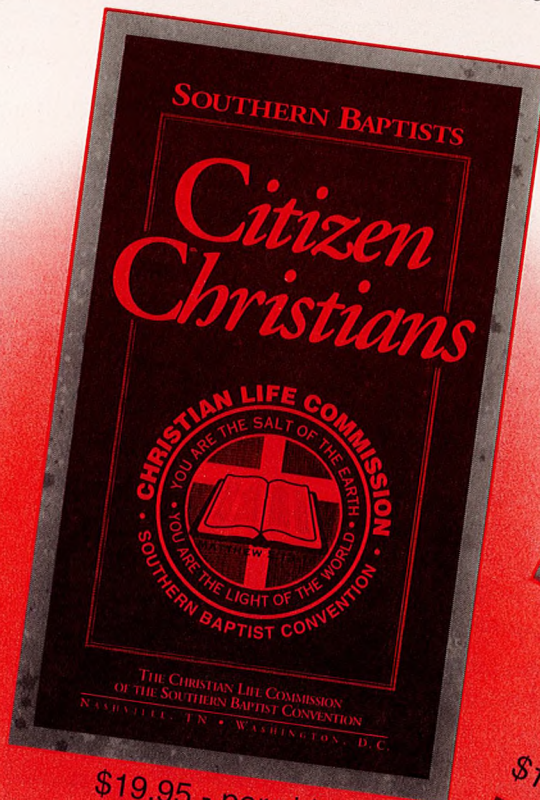
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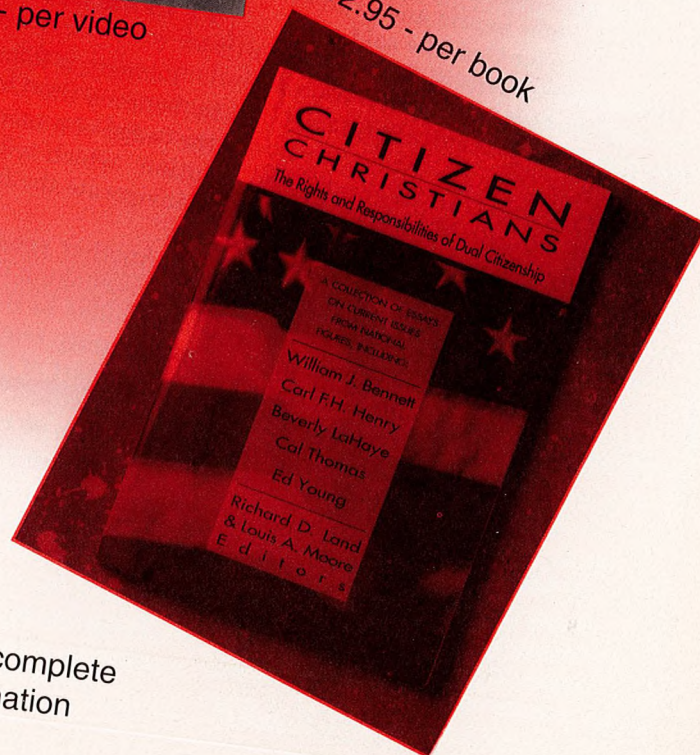
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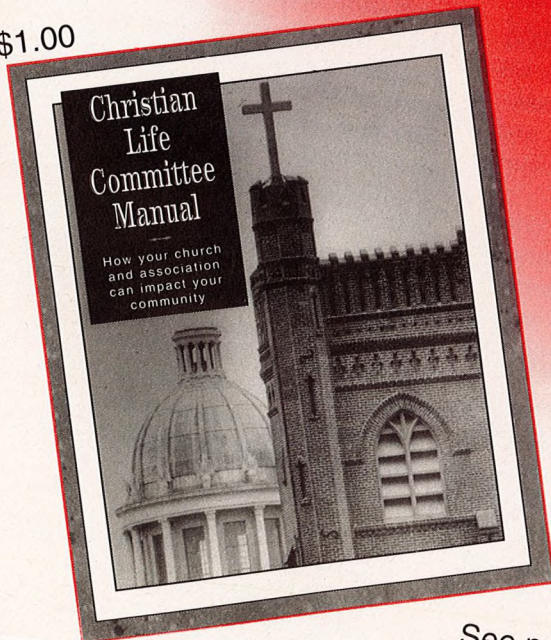
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See page 12 for complete ordering information

Seminar focuses on family crises

(Continued from Page 1)

seminar in more than a decade.

"The family is the most basic unit of society," said Southern Baptist Seminary President Al Mohler. "God intended it that way."

CLC Executive Director Richard Land said, "The family has almost ceased to function in a nurturing, moralizing way in major segments of society.

"There is a way back from this moral abyss, but it is only found in God's Word and God's institution of families," Land said.

Baptist Sunday School Board President James T. Draper said the hope of America lies in returning to biblical principles of the family.

"The crowning achievement of God was the creation of the family," he said. "When sin entered the world, things changed, but God did not abandon His plan for the family. It was His plan for a unified world."

Draper said authority, affection and admonition are the principles God laid down for a unified family.

Southeastern Baptist Seminary President Paige Patterson said families must rear their children in the "fear of the Lord."

"Parents must store the Word of the Lord in their hearts and express profound love for God," he said.

Several speakers said pornography and homosexuality are two of many ways Satan is attacking families today.

Every Christian needs to be involved in the fight against pornography, said Jerry Kirk, founder and president of the National Coalition Against Pornography (N-CAP).

"Pornography is anti-child, anti-woman, anti-man, anti-marriage, anti-family, anti-church and anti-God, and it is filling America," he said. Kirk, a former Presbyterian Church, U.S.A., pastor, called for a united Christian effort to eliminate child pornography and all illegal pornography in America.

Americans can win the war against pornography, but they will have to do it one battle at a time,

said Oklahoma City District Attorney Bob Macy, also a Presbyterian.

Macy is credited with spearheading a citywide effort to drive pornography-related businesses and prostitutes from Oklahoma City. His efforts are said to have lowered the rate of sexually related crime in the city and saved the taxpayers millions of dollars.

In his keynote address to the seminar, former U.S. drug czar William Bennett said happiness "has moved ahead of commitment in modern American thinking." During the 1960s and 1970s some Americans embraced the belief they "were not only entitled to the pursuit of happiness, we were entitled, as a right, to happiness itself," he said.



During the seminar, the CLC presented Fort Worth dentist Richard Neill with its 1994 Distinguished Service Award for his battle to remove "The Phil Donohue Show" from TV in his hometown.

Bennett, a Roman Catholic, said he believes the United States is on the "edge of a moral, religious revolution" which will reestablish and reinvigorate the family in this country.

Another speaker said the crisis that is shaking the very foundations of families in the African-American community requires decisive action on the part of churches and individual Christians.

"Satan is boldly taking from us what was given to us at Calvary," said Fred Luter Jr., pastor of Franklin Avenue Baptist Church in New Orleans. "God wants us to do something, and He is doing something in the African-American community today."

While ministering to the ills of

families in society, Christians must guard against erosion in their own homes, said Harold O'Chester, pastor of Great Hills Baptist Church in Austin, Texas, and his wife, Barbara O'Chester.

The O'Chesters said the breakdown of Christian families because of infidelity is increasing rapidly.

"People today are asking why immorality is wrong," said O'Chester. "God says, 'Thou shall not commit adultery.' That's why it's wrong. God forbids it."

Draper said the tragedy today is that Christian morality and ethics is often no different from that of the world. "Marriage is an exclusive union. It excludes a sexual relationship with anyone other than one's spouse. It is never right to compromise God's standards."

During a special public-policy luncheon, Christian Life Commission staffers said Christians must also focus on government policy that influences families.

CLC Director of Government Relations James A. Smith said, "There is too much doom and gloom" among evangelicals today over whether they can impact government policy.

"American evangelical Christians can win federal public-policy battles," Smith said.

Nancy Schaefer of Family Concerns, Inc. in Atlanta, Ga., urged seminar participants to oppose the goals of Outcome-Based Education. She said OBE goes by various aliases, such as PASS, Success for All, Performance Based, Mastery Learning, and others.

Schaefer said OBE advocates changes in the U.S. public education system which will undermine the family, undercut religious values and "regulate citizens from the cradle to the grave by using the educational system to challenge fixed beliefs through a religious cleansing."

Tom Strode, Tammi Ledbetter, Dana Williamson and Dave Parker also contributed to this story.

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Dear (Your Senator/Representative Name):

I urge you to oppose any health care plan that will pay for abortion on demand.

I would consider it a serious violation of my conscience to be made complicit in the act of destroying human life if my taxes were used to pay for abortion or if my private insurance was mandated to cover abortion services. Thomas Jefferson wrote in 1785, "To compel a man to furnish contributions of money for the propagation of opinions which he disbelieves is sinful and tyrannical."

As a Southern Baptist, I am part of a proud heritage of support for the principle of freedom of conscience. Baptists fought for the First Amendment's protection of religious freedom so that the government was not able, through its taxing power, to violate the conscience of its citizenry by subsidizing practices some Americans oppose.

Millions of Americans are opposed to including abortion in health care reform. The snuffing out of unborn children cannot be regarded as true health care. In fact, a *New York Times* survey from last year revealed that 72% of Americans are opposed to including abortion in a health care basic benefits package.

Please work against any health care reform plan—Clinton, Cooper, Chafee or any other—that includes abortion on demand or does not expressly forbid abortion coverage. I look forward to your reply and learning your views on this important issue.

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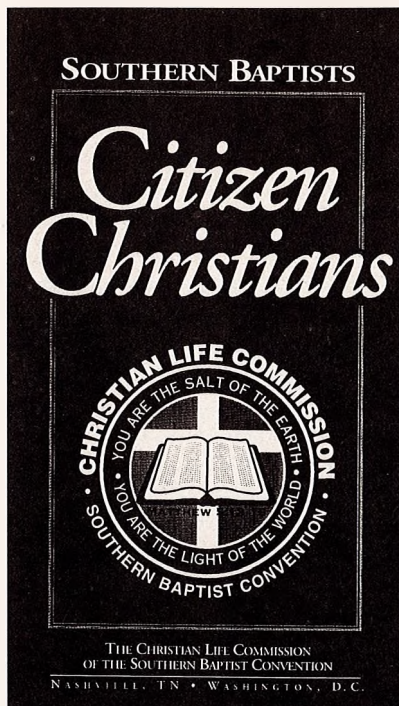
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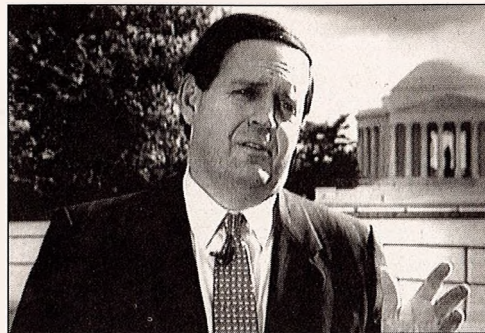
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All Southern Baptists should see this important video

New video release



See page 12
for complete
ordering information



“This handsome video is rich in history, rich in insight, and rich in counsel for Southern Baptists who would be salt and light in our land.
Morris H. Chapman
President and
Chief Executive Officer
SBC Executive Committee



Recently I had the opportunity to view the new Christian Life Commission's video "Citizen Christian." It is a persuasive treatment of every Christian's responsibility as a citizen and the biblical mandate to be salt and light in our society. It is also a clear portrayal of the role of the Christian Life Commission, not only in Southern Baptist life, but in the life of our nation. I commend the viewing of this important video to all our Southern Baptist people.

I pray that God will give wide distribution to this video. Thanks for letting me be a part of the preview process. May God bless you.

James T. Draper, Jr.
President
The Baptist Sunday School Board



“The CLC's video entitled "Citizen Christian" is a quick-hitting, historical, political and theological update of Christian citizenship for the 1990s. It offers an honest assessment of the delicate balance needed for understanding the separation of church and state without excluding the church from the state. And best of all, it offers some practical procedures for living out the ideology that it espouses.
Dan Francis, pastor
First Baptist Church
Nashville, Tennessee



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