




LIGHT

THE ETHICS & RELIGIOUS LIBERTY COMMISSION OF THE SOUTHERN BAPTIST CONVENTION

JULY-AUGUST 1998

STACKED SIDE-BY-SIDE, all the televisions in U.S. homes would create a wall nearly 17 feet tall along America's coastlines — from Penobscot Bay to Padre Island to Norton Sound and on to the Alenuihaha Channel.

WHILE A FLIMSY BARRIER to invading marauders, these televisions present a nearly impenetrable defense to the exchange of good and decent ideas, stifling family dialogue and blocking the expansion of the American mind.

Continued on p. 4. 



Dr. Richard Land is President of the Ethics & Religious Liberty Commission of the Southern Baptist Convention.

Gary Bauer is President of the Family Research Council.

Clinton: Promise vs. Practice*

BY DR. RICHARD D. LAND AND GARY L. BAUER

President Clinton's defenders have told us that we should ignore the president's private morality and focus on his public performance.

The facts suggest otherwise. Not only has the president's personal life completely captured the public's attention, lowered respect for political leadership, and threatened his hold on office, but his penchant for deception and double talk has bled over into our relationship with foreign powers, with fatal results. "Compartmentalism" is this year's Big Lie and its deadliest deception.

President Clinton's China policy is the major case in point. Recall that before he became president, Clinton criticized then-President George Bush for "coddling" China's dictators. The sight of Bush administration officials toasting the Butchers of Tiananmen Square was too much for Candidate Clinton. If elected, he would be a watchdog, not a lapdog. Many of us cheered the prospect.

It was all a lie. After winning office, Clinton quickly assumed the Bush position, and in fact has exceeded Bush's shameful accommodation. He is not only toasting the butchers, but he is also pushing plans to sell them nuclear technology, despite their record of weapons sales to Iran and Iraq. Not content with dropping all meaningful criticism of this bloody regime, he is essentially running a pro-China public relations campaign that is the shame of the modern presidency.

The report which appeared in the *New York Times* yesterday, regarding Clinton fundraiser Johnny Chung's testimony that he channeled tens of thousands of dollars from General Liu Huaqing, China's top military commander, to the

national Democratic Party during President Clinton's 1996 re-election campaign, raises even more troubling concerns about our national security. According to the *Times*, General Liu "was in charge of China's drive to modernize the People's Liberation Army (PLA) by selling weapons to other countries and using the hard currency to acquire Western technology." At the time the Chinese campaign money was flowing, President Clinton was making it easier for American civilian communications satellites to be launched by Chinese rockets, a major goal of the PLA. How deep is Clinton's betrayal of American voters and those whose lives depend on US advocacy of human rights? In 1994, when he was vigorously lobbying to extend Most Favored Nation status, the president countered criticism from human rights groups by promising to keep China's feet to the fire regarding its abysmal human rights record. He pledged, explicitly and passionately, that he would "step up efforts" to secure approval of a UN resolution condemning abuses if changes were not made, a resolution that is "a matter of life and death" for Chinese reform, according to Wei Jingsheng, a released dissident who is rightly called the Solzhenitsyn of China's pro-democracy movement.

MFN was extended. So were the rights abuses. While the State Department's most recent report on China was rightly criticized by groups such as Amnesty International for pulling punches, even it reported "widespread and well-documented" horrors, including state-sanctioned murder, torture, arbitrary arrest and detention, forced abortion and sterilization, and continued brutalization of Protestant and Catholic believ-

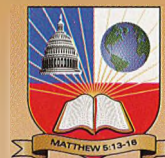
ers and ethnic minorities, including Tibetans. Clinton's own assistant secretary of state for Asia admits that "the situation has deteriorated." How has the administration reacted? With silence. Silence despite the fact, as the *Washington Post* recently said, that "China's regime is [as] oppressive today as it was" in 1994. Silence despite the fact that last month the FBI arrested two Chinese agents for allegedly attempting to sell human organs plundered from Chinese prisoners. Silence despite the fact that it knows sanctions do work. When the Clinton administration threatened \$3 billion in sanctions unless China stopped pirating CDs, it showed its sense of priorities. Pop stars are apparently worthy of protection, but political and religious dissidents are not. By the way, this move did not work. The Chinese merely made a show of compliance.

Not only has the president failed to push the UN resolution, but his administration has tried to silence other critics. It attempted to pull the plug on a Voice of America Mandarin Chinese broadcast featuring Wei Jingsheng. It has strongly opposed the Freedom from Religious Persecution Act,

which would create an office in the State Department to monitor international religious persecution and recommend reasonable penalties. The result of his China pandering cannot be understated. As Wei Jingsheng said, "If the United States, Britain, and other European Union members don't take the lead on a UN resolution criticizing China's human rights practices, the resolution will die, and the international community will lose a critical opportunity to promote improved respect for human rights for the Chinese and Tibetan people." The torture and murder will continue, with the Clinton administration's tacit blessing. Wei's warning proved to be prophetic. The US pulled the plug on a resolution even being introduced and, sure enough, it died.

Throughout the Clinton scandals, some of us have argued that a man who will lie to his family will lie to the rest of the world. The ever-widening squalor of the Clinton administration, with its deadly worldwide consequences, proves once again that every public horror has its roots in private moral belief, or lack thereof. **LAND**

You are invited to be a part of an exciting **PRO-FAMILY RALLY** to be held at Broadmoor Baptist Church in Memphis, Tenn. The event will begin at 1:00 p.m. Sat., July 25, and will feature U.S. Senator John Ashcroft, Gary Bauer of the Family Research Council, Phyllis Schlafly of Eagle Forum, the ERLC's Dr. Richard Land, and a host of other well-known guests.



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The Young and Addicted

The note found in Moshe Pergament's car read: "Tell the police I'm sorry, but I wanted to die." The 19-year-old "good boy," as his family and neighbors described him, was a well-publicized victim of a hidden epidemic sweeping this country – teen-age gambling.

Last fall Pergament drove his car erratically along New York's Long Island Expressway, hoping police would stop him. When they did, he jumped from his car, brandished a silver-colored gun, and dashed toward police officers, ignoring repeated warnings to stop and drop the gun. When Pergament made his way around a patrol car the policemen were using as a shield, the officers fired. The shaken officers then found the note and discovered, to their horror, the teen-ager had used a \$1.75 toy pistol to force them to kill him. A girl friend later told investigators: He could not repay a \$6,000 World Series debt.

Moshe Pergament followed the tragic pattern of most adolescent gamblers who engage in betting on sports, at cards, in casinos, at the track, or in the lottery. Gambling is becoming a formidable new threat to our teenagers, and unlike alcohol and drugs, it usually goes undetected until it's too late.

"Little will change until society begins to view teen-age gambling with the same alarm directed at drugs and alcohol. Gambling is the addiction of the '90s," states Durand Jacobs, a psychologist and vice president of the National Council on Problem Gambling.

When a storm comes at sea, a ship turns to face the tempest. If the vessel allows the storm to hit its side, it will capsize. If it turns its back to the storm, the storm will drive it wherever the wind blows. Only in facing the storm is the ship safe. That's a good analogy of where we are today in the fight against teen-age gambling. Those who know of the problem often turn their backs to it. Those who don't are in danger of being overcome by the menace. We must face this tempest head-on, and our churches should be at the forefront.

Just like the problems associated with alcohol, if the problem of teen-age gambling goes unchallenged, our society will pay for it. In fact, we already are paying.

Studies show 5 to 11 percent of our teenagers today will become compulsive gamblers. In a state with two or more forms of legalized gambling, upwards of 3 percent of the population will become compulsive gamblers.

What can we do to protect our children? The Families First Foundation has some suggestions: First, be aware of the dangers of gambling. Support preventive education for youth. Encourage better law enforcement. Second, ask yourself, "Just what type of role model am I?" Does anyone in your family buy lottery tickets, visit casinos, or play bingo? Do some of your family members participate in sports betting and "office pools" to place wagers? Examples begin at home. Third, seek spiritual answers to all life's problems, including gambling. Jesus taught us, "No man can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other" (Matt. 6:24). Finally, seek help if you or someone you love has a problem.

The Arizona Council on Compulsive Gambling lists indicators to watch for in teenagers engaged in gambling:

- **Unexplained need for money.** Valuables missing from home. Borrowing money. Exaggerated display of money and other possessions. Unaccountable explanation for new items of value in their possession.

- **Withdrawal from family.** Change of personality, impatience, criticism, sarcasm. Tardy or missing school or class. Drop in grades. Fewer outside activities. Late night calls. Increased irritability, hostility. Unaccountable time away from home.

- **Interest in sports teams with no prior allegiance.** Excessive watching of TV sports. Overly upset at conclusion

Excerpted from commentary by Michael D. Chute, editor of the Florida Baptist Witness, with permission.

- Researchers have concluded that 9.9 to 14.2 percent of young people in America, ages 15-20, display problems in gambling behavior.
- A Florida survey found 80 percent of the state's teen-agers gambled at least one time last year. A similar study in New Jersey, a state with casinos, found more than 90 percent of that state's teens gambled at least once that year.
- A Louisiana study reported compulsive gambling in the 18-21 age group stands at 14.3 percent.

Source: Michael D. Chute of the *Florida Baptist Witness* (March 26, 1998)



"A state-sponsored lottery is the most insidious form of gambling. Government becomes the promoter of gambling. Government advertises gambling. Government tells the people to trust luck rather than hard work, savings, and family responsibility. . . . From a biblical perspective, gambling is wrong. From a social policy standpoint, gambling is destructive."

Bob Terry, editor of *The Alabama Baptist* (March 12, 1998)

of a game. Unusual interest in sports reports. Multiple game viewing. Charges to 1-900 sports phone numbers.

- **Gambling paraphernalia.** Betting slips. IOUs. Lottery tickets. Frequent cards/dice games at home. Gambling language in conversation. Overuse of word "bet" in vocabulary.

Some years ago the Associated Press carried a story about a dramatic rescue in Allentown, Pa. An 8-year-old boy had fallen into a creek and had been sucked into a large drainpipe. His whole body was submerged in the pipe and he was in danger of drowning. The boy's 12-year-old playmate extended his hand. Though the playmate could not pull him out of the swirling water, he held the boy safely until help arrived. When it comes to gambling, Christians and our churches are the extended arm of Christ to teen-agers who sorely need to be rescued.

Out With the Bad, In With the Good

A significant portion of prime time programming amounts to little more than an electronic twinkie—and often far worse. Yet, there are a number of commendable shows and encouraging moves by the networks. Last spring, for instance, ABC canceled two controversial programs, *Nothing Sacred* and *Ellen*, due to sagging ratings and questionable content.

In the case of *Ellen*, an informal poll conducted by *USA TODAY* discovered that more than 53% of viewers believed the show was too preoccupied with Ellen's gay agenda—a subject in which viewers were simply not interested. *PrimeTime Live* documented 13 of last season's 21 episodes had primarily gay themes, causing viewers to seek entertainment elsewhere.

Meanwhile, normally family-friendly fare such as *Touched by an Angel* (CBS), *The Cosby Show* (NBC), and *Home Improvement* (ABC) routinely place in the top ten most watched shows as compiled by Nielsen Media Research. With regard to children's programming, *Wishbone* is a delightful show where youngsters are taught important lessons about life by a little dog with a huge imagination. Likewise, *Arthur*, the irresistible aardvark, wrestles with his siblings as he learns about teamwork, getting along with others, and truth-telling. Both programs provide wonderful entertainment for kids 4 to 11.

Bob DeMoss, author of *21 Days to Better Family Entertainment and Learn to Discern* [Zondervan; see ad, p. 6], is an international speaker on youth culture. For more information regarding his multimedia seminar or video on popular entertainment, write: Entertainment Today, Inc., P.O. Box 121,228, Nashville, TN 37212.

The Outer Limits:

TELEVISION FOR A NEW CENTURY

BY BOB DEMOSS

There's a popular television show sweeping the nation. In it, people punch each other with the barbaric zeal of Attila the Hun, pull out their opponents' hair like a ravenous caveman protecting his turf, and spew enough coarse expletives to make a veteran sailor proud. Another Pro Wrestling program? Hardly. Just business as usual on the *Jerry Springer Show*.

And, sadly, millions of Americans are tuning in—upwards of 8 million every day. What's the attraction? Kinky sex, be it watching a 32-year-old divorced woman announce her engagement to her 19-year-old stepson. Maybe it's a guest revealing his/her sex change to his/her spouse prior to their marriage. Transvestites. Hookers. Strippers. Nothing is sacred. Decadent themes such as these, which would never have been permitted twenty years ago, have propelled the *Jerry Springer Show's* audience share nearly 200 percent in the last year. Springer, in a moment of rare self disclosure, told an

associate, "I know I'm going to hell for this."

If our tastes are like the Titanic, then Springer's show is the tip of the scandalous iceberg destined to sink our sensibilities to a new low. Take, for instance, the deal CBS penned with Howard Stern earlier this year. Even before the ink was dry, Stern went public to paint a picture of what we can expect from his warped imagination. In a press conference, Stern explained, "We'll have sex and nudity and lesbians. Standards have gone down to an all-time low, and I'm here to represent it. It's a miracle; I prayed to God for this."²²

Although not known for his promotion of traditional family values, Woody Allen even got it right when he observed, "In Beverly Hills they don't throw their garbage away. They make it into television shows."²³

Comedy Central's *South Park* could be considered that kind of trash. Here, four animated cartoon tykes wallow in toilet humor and debasing themes. A recent episode, entitled "Cartman Gets an Anal Probe," might even make

Beavis and Butthead blush. Flaming flatulence and mutilated animals all played for laughs. The show is routinely given television's strictest rating of TV-14.

If cartoons aren't your bag, the WB network hopes you'll join the action on *Dawson's Creek*—their highest rated show. Each week, there's a one-in-three chance that your teen-age daughter will be watching. What will she see? Past story lines have included teacher-student sex, adultery, and impotence. Themes such as these prompt the frequent TV-14 rating.

Is it really a surprise that a generation raised on Beavis and Associate would find the aforementioned programs entertaining? After all, the current cultural climate is clearly unencumbered by a moral compass. We've traded in reason for ratings systems. Common sense for corporate irresponsibility. Our morally numb society prefers to engage the recliner rather than their brains. This lack of discretion on our part ultimately fuels the networks' race to be racy.

Off the Edge

▲ The level of violence on television has remained about the same for three years, but the number of violent programs appearing in prime time has increased, according to a three-year study by four major universities.

Prime time shows with violent content on the broadcast networks increased 14 percent, to 67 percent of all shows examined. Shows on cable with violent content increased 10 percent, to 64 percent of shows. Nearly 75 percent of violent scenes on television "showed no remorse, criticism, or penalty for the violence." [New York Times, April 17, 1998]

▲ A three-week study by the Parents Television Council TV ratings system revealed that 54 percent of "family hour" shows contain sexual reference, 35 percent use foul language, and 19 percent have violent scenes. Also, 59 percent of PG-rated TV shows have sexual references, and 46 percent contain obscene language. Most of the observed programs failed to indicate a rating at all. [Family Research Council, April 1998]

▲ "Television has changed. Standards have gone down to an all-time low, and I'm here to represent it. It's a miracle; I prayed to God for this." Shock-jock Howard Stern announcing the planned August launch of *The Howard Stern Show* through CBS's syndication arm, Eyemark Entertainment. "We'll have sex and nudity and lesbians. We'll interview wackos from all walks of life," Stern said of the show which will air Saturday nights opposite NBC's *Saturday Night Live*. [New York Times, April 2, 1998]

"The bottom line is that children watching TV is *not* the problem; it's *what* they watch, *how much* they watch, *how they relate* to what they watch, and with *whom* they watch it. Like most useful things in life, TV is neither all good nor all bad. TV doesn't have to be banished from the home; it just needs to be corralled and tamed."

—Debra Koontz Traverso in *TV Time: 150 Fun Family Activities that Turn Your Television into a Learning Tool* (Avon Books: 1998)

When it's all said and done, the only "winners" are the cash-hungry corporate sponsors and the equally greedy network executives who pollute the public airwaves by putting profits ahead of social responsibility. And yet, can we blame them when millions of us, including a vast audience of believers, continue to demonstrate an unwillingness to demand better?

What's the Christian couch potato to do? Aside from letter writing and boycotting, maybe it's as simple as following the lead of Groucho Marx, who once quipped: "I find television very educational. Every time someone switches it on I go into another room and read a good book."¹ While you're at it, incorporate these practical ideas:

• **Post Psalm 101:3 above the TV:** "I will set no worthless thing before my eyes; I hate the work of those who fall away; it shall not fasten its grip to me." Discuss with your family what their response should be when a show fails to meet this high standard. (See Colossians 3:1-2, 5-6 for additional insight.)

• **Vote your convictions.**

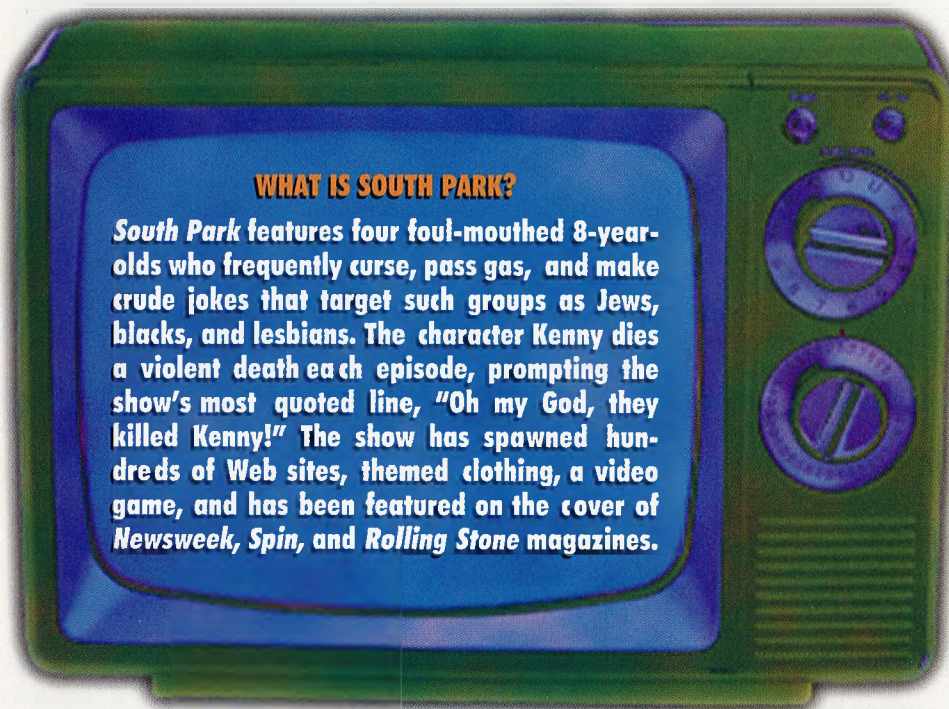
For the parent who wants to be more aggressive, vote with your pocketbook. Cancel premium cable channels such as HBO, Showtime, Cinemax, Comedy Central, and MTV. Why pay for programming which routinely mocks your values and stimulates spiritual indigestion?

• **Teach 'em to pray:**

Using John 11:35, "Jesus wept," invite your family to pray, *Dear Jesus, I don't ever want to be the reason why you cry. I don't want to break your heart like that. When I watch TV, give me wisdom to make choices that please you.*

Personally speaking,

I have taken to heart the challenge of Ephesians 5:15-16: "Be careful how you walk, not as unwise men, but as wise, making the most of your time, because the days are evil." When it comes to future television choices, will you join me in this high calling? USA



¹ *Rolling Stone*, May 14, 1998, 68.

² *Citizen Issues Alert*, 4/8/98.

³ Woody Allen, in the film *Annie Hall*, 1977.

⁴ Groucho Marx, quoted in Leslie Halliwell, *Halliwell's Filmgoer's Companion* (1984) [Columbia Dictionary of Quotes, pg. 899].

▲ Rejected by The Fox Network and MTV, *South Park's* success is not lost on Comedy Central's President Doug Herzog. "We never thought its appeal would be this broad. This has been like rocket fuel." [*USA Today*, March 31, 1998]

▲ A 12-year-old boy left a suicide note telling his parents to watch *South Park* to learn why he killed himself. The note mentioned the animated character Kenny, a silent third-grader who is killed violently in every episode of the program. [Associated Press, May 22, 1998]

▲ An episode of Comedy Central's animated series *South Park* was the most-watched program on basic cable in April 1998, according to Nielsen rating numbers. The episode, which was to reveal character Cartman's paternity, was viewed in nearly 4 million homes. (*South Park* was cable's top-rated program in February; host Comedy Central's ratings were up 59 percent in the first quarter of the year.)

▲ "The *Jerry Springer Show* isn't the first program without any redeeming value to find its way onto the air. But it is by far the worst to ever do so. It is a cancer on our society—an integrity-eating virus that threatens to quicken the pace of our social and moral decline." [DeWayne Wickham, *New York Times*, April 28, 1998]

▲ World Championship Wrestling, a division of Turner Sports and Time Warner, promotes two of the highest rated prime time series on basic cable — *Nitro*, Turner's Monday night wrestling, and *Thunder*, Thursday night's wrestling offer. "The only thing that edges us out is *South Park*," said Alan Sharp, a WCW spokesman. [*New York Times*, March 30, 1998]

▲ According to Peter Weir, director of the film, *The Truman Show*, "Children see violence on TV so much that they don't know what's real or unreal.... We're like Alice in Wonderland. We're in TV-land. It's such a flood of images. We're just trying to keep our heads above water." [*USA Today*, June 5, 1998]

RECOMMENDED READING:

21 Days to Better Family Entertainment

Bob DeMoss gives the tools you need not only to choose better television viewing, but to equip your children for a lifetime of interacting with music, the movies, advertising, the Internet, magazines, computer games, and the news. In three weeks, you and your

family can exchange passive media consumption for smart, safe choices in entertainment.

BKTWE (139 pages, paperback) \$7.00 ea.

Learn to Discern

From advertising to music to movies to cyberporn, this hard-hitting book by Bob DeMoss won't just rouse you to action in the war for your children, it will equip you to win. You'll learn how to do more than merely limit your children's viewing and listening—you'll discover how you can train them to discern the lies aimed at them, so they can walk with wisdom in today's troubled culture.

WARNING: CONTAINS EXPLICIT MATERIAL.

BKLEA (235 pages, paperback) \$11.00 ea.

The Media-Wise Family: A Christian family guide to making morally and spiritually responsible decisions about movies, TV, and multimedia.

Ted Baehr, publisher of *MOVIEGUIDE*,

will not tell you to throw away your television or computer, but in this informative book he will:

- Challenge you to examine how you and your children use television, movies, and multimedia resources.
- Help you understand how your children learn and what effect entertainment has on them at different stages of their growth.
- Show you how to redeem the values of the media and use discernment in selecting your family's entertainment.

BKMED (423 pages, paperback) \$12.00 ea.

Excerpted from *TV Time: 150 Fun Family Activities that Turn Your Television into a Learning Tool*—

A useful new book from Avon Books that doesn't turn parents into TV police or youngsters into TV addicts, this guide gets you involved in managing your children's TV choices to entertain, inform, and stretch your child's imagination!

DO TV CHARACTERS WATCH TV?

"I'm so bored. There's nothing to do. I wish something exciting would happen to us like it does on TV."

I knew where my neighbor's 10-year-old daughter was heading with this conversation and what inevitable question would be next: "May we watch TV?" She knew the TV viewing rules in our house, and I didn't want to answer a question we both knew she already knew the answer to. I decided to preserve her dignity and mine by squelching the question before it was asked, so I replied, "Well, maybe the characters on TV live exciting lives because they don't watch much TV. Maybe they're busy doing, rather than watching."

Her look told me she was momentarily stifled as she searched her memory for scenes in which the characters watched TV. Taking advantage of the repose, I grabbed a sheet of paper, divided it into three columns, and sat down with her and her brother and my son at the kitchen table. "In the first two columns, let's make lists of all your favorite

characters and all the times you've seen them watching TV," I explained. "In the third column, we'll list the things they do for fun when they're not watching TV." As it turned out, they could remember only one program showing TV characters watching TV. Soon the children were arguing about what activities from the third column they wanted to do first.

THE RULES STAY THE SAME

Use common sense and self-evident rules to limit and monitor TV exactly as you limit and monitor other things in your child's life, such as after-school activities, bedtime, and junk food.

Make it clear to your child that time spent watching TV requires the same responsibility as every other activity she engages in. Use examples from her daily routine to explain our statements and to help her understand the seriousness of your rules. For example:

Proper eating. No doubt you have taught your child that she needs a variety of foods to stay healthy and to grow.

Likewise, children need variety when it comes to TV programs so that their minds stay healthy and stimulated with new, thought-provoking information. Also, if you insist your child eat nutritious meals rather than snacks, she will be more likely to understand your rules for her to watch specific quality shows instead of snacking through the day with background TV noise.

Swimming. You never allow your child to swim alone? Then don't let her watch TV alone either because she could drown in a TV pool of confusion, violence, and sex.

Friends. Do you take the time to meet your child's friends and see their homes before allowing her to stay overnight? You should also meet your child's TV selection by seeing them yourself before granting permission to spend time with the programs.

Once she understands the TV rules in these terms, your child may be more understanding of, and more willing to cooperate with, your desire to limit and monitor what she watches. —LW



The three books at left may be ordered from the ERLC by mail, phone, fax, or e-mail. See order form, p. 12, for details.

A Failed Defense:

T H E U N B O R N I N T R U D E R

BY DON BUCKLEY, M.D.

There is good news and bad news in the ongoing debate in America over the sanctity of all human life. The good news is that some abortion advocates have finally conceded that a human fetus in its mother's womb is truly a human being and not simply a blob of tissue. The bad news is that in their way of thinking it doesn't matter anyhow—a mother still has the “right” to kill her preborn but fully human infant.

Political science professor Eileen McDonagh, in her recent book, *Breaking Abortion Deadlock: From Choice to Consent*, writes that she has moved us beyond the impasse in abortion rights argumentation by conceding the humanity of human fetuses. Such a concession offers little safety for the intrauterine child, however, in this professor's chilling reasoning that follows. She goes on to write, “Even if the fetus were a person, a woman is justified in killing it because of what it does to her when it imposes wrongful pregnancy, whatever may be her personal reasons for doing so.”

It's all the fetus' fault anyway according to McDonagh, speaking here as a true daughter of Eve. Males do not cause pregnancy. Sexual intercourse does not cause pregnancy; fetuses do! And McDonagh says we should not judge a fetus according to what it is but rather according to what it does. The conclusion of this tortured line of reasoning by the professor is most nauseating as she writes, “Even in a medically normal pregnancy, the fetus massively intrudes on a woman's body and expropriates her liberty. If the woman does not consent to this transformation and use of her body, the



fetus' imposition constitutes injuries sufficient to justify the use of deadly force to stop it.” The author admits only briefly in passing that her depiction of the fetus as an “aggressive intruder” is “stretching the usual understanding of pregnancy.” This is an understatement. One wonders if her description of pregnancy was written after viewing the old sci-fi thriller *Alien*. Her account of fetal development sounds more akin to alien creatures parasitizing human abdominal cavities than to the beautiful and natural event called pregnancy.

The reader should note that McDonagh's book is not the isolated rantings of an individual on the fringes of the pro-choice movement. To the contrary, her book was released by a prestigious academic book publisher and heartily endorsed by Patricia Ireland of NOW and Eleanor Smeal of the Feminist

Majority Foundation.

Professor McDonagh notes that the major point of contention in the abortion debate has been over the humanity of

“Even if the fetus were a person, a woman is justified in killing it because of what it does to her when it imposes wrongful pregnancy, whatever may be her personal reasons for doing so.”

— Political science professor Eileen McDonagh, in her book, *Breaking Abortion Deadlock: From Choice to Consent*

the fetus. Pro-lifers insist that a fetus is a human and that abortion is murder. Abortion advocates until recently have argued the contrary. Advancing knowledge in fetal development and ultrasound technology confirming the humanity of the fetus is increasingly causing some abortion apologists such as McDonagh to recast their

arguments lest their cause be “fatally undermined.”

The former abortionist, Bernard Nathanson, has experienced firsthand the impotence of pro-choice ideology to explain away the wondrous work of God in a mother's womb. In his recent book, *The Hand of God*, Nathanson writes: “When ultrasound in the early 1970s confronted me with the sight of the embryo in the womb, I simply lost my faith in abortion on demand.” By the grace of God, this former head of the largest abortion clinic in the world now has a newly found faith in Christ's life giving power. In a 1974 article in the *New England Journal of Medicine*, Nathanson courageously writes, “There is no longer serious doubt in my mind that human life exists within the womb from the very onset of pregnancy despite the fact that the nature of intrauterine life has been the subject of considerable dispute in the past.”

In previous days such an

acknowledgment of the humanity of the fetus would convince most citizens that abortion was a great moral evil to be opposed. This was due primarily to the pervasiveness of the Judeo-Christian worldview in American society. Even non-believers held to a somewhat civic dogma against abortion

Continued on p. 14.

Don Buckley and his wife, Janice, are family practice physicians in Pensacola, Fla., and the parents of two children.

HOW TO PRAY FOR PE

BY JOHN

The 20th century boasts more martyrs than all other 19 combined. Last year alone 160,000 of our brothers and sisters paid for integrity with the price of their lives. Shocking as these facts are, they have mysteriously been hidden from the Western church until recently. Through the efforts of World Evangelical Fellowship's International Day of Prayer for the Persecuted Church emphasis, a number of churches and organizations are awakening to this holocaust, asking with a righteous indignation: "What can we do?" It is just this question that I propose to explore and answer by examining the Scripture.

In order to focus our attention, we will investigate how Jesus handled persecution and how He instructed His followers to handle it. Then we will address how the apostles and the early church dealt with this dreadful reality.

The first extended treatment of persecution in the New Testament occurs in the 10th chapter of Matthew. Jesus simultaneously issues a call to apostleship and a warning of persecution. In verse 25, Jesus notes His own persecution and the fact that "a disciple is not above his master." If they persecuted Jesus, they would persecute the disciples. He then gives the secret for handling persecution. Three times in verses 26-31 Jesus

commands that they respond by **not being afraid**. Never is deliverance of their life, nor immunity from pain, even mentioned. Instead of promising protection, Jesus gives three reasons not to fear: verse 26, evil will be revealed; verse 28, God is the One to fear; and verse 29-31, God loves them very much.

Is that encouragement not contrary to the basic inclinations of the human nature? When injustice comes, is there not an intense desire for vindication? When life is threatened, is self-preservation not instinctual?

I'm assuming that God's commands are not only good, but they represent the very best for us. If that is the case,

then Jesus evidently considered lack of fear as better than preservation of life. How did His disciples respond to that kind of teaching? Did the early Christians adopt the belief system of Jesus? Let's look at a few more passages of Scripture.

In the 4th chapter of Acts we find the first recorded persecution of the apostles. The elders severely threatened them (verses 17, 21) not to speak anymore in the name of Jesus. Peter and John related their words to the church, and they turned to the Lord in prayer. It would logically seem that they would pray for protection or for God to turn the hearts of the Sanhedrin, but in verse 29 they asked for



Christians of Shanti Nagar, Pakistan, were forced to leave their homes when Muslims burned their village in February 1997. The attack on this village and neighboring Khanewal by an estimated 30,000 to 50,000 armed Muslims was the result of a rumor that a Christian had burned a copy of the Koran. Many Pakistani Christians have been falsely accused of breaking Law 295c—blaspheming Mohammed—a law punishable by death. Some have even been killed after being acquitted of such charges.



Vietnam has historically been a hotbed of struggle. France governed there until 1954, but in 1975, Vietnamese and Lao Communists took over. Today, many Christians are fined two to three months' wages for "illegally organizing evangelistic activities," and some are imprisoned for preaching. A major house church meeting point was raided in Ho Chi Minh City in late July 1997, and police seized over 500 Bibles, training books, and videos from the District One site of the 16,000-member Assemblies of God (AOG) in Vietnam. The AOG is recognized by AOG worldwide, but not by the Vietnamese government.

Remember the Perse

In an effort to raise awareness of the Martyrs, Inc., has prepared (below) saying, "remember the see 25,000 churches place these September to urge Christians w brothers and sisters.

For yard signs, call VOM at 1-800-747-0085. Bumper stickers may be ordered from the ERLC at 1-800-475-9127.



Quantity discounts are available.

pakistan vietnam

PERSECUTED CHRISTIANS

FRANKLIN

boldness! God affirmed that prayer in verse 31 by filling them with the Holy Spirit so that they spoke with **boldness**.

Paul's jail cell request to the Ephesians was not for freedom, but rather twice he asked for **boldness** (6:19, 20) in the proclamation of the Gospel. In Philippians 1:19, 20, he believed that he would be delivered from prison by the church's prayers, but he acknowledged the possibility that it might not turn out that way. Whatever the case, his greatest desire was that with all **boldness** he should not be put to shame in anything, but that Christ might be exalted in his body, whether by life or by death.

How interesting that

the ones being persecuted prayed for courage instead of deliverance.

Boldness in the face of physical danger was the obvious choice of Peter and Paul. Did they limit this practice to themselves, or did they encourage others to behave similarly? Peter counsels believers facing persecution to "**not fear their intimidation, and do not be troubled**" (1 Pet. 3:14, NAS). Paul likewise wrote joyfully that his imprisonment resulted in many of the brethren speaking the word of God more **courageously without fear** (Phil. 1:14). Later in verse 28 he tells the church **not to be alarmed by their opponents in any way**, because their

faith in God is a sign to unbelievers that God will destroy them, while they themselves will be saved.

Finally, it should be noted that our Lord Himself set the pace by His fearlessness during His trial and crucifixion. He, our example, not only modeled boldness but expects it of His church. In Revelation 2:10, He tells His church they are about to experience tribulation, but "**Do not fear** . . . Be faithful unto death."

In summary, Christ modeled it and commanded it; the apostles prayed for it, requested that others intercede on their behalf for it, modeled it, encouraged it, and commanded it. Therefore, it behooves us to work with all our might

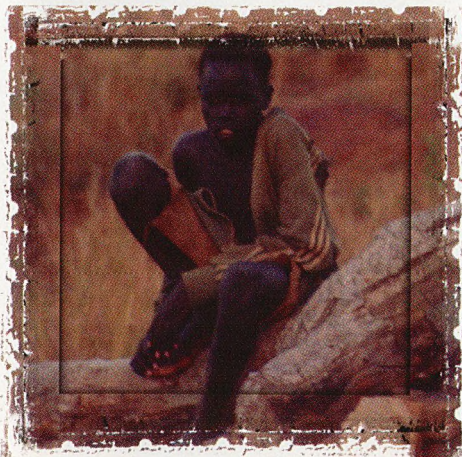
to liberate our brothers and sisters, but until that day comes, to spend the primary thrust of our prayers in asking God to grant them boldness before their persecutors as they testify of Christ. ■

John Franklin serves with LifeWay Christian Resources (formerly Baptist Sunday School Board) as prayer and discipleship consultant. Prior to joining the LifeWay staff, Franklin was minister of prayer at First Baptist Church, Woodstock, Ga. T.W. Hunt served as the Sunday School Board's prayer consultant up to his retirement in 1994.

The International Day of Prayer is Nov. 15, 1998. Contact the ERLC for this year's Day of Prayer resource kit to aid your church in praying for persecuted Christians worldwide.

rted...

persecuted Christians, Voice yard signs and bumper stickers "persecuted." VOM's goal is to front of their buildings by dwide to pray for persecuted



In Sudan, Africa's largest country, an onslaught of persecution has forced 3.5 million people to flee their homes and claimed the lives of approximately two million people—mostly Christians—due to an attempt by the Muslim government to Islamize the entire population. In the South, fathers are killed, mothers raped, and children sold into slavery. In 1997, the day after Easter, police drove a bulldozer through a Catholic church and school in a shanty town south of Khartoum. The action followed similar moves by authorities in December and January, when a Catholic church, three schools, and a community center were leveled in Khartoum North and Omdurman.



Only 90 miles off the Florida Straits lies one of the last "champions" of Communism—Cuba. In 1959, Fidel Castro came to power threatening, "Socialism or die." Today, despite claims by the Cuban government that there is freedom of religion, Christians are still imprisoned, churches are destroyed, and Bibles and Christian literature are confiscated. In 1996, the Ministry of Justice ordered the closure of all house churches like the one above, a number estimated between 3,000 and 10,000.

sudan cuba

Remember the PERSECUTED

www.persecution.com

PRICES

Sign (24" x 18") \$15.00 ea.

Sign (30" x 24") \$18.00 ea.

Bumper stickers \$15.00/25

Caring for God's Creation

SOUTHERN BAPTIST CHURCHES AND ENVIRONMENTAL STEWARDSHIP

Steps Your Church Can Take to Help the Environment

1. Take an energy audit to see how your church uses energy.
2. Xeriscape your land by using native grasses, flowers, bushes, etc. to reduce water consumption.
3. Encourage church members to bring their aluminum cans to church for money for missions.
4. Put building thermostats on timers to automatically turn up or down.
5. Distribute the church newsletter by e-mail and fax to reduce paper costs.
6. Provide a park and ride shuttle service so that members use less gas getting to church.
7. Build multi-purpose buildings to reduce the costs of heating and cooling different spaces for each church activity.
8. Plant trees around buildings to help cool them in the summer and reduce lawn watering demands.
9. Replace incandescent lights with the new low energy fluorescent lights.
10. Replace flood/spot lights with tungsten-halogen bulbs.
11. Replace single pane windows with double pane windows.
12. Re-caulk the exterior of the building.

BY BARRETT DUKE

A survey conducted by the ERLC in the November-December 1997 issue of *Light* reveals that Southern Baptists are caring for God's creation in a number of innovative ways. A church in North Carolina annually celebrates Environmental Earth Day in April. After the service, church members recognize "Clean Sweep Beach Day," during which they clean up the local beach and stress the importance of recycling. Another church includes multi-media presentations emphasizing the beauty of God's creation and the need for Christians to care for it. They include "better care of God's creation" as a regular item on their weekly prayer list. Another congregation camps and hikes at a nature center regularly as a church and worships outdoors at least four times a year.

Another popular activity in Southern Baptist churches is the collection of aluminum cans, most often to

raise money for missions. Many churches no longer use Styrofoam cups, replacing them with ceramic mugs that can be reused or environment-friendly disposable products (usually recycled paper products).

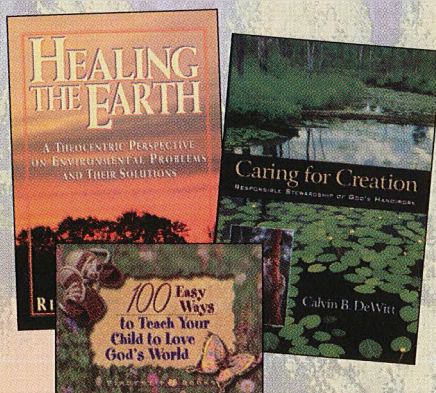
Some church youth groups have taken on neighborhood litter collection programs as ministry activities. A youth group in Tennessee went into one of the local public housing developments and picked up trash and swept sidewalks, providing an opportunity for the church to communicate its interest in the well-being of the poor in its community and for the youth to make a contribution to their community. Another church takes its teens into the local wildlife refuge to remove the trash that collects in the water and on the grounds, reminding them that keeping the environment clean makes for healthier wildlife and a better place for people to visit. They also use it as a

witness to the community to demonstrate that Christians are actively involved in care for the environment.

What we have learned from our survey is that there is no formal approach to environmental stewardship among Southern Baptist churches. As individuals become aware of needs, they are devising their own responses. Their creativity is enabling churches to develop responses particularly suited to their unique situation and needs. What this should tell all of our churches is that they can do something. It may not be what any other church is doing, but they can each make a difference. Perhaps your church cares for creation in a way we haven't mentioned. Please let us know so we can share your ideas.

As with any social issue, it should be the people of God serving as a model of Christ-led activism—to reclaim and maintain the environment. ■

RECOMMENDED READING:



Healing the Earth

Richard A. Young contends that Christianity is the best philosophical/theological framework for developing solutions to today's ecological crisis, dispelling the criticism by some that Christianity spawns negative attitudes toward nature and has resulted in greed and materialism caused by God's command to "subdue" the earth and "have dominion" over it. (Broadman & Holman Publishers, 1994)

Caring for Creation

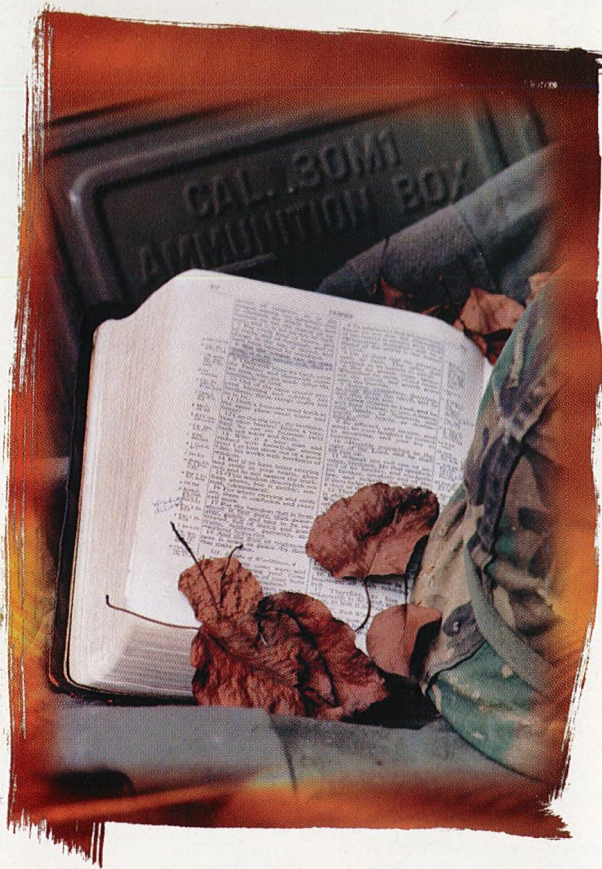
Calvin B. DeWitt offers a biblical approach to being a good steward of the earth, addressing such issues as global warming, land degradation, and species extinction. (Baker Books, 1998)

100 Easy Ways to Teach Your Child to Love God's World

These tips are easily implemented and teach children to love God's world and its Creator. Available from the ERLC. See order form, p. 12.

BKONE (100 pages)

\$4.99



"The wisdom that is from above is ... peaceable"

James 3:17

BY TOM STRODE

When British Prime Minister Neville Chamberlain returned from the Munich Conference of 1938, he held aloft a piece of paper that he said secured "peace for our time." He had agreed to the annexation of the Sudetenland, a portion of Czechoslovakia, in order to appease Adolf Hitler and his powerful Nazi forces. Eleven months later, however, Nazi Germany launched its march through Europe. Chamberlain's "peace" had prevented neither World War II nor the carnage of untold lives.

In Chamberlain's wisdom, he saw a peace for the many derived from the subjugation of the few as a worthy goal. His wisdom was not biblical, however, and neither was the peace

he obtained. He had made a false peace with an unholy regime whose goal was power, not peace.

There is a prerequisite to a proper peace. James 3:17 describes God's wisdom as "peaceable," but only if it is "first pure." The late New Testament Greek scholar A.T. Robertson, longtime professor at The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, wrote of this passage: "But clearly great as peace is, purity (righteousness) comes before peace, and peace at any price is not worth the having."

It is true of individuals, of families, of churches, even of countries. No person will have peace with God until he or she is purified through the blood of the Lord Jesus. No believer

will have the peace of God unless he or she repents of sin and seeks to live a life of holiness. No family will have peace until its members confess their offenses toward one another. No church will have peace unless it deals with sin in the body.

Since God is sovereign and holy, how can a people expect Him to provide peace when they worship materialism and sex, serve themselves instead of others, and refuse to protect the unborn, the disabled, and the critically ill?

The answer to both questions is obvious: They cannot.

Worldly wisdom will not gain God's kind of peace. "The wisdom that is from above" will produce such peace, because such wisdom is pure. ■

Safe Surfing on the Internet

It's more evident than ever — not all Internet filtering mechanisms are made alike. Cyber Patrol, a popular Internet filtering software package, is now blocking the Web site of the American Family Association (AFA). According to the Family Research Council (*Culture Facts*, June 3, 1998), the AFA is being targeted because it violates Cyber Patrol's guidelines of intolerance.

Yet that is no surprise when you hear that the Gay & Lesbian Alliance Against Defamation (GLAAD) is a charter member of Cyber Patrol's oversight committee. According to the report in *Culture Watch*, GLAAD is "a homosexual media group that promotes transgenderism, childhood anti-'homophobia' education, and tolerance for sadomasochists, as well as other bizarre sexual behaviors."

Cyber Patrol initially blocked homosexual-oriented sites, according to the report. Yet pressure from GLAAD in late 1995 prompted the screening software provider to form an oversight committee with representatives "from diverse areas of expertise and experience." A GLAAD spokesperson at the time praised Cyber Patrol, saying, "This gesture demonstrates their understanding that gay men and lesbians are a very important part of the Internet community."

Of even greater concern is the fact that personal computer-based filtering software such as Cyber Patrol can be manipulated and bypassed by the user to allow the free run of the Internet. That is why the ERLC has endorsed Rated-G Online.

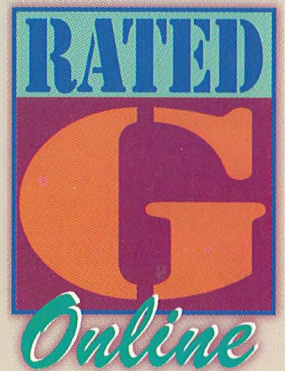
The Rated-G system resides at the server level, far from innovative hackers in your home. Rated-G Online provides security and safety for your family as they surf the 'net. This most up-to-date technology searches daily the entire Web for offensive and dangerous sites using a process more sophisticated than key-word exclusion.

Rated-G Online is the official Internet Service Provider of the SBC's Ethics & Religious Liberty Commission — at the office and in staff members' homes.

To become an ERLC Rated-G Online subscriber, call 888-711-6381 or visit www.rated-g.com. Be sure to mention extension 521 when you call. A percentage of your sign-on and monthly fees will be returned to the SBC Ethics & Religious Liberty Commission for further ministry.

STANDARD PLAN:
\$24.95 per month
(4 e-mail addresses)

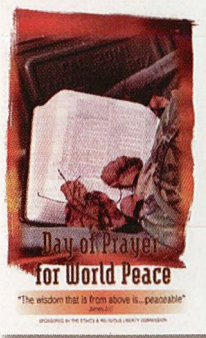
SET-UP CHARGE: \$25.00 (one-time)



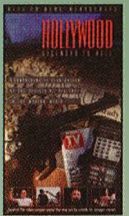
Observe the Day of Prayer for World Peace on Aug. 2, 1998.

The products on pages 12-13 will aid churches in informing their congregations of ways to deal with these issues in their homes, communities, and nation.

PESET *\$1.40 ea.*



\$12.95 ea.



\$.17 ea.



Note: No additional shipping costs for rice bowls.

1998 Anti-Gambling Bulletin Insert*

This piece looks at gambling as "a temptation and a snare" (1 Tim. 6:9) and offers biblical insight to help believers avoid its pitfalls. Undated. One of a series.

GABUL \$06 ea.

1998 Anti-Gambling Sunday Poster*

This full-color 11"x17" poster complements the bulletin insert above to promote Anti-Gambling Sunday. Undated. One of a series.

GAPOS \$.95 ea.

Suggested Sermon: "A Temptation and a Snare"*

A look at gambling in light of 1 Timothy 6:9-11. Complete with illustrations of the biblical principles that are shared, it can be used in either a preaching or teaching setting.

GASER \$.22 ea.

Fact Sheet: Gambling*

This new fact sheet offers statistics and startling facts about gambling in our culture. It targets gambling's influence on teens, politics, crime, addiction, suicide, poverty, greed, sports, and the Internet. These fact sheets are useful as hand-outs or for reference in sermon preparation when addressing gambling issues.

GAFAC \$.22 ea.

Anti-Gambling Resource Set

Includes one of each item on this page indicated by an asterisk (*).

GASET \$2.85 ea.



AUDIO TAPE

Gambling and Organized Crime

Austin McGuigan, Chief State Attorney for Connecticut, shares a moving firsthand account of the tragic social and economic effects of legalized gambling in that state. This audio tape should be heard by anyone interested in an eyewitness account of the involvement of organized crime in gambling.

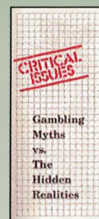
CASSGAM \$2.95 ea.

PAMPHLETS

"Critical Issues: Gambling Myths vs. Hidden Realities"*

This pamphlet refutes the 10 most widely used arguments for gambling through Scripture, actual statistics, and real-life situations.

CIGAM \$.33 ea.



"Issues & Answers: Gambling"*

An introduction to issues related to gambling, discussing evangelism, education, rehabilitation, and legislation as ways to deal with it. Includes eight points for personal action in impacting gambling.

IAGAM \$.17 ea.



"Gambling: Ten Myths vs. Real Truth"*

Compiled by Dr. Lamar Cooper, this sheet will quickly help one understand the Bible's definite stance against gambling. It dispels arguments that people advance in support of gambling. An excellent bulletin insert or hand-out.

GATEN \$.22 ea.



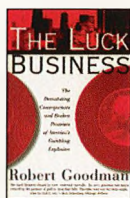
Observe Anti-Gambling Sunday on Sept. 20, 1998.

BOOKS

The Luck Business

This widely quoted work on the devastating effects of government promoted gambling draws on the landmark United States Gambling Study and features interviews with politicians, industry leaders, and experts. Robert Goodman shows that bidding by states for gambling enterprises fails to provide desperately needed new revenues and jobs.

BKLUC (273 pages) \$11.50 ea.



Seducing America: Is Gambling a Good Bet?

Rex Rogers stirs Christians into action with true stories of lives destroyed by gambling. He provides a biblical analysis and a hard-hitting look at legalized gambling's effect on America.

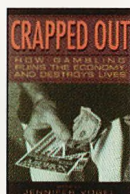
BKSED (176 pages) \$10.00 ea.



Crapped Out: How Gambling Ruins the Economy and Destroys Lives

This book includes the most significant articles ever written about gambling from *US News and World Report*, major gambling trade publications, and national and regional newspapers. It is loaded with statistics and powerful personal stories.

BKCR (233 pages) \$15.50 ea.

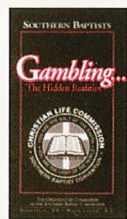


VIDEO TAPE

Gambling: The Hidden Realities

The public has been the victim of a well-orchestrated, well-financed campaign to present gambling as harmless family entertainment. This video explodes myths about the benefits of gambling by sharing what has really happened to people and communities where gambling has been implemented.

VTGAM (VHS, 19 min.) \$19.95 ea.



GAMBLING: A CHRISTIAN PERSPECTIVE SERIES

"Casino Gambling"*

As the casino industry entrenches itself deeper in the fabric of communities across the U.S., it is important for Southern Baptists to understand the dangers that casinos present. This new casino gambling pamphlet forcefully lays out the case against casino gambling from the social, economic, and moral perspectives. Thoroughly documented with the most up-to-date sources, it can be read quickly or used for in-depth study and further research.

GACAS \$.22 ea.

"Pari-Mutuel Gambling"*

This discussion of legalized gambling on horse racing and other competition offers specific actions to take to combat its spread in the community.

GAPAR \$.22 ea.

"Biblical Insights on Gambling"*

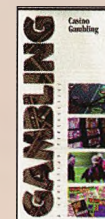
This pamphlet offers biblical principles opposed to gambling to help readers avoid the gambling trap in their own lives.

GABIB \$.22 ea.

"State Operated Lotteries"*

State-sponsored gambling, or lotteries, are being pushed on the American people by their own governments in order to wring more money from their pockets without the political fallout associated with tax increases. Today, 37 states and the District of Columbia conduct some form of lottery in order to raise money. The problem with lotteries is that they encourage people to gamble. Some of those people will find themselves addicted and will actually destroy their lives through this state-sponsored, state-promoted form of gambling.

GASTA \$.22 ea.



A Failed Defense

(FROM P. 7)

based on a "reverence for life." In today's increasingly post-Christian culture, however, such a consensus is eroding in the wake of moral relativism and radical individualism. In other words, self-esteemed and self-absorbed individuals will accept no restraints on their uninhibited pursuit of pleasure. If a child in the womb is considered by the mother or father to be "inconvenient," then who can deny the "right" to abortion? After all, Professor McDonough tells us that the fetus is an intruder in the womb unless the mother has expressly given her consent to pregnancy.

McDonough's legal argument that abortion can be viewed as a form of justifiable homicide is reprehensible and yet predictable given the erosion of society's respect for life. Yet, one cannot help but feel that her arguments are more muddled-headed than evil. Unborn children do not cause pregnancies. Couples do. As my unsanctified friends tell it, "If you play, you pay." It is a weak and beggarly argument that tries to blame a pregnancy on the fetus. One also wonders how the mother of two children can advance an argument for the use of "lethal force" against unborn children all the while acknowledging their full humanity.

Paul reminds us that we "must no longer live as the Gentiles do in the futility of their thinking. They are darkened in their understanding and separated from the life of God because of the ignorance that is in them due to the hardening of their hearts" (Eph. 4:17, 18, NIV). We as evangelical Christians do not buy in to pro-choice "rights" rhetoric, for we understand that our lives and those of our unborn children are not our own but rather belong to our Creator. He delights in reflecting His image in our humanity and holds accountable those who would snuff out His image in the womb.

As one reads McDonough's book it is eerily apparent that her arguments are similar to the Nazi propagandists who held that there is indeed "life unworthy of life" (*Lebensunwertes Leben*). The Nazis used this concept to justify mass murder through abortion, euthanasia, and execution in gas chambers. Against this madness the words of the martyred German pastor, Dietrich Bonhoeffer, still ring true today when he said, "In the eyes of God, there is no life that is not worth living." LUCEY



"A temptation and a snare"

1 Timothy 6:9

BY BARRETT DUKE

In a Tennessee community, Robert and Rose opened a bank account that enabled them to borrow against the equity in their home. After taking care of some financial matters, they put the checks away for use in emergency situations. What Robert did not know was that his wife had begun to gamble. In less than a year, Rose had signed her name and her husband's name to \$28,070.24 in checks. She had spent the money on gambling and paying off delinquent debts incurred because of her growing addiction to gambling. The bank threatened to foreclose on their house if they could not make the mortgage payments. Finally, Rose had to tell her husband what she had done. In a note to her husband

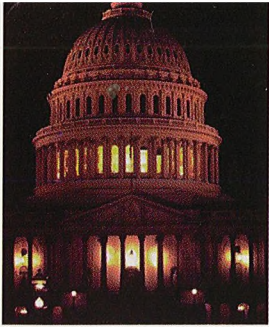
she confessed that her gambling problem "just kept getting bigger and bigger and now I see no way out." Robert divorced his wife and filed criminal charges against her in a last-ditch attempt to save their house. This tragic story reveals the painful reality that "they that will be rich fall into temptation and a snare, and into many hurtful lusts, which drown men in destruction and perdition" (1 Tim. 6:9).

This couple's experience is being repeated over and over by people who view gambling as a means to quick wealth. Their desire for riches leads them into a snare that grows tighter and tighter even as they struggle to get out. Robert said that his wife continued to gamble because "she just hoped that she could win it all back."

All she won was a destroyed marriage and a broken family.

As you consider what you will do about gambling, you would do well to heed this advice from Scripture and save yourself much heartache. Perhaps it would help put gambling in perspective if you considered that the money that gambling offers to you is the money that someone else has lost. In fact, some of it might even be Robert and Rose's money. As responsible Christians, it is our duty to encourage healthy lifestyles. Gambling creates too much pain for anyone to call it healthy or harmless. Let us all set the example and deny gambling its opportunity to ensnare us or anyone else by refusing to participate in it. LUCEY

Observe Anti-Gambling Sunday on Sept. 20, 1998.



Action Needed on Persecution, ERLC's Land Tells Senate Panel

BY TOM STRODE

The worst thing Congress could do on the issue of religious persecution overseas is to take no action, said Richard Land, ERLC President, before a U.S. Senate committee.

Testifying in a Foreign Relation's Committee hearing on Senate legislation aimed at thwarting persecution, Land said either of two congressional approaches would be preferable to no legislation.

"We've done nothing for far too long," said Land. "To put it charitably, the U.S. State Department under both Republicans and Democrats has had a remarkably tin ear to this particular kind of persecution. And I do not believe that is going to stop without some kind of effective legislation from the Congress."

Land joined four other religious leaders in expressing from qualified to firm support for the International Religious Freedom Act at a June 17 hearing. The bill, sponsored by Sen. Don Nickles, R.-Okla., would place an office on international religious freedom headed by an Ambassador at Large in the State Department. It also would establish a Commission on International Religious Persecution, with two members appointed by the President, two by the President Pro Tem of the Senate, and two by the Speaker of the House.

The Nickles approach would give the President more latitude in determining how to respond to violations of religious liberty than a bill passed overwhelmingly in the House of Representatives in May. The Freedom From Religious Persecution Act, sponsored by Rep. Frank Wolf, R.-Va., and Sen. Arlen Specter, R.-Pa.,

would require automatic sanctions if it were determined violations had been committed. The Wolf-Specter proposal would ban exports and nonhumanitarian aid to governments found guilty

legislation, President Clinton announced June 18 the creation of a new State Department position—Senior Adviser for International Religious Freedom. The President announced the

the bill's application to the "most extreme forms of persecution."

While there is not unanimity on how to solve the problem of religious persecution, Land told the



TARGETING PERSECUTION — Among those testifying June 17 in a Foreign Relation's Committee hearing on Senate legislation aimed at thwarting religious persecution were (L-R): Episcopal Bishop Munawar (Mano) Rumalshah of Pakistan; Richard Land of the SBC's Ethics & Religious Liberty Commission; Felice Gaer of the American Jewish Committee; John Akers of East Gates Ministries International.

of widespread persecution of religious adherents or of failing to try to stop such persecution, although the President would have the authority to waive the penalties.

The ERLC endorsed the Wolf-Specter bill because it was the House vehicle dealing with the problem, Land said. "I think that the Nickles bill certainly addresses our concerns substantially in the Senate. Our position is that we want the best bill that can be passed" in this Congress, he told the panel.

The Nickles bill is expected to pass the Senate, leaving the differences to be worked out in conference.

In a move apparently in response to congressional activity on the persecution issue and possibly in an attempt to thwart unwanted

appointment of Robert Seiple, President of World Vision United States, to the post. World Vision is a Christian-based relief organization ministering in more than 100 countries.

While Land did not specifically endorse the Nickles bill, he said the ERLC would strongly support legislation including at least these features:

- A Senate-confirmed ambassador or director and a Senate-confirmed commission, with congressional review of both entities;
- Public reports of and congressional review of the President's responses to recommendations from the ambassador/director and commission;
- A definition of persecution not so narrow as to limit

committee, "If there is near unanimity on any issue among Southern Baptists, it is on the issue of religious freedom being the fundamental human right."

Southern Baptist International Mission Board President Jerry Rankin and IMB Executive Vice President Don Kammerdiener agreed the right kind of legislation is "both beneficial and necessary," Land said.

Others testifying were William O'Brien of Samford University and former Executive Vice President of the International Mission Board, John Akers of East Gates Ministries International, Episcopal Bishop Munawar (Mano) Rumalshah of Pakistan, and Felice Gaer of the American Jewish Committee.

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Dr. Richard Land shares biblically based viewpoints on social issues with listeners who wrestle with issues of faith in a culture that has blurred the lines between right and wrong on the Ethics & Religious Liberty Commission's radio program, **For Faith & Family**. The program is heard on more than 180 radio stations Monday through Friday. The half-hour, call-in program is broadcast live at 11:30 a.m. (CST). Live and archived programs also may be heard via the Internet by visiting the ERLC's Web site at www.erlc.com. Call the ERLC office at (615) 244-2495 or see our Web site for a listing of stations carrying the show and the times they broadcast it. The ERLC Web site also has information on a wide variety of ethical and cultural issues impacting society.

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