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THE CHRISTIAN LIFE COMMISSION OF THE SOUTHERN BAPTIST CONVENTION

MARCH-APRIL, 1997

REAL RACIAL RECONCILIATION A MATTER OF THE HEART AND NOT OF THE STATE

BY DWAYNE HASTINGS

Revisiting the vision of the late Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., Richard Land said if the racial wounds of America are to heal, it will be the people of God who will apply the salve.

"In this secular-dominated age, Christians have a unique responsibility to remind society that racism as well as the other moral problems we face will not

be solved without the spiritual dimension," said Land, president of the Southern Baptist Christian Life Commission.

Recalling King's address before a standing-room-only audience in The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary's chapel April 19, 1961, Land said as a 32-year-old Ph.D. graduate, King spoke of the church on

the frontier of racial tension.

Using biblical terminology, Land recalled King said, "We are broken loose from the Egypt of slavery; we have moved through the wilderness of segregation; we stand on the border of the Promised Land of integration."

Land said King insisted race relations was a moral issue that must be con-

fronted by the church.

Standing behind that same pulpit some 36 years later, Land said March 4, "There has been progress; we are a long way from where we were, thank God for that, but we are still a long way from where God wants us to be and where we need to be.

"In the heated aftermath of the end of official legal-sanctioned segregation, in the aftermath of those sweeping 1964, 1965 and 1967 Civil Rights Bills, in the immediate aftermath of the decade of reform after the *Brown v. the Board of Education* decision, one would have hoped there would have been far more progress in the three decades than what we have experienced," Land said.

The call to racial reconciliation is deeply rooted in

"We are broken loose from the Egypt of slavery; we have moved through the wilderness of segregation; we stand on the border of the Promised Land of integration."

MARTIN LUTHER KING JR.
April 19, 1961
The Southern Baptist
Theological Seminary
Louisville, Ky.

Scripture, Land explained, agreeing with King's admission of "the insufficiency of mere human power and reason to confront it."

"If there is to be a successful reconciliation of the ethnic divisions among us, it will come from the same source that reconciled us to God, it will be a spiritual power through Jesus Christ," said Land, noting in

See RECONCILIATION, p. 13

Abortion destroyed 'heart and soul' of Democratic Party, Casey says

BY TOM STRODE

Legalized abortion not only has torn at the social fabric of America, but it is sending the Democratic Party to its death, former Pennsylvania Gov. Robert Casey said at the 50th anniversary seminar of the Southern Baptist Christian Life Commission.

A pro-life Democrat who has been rejected in efforts to speak at the last two Democratic national conventions, Casey said of his party's abortion rights advocacy, "You see, I believe abortion has destroyed the heart and soul of the Democratic Party. They're headed for oblivion. They're going the way of the Whigs in the 18th Century, because Democrats always said, 'We protect the powerless.' It's not true anymore."

Casey, whose eight years as governor were marked by several reforms, was a keynote speaker March 4 at the three-day seminar on The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary campus. He is best known for initiatives which made his state a leader in restricting abortion in the post-*Roe v. Wade* era.

"Twenty-four years ago, [abortion] was sold to America as a social cure or resolution. Instead, it has left us wounded and divided," he said.

Twenty-four years after abortion was legalized in the Supreme Court's *Roe* decision, abortion "tears at our soul," Casey said. The issue is about "not how comfortable we will live, but how we will live with our conscience," he said. "But beyond that, it tells us who we are.

"Our generation alone has made abortion a social good," he said. This generation "has dared to call the victim a thing, the act a service, the perpetrator a provider, a health-care provider," Casey said.

Both parties need change on the issue, he said.

"My party is off the charts," Casey said. "What about the Republican See CASEY, p. 13



BY RICHARD D. LAND

What has been billed by liberals as "the first free speech case of the 21st century" has now been argued before the U.S. Supreme Court. On March 19, 1997, the Supreme Court justices heard oral arguments in *Reno v. American Civil Liberties Union*, which challenges the Communications Decency Act (CDA) passed by Congress and signed by President Clinton in 1996.

The CDA makes it illegal to transmit sexually explicit material to anyone under 18 years of age and makes provisions to exempt those who make "reasonable, effective and appropriate" attempts to keep such material out of the hands of minors. The ACLU lawyers argued that it would be too costly to filter the Internet to protect minors and that parents should instead bear the full responsibility for protecting their children from such pornographic material.

But U.S. Deputy Solicitor General Seth P. Waxman warned that "the Internet threatens to render irrelevant all prior efforts to protect children from indecent material" and "threatens to give every child a free pass into the equivalent of every adult video store in the country." As the Christian Coalition's Ralph Reed put it, "Our children ought to be

PORNOGRAPHY AND THE INTERNET

given at least as much protection from smut on the Internet in their living rooms as they get at the corner drug store or the library."

The material readily available to children on the Internet is vile, obscene, and perverse. It includes graphic depictions and descriptions of bestiality, incest, pedophilia, necrophilia, defecation, urination and the torture, bondage and rape of women and children (*Newsweek*, July 3, 1995). As Donna Rice Hughes of the *Enough is Enough* campaign has made clear, "whether it be commercial web sites that post free teaser images or the 250 public newsgroups which include images as lurid as those found in *alt.sex.snuff.cannibalism*, all are as accessible to a 12-year-old as to an adult" (*USA Today*, Mar. 19, 1997).

Pornographic web sites are already the third-largest source of revenue on the Internet, "with annual gains of \$100 million spread over hundreds of porn sites" (*USA Today*, Mar. 19, 1997), with a score or more of new sites emerging each day. As *U.S. News & World Report's* cover story for Feb. 10, 1997, "The Business of Pornography," explains, porn is now an \$8 billion a year industry in the U.S., and cyberporn is one of its fastest growing segments (25 years ago pornography was a \$5-\$10 million a year business).

To furnish some perspective on the size of the porn industry, *U.S. News* explained that the porn industry now takes in more money "than Hollywood's

domestic box office receipts" and more "than all the revenues generated by rock and country music recordings" (*ibid*).

Tragically, America is the world's leading producer of pornography, and no other nation is even a close second.

On the Internet, America is faced with an almost invisible, subterranean, electronic river of pornographic slime which threatens our nation's basic moral fabric and our children's physical, emotional and spiritual well-being. This material is morally radioactive.

Rapists and sex offenders "are 15 times as likely as non-offenders to have had exposure to 'hard core' pornography during childhood or between six and ten years old" (Attorney General's Commission on Pornography). One University of New Hampshire study clearly "demonstrated a higher rape rate in states with broader availability of pornographic material" (*Christianity Today*, Sept. 12, 1994). Also, for many men and boys (cyberporn users are overwhelmingly male), this material is highly addictive, and exposure to it often leads to socially destructive behavior both to themselves and to their victims.

Cyberporn also allows an invisible horde of pedophiles and child molesters to surf the Internet seeking to solicit and seduce children through computer terminals in the children's own bedrooms. There have been some highly publicized cases in the press of children actually having been induced

into running away to meet pedophiles who entice them away from home through the Internet.

The stakes in this debate are enormous. If the opponents of legal liability for pornography distribution prevail, it will signal a catastrophic shift

from such exposure.

This is not to say that parents should not assume their responsibility to protect their children. They should make every attempt to shield their children from the electronic filth polluting the Internet. But what about children whose

"On the Internet, America is faced with an almost invisible, subterranean, electronic river of pornographic slime which threatens our nation's basic moral fabric and our children's physical, emotional and spiritual well-being. This material is morally radioactive."

in legal philosophy in our society. Until now, society has said a pornography distributor (adult video or bookstore) has a legal responsibility to ensure that minors do not have access to pornographic material. The opponents of legal liability for cyberspace distribution are saying that instead it should be the parents', not the distributors', legal responsibility to protect their children from contact with obscene material. This is a devastating shift in legal philosophy which jettisons centuries of societal responsibility for ensuring children's protec-

parents do not assume their responsibility? Does not society have an obligation to provide legal protection for those suffering such parental neglect?

The Supreme Court will probably announce its decision by July. Please pray that God will intervene and convict the hearts and minds of the Supreme Court justices so that they will uphold the Communication Decency Act's legal protections for our children. Remember the promise and the truth of Prov. 21:1: "The king's heart is in the hand of the Lord... He turneth it whithersoever He will."

USA RADIO NETWORK

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Church can conquer 'culture of death'

BY DAVID PORTER

America has slid into a culture of death, and "we must get our own house in order" to salvage it, observed Southern Baptist Theological Seminary president R. Albert Mohler Jr. in the opening address of the Christian Life Commission's seminar.

Christians "must recover our own moral authority," Mohler continued, "which can only come when we are submitted to our Savior's moral authority. And we must share the light," he challenged as he reflected on what Romanians call "the night of candles" in Bucharest in 1989 when thousands gathered to contend for freedom against the oppressive Ceausescu regime. As they stared down tank and rifle barrels, armed only with unlit candles and courage, Mohler said, "The culture of life stood against the culture of death and passed the light from candle to candle. And I think that is an apt metaphor for us."

Mohler asked what the church should do and be in this decadent age. His answer began, "We are to let the light shine in the darkness . . . a simple, urgent and uncomplicated command that is brought into sharp distinction when there is so much darkness surrounding us."

The church of Jesus Christ must understand it is "a cognitive minority standing out in our minority status against a majoritarian decadence." In contrast to a prevailing culture characterized by abortion, the rise and acceptance of divorce,

homosexuality, violence, and a general revolt against authority, Mohler said, "The church must be a culture of life, contending for life at every level—in the womb, and in the nursing home, in the hospital ward, on the streets, in the schools, everywhere." As a moral minority, the church must be engaged. "Our mode must not be to turn entirely inward but instead to engage the culture in such a way that we bear open witness to life, even calling for the life of the culture."

To do this, Mohler insisted, "The church must be the people of the truth. . . . We must bear witness to the truth of God's wrath against sin and to the wonder and glory of His grace and the redemption of sinners." This also means living in hope, he said. "We live in hope, biblical hope, because we know in Whom our hope is placed."

Mohler said the CLC's 50th anniversary is an occasion to note a half century of witness and work in a time marked by tremendous change. "Historical perspective should always be before us . . . should require us to go back to the most basic issues and the most important events which have shaped this half century and see what hath been learned and what hath been demonstrated in the course of human events," Mohler said.

Citing numerous examples to show the death of culture, Mohler quoted Marxist historian Eric Hobsbawm who said this was a short century of "mega-death." "More

human beings were killed or allowed to die by human decision than ever before in history."

Mohler mentioned the recent discussion of cloning, and cited one philosopher who said that we should give in and begin eradicating "the inferior." He noted that RU 486, "the human pesticide," is close to being distributed in America as bills to prevent late term abortions remain stalled before Congress. "There has been a cauterization of the American conscience so that this issue is not even understood in moral terms by so many," Mohler said author Walker Percy predicted "pedothesia, the killing of children who are perceived to have no future," is the next step toward the death of the culture.

While "those who saw the dawn of the 20th century were determined this

would be a century marked by the inevitable and the strategic onward march of human progress," Mohler said, "the century now ends with a great sense of moral and cultural uncertainty and has left behind the debris of failed utopianisms and brutal totalitarian regimes. Death of culture is a necessary product and parallel to the culture of death. In the last 50 years we see the devolution of our moral discourse and of our moral actions from modern manipulation and death to postmodern chaos and even greater death."

As the light was passed from one candle to another that dark night in Bucharest, Mohler recounted, "I think in a 50 year perspective, it is an apt metaphor . . . for the church of Jesus Christ. Let us pass the light from candle to candle, and let us pass it well." ■



Southern Baptist Theological Seminary president Albert Mohler asserts that the church can conquer the "culture of death" in our decadent society by being "the people of the truth... [bearing] witness to the truth of God's wrath against sin and to the wonder and glory of His grace and the redemption of sinners."

Cassette and video tapes of all sessions of the Golden Anniversary Seminar of the Christian Life Commission can be ordered individually or as a set by completing the order form on p.11 and mailing, phoning, faxing or e-mailing as instructed.

CLC ISSUES STATEMENT ON CLONING

Without dissent trustees of the Christian Life Commission indicated their approval of the Clinton Administration's March 1 decision to prohibit federal funding for human cloning research, accepting a resolution which requested "the Congress of the United States make human cloning unlawful," during the commission's semi-annual board of trustees meeting March 6 in Louisville, Ky.

"We wasted a lot of years in the life issue," said James Powell, a CLC trustee from Ellensburg, Wa., and a retired physician. "We need to take a prompt stance on this issue now."

"This resolution affirms our deeply held religious beliefs. The cloning of human beings represents uncharted territory," said C. Ben Mitchell, CLC consultant on biomedical and life issues.

"It is important for us to let our convictions be heard while the National Bioethics Advisory Commission and the rest of the nation are making up their minds on this critical issue," added Mitchell, an assistant professor of Christian ethics at The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary. ■

Committed people with convictions are hope for country, Huckabee says

BY TOM STRODE

Conservatives and liberals mistakenly look to government as the answer for America's problems, when it is people who have solid convictions and a sold-out commitment to Jesus who are the hope of this country, Arkansas Gov. Mike Huckabee said at the CLC seminar.

"Liberals believe that government is really like God. If we just had more of it, we'd be so much better off," said Huckabee, a conservative Republican.

Conservatives too often focus on legislation or on "who's in the White House or who's in the statehouse, and we forget that what really matters is who's God in our own house."

The hope of the United States "cannot be in politics, in the Republican or Democratic parties," he said March 3 at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary.

"Let me also say that real hope for our country is not found in a denomination. Real hope is not in what some would say is the values of a village. I quite frankly, in all due respect, don't believe that it takes a village to raise a child after all, but it takes the character found in mothers and fathers who pass that character on to the children nurtured by the community values, by a church where values are undergirded rather than uprooted.

"And the whole hope of a culture and its survival lies not so much in what we do under the dome of a state capitol or a national capitol, but rather under the steeples of the churches that are supposed to be God's voice," Huckabee said.

Huckabee's "village" comment was in reference to a book, *It Takes a Village*, by first lady Hillary Clinton, whose husband served as governor of Arkansas for 12 years.

Huckabee, an ordained Southern Baptist pastor and a former president of the Arkansas Baptist State Convention, said America needs courageous leaders.

"Far too many leaders today, both in government and the church, are really thermometers when we are in desperate need of thermostats," he said. A thermometer reflects the temperature in a room, while a thermostat primarily adjusts the temperature to what it should be, he explained.

"I'm afraid that there are far too many people in leadership positions who are content with the idea of taking a political poll or feeling the pulse of the people" and adjusting one way or the other, Huckabee said. "That's thermometer leadership. Anybody can do it.

"America doesn't need any more thermometers. Tonight across America, we die for lack of thermostats."

Christians have allowed "our pulpits to become little more than instruments, like thermometers, so fearful we might offend, and yet every time I read, whether it's the Old or New Testament, the pulpit always offended," he said. "It always challenged. It never allowed culture to move away from God without confrontation."

Some things, such as abortion and same-sex marriage, clearly are wrong, but sometimes Christians are selective on what sins they decry, Huckabee said.

"Let me be clear that while it is totally appropriate for us to say there is something wrong about men marrying men and women marrying women, sometimes our pulpits can be strangely silent when it comes to other moral failures," he said. "Take racism, for example. It still bothers me — no, it more than bothers me; it burdens my heart dramatically — that in many cases it was the white churches across the South who not only tolerated racism but actually preached it, promoted it..."

In September, the 40th anniversary of the school desegregation

See HUCKABEE, p.9



"The whole hope of a culture and its survival lies not so much in what we do under the dome of a state capitol or a national capitol, but rather under the steeples of the churches that are supposed to be God's voice," Huckabee asserts.

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JAMES KELLER



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Richard D. Land, President ■ Dwayne Hastings, Editor

REPORTS OF CHRISTIAN PERSECUTION FAIL TO IMPACT U.S. POLICIES, SHEA SAYS

BY DWAYNE HASTINGS

The fires of Christian persecution have been fueled by the shocking indifference of believers and government leaders in the United States, lamented Nina Shea, director of the Puebla Program on Religious Freedom, during the SBC Christian Life Commission's 1997 national seminar March 3.

"It is shocking that so few Americans know about the worldwide global persecution of Christians," said Shea, an international lawyer and head of the Puebla Program, a human rights group dedicated to defending religious liberty around the world. "Our government is indifferent, even hostile, to the plight of these persecuted Christians."

The Puebla Program on Religious Freedom is part of the Freedom House, a Washington, D.C., organization founded by Eleanor Roosevelt and Wendell Willkie in 1941 to oppose Nazism and Communism in Europe.

Shea, speaking on the campus of the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville, said Christians are the most persecuted religious group in the world.

"When I talk about persecution, I'm not talking about discrimination or bigotry, I'm talking about torture, enslavement, rape and murder," said Shea, noting countries with Communist influence or militant politicized strains of Islamic faith have the worst records on Christian persecution. Since the end of the Cold War, Americans have turned

inward, Shea suggested, mistakenly believing the fall of the Berlin Wall and the Soviet Union signaled the end of religious persecution around the world.

A "secular myopia" renders many in America unable to comprehend a worldview as Christianity that is willing "to sacrifice liberty and life and freedom for the sake of their beliefs," said Shea, author of *In the Lion's Den*, a recently released book detailing international Christian persecution and martyrdom.

"Our leaders and the media elite are captured by the image of the young man in front of the tank in Tiananmen Square [in China]," Shea said. "They see him as a democracy hero, yet they think that the evangelicals who will lay down their lives in China or Sudan for Jesus Christ must be crazy."

The U.S. government has not made the persecution of Christians an issue, Shea insisted, calling on President Clinton to deliver "a major speech on the global persecution of Christians."

Shea, recently appointed to the new Advisory Committee on Religious Freedom to the President and Secretary of State, expressed hope the committee would impact U.S. foreign policy for good. Repeating her fear the advisory committee would be "little more than a debating society," she called again for appointment of a special advisor to the President on religious liberty.

"There are powerful trade lobbies at work," Shea

said, most of them arguing against linking trade to human rights. She expressed reservations there would be further congressional action on the issue, saying Congress has been "bought off" after arm-twisting by business interests who have a stake in maintaining the status quo in the offensive countries.

She said the United States was willing to put pressure on China over the pirating of computer software and compact discs but was unwilling to tackle the issue of religious freedom for Chinese Christians.

China has the largest Christian population of any country in the world except the United States, Shea said, noting nearly 60 million believers in the underground house church movement risk their lives and their freedom to worship independently.

"Thousands of Christians are in religious gulags there," Shea said, "imprisoned because they dared to read the Bible, preach or sing hymns in public." She explained Chinese leaders see Christians as their biggest threat to political stability, noting Christians in China claim persecution has been greater in the past 12 months than in any time since the post-Mao Tse-tung period in the late 1970s.

Christians in Vietnam, as in China, are imprisoned for spreading "religious propaganda" — a popular charge leveled by government officials against evangelical Christians in Indochina, Shea said. During the last four months, Shea cited four known cases

being arrested in Vietnam for "singing hymns in a private home and reading the Bible with Vietnamese in their hotel room."

"Blasphemy laws which bring an automatic death penalty are regularly brought against Christians in Pakistan," Shea said. And a jihad, holy war, is being waged by the radical Islamic government in the Sudan against Christians, Shea said, recounting accounts of slavery of Christian women and children in "open-air slave markets" documented by surreptitious fact-finding missions in the northeast African country.

Christians in Pakistan suffer through a reign of violence and discrimination, Shea said, relating the story of a youngster whose sole crime was converting to Christianity.

At the age of 12, Salamat Mashi was charged with defacing a mosque — a

crime punishable by death. Although no evidence was ever submitted to substantiate the charge, Mashi was sentenced to death. Acquitted by the Pakistani government, the youngster fled the country. Now, two years later, the youngster remains in hiding in Germany, as Muslim extremists have offered a bounty for his capture and death.

As recently as two weeks ago, Shea said, 12 Egyptian Coptic Christians attending a youth leaders' assembly were murdered.

"Christian churches must take the lead. This must be a grassroots effort," Shea said, pointing out in a democracy citizens have the right and obligation to demand the U.S. government do something about this persecution.

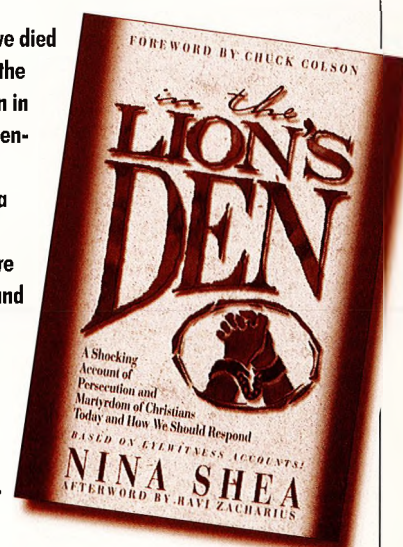
"As the spiritual heirs of Roger Williams," Shea said, "it is entirely appropriate for Southern Baptists to take up this issue." ■

More people have died for their faith in the 20th century than in the previous 19 centuries combined. Author Nina Shea shares what's happening, where it's happening, and what America's Christians must do to stop it.

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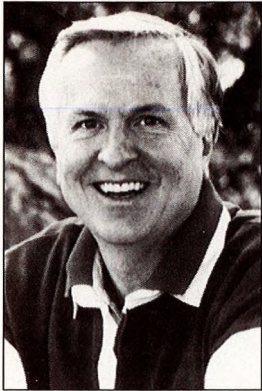
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Revised definition of tolerance threatens believers, McDowell says

BY TOM STRODE



JOSH MCDOWELL

Christians face the “greatest threat to Christ in the history of the church” because of the culture’s adoption of a new meaning of tolerance, well known apologist and youth communicator Josh McDowell said at the 50th anniversary seminar of the Christian Life Commission.

Americans will live in a “culture totally, completely different” within three to four years as a result of a redefinition of tolerance and its elevation to being the most esteemed virtue in society, he said March 3 at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary.

“For the first time in the history of America, we face an issue where the No. 1 virtue in culture stands against everything that you believe in as a Christian,” McDowell said. “In the past, the No. 1 virtue was an expression of a biblical value.”

Traditionally, tolerance has been defined as recognizing and respecting “others’ beliefs and practices without sharing them,” he said. The new definition of tolerance — one which nearly every young person in the country is being conditioned with, he said — says every “individual’s values, beliefs, lifestyles and claims to truth are equal,” McDowell said.

As a result of this new definition, a bigot is a person who says some values and truth claims are more valid than others, he said.

For a person to say he is “to love the sinner but to hate the sin” is “one of the most bigoted, intolerant statements you could make today,” McDowell said of American culture.

The implications of such a shift, which McDowell says

he fears the church will not grasp, include an emphasis on style over substance and a threat to the biblical virtues of justice and love.

Until four to seven years ago, when he declared the deity of Christ or the reliability of the Bible on a university campus, hecklers attacked him on the basis of substance, the validity of his claims. Now, when he proclaims the same Christian fundamentals, hecklers attack him based on style, his right to say such a thing. As a result, he is declared a bigot and intolerant.

Such thinking has invaded the church, which was “founded on substance over style,” McDowell said. One of the results is the mounting disappearance of public church discipline, he said.

Both justice and Christian love are enemies of tolerance, he said. Both are based on value judgments, he said. Referring to Micah 6:8, McDowell said those who “act justly and express Christian love” will be labeled bigots and heretics.

“Tolerance says I must be indifferent,” McDowell said. “Christian love says I must speak and act the truth in love.”

In response to this threat to the church, Christians should do three things, he said:

- Be loving, not tolerant;
- Help their children discern right from wrong;
- Live out loving relationships between husband and wife and parent and child.

In the next 15 to 20 years, loving family relationships will provide more opportunities to speak the truth in love than anything else, McDowell said. ■

Kinsey research sets false standards for sexuality, Reisman says

BY HEATHER OLDFIELD

Alfred Kinsey was responsible for taking America on a wayward course of beliefs concerning sexuality, charged Judith Reisman, president of The Institute for Media Education, during a workshop at the Christian Life Commission’s seminar March 4.

Reisman, author of *Kinsey, Sex, and Fraud*, argued the ancient

worship of man’s regenerative powers known as Baal-Peor was “knowingly repackaged for modern sensibilities in a diaphanous ‘scientific’ covering” by zoologist Kinsey in his research published in 1948.

Kinsey’s research sought to redefine America’s views of sexuality.

Referring to Kinsey’s own stated intent, Reisman challenged, “Are we any better off now than we were in 1948 in regards to sex edu-

cation and the sexual behavior of children and teenagers? Are there fewer criminal sexual acts because of the applications of this man’s research?”

By his own words, Kinsey’s research was “an attempt to accumulate an objectively determined body of facts about sex which strictly avoids social or moral interpretations of the facts.”

By removing the moral authority governing sexual-

ity, Reisman proposed, God-given limits for sexual expression are ignored.

Dealing with the second commandment in which God forbids the creation of graven images, Reisman said God was “warning us about our inability to deal with images.” Pornography is just one example of that inability, she believes.

Pornography is destructive because the human brain is designed to lock and store images, she said. “Images

are indelibly printed on the brain,” Reisman said, “and they are easily recalled and addictive.”

Citing the “Law of Strength” that as a person becomes adjusted to levels of stimuli a higher level is needed to achieve the same effect, Reisman said the same law applies to the visual images used in pornography. “In effect, you’re stoned on images,” she said. ■

MINISTRY TO HOMOSEXUALS REQUIRES BRIDGE BUILDING

BY DAVID PORTER

Southern Baptists churches must become transforming churches building bridges to homosexuals to minister to them in a biblical way, a Southern Baptist ethicist said March 4.

In a "Ministry to Homosexuals" workshop during the Christian Life Commission's seminar, Ben Mitchell, assistant professor of Christian ethics at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary and CLC consultant on biomedical issues, said Christians have a biblical mandate to minister to homosexuals "with conviction and compassion, because those are the two strands we want to maintain in any ministry."

Referring to I Corinthians 6:9-11, Mitchell said "We want to proclaim and make known that there is a convictional response to homosexuality, that it is a sinful behavior," just as verses 9 and 10 mention many other sinful lifestyles. Verse 11 presents hope to those caught in any lifestyle of sexual perversion, because Paul writes their condition is changeable through the ministry of the Holy Spirit and the gospel of Christ, Mitchell said.

In the book *Unwanted Harvest?* by Mona Riley and Brad Sargent, five possible local church responses to homosexuality are given, Mitchell noted. First is the rebellious church that receives openly gay members and provides opportunity for acting out their behavior. Second is the permissive church, which adopts a "don't ask, don't tell" policy. Third is the judgmental church or pharisaical church that pushes people away simply because they are different. The ignorant church, the fourth response, says it just never thought about it and doesn't plan to. The fifth and biblical response is a transforming church, which Paul was writing to at Corinth.

To build bridges to people who are homosexual, Mitchell offered some suggestions.

"It's important, first of all," he said, "that we must count their cost. Remember what we're asking a person to do who comes to faith in Christ. We're asking for a complete life change." For many, Mitchell clarified, this would involve a change in dress, speech, network of friends, living situation and maybe a job. "Imagine what it would take for you or me to live in a third world country, to totally change our way of living. Magnify that," Mitchell said.

Then, "also count your cost," because ministry to people in sexual perversion is not for the faint of heart, Mitchell said. "We must establish healthy boundaries" to avoid situations where people being helped shift their emotional lives towards those who are helping them, he said. Bridges must be built based on individuals' backgrounds, such as whether they went to church. And bridges must be built with respect. Many homosexuals have experienced rejection. "We should not further alienate them. We want them to be reconciled to God," Mitchell stated.

Finally, Mitchell observed that becoming a transforming church should happen naturally. "If the church understands the gospel, if they are being obedient in discipleship, then they are at the same time looking for ways always to share their faith," he said. "It's critical that we be equipped simply to develop relationships with a view toward bringing the gospel." Becoming a transforming church should also happen intentionally—churches joining together or associations starting or supporting ministries. He suggested churches provide survival skills classes because people who are HIV positive or have AIDS are more susceptible to illness as their immune system deteriorates.

Much of the medical and scientific research claiming homosexuality is not a choice but is part of some people's genetic makeup is biased, flawed and, in some cases, distorted, Mitchell said.

He referred to psychiatrist Jeffrey Satinover's book, *Homosexuality and the Politics of Truth*, which examines research by Simon LeVay on the "homosexual hypothalamus" and Dean Hamer's work on the genetics of lesbian twins. Their research fails to demonstrate what it purports to demonstrate, Satinover writes. While the media has ignored this fact, LeVay and Hamer themselves agree "there need to be many more studies." ■

MINISTRY RESOURCES

The following resources are suggested for ministry to homosexuals: *Desires in Conflict: Answering the Struggle for Sexual Identity* by Joe Dallas; *A Strong Delusion: Confronting the Gay Christian Movement* by Joe Dallas; *Homosexuality and the Politics of Truth* by Jeffrey Satinover, and *Someone I Love is Gay*. Mitchell recommends Exodus International for more resources.

Integrity not receiving attention it deserves

BY WILL DODSON

Christians "need to learn to do what is right even when we have the opportunity to do what is wrong," Taylor University professor Ron Collymore said at the Christian Life Commission's 50th anniversary seminar.

Preaching on integrity, Collymore recalled an experience he had at the age of 12. His mother encouraged him to "become a man of integrity." He responded by asking, "What is integrity?"

She said, "Integrity is the ability to do what is right even when you have the opportunity to do what is wrong." Collymore repeated her definition throughout his message.

"We as God's people," he said, "need to learn to do what is right even when we have the opportunity to do what is wrong."



RON COLLYMORE

Collymore used I Sam. 24:2-6 to identify some principles of integrity demonstrated in David's relationship with Saul.

Alone, Saul had entered a cave where, unbeknownst to him, David and his men were hiding. Saul had been in pursuit of David to kill him, but now it appeared Saul was being delivered into David's hands. David's men

urged him to take advantage of the opportunity to rid himself of Saul. Collymore noted, "We must resist following bad advice." David resisted the bad advice of his men and spared Saul's life.

Collymore, assistant professor of biblical literature and language at Taylor, observed not every golden opportunity is good, because "not everything that is golden is good. We must review things from God's point of view," he said. "David did so and said, 'How can I harm the Lord's anointed?'" Collymore said. David did not kill Saul when he had the opportunity to do so.

While he did no physical harm to Saul, he did cut off the corner of Saul's garment. As a result, David felt remorse. "We must remain unmarred from bad decisions," Collymore proclaimed. David did wrong and suffered the consequence of a guilty conscience.

In elaborating on David's grief over his sin, Collymore said, "We need to stop confessing the sins of our fathers, and we need to confess our own sins. We need to say, 'I am wrong.'"

Collymore also said many Christians insist on asserting their rights when they ought to be serving God. "We need to learn from Jesus that we are nothing but servants. . . ." Integrity does not receive the attention it deserves, Collymore said. In considering the many ethical issues he could have preached about, such as racism, gambling or pornography, Collymore said he believed God was leading him to preach a sermon on integrity because "maybe God's children need to hear about integrity." ■

Domestic violence occurs within Christian families, Holmes says

BY HEATHER OLDFIELD

"Domestic violence is not far removed from the church," said Elizabeth Holmes, consultant for family and women's issues for the Mississippi Baptist Convention and Christian Action Commission, at a workshop during the CLC's 1997 seminar. "It is not something that occurs to non-believers 'out there.' It is happening in Christian homes by those who are members of our churches.

"If you haven't encountered situations of domestic violence in your ministries yet, you will," Holmes assured the participants in her March 4 workshop.

Holmes focused her information on wife-battering, although she said, "Any violence in the home is abusive of everyone present."

Citing national statistics that domestic violence affects as many as one-fourth of all American families and that six million women are assaulted by their partners each year, Holmes said the evidence for abuse situations within the church is overwhelming.

To come to terms with this abuse, Holmes said the church needs to "address the theology that has perpetrated the problem." She encouraged leaders in the church to preach biblical meanings of submission and headship and to explain how those ideas should be incorporated into marriages.

"Because a large number of abusers and victims hold stereotypical views of male/female roles and

believe that the man should be dominant and the woman should accept whatever behavior he acts out toward her, the teachers and preachers in a church can be a strong influence by directing spouses to the true meanings of headship and submission," Holmes explained.

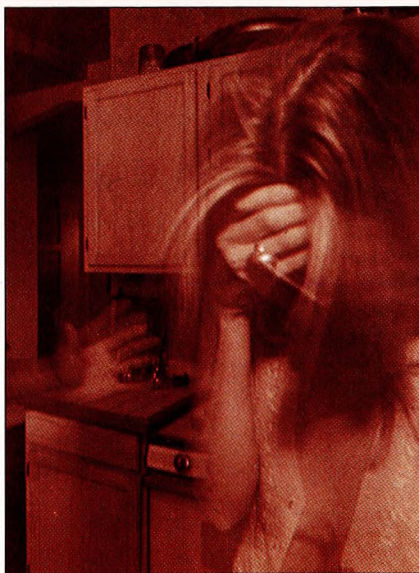
Acknowledging abuse as sin from the pulpit is necessary, as is admitting that spouse abuse exists among Christian families.

"By doing these things, your church will be recognized as a church that cares for women. These actions let abused women know that they are safe in your church and can speak openly with someone about what they're experiencing," Holmes said.

Church members can also become informed about available community resources and make provisions to assist women and children who are fleeing abuse, including meeting financial and legal needs.

The church could consider establishing a shelter for abused women if one does not already exist, or it could help meet the needs of existing shelters or agencies, Holmes suggested.

Violence within a relationship tends to increase



According to Elizabeth Holmes, six million women are assaulted by their partners each year, and evidence for abuse situations within the church is overwhelming. Churches need to "address the theology that has perpetrated the problem," she said.

with the length of the relationship, so the earlier a woman receives help the better off she will be.

"Many people don't understand why a woman would stay in an abusive situation," Holmes said.

Listing a variety of reasons, such as fear, economic dependence, psychological factors and reluctance to initiate divorce, she said, "Some women also feel that they are the only hope for the men who are abusing them, that somehow they will be able to change those men and save them.

"These women are caught in a cycle of loving those men, hoping they will change their behavior, and yet fearing them," Holmes explained.

"When we as Christians take the problem of domestic abuse as a serious one both within our nation and within our churches, then we can truly serve as advocates for the people who are suffering," she said. ■

Bible's authority key to restoring moral sanity

BY TOM STRODE

America has lost its moral sanity, and it will be restored only when the Bible returns to its rightful place of authority in the lives of Christians and in the culture, a Southern Baptist scholar said.

Speaking March 5 at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, Lamar Cooper said efforts to restore the society's moral sanity must focus on at least three areas:

"FIRST, WE MUST RECOGNIZE THE SYMPTOMS OF A CULTURE WITHOUT MORAL SANITY."

Americans "can no longer distinguish truth from error, holiness from unholiness, or moral righteousness from immorality," said Cooper, vice president for academic affairs and dean of the faculty at Midwestern Baptist Theological Seminary. The day after his speech, Cooper was elected vice president of academic affairs at Criswell College, where he also will teach Old Testament and Hebrew.

The same has been true of other countries, including Israel, he said. According to Isaiah 5, Cooper said, Israel experienced "unbridled materialism . . . which led to indulgence and pleasure seeking . . . which resulted in a sin-hardened will, defying God and daring Him to respond . . . producing the perversion of moral principles." This "produced the perversion of justice in the land . . . and undermined the moral sanity of the nation," he said.

"Truth out of balance is no longer truth," Cooper said.

"Truth distorted is error. It will never lead us to righteousness and morality no matter how logical and right it might seem."

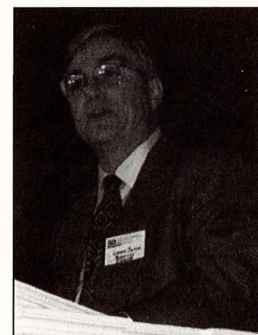
"SECOND, WE MUST RESTORE THE PLACE OF SCRIPTURE IN OUR OWN LIFE AND CONDUCT."

This is true not only for those who doubt the Bible's accuracy but for those who trust its infallibility but do not meditate upon Scripture, Cooper said.

"The general lack of spiritual discernment that is evidenced among many believers today can be traced to our lack of knowledge of the Word of God and to our failure to meditate on its precepts," he said. "Facts do not always lead us to the truth, because truth is not learned; truth is discerned."

Evangelical Christians have failed to proclaim truth in the culture, Cooper said.

"No longer do many evangelicals seek to be a bellwether against cultural decline," he said. "Those who do



Lamar Cooper, newly elected vice president of academic affairs at Criswell College, maintains that America's moral sanity will be restored only when the Bible returns to its rightful place of authority in the lives of Christians and in the culture.

See MORAL SANITY, p.10

Biblical standards of sexual morality shaken by Kinsey 'research'

BY DWAYNE HASTINGS

The biblical underpinnings of sexual morality were shaken to their core by the release of Alfred Kinsey's *Sexual Behavior in the American Male* in 1948, said Judith Reisman March 4 at The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville.

A tidal wave of soft pornography — evidenced in *Playboy* and other pornographic literature and films — has washed over an unsuspecting America, Reisman said, citing the infamous Kinsey report's claims that "children are sexual from the womb" as its source.

Kinsey's amoral standards, falsely labeled "scientific findings" according to Reisman's research, provided the basis for the sexual revolution which has carried the culture from "chastity to condoms" in two generations, said Reisman, speaking at the Southern Baptist Convention Christian Life Commission's annual seminar.

"Over the past forty years, these Kinseyite, so-called scientists have used

our beloved America as their own personal sex laboratory, experimenting upon a quarter-billion men, women and children, whom they see as little more than lab animals," said Reisman, noting Kinsey was by vocation a zoologist.

In her book, *Kinsey, Sex and Fraud*, Reisman revealed Kinsey used convicted child molesters, pedophiles, to "count and time the alleged orgasms of the children they were manipulating and raping." Prompted by her 20 years of research, congressional authorities are planning to investigate the findings of Kinsey and his institute to determine if any fraud or criminal wrongdoing were involved as Reisman alleges.

Reisman said Mary Calderone, former medical director of Planned Parenthood and former director of the Sex Information and Education Council of the United States (SIECUS), is one of many "experts" who embrace "Kinsey's radical sexual agenda."

SIECUS, a *Playboy*

Foundation grant recipient, was started by the Kinsey Institute "to teach Kinsey's sexual ideology as sex education nationwide," Reisman offered.

They look to Kinsey's findings as a "new religion which preaches that children are sexual from [the] womb, that preborn babies have erections, and that we should make all types of sex available to children of all ages, she stated.

"Kinsey taught that children are entitled to so-called sexual outlets, unencumbered by parental miseducation and interference," Reisman said.

"The Kinsey view of humanity, which reduces people from human beings made in the image and likeness of God to targets of lust, inevitably turns people into targets of violence as well," said Reisman, linking acceptance of the ideology with the fact that since 1957 the number of criminal assaults to commit murder has grown 700 percent.

In her review of major national law journals, Reisman found Kinsey

cited 799 times as an authority in court decisions between 1982 and 1996. In the Science Citation and Social Science Citation Indices, she uncovered 5,749 citations to Kinsey—twice as many as for Sigmund Freud.

"It was Kinsey's junk 'science' that so-called 'experts' cited to reduce criminal penalties for rape and other sex crimes, to parole violent sex criminals, including murderers, to legalize mailing obscene materials through the mail, to legalize sodomy and to award child custody to criminal parents," Reisman explained.

"We have let the Kinseyites violate our

children's innocence and we are reaping the whirlwind," said Reisman, calling on parents to examine the impact Kinsey's reports have had on the development of sex education programs and the pornography industry.

"When the movies at your neighborhood theater feature total nudity, when your granddaughter tells you she learned about condoms in school today, and when your 'clergy-person' announces your denomination is rethinking its stand on homosexual acts, you are seeing the cold, dead hands of Professor Kinsey at work," she concluded. ■



Judith Reisman attributes reduced criminal penalties for sex crimes and paroling of violent sex criminals to Kinsey's "research."

HUCKABEE — From p.4

crisis in Little Rock, Ark., will be observed. This year has been proclaimed the year of reconciliation in Arkansas, Huckabee said. During the observance, he will open the door of Little Rock Central High School to the former students who had to be escorted in by the National Guard in 1957. This time they will be

escorted by ministers and there will be a call for repentance, he said.

While a governor can do some things, he realizes his power is limited, Huckabee said.

"I have come to understand that, yes, in this office there is power to take life, but there is no power to give it back," he said.

"Only Jesus has that power, and ours is so limited.

"I can pardon people from the consequences of their crime . . . but nothing I will every write down can take away the guilt of the person who has committed crimes. Only Jesus can do that.

"I can sit at my desk and I can veto laws . . . but I

can't stop others from violating those laws. Only Jesus can do that.

"I can appoint people to boards and commissions and agencies . . . but I can't [add] one person to the Lamb's book of life. Only Jesus can do that.

"Real power is not found in what we do. It's found in what God does."

Christians who want to make a difference need to "come to the place where being what He wants us to be is more important than life itself," he said.

Huckabee and his wife, Janet, traveled to Louisville for his speech at the end of a day of surveying parts of the state devastated by tornadoes. ■

Jones traces biblical basis for anti-gambling position

BY JEFF CARTER

While acknowledging gambling is not addressed explicitly by any one New Testament passage, Paul Jones nonetheless traced an anti-gambling thread through Scripture in an address during the Christian Life Commission's 1997 national seminar.

Jones, executive director-treasurer of the Christian Action Commission of the Mississippi Baptist Convention, said the biblical tapestry provides a basis for the Southern Baptist Convention's

and destiny."

"Gambling is an excellent expression of contemporary idolatry," Jones said, adding, "Gambling violates the biblical principles of stewardship with regard to property and its use."

The church has stumbled as an effective voice against gambling, Jones said. The rapid growth of gaming in the U.S. is a strong indication "the church has failed to assume its prophetic role and evangelistic witness to a culture that invites the church to conform to its pattern."

Gambling is causing political corruption, as well as having a negative effect on the family, and working to destroy legitimate business due to the diversion of funds to the casinos in Jones' home state of Mississippi, he explained.

"Man is not the owner, but the caretaker of

what God has put in his charge," Jones stated. "What a person has is not for his hedonistic use or egotistic fulfillment, but always is an acknowledgment of man's accountability to God because of God's goodness to man."

According to Jones, man is measured by his stewardship of God's possessions. The scriptural admonitions to provide for the needs of the family, to contribute the work of the Lord, to meet the needs of

others, and to pay taxes are the proper uses of money and property, Jones said.

He emphasized the biblically mandated method for obtaining money and possessions is through legitimate labor, which "is a divine attribute that has been given to man as his opportunity to participate with the Creator."

Gambling deprives man of this opportunity, Jones said, noting it "denies the validity of work" by emphasizing the false notion that anyone can "get rich without work."

Because it naturally leads to a desire to gain more, Jones argued gambling causes its participants to violate the Tenth Commandment against covetousness, further degrading man's relationship with God.

"Gambling emphasizes materialism since it focuses on the things of life without relationship," Jones said. "Exploitation in the gaining of wealth is repugnant to the ethical standards of the Christian faith."

Participants in gambling run afoul of the warning of James 5:1-6 given to the seekers of false gain, Jones added. In that passage, he said exploitation of persons and property for personal gain is decried.

Recalling Rom. 12:1-2, Jones challenged believers to recall Paul's admonition to avoid being conformed "to the patterns of this world," but to instead "be transformed by the renewing of [our] mind[s]." ■

have the courage to take a strong stand against sin are viewed as radical, rebellious or subversive. Because evangelicals seem unable to clearly define this distinction, the gospel message has become somewhat distorted."

While he does not oppose the use of church growth principles, he does "oppose relying more on church growth principles than on the Holy Spirit," Cooper said. While a megachurch may be built on "user friendly" and "non-confrontational" methods, "you will never change the culture unless you are willing to confront sin in the lives of . . . people in the community," he said.

"THIRD, WE MUST RESTORE THE CONFIDENCE IN SCRIPTURE ERODED BY THE LEGACY OF LIBERAL SCHOLARSHIP."

Working in the early 19th century, liberal theologian F.D.E. Schleiermacher produced a philosophy that led to the rejection of the Bible as God's revelation and a faith "centered in human experience," Cooper said.

He encountered these concepts as a student in a Southern Baptist seminary, Cooper said. He did not lose his faith in the Bible as the Word of God but dedicated his life to "work for the day that a person could attend one of our seminaries, in fact all of our seminaries, and never feel disenfranchised for believing the Bible to be the infallible, inerrant Word of God," Cooper said.

"One has but to look at any of the historic educational institutions and denominations which have abandoned the Bible as 'truth without any mixture of error.' None of them [has] ever risen from the death and demise which that decision guarantees. Our own Southern Baptist Convention came dangerously close to succumbing to this malady."

Erosion of biblical authority results in relativism and religious pluralism, he said.

"Simply put, if 'Thou shalt not . . .' is not a divine mandate, then why shouldn't we do whatever we want to do?" Cooper said.

"If we are to restore moral sanity to our nation and world in the third millennium, we must restore the status of the Bible as a book that speaks with authority and rightly claims its authority over our lives and all human conduct." ■



By placing "ultimate significance in luck and risk and chance, gambling is a denial of the sovereignty of God," claims Paul Jones.

continuing stand against the practice of gambling.

By placing "ultimate significance in luck and risk and chance," Jones said, "gambling is a denial of the sovereignty of God."

Speaking March 4 on the campus of The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary during the Christian Life Commission's golden anniversary seminar, Jones said gambling "presumes that the focus of man's existence are the false gods of fortune

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Congress is once again considering legislation banning partial-birth abortion, legislation similar to that vetoed by President Clinton last year. Concerned citizens will find *The Procedure* informative, designed to educate and encourage opponents of the gruesome late term abortion technique. To speak up for the unborn who are being slaughtered. (To order, see p.12.)

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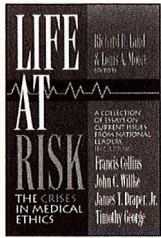
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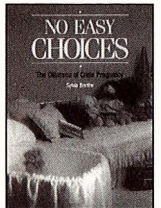
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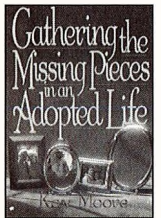
This book takes a hard look at genetic engineering, tissue harvesting and the prospect of doctor-assisted suicide. From the 1993 CLC seminar.

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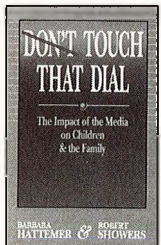
Sylvia Boothe offers advice to concerned Christians who want to minister to a woman with a crisis pregnancy in *No Easy Choices*.

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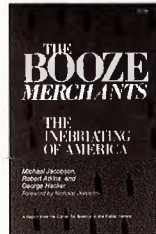
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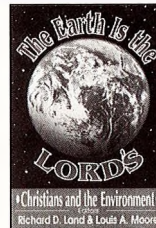
National Family Foundation president Barbara Hattemer and attorney Robert Showers share results of research by internationally recognized experts to reveal the devastating impact of the media on families in layman's terms.

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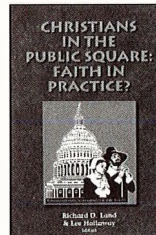
This report from the Center for Science in the Public Interest documents how alcohol promotion inundates our society, especially targeting our young people with positive view of drinking.

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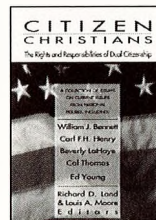
A collection of messages from the 1991 CLC seminar, this book is designed to initiate an ongoing discussion among Christians concerning the environment and ecology.

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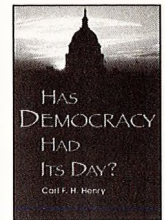
These messages from the 1996 CLC seminar address critical issues facing Christians today, offering solutions from a biblical perspective while helping define the Christian's role in the nation's public life.

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This book helps Christians balance their responsibilities as subjects in God's Kingdom with the requirements of citizenship in an earthly nation. It addresses a Christian's responsibility to influence government despite separation of church and state. From the 1992 CLC seminar.

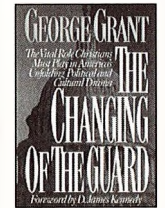
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1963 King called the "humanist hope" an "illusion."

"I suspect the chief problem is that government and law have probably done about all that government and law can do to rid us of the plague of racism," Land said. "It is now a spiritual and moral problem; it is a sin problem."

Citing Paul's words to the Corinthians in 2 Cor. 5:16-20, Land explained sin created a chasm between God and humankind, but God found a way that He could live in unbroken relationship with human beings.

"God was in the world reconciling the world unto Himself in Jesus Christ. And once we have experienced that reconciliation, once we have been put back together with God in Christ, God named us as ambassadors for Christ, as ministers of reconciliation."

In the original language, the word *reconcile* in this passage, Land said, meant to change from enmity to friendship, to go from being

an enemy to having peace, to be reconciled. "Because of Christ, God has changed us from enemies to friends," he continued.

"God has reconciled; God is reconciling; God will reconcile. And He has made us to name His name as disciples of Jesus Christ; we are called to be ambassadors of that reconciliation."

Observers of the late civil rights leader's ministry noted when King would begin to offer the "religious and moral-philosophical basis of the movement for racial justice," the television cameras would be turned off, and turned on again only when the discussion moved from the foundation to the application, Land recounted.

"We must understand the nature of the enemy that we confront; it is an enemy within, as well as an enemy without," Land said. "Racial bigotry is woven into the very warp and woof of our society because it is a part of fallen human nature."

When King spoke at Southern, Land said King anticipated "winds of change that were sweeping the world."

And embracing King's vision, Land said, "We don't have segregated lunch rooms, segregated water fountains, and segregated buses like we did in the '50s and early '60s, but we still have problems of the heart."

"The salt of the law can change actions, but it is only the light of the gospel that can change attitudes; the salt of the law can change behaviors, it is only the light of the gospel that can change beliefs; the salt of the law can change habits, but it is only the light of the gospel that can change hearts," Land thundered.

Noting an undergraduate course entitled "Christianity and Race Relations" was taught at Southern in 1939, and that African-American students attended the Louisville seminary since the early 1940s, Land said intentions were good, and progress in racial reconcili-

ation was made.

But he quickly added, "The shame and disgrace is that often, less reconciliation goes on in the name of Christ than in other sections of our society."

Nonetheless Land said the subject of race relations did more to define the Christian Life Commission in its first 50 years than any other single issue, adding the commission was "on the right side of the race issue when there were so many institutions in American life and Southern Baptist life that were on the wrong side."

Holding aloft a yellowing copy of a flyer titled "Race Relations: A Charter of Principles," produced by the CLC announcing a statement of principles adopted by the Southern Baptist Convention in 1947 and reaffirmed in 1948, Land said 50 years ago the Convention acknowledged the existence of a fellowship of believers which "forbids us to allow worldly patterns of prejudice to drive a wedge between us and our Christian brothers of other races," Land said.

"For a long time we have known what we ought to do; unfortunately this is not where all Southern Baptists have stood," he said.

"Prejudice is at its base a sin problem, it is a spiritual problem, it is a conse-

quence of the fallen, sinful human heart."

Government has a role to play: God ordained civil society to punish those who do evil and reward those who do right, but government cannot save us, Land said. "Only the gospel of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ can do that."

"The fact that racism at its foundation is a spiritual problem and will be vanquished only by spiritual means does not mean that legislative and judicial relief should not be applied to racial discrimination and bigotry," Land said, noting legislative and judicial remedies have radically altered the status of *de jure* segregation, legally institutionalized race discrimination.

"It is because of the fact of the vertical reconciliation that we have experienced in Jesus Christ that the hope of reconciliation on the horizontal scale with our brothers and sisters in Christ, with our fellow human beings, is a possibility," Land said.

"The good news of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ is that we can overcome racism. We can be reconciled once we have been reconciled to Jesus Christ, Land said, adding, "Change can happen. Change must happen. Change will happen." ■

CASEY - From p.1

Party? What about the party of Lincoln?

"What good is a 15 percent tax cut or a capital gains tax cut or a balanced budget or a college tuition credit to a nameless, faceless, powerless child who never had a chance to be born?" he asked.

"If we can't protect life, what's left?"

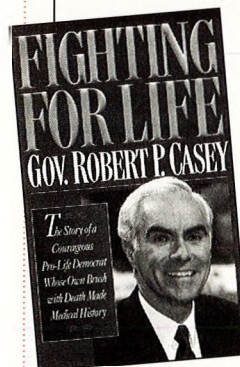
Yet, Casey expressed hope for America.

The ground "is shifting under our feet," he said, noting the Promise Keepers movement and the changes taking place on the abortion issue.

"The Southern Baptist Convention and those who stand with them have been one of the most powerful, galvanizing forces in refocusing America on the direction we've got to take if we're to save our country, save our future by your position on abortion and euthanasia and gambling and hunger, pornography and racism," said Casey, a Roman Catholic.

Among efforts Casey suggested to battle abortion were:

- ▲ Focus on communications.
- ▲ Bring about passage of the Partial-birth Abortion Ban Act.
- ▲ Recognize the limitations of the partial-birth abortion ban. Pro-lifers "can't let [the ban] become a safe haven" for politicians, he said.
- ▲ Persuade Congress to reject most favored nation trade status for China, which has a coercive population control policy.
- ▲ Influence Congress to hold hearings, to make findings of fact on fetal development and to change pro-abortion laws.
- ▲ Help women with crisis pregnancies.
- ▲ Make adoption a federal priority.



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LIGHT FROM THE CAPITOL

White House appeals to evangelicals, pro-abortionists

BY TOM STRODE

President Bill Clinton called on churches to help welfare reform succeed in an early January breakfast with religious

leaders, while Vice President Al Gore launched an impassioned defense of abortion rights two weeks later.

Meanwhile, on inauguration day, a megachurch, evangelical pastor who has counseled the president the last four years said Clinton's "desire to know God" has grown.

The month marking the beginning of the Clinton-Gore administration's second term again demonstrated its strategy to appeal to evangelical Christians and other religious communities while at the same time maintaining its support from abortion advocates. Among the examples:

The president, speaking Jan. 6 at a White House breakfast for about 100 religious leaders, called on churches to help make welfare reform successful by providing for the employment of needy people. Clinton also declared the society is returning to its basic values.

Clinton's comments came at a prayer breakfast which has become an annual tradition since the late summer of 1993, his first year in the White House. Included in the audience were some Southern Baptists, other evangelicals and Baptists, Roman Catholics, representatives of main-line Protestant denominations, as well as Jewish, Muslim and Bahai leaders.

Acknowledging some at the breakfast thought he "made a mistake" in signing the Republican-backed welfare reform bill, Clinton said his objective "is, once and for all, to take the politics out of poverty and to treat all able-bodied people the same at the community level."

The President said, "This new law gives every state the right to give the welfare check to any employer, including a church, as an employment and training subsidy, who will hire someone from welfare. If every church in America just hired one family, the welfare problem would go way down. If every church in America challenged every member of that church who had 25 or more employees to hire another family, the problem would go away . . ."

Americans "are proving that we're getting back to our basic values," said Clinton, citing a drop in the crime rate and the teenage pregnancy rate, while admitting drug use among young people is increasing. "So, we're on the cusp, here, maybe, of turning a lot of our social problems around."

A Southern Baptist agency representative at the breakfast expressed gratitude for the president's request of religious leaders but said his focus was too narrow.

"I think it is important and good for our President to call upon religious leaders to do everything in their power to minister to the poor, to seek reconciliation and to foster a better spirit in our society," said Will Dodson, the Christian Life Commission's director of government relations. "However, we can never agree to focus only upon those issues on which most people agree but ignore other critical issues simply because they are divisive. It would be wrong for the church to ignore addressing divisive issues such as the sanctity of human life and sexual immorality in its many forms out of fear that doing so will offend a large segment of our society."

"Cooperation and reconciliation must never mean that the church compromises its mission to urge people to righteous living by turning from sin and by turning to Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord."

He also disagreed with Clinton's assessment American society is returning to its basic values.

"I wish I could agree with this statement," Dodson said. "However, it seems to me that we are drifting farther and farther away from basic moral values and closer to God's judgment for our stiff-necked refusal to turn from our sin and let Christ be Lord of our lives."

Rex Horne, pastor of Immanuel Baptist Church, Little Rock, Ark., where Clinton is a member, attended, as did James Dunn, the Baptist Joint Committee's executive director; Jimmy Allen, SBC president in 1978 and 1979, and Brian Harbour, pastor of First Baptist Church, Richardson, Tex. Dunn, Allen and Harbour have been identified with the moderate segment of the SBC. Harbour formerly was Clinton's pastor at Immanuel Church in Little Rock.

Also attending was Hugh Tobias, pastor of Trinity Baptist Church in Madison, Ala. Tobias was the "voice" for some ads by Clinton-Gore on Christian radio stations during the 1996 campaign.

On the morning of his second inauguration, the president and his family, as well as the Gore family, attended a prayer service at the Metropolitan African Methodist Episcopal Church near the White House.

Speaking at the Jan. 20 service were civil rights leader and former Democratic presidential candidate Jesse Jackson; popular, though controversial, evangelical author/speaker Tony Campolo, and Chicago area megachurch pastor Bill Hybels.

Hybels said the President and he have met monthly since the first inauguration, the *Washington Times* reported.

"Four years ago, in an act of uncommon humility for a newly elected president, President Clinton asked if I would meet with him privately every month," said Hybels, founding pastor of one of the country's leading "seeker-sensitive" congregations, Willow Creek Community Church.

The sole agenda item, he said, "was to talk about things of God and pray."

Hybels said the president has increased in his "desire to know God."

"Know in the depth of your being that you are loved by God and not incidentally by many, many of us," Hybels said, according to the *Times*.

While some evangelical leaders joined with Catholic, Jewish and Muslim officials to participate in the prayer service, some evangelicals joined with other pro-life activists to protest Clinton's abortion rights advocacy. On the inaugural parade route, about two dozen protesters, according to the *Times*, displayed posters, some nearly six feet tall, of photos of aborted babies.

Before the president was sworn in at his inauguration, evangelist Billy Graham prayed.

"Where there's been failure, forgive us; where there's been progress, confirm; where there's been success, give us humility and teach us to follow your instructions more closely as we enter the next century," Graham prayed.

When he was sworn in by Chief Justice William Rehnquist, Clinton placed his left hand on the Bible, opened to Isaiah 58:12, according to the *Washington Post*. The verse reads, "And they that shall be of thee shall build the old waste places: thou shalt raise up the foundations of many generations; and thou shalt be called, The repairer of the breach, The restorer of paths to dwell in."

Two days after the inauguration, Gore, like Clinton a member of a Southern Baptist church, brought a cheering crowd of abortion rights advocates to its feet with a blistering attack on anti-abortion "terrorists."

Gore's speech to a Jan. 22 luncheon of the National Abortion and Reproductive Rights Action League, and the resultant reports on the television network news, provided the country with

possibly its most vivid image to date of the vice president as a defender of abortion.

"America's women have the right to choose, and no one will ever steal that right away," Gore said, according to the *Times*. "The anti-choice cause did not win in the nation's courts; they did not win in the court of public opinion; they did not win in the nation's elections, and its advocates will not prevail by trampling our traditions or trafficking in terror."

Speaking less than a week after bombings at abortion clinic sites in Atlanta, Ga., and Tulsa, Okla., Gore said rhetorically to those guilty of the bombings, "The American people will not tolerate your cowardly crusade," the *Post* reported.

"We Americans resolve our differences with civilized discussion and spirited debate and elections and constitutional processes, not with pipe bombs, hand grenades and instruments of hate.

"Let there be no doubt we will find the terrorists who committed these horrible acts of the last week and we will punish you to the fullest extent of the law," he said, the audience of several hundred standing to applaud, the *Post* reported. "We will not let you terrorize America's women. We will not let you debase our Constitution."

The leaders of the major pro-life organizations in the country also had denounced the bombings.

Gore's passionate speech at the NARAL celebration of the 24th anniversary of the *Roe v. Wade* decision legalizing abortion seemed a long journey from his mostly pro-life days in the U.S. House of Representatives. As a Tennessee congressman for eight years in the late 1970s and early 1980s, Gore had an 84 per-

cent pro-life voting record, according to the National Right to Life Committee. He veered away from his pro-life votes after he was elected to the U.S. Senate and when he began campaigning for the Democratic presidential nomination in 1988.

First lady Hillary Clinton also spoke at the luncheon, promoting "family planning" and calling for abortion to be "legal, safe and rare," a formula often expressed by her husband.

Neither Gore nor the first lady, however, mentioned Congress' ban on partial-birth abortions, according to both papers. The president vetoed the ban, which would have prohibited a particularly gruesome form of abortion normally performed in the fifth or sixth month of pregnancy.

Despite the January bombings, a new report from the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms showed such incidents have decreased dramatically, according to the *Times*.

Three arsons and one bombing were reported at abortion clinics in 1996, the BATF reported. This compares to 15 arsons in 1995, 12 arsons and one bombing in 1994, 14 arsons and two bombings in 1993 and 21 arsons in 1992, according to the *Times*.

Earlier in January, the National Abortion Federation announced violence at clinics had dropped 21 percent in 1996 as compared to 1995, the *Times* reported.

While the vice president was making news, a crowd estimated at anywhere from 20,000 to 125,000 gathered between the White House and Washington Monument and marched to the Supreme Court to protest abortion. The March for Life has been held every year since 1974, the first anniversary of *Roe v. Wade*. ■

Proper doctrine of Christ is basis for ethics, Akin says

BY JAMES A. SMITH SR.

A recovery of the Bible's assertions concerning the person and work of Jesus Christ is a critical foundation to the broader recovery of America's moral fabric, a theologian told the Christian Life Commission's golden anniversary seminar Mar. 5.

Danny Akin, dean of the School of Theology and vice president of academic administration at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, said, "What one thinks and believes about Jesus will impact his complete theological framework and any thoughtful worldview.

"The Jesus we so often read about today, one who is only a wise teacher, religious sage, political revolutionary, Jewish peasant, cynic spinner of proverbs or spirit-inspired guru, is a Jesus far-removed from biblical revelation and one who is spiritually bankrupt and totally insufficient to meet the deepest needs of hurting humanity," Akin asserted. "Such a vision of Christ is totally inadequate to energize and mobilize the church to be salt and light in a world immersed in darkness."

Reminding seminar participants that culture is always in a state of flux, Jesus is "the same yesterday, today and forever," Akin said. "Those who call Jesus Lord must be faithful to who He is, what He has done and the task which He has assigned."

Cataloging the statistical facts which demonstrate the demise of morality in America, Akin noted, "The church itself also appears on the verge of insanity, having forsaken the exclusive claims of its Christ and the instruction of His Word." He cited surveys indicating that less than half of Christian men believe "there are moral truths which are unchanging," 27 percent believe Jesus sinned and 28 percent deny the bodily resurrection of Jesus.

Akin outlined four "pillars" on which the doctrine of Christology rests and which impact a Christian worldview.

LOGOS CHRISTOLOGY – With John 1:1-18 in view, Akin said, "By using *logos*, John takes a familiar first century term and fills it with new meaning."

The importance of this pillar of Christology is that it focuses on the person of Christ, rather than His work, according to Akin.

Without this doctrine, Akin said, Christians have no basis on which to build an ethical framework.

SERVANT CHRISTOLOGY – Exploring the "Christ hymn" of Phil. 2:6-11, Akin said the passage is a model for how believers should serve others.

"These verses reveal something about the very nature and being of our God, and they are instructive concerning the kind of disposition we should cultivate as we involve ourselves in the lives of others," Akin said. "It is the very essence of our God to give and to serve. The Son of God did not seize status. Rather, He served. He did not grasp after power. He gave in sacrifice to others."

COSMIC CHRISTOLOGY – "As the God-man, Jesus Christ defies simplistic explanation. The incomparable Christ transcends human wisdom," Akin said.

Describing the importance of the Apostle Paul's teaching in Col. 1:15-20, Akin said, "Nothing is outside or beyond His sovereign Lordship. All of reality has been created by Him and for Him.

A proper ecologic ethic is an outcome of a proper understanding of this "cosmic Christology," Akin noted.

"All of creation is sacred and is to be honored with care and responsible stewardship," Akin explained. "Genuine ecological theology finds its theological justification in cosmic Christology."

Asserting that Christ is to have "first place in all things," Akin said, "His theology is to be our theology. His ethic is to be our ethic. His mind is to be our mind. His heart is to be our heart."

REVELATIONAL CHRISTOLOGY – Exploring Heb. 1:1-3, Akin said, "Revelational Christology is cognizant of God's mighty acts in history, yet it focuses upon the God who invaded history, the God who brought eternity into space-time reality, the God who is the Lord of history."

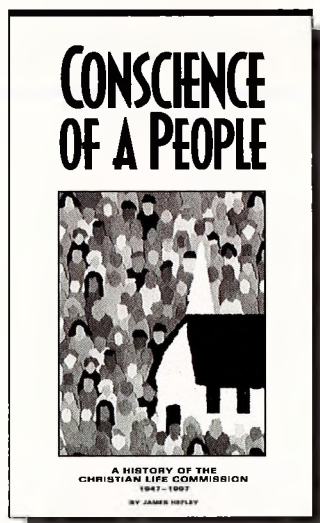
Quoting the late Francis Schaeffer, Akin said, God "is there and He is not silent."

"In a day when many people stress, and are stressed over, the absence of God and the silence of God, Hebrews 1 declares that He is there and He has spoken. It is a much needed corrective for those obsessed with the 'hidden God.' Our God has revealed Himself for all to see and hear in the person of His Son," Akin said. ■



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Excerpt from *Conscience of A People* by James Helley:

The world was exploding when 4,598 SBC messengers came to Oklahoma City in May, 1939. German troops had swept through Austria and Czechoslovakia. Italy had overrun Albania.

Yet Americans, and particularly Southern Baptists, were preoccupied with interests other than another European war. Orson Welles' radio invasion from Mars had sent thousands of Americans fleeing from cities. A powerful hurricane had swept up the Atlantic coast, killing 700 people. Howard Hughes set a record for a round-the-world flight. All while economic depression continued in the U.S. and a food stamp program was begun. President Roosevelt's call for a war build-up got little support.

A.J. Barton, first chairman of the Social Service Commission (forerunner of the current CLC), and other Southern Baptist influentials were upset over Roosevelt's appointment of an ambassador to the Vatican, then sending "Whiskey Joe" Kennedy to be Roosevelt's special representative at the coronation of Pope John II. Roosevelt ignored the Baptists and other critics.

The seventy-two-year-old Barton was still fighting Demon Rum and urging every church to have a peace committee. Frank Norris, who had been kicked out of the Tarrant County Baptist Association in Fort Worth, kept calling for the denomination to clean house of "liberals" who didn't believe the Bible was all true. When the 1939 Convention convened the fiery Norris had his eyes on Mercer University where student conservatives, led by young John Birch, were pressuring several faculty members to resign. Barton must have known about the Mercer situation. In any case, he didn't get involved.

Barton, still the voice of the Social Service Commission, took on some standard enemies in 1939, mob violence, weak laws for getting a marriage license, breakdowns in church-state separation, liquor advertising, licensing of wet counties by states to sell spirits, rising crime (he cited FBI Director J. Edgar Hoover's figures of 4.6 million criminals in the U.S.), and other concerns. One new target was an effort in Congress to impose a Social Security tax upon church employees.



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