

LIGHT

INSIDE!
Celebrating
Dr. Land's Ten
Years of Service

THE ETHICS & RELIGIOUS LIBERTY COMMISSION OF THE SOUTHERN BAPTIST CONVENTION

MAY-JUNE 1999

Wedding Bell Blues

*Love & Marriage
in the '90s*



KOSOVO: Do We Pay Now or Later?

America and the Western World stand at a crucial crossroads. At the very end of this bloodiest of centuries, the massive atrocities in Kosovo force us to confront a critical question, "Have we learned anything from the momentous mistakes and epic sufferings of those generations which have preceded us through this tortured century?"

The twentieth century gave birth to the truly totalitarian state in its various and malignant forms (Communism, Fascism, Nazism) and thus spawned Auschwitz, Dachau, and Buchenwald, as well as the Soviet Gulag and the Khmer Rouge's auto-genocide of a third of their own population. This century has given us new words which are evil, vicious, and barbaric—concentration camp, genocide, and now "ethnic cleansing." Inhabitants of the present century have witnessed man's inhumanity to his fellow man degenerate to new and previously unimaginable depths of depravity.

Once again the evil specter of a Fascist police state casts its dark and dangerous shadow across the European continent. Serbia and its truly evil leader, Slobodan Milosevic, are perpetrating war crimes and genocide against the Kosovar population on a scale and with a ferocity not seen in Europe since the end of the Second World War. Modern communications technology confronts us daily, even hourly with grotesque images of burning villages and terrified throngs of refugees, as well as reports of mass executions and human bodies strewn along the highway. The Serbians' ever-escalating genocide against the Kosovars extends to forcing the

fleeing refugees to surrender all form of identification and reports of mass burning of birth and marriage records in the towns and villages they flee in an attempt to wipe away evidence that the Albanian Kosovars (90% of the province's pre-war population) ever existed.

Once again, Americans and the West are faced with the choice of either paying the price now of intervening effectively to stop this human tragedy unfolding on the European continent, or paying the far greater price later for inaction and impotence in the face of pure, unadulterated evil. Make no mistake about it, the would-be Milosevics across the globe—and such people are unfortunately always with us, poised and ready to strike from the dark corners where they lurk, whenever the inattention or moral lassitude of the world affords them the opportunity—are watching very attentively. If we do not stop Milosovic, his example will be followed by scores of others in an ever-escalating cycle of human suffering and violence.

Slobodan Milosevic and the evil racial and ethnic bloodlust he generates is a cancer which will metastasize with alarming speed if not removed from the human body politic. And as ten years of Western gullibility and 250,000 already dead corpses in what used to be Yugoslavia bear eloquent testimony, force is the only language a butcher like Milosevic and his would-be imitators understand.

We must act, and we must act now. If we do not, future generations not yet born will curse our lack of discernment, or courage, or both, as they suffer the barbaric consequences of our failure to act effectively now.

Sadly, the resort to armed conflict is the price human beings must periodically pay for the right to live in a moral universe.

If resort to military force is necessary, can it be justified, and under what circumstances? While there have been persistent elements of pacifism within the Christian tradition, for most Christians, in most places, at most times, the answer has been that, yes, resort to military conflict by legitimately constituted civil authority is justifiable.

An extremely useful tool employed by Christians for many centuries in discussing such issues of war and peace has been "just-war theory." This theory was adopted by early church leaders, particularly Augustine, to deal with the reality of war in a fallen, sinful world of empires and nations in which Christians were increasingly a significant and crucial part of the population.

Just-war theory was never intended to justify war. Instead, it tries to bring war under the sway of justice as understood by Christians and to ensure that war, when it does occur, is hedged about by limits which reduce its barbarity. In fact, if all

parties accepted just-war criteria, there would be no wars, since the theory's first rule clearly states no war is just unless it is a defense against aggression. If everyone adhered to just-war theory, aggression would be eliminated.

In other words, only defensive war is defensible. The intent must be to secure justice for all involved. It is to be a last resort only authorized by legitimate civil authority. There must be limited goals, and the question of proportionality must accompany all actions. Underlying all of these criteria is the question of noncombatant immunity. No war can be just which does not disqualify non-combatants as legitimate military targets and which does not seek to minimize collateral civilian casualties.

How do just-war criteria apply to the Kosovo crisis? Is America's and her NATO allies' goal to help erect a stable, just peace in the post-Cold War world in which people have a reasonable expectation that war criminals will be stopped by the world community of nations, even when they make genocidal

See *KOSOVO*, page 10



Richard Land is President of the Ethics & Religious Liberty Commission of the Southern Baptist Convention, the nation's largest protestant denomination with 16 million members in over 40,000 churches nationwide. He is also host of a nationally syndicated daily radio talk show, For Faith & Family.

CORRECTION

Toll-free telephone numbers for more information on domestic abuse listed in the March-April 1999 issue of *Light* magazine were for use within the state of Mississippi only. We apologize for any inconvenience this may have caused you. The correct numbers are (601) 932-4198 for the Resource Center Network and (601) 292-3329 for the Christian Action Commission. Persons needing immediate assistance are urged to call the National Domestic Violence/Abuse Hotline at 1-800-799-SAFE (7233).



THE ETHICS & RELIGIOUS LIBERTY COMMISSION

OF THE SOUTHERN BAPTIST CONVENTION

901 COMMERCE, #550 ■ NASHVILLE, TN 37203-3696

(615) 244-2495 ■ FAX: (615) 242-0065 ■ www.erc.com

Light, a Christian ethics, public policy and religious liberty publication for pastors, teachers, state and national denominational workers, and others interested in applied Christianity, is published six times a year by the Ethics & Religious Liberty Commission. *Light* is sent free to those who request it. Voluntary subscriptions, for those who wish to help defray costs of printing and mailing and to help underwrite a growing mailing list, are \$10 annually. Checks should be made payable to *Light*. Canceled checks serve as tax-deductible receipts. Permission to quote material from *Light* is granted; please cite our name and address when doing so.

©1999 Ethics & Religious Liberty Commission of the Southern Baptist Convention ■ Richard D. Land, President ■ Dwayne Hastings, Editor

Homosexuality

AND THE COMMON CHRISTIAN

BY DONALD R. MCFADDEN

Unless Christians are well prepared, trying to defend the biblical view of homosexuality in discussions with our politically correct neighbors could be loosely compared to teaching the proverbial pig to sing. As the saying goes, you will not succeed, and you will simply annoy the pig. Since moral relativism now pervades so much of our culture, we have come to the point where Christians must be prepared for cross-cultural communications. The issue of homosexuality is particularly difficult to apprehend. In the abortion debate, one can ultimately point to a dead baby to show the horror of the action. The sin of homosexual behavior, however, is clouded by questionable arguments for civil rights and fairness. Due to the rise of "gay rights" issues such as "same-sex marriage" and anti-discrimination laws, the Christian community is confronted with an increasing tide of pro-homosexual propaganda and actions.

Last year's uproar caused by Senator Lott's entirely accurate characterization of homosexuality is a good illustration of the public abuse one takes when speaking the truth. These responses to the biblical view of homosexuality are a sad reminder that our culture is drifting far from its Judeo-Christian ethical roots to one that is characterized by moral relativism. If there are no absolutes, there can be no objective standards of behavior.

In a relatively short time, our society has moved from merely tolerating homosexuality to affirming homosexual rights. This issue does not simply revolve around "rights." Most of the arguments in support of the homosexual lifestyle and same-sex marriage appear to be based upon a belief in personal subjective relativism (i.e. there is no objective good) and the autonomous self. Francis J. Beckwith, in *Wedding Bell Blues: Understanding the Same-Sex Marriage Debate*, summarizes the issue as follows:

Same-sex marriage proponents defend their position by arguing that government neutrality is violated when the state allows only people of different genders to marry one another. Yet the same-sex marriage position is far from neutral. It asserts that the government ought to prefer a view of human nature that sees human institutions, such as marriage and the family, as artificial social constructions ruled by personal subjective preference. Because proponents of this view try to establish marriage on the basis of adult consent and desire rather than on marriage's intrinsic value and the natural teleology (purpose) of the body (or person), numerous counterintuitive and irrational consequences result.

Some of these counterintuitive results are the logical expansion of possible relationships. Using this line of reasoning, a marriage between any two human beings or groups of human beings should be permissible. What is our justification for denying polygamy or a marital union of any number of people including brothers, sisters, mothers, fathers, sons, and daughters?

What can we expect if the homosexual "rights" movement continues unabated? A brief examination of the recent political activity in Canada is instructive. In 1992, the British Columbia ("B.C.") Human Rights Act of 1984 was amended to include "sexual orientation" as prohibited grounds for discrimination. The Canadian Human Rights Act was similarly amended in 1996. The most recent affirmation of the "gay lifestyle" was achieved through the 1997 amendment to the Family Relations Act of B.C. that expanded the rights of same-sex couples; this amendment effectively redefined "spouse" to include homosexual partners.

With this statutory blessing of homosexual activity, it is no surprise to find Canadian Christians under legal challenge because of their "homophobic" views. Trinity Western University (a Christian liberal arts institution associated with the Evangelical Free Church) was denied certification related to their teacher training program by the B.C. College of Teachers (BCCT). The cause for concern is TWU's "community standards document" that all students and faculty must sign which requires the abstention from premarital sex, adultery and homosexual behavior while attending or working at the school. The BCCT denied certification on the grounds that this document shows discrimination against homosexuals and that their graduating teachers may be biased against homosexuals. After TWU's victories in B.C. courts, the BCCT is appealing to the Supreme Court of Canada.

In order to adequately respond to those around us who are wrestling with the issue of homosexual rights, we must do our homework. Although there are many comprehensive examinations of the issue written from a Christian perspective, the brief summary on page 4 of some of the myths regarding homosexuality should help:

Donald McFadden is Senior Vice President of Capstone Asset Management Company, an investment management firm based in Houston, Texas. He is involved in the ministry of encouraging Christians to adopt a thorough worldview and to reach out to our increasingly hostile culture. He is active in the Sutter Creek Church of the Nazarene in Northern California. The article was written in anticipation of the vote on the California Defense of Marriage Act in March 2000.

Homosexuality and the Politics of Truth

Psychiatrist Jeffrey Satinover examines recent research reported in medical journals and the press, pointing out flaws in the "homosexual gene" theory and citing evidence that homosexuality is indeed changeable.

BKHOM (280 pages)

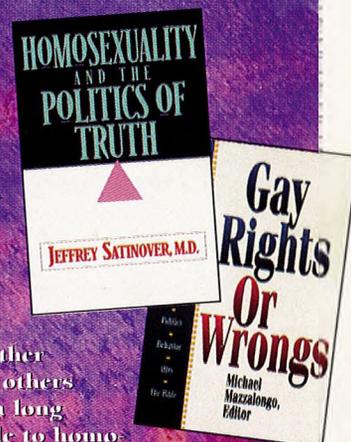
\$17.99 ea.

Gay Rights or Wrongs

Editor Michael Mazzalongo brings together teachers, psychologists, ministers, and others who have studied homosexuality over a long period of time to give Christians a guide to homosexual issues and ministry. Its goal is to help Christians deal compassionately with those who struggle with homosexuality and to equip church members with the confidence to respond intelligently to the false arguments being made for the homosexual lifestyle by Gays and their sympathizers.

BKGAY (290 pages)

\$13.99 ea.



CONTINUED FROM PAGE 3

MYTH: Homosexuals comprise at least 10% of the population.

FACT: A more realistic range is 1%-3%.

MYTH: Homosexuals are genetically programmed for homosexuality.

FACT: Like any other compulsive/addictive behavior, scientific research points to a number of biological, psychological, and environmental factors underlying homosexuality. The successes at many counseling and treatment ministries indicate that homosexuals can escape from their affliction.

MYTH: Mental health science does not view homosexuality as aberrant.

FACT: Although the pro-homosexual movement has made tremendous inroads in mental health organizations, the decisions have been based on politics rather than scientific research.

MYTH: Homosexual sex can be "safe."

FACT: The practices that are common among homosexual men are not safe from a medical viewpoint and can lead to many diseases and conditions (besides AIDS) that are otherwise rare outside the homosexual community.



Christians have an obligation to reach out to people around us and "always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have" (1Pet. 3:15 NIV). We are not loving our neighbor and certainly not preserving what is good in society ("salt of the earth") when we remain silent while sin abounds. God has placed us in a society

where we can speak freely (at least for now) about what is right and wrong. Would God have us do anything less?

It is difficult to overstate the gravity of the situation at hand. The cultural drift away from transcendent standards of morality grounded in the belief in absolute truth is accelerating. Should we stand idly by while that which God has given us crumbles? We can

agree with the pro-homosexual lobby in one area: "It is a struggle not just for marriage, not just for gay people, but for what kind of country we want this to be." An unprepared and thoughtless response to homosexuality is not useful to the cause of Christ. Let us be prepared to encourage what is good and resist that which is evil when the opportunity is presented to us. ■

SOURCES USED FOR THIS ARTICLE INCLUDE: Francis J. Beckwith, *Wedding Bell Blues: Understanding the Same-Sex Marriage Debate*, Christian Research Journal, Volume 20, Number 2, November-December 1997 • Jeffrey Satinover, M.D., *Homosexuality and the Politics of Truth*, (Grand Rapids, MI: Hamewith Books, 1996) • Larry Burtoft, Ph.D., *Setting the Record Straight*, Focus on the Family, 1994 • Evan Wollson, *Eye on the Prize*, Lambda Legal Defense and Education Fund Marriage Project, published on the Internet at www.lfm.org/archive/lldef/update-10.18.96.html.

RESOURCES

BOOKS

Someone I Love Is Gay

Finding out that a child, spouse, relative or friend is homosexual can be an unwelcome surprise. What is the biblical response? This book is a product of Anita Worthen's own struggle over this issue with her son and her work with New Hope Ministries in San Rafael, Calif., and Bob Davies' personal and professional experience with Exodus International in Seattle, Wash.

BKSOM (280 pages)

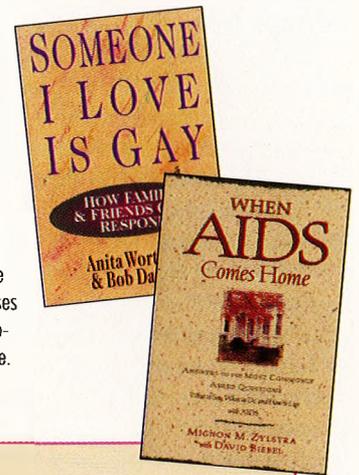
\$10.99 ea.

When AIDS Comes Home

This valuable resource is for those with AIDS, those who love them, and those who want to better understand and respond to this deadly disease. It addresses questions people are most often afraid to ask and gives suggestions for a support ministry, sample church HIV policies, and a model for a memorial service.

BKAID (193 pages)

\$12.99 ea.



AIDS PAMPHLET SET

This set includes the titles below and offers statistical data and biblical insights for dealing with AIDS. Quantity discounts available on individual titles. Call for pricing.

A1SET

\$1.00 ea.

AIDS: A Deadly Disease

This pamphlet defines AIDS in terms of what it is as well as how it spreads, revealing startling statistics of its presence in America and globally.

A1DEA

\$.35 ea.

People with AIDS

Besides the medical ramifications of AIDS, people with the deadly disease face a number of hardships related to work, housing, insurance, school, church, and relationships with others. A look at some of the problems AIDS patients face and how Christians can minister to them.

A1PEO

\$.35 ea.

AIDS: Biblical Insights

A look at what Scripture says about these AIDS-related issues: sex, drugs, self-control, the Christian's responsibility toward the infirm, and how the afflicted can find comfort by trusting in Him.

A1B1B

\$.35 ea.

Ministry to People with AIDS

This piece offers pastoral care strategies for ministering to people with AIDS and their loved ones and identifies 10 stages of grief remarkably alike for people dying from AIDS and their families.

A1MIN

\$.35 ea.

Revised versions available mid-summer 1999. To order, complete the form on page 19 as instructed.

“...there was given me a thorn in my flesh, a messenger of Satan, to torment me.”

God's Grace

IN THE FACE OF

BY ERIC L. RADDATZ

Phil is gay. Phil is born again. Phil is saved by the grace of God.

Phil was addressing a group of seminary students when he was asked, “When you were born again, did Jesus cure you of your homosexuality?” Phil answered, “No.” His life has been a struggle with his professed sin and its consequence, HIV/AIDS. His response to that student was painful; Phil has been praying for just that for years. Yet God has chosen to leave the “thorn” so that His power may be revealed through him. The periods of loneliness and depression while remaining celibate have been the most difficult for him. When he was “full blown AIDS,” before he started on the triple therapy commonly known as the “cocktail,” Phil was ready to die. He knew that he had, at most, three years left to live. He felt that, with God’s help, he could handle the burden of his “thorn.” Then he was given protease inhibitors that proved effective in fighting the virus—his T cell count went up, and the virus became undetectable. Phil became more depressed. He had the “Lazarus Syndrome.” He was going to live. His problems were not going away. The fight was to continue.

Phil stopped going to church and began to frequent the “bars” again. Old patterns of escape reared their ugly head. He also looked to other churches that were more accepting of his life style. He began to research scriptures that spoke to his affliction, his sin, his “thorn.” He learned from other teachers and preachers that the scriptures didn’t mean exactly what they said; he

learned all of the other spins and rationales being bandied about in the world. He fought to believe so that he could live a “happier” life. He continued to see a couple of Christian men who were important to his walk in faith—one old and valued friend from his former church and the Executive Director of the Baptist AIDS Partnership of North Carolina, me. Phil was surprised that I stuck it out with him, thinking that I would walk away from him as others in the church had done. I tried to explain God’s grace and unconditional love and the wonders found in Romans 8:38-39 NIV: “For I am convinced that neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither the present nor the future, nor any powers, neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord.”

Phil’s struggle continued for eighteen months. The escape in physical gratification didn’t relieve his pain. The spins on Scripture didn’t ring true, so he rejected them as false teachings in an effort to bring the church to “political correctness.” His close friend and I continued to pray and minister to him through grace, nonjudgmental acceptance, and love. He continued to pray and plead, as Paul did, that God would take the “thorn away from him.” But so far God has given him the answer He gave Paul, “My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness” (Rom. 12:9 NIV).

Phil now attends a church that gives him much-needed support in his struggle. He

has also joined a support group that is a part of Exodus International, a ministry that brings wholeness through Jesus Christ to men and women facing sexual identity issues.

Because of HIV and AIDS, the church is facing the fact that there are persons in and out of the church who are struggling with difficult issues. When it comes to sex and drugs, it has been easier to judge than to show mercy and grace. As James wrote: “Mercy triumphs over judgment” (James 2:13 NIV). The church addresses many needs in our communities related to prison, homelessness, child abuse, and more. HIV and AIDS are a real part of these ministry needs. We like to minister to the “innocent victims” of AIDS, but who is really innocent? YOU?

Baptist AIDS Partnership (BAPNC) has reached out and touched more than 200 lives in the name of Jesus Christ. Through our “Grace for the Journey” spiritual retreats for persons with HIV/AIDS and caregivers, I have been humbled and amazed at how God’s grace is working in the lives of substance abusers, gays, lesbians, ex-cons, and promiscuous heterosexuals. Because of BAPNC’s efforts to be non-judgmental and accepting in grace, we have seen lives changed through Christ. Individuals living with HIV/AIDS have recommitted their lives to Christ and others have been born again, saved by the grace of God. The only part that is troubling is how they perceive the church. Most have been turned away because of fear and prejudice. The retreats are the only church

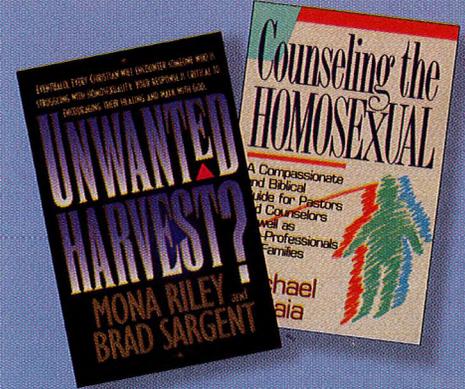
some of them attend. As Paul wrote in 2 Corinthians 1:3-4 NIV: “Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of compassion and the God of all comfort, who comforts us in all our troubles, so that we can comfort those in any trouble with the comfort we ourselves have received from God.”

God’s grace is that comfort and what a comfort it is! Without grace there would be no message.

Phil is gay. Phil is born again. Phil is saved by the grace of God! ■

Eric L. Raddatz is the founder and Director of the Baptist AIDS Partnership of North Carolina. He acts as pastoral counselor for persons living with AIDS in the Raleigh, Durham, and Chapel Hill area. Working with the Baptist State Convention, he directs “Grace for the Journey” retreats, Camp Kid-Care, a camp for children infected or affected by HIV/AIDS, and, new this year, a spiritual retreat for families with HIV/AIDS, “Grace for the Family.” He is graduate of Southeastern Seminary and lives with his wife Bonnie and two children in Wake Forest, NC.

RESOURCES AVAILABLE FROM THE ERLC



Counseling the Homosexual

Michael R. Saia offers a compassionate and biblical guide for equipping churches and families to effectively approach, support, and counsel those who struggle with homosexuality.

BKCOU (237 pages)

\$9.99 ea.

Unwanted Harvest?

Eventually, every Christian will encounter someone who is struggling with homosexuality. Your response is critical to encouraging their healing and walk with God. Mona Riley and Brad Sargent show that no sinner is beyond reach, no sin beyond redemption.

BKUNW (207 pages)

\$12.99 ea.

The Irresistible Sin?



HOMOSEXUALITY:

BY DON SCHMIERER

In recent months, we've heard solid, affirmative answers to some tough questions. Yes, we've learned that homosexuals can change their behavior. And yes, we've seen that, with God's help, more and more men and women are choosing to reclaim their heterosexual identity. But can homosexual behavior be prevented in today's youth?

The answer resounds loud and clear: Yes, it can! Genetic, psychological, and social research informs us that a constellation of causes sets the stage for homosexual choices. But there are no pre-existing conditions that cannot be reversed, no genetic patterns that cannot be overruled, no patterns of attraction and addiction that can't be avoided. And all this can (and should) be addressed before homosexual behavior takes place.

As Christians, we are deeply concerned not only about the erosion of morality in our society, but even more about the spiritual, physical, and emotional well-being of young people. That's why a plan for the prevention of homosexuality is essential. This is not only important because homosexual behavior is one of many sins that God's Word denounces, but because it is both physically and spiritually dangerous—clearly a matter of life and death.

After I had spent forty years counseling young people in university ministries and recovery programs as well as dealing with family issues in both church and para-church settings, I was confronted by a friend who had also watched me struggling to assist AIDS hospice ministries. He made an interesting statement. He said, "Don, we've got to find a way to stop this problem before it starts. If we don't, we're fighting a losing battle."

Inspired by his words, I spent several years compiling information, and I finally wrote *An Ounce of Prevention* [available from the ERLC] to help concerned Christians develop a strategy for the prevention of homosexuality among today's youth. My research has

convinced me of some key points: Homosexuality begins in pain, exists in pain, and often ends in pain.

Homosexuality is not genetic, and no studies have proved it to be so.

Homosexuality results from a number of factors, many of them related to the family.

In a Christian context, homosexuality is a sin, but we are called to love those taken in sin.

Homosexuality is deadly, and AIDS isn't the only reason.

One of the first things people want to know about homosexuality is what causes it. While there are many contributing factors, Mom and

Dad are key players. One report states, "100% of the research participants stated their father/father-figure was distant, uninvolved in their upbringing, frightening, and unapproachable. 87% spoke of a mother who was close, controlling, and overbearing" (NARTH Bulletin, Aug. 1998, p. 13).

There's no such thing as a perfect family, but it is my hope that *An Ounce of Prevention* will alert families to potential problems. I hope it prepares young parents to create the kind of family life that starts nurturing healthy gender identity in their children from the day they are born.

Even though wholesome parent-child dynamics are profoundly important to establishing a healthy sexual identity, they aren't the only concern.

Families can make a dramatic difference in the lives of gender-

confused boys and girls. Parents who recognize warning signs can begin a preventative process of communication, understanding, affirmation, counseling, and unconditional love. However, because families are sometimes as much a part of the problem as the solution, it is essential that concerned Christian adults also become keenly sensitive to at-risk youth. The prevention of homosexuality requires the involvement of the entire Christian communi-

The following can be contributors to the homosexual condition, but they are not listed in any particular order:

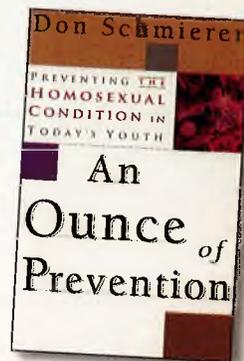
- ▲ The individual's self-will
- ▲ Media and culture
- ▲ Spousal abuse in the home
- ▲ Molestation and pedophilia
- ▲ Chemical imbalances
- ▲ Poor eye-to-hand coordination
- ▲ Pornography
- ▲ Parental adultery
- ▲ Seduction by peers
- ▲ Moral relativism
- ▲ Failure of leadership

ty: pastors, lay leaders, teachers, peers, friends, families, and youth workers.

An Ounce of Prevention helps identify the warning signs of a developing homosexual orientation. It explores strategies involving all concerned Christians, which include initiating an emphasis on love and forgiveness in families and churches. We need to provide healthy male and female role modeling. We need to awaken an awareness of media influences. And—most of all—we need to build godly, Christ-centered families. With a prayerful determination to love vulnerable young men and women in the midst of rejection, rebellion, confusion, temptation, and deception, I believe concerned Christians can—indeed, we must—stop homosexual behavior before it starts. ■

Taken from
*An Ounce of
Prevention* by
Don Schmierer
BK0UN \$12.00

The founder of "His Servants" ministries, Don Schmierer has four decades of experience in the fields of marriage and family counseling, addictive behaviors, youth issues, businessmen's leadership, women's ministries, and AIDS/Hospice. He and his wife Diana live in Sacramento, Calif.



A POPULAR MYTH: Once you are involved in homosexual behavior, there is no way back—you can't change your direction.

CONSIDER THIS: Homosexual behaviors are preventable and treatable in many cases. As with any other sexual sin, if we confess sinful behavior to God (1 John 1:9), He will forgive the sin and cleanse the sinner. The sooner any tendencies are detected, the easier it is to prevent them. (Page 7)

A POPULAR MYTH: Homosexual behavior has nothing to do with sexual abuse.

CONSIDER THIS: Sexual abuse is a key factor in homosexuality. Studies indicate that as many as 58% of homosexuals experienced sexual abuse as children; many others were physically or emotionally abused. (Page 14)

A POPULAR MYTH: Homosexual behavior is genetic—or like a third gender.

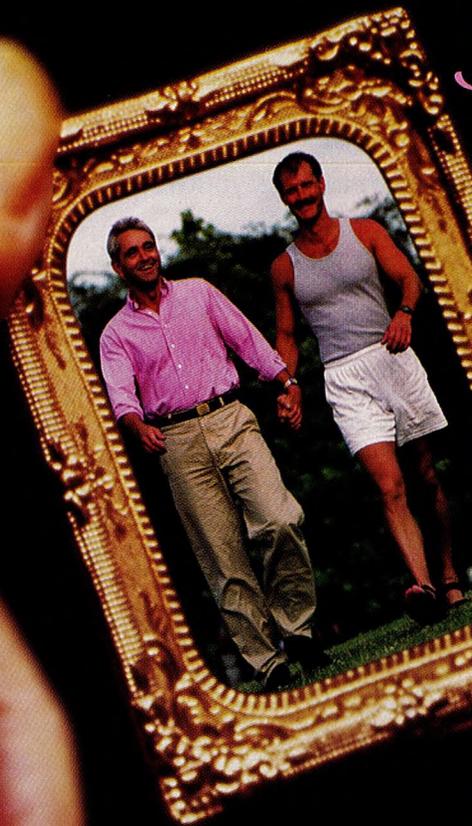
CONSIDER THIS: Homosexual feelings are developed by a complex group of circumstances in life, from birth to one's early years. Later in life, these feelings play a role in choices one makes involving sexual relationships. Because all sexual behavior is learned behavior, a person may be inclined, because of feelings, to homosexual behavior. (Page 59)

A POPULAR MYTH: According to the Bible, homosexuality is okay.

CONSIDER THIS: Leviticus 20:13—"If a man lies with a man as one lies with a woman, both of them have done what is detestable." (Also see Lev. 18:21, 1 Cor. 6:9, and Rom. 1:24-27.) (Page 74)

A POPULAR MYTH: Homosexual behavior is an alternative lifestyle—a good healthy choice for some people.

CONSIDER THIS: Homosexual behavior is life threatening. A journal report in the October 1996 *Princeton Theological Review* indicates that the physical dangers involved in homosexuality make it a high-risk choice. HIV and AIDS, [and] . . . other threats, including higher murder/suicide rates, hepatitis B, syphilis, herpes, and "a host of other blood-borne diseases" also threaten lives. (Page 95)



Learning to

BY JUANITA SUTPHIN

As her grown son packed boxes to leave home and move into his own apartment, Juanita came across a stack of photos among his things. Glancing through them, she was sickened to find a photo of his new roommate embracing another man...

The hatred inside was eating me alive — and destroying my relationship with our son.

In January 1991, our oldest son came home and announced he was moving out to live with a friend. Ron was 25 years old; we trusted him and had raised him to be independent. We even helped him get together some things he would need to live in an apartment. By February 14, he and his friend Mike had found a house they could afford to rent and began the move.

That night Ronnie, my husband, took me out for a nice Valentine's Day dinner. When we returned home, we found boxes and other items of my sons in the living room which they were preparing to move out. On the coffee table was a stack of pictures of Mike. When we glanced through them, we were sickened to find a photo of him hugging and kissing another man.

About half an hour later, they returned to pick up another load. I asked our son to come into our bedroom and told him about the photos. "I know Mike's gay — but we're just friends," he said. "I'm not gay, so there's nothing to worry about!" That night, I sat down and cried; somehow I knew that my son wasn't telling the truth.

At first, Ron came over for supper or to do his laundry about twice a week. After about a month, however, we saw him less and less. We would have to call him or drop by his workplace to see how he was doing. We kept praying, hoping that God would intervene in whatever was happening.

On Mother's Day, we went to my mother-in-law's house, as we always did. Ron and Mike were invited, and they both came. Later, my husband had to go to work. As we were leaving, Ron asked me if I was going to be home later because he wanted to come over and talk.

About three o'clock, he arrived and said he would enjoy a ride in the mountains, something we both loved. We pulled off at a lookout and watched the sunset. Ron presented me with a beautiful Mother's

Day card and told me how much he loved me. Then he proceeded to tell me that he was homosexual.

I was devastated. His words, *I'm gay! I'm gay!* bounced around in my head like an echo chamber. I tried to tell him that homosexuality was not right and that God had provided a way out through His Son, Jesus Christ. He wasn't interested in what I had to say.

Somehow I managed to turn the car around and drive home. I went into the house, sat on the floor in my bedroom, and cried for three hours. "God, what have we done?" I sobbed. "Why is this happening? Where are You?"

My husband arrived home about eleven o'clock and we talked for a long time. Finally I went to bed and cried myself to sleep. The next morning, we told our pastor what had happened. He reassured us that we had done the right things; now all we could do was pray. He

also instructed us not to tell anyone at church because it might embarrass our son and hinder him from ever coming back to church.

We kept praying and hoping for a miracle, all the while hurting inside. But I had no one to talk with: My husband didn't want to discuss it, I couldn't talk to anyone at church, I had no brothers or sisters, my father was dead, and I didn't want to break my mother's heart. So I kept the secret for seven months; every day it ate away at me inside until I felt like an empty shell.

One night a thought came to mind which I believe was from Satan: *Kill your son!* He reminded me how good I was with my .38 pistol. I could go over, knock on their door, and kill them both when someone answered. No one would ever suspect who had done it. *In fact, when the police find out they're gay, they won't even care who killed them, I thought. Certainly no one would ever suspect a "Christian" mother was the killer!*

These thoughts plagued me for several weeks. Finally, one night I got up and went to the closet. I was just reaching for the gun when I felt God's presence fall upon me in a powerful way. I could almost feel His arms wrapped around me, holding me like the father I never had.

That night God reminded me of His love. He had been with me through the preceding months, even when I had not sensed Him. And He helped me realize that, as long as my son was alive, there was hope. I went back to bed and slept the rest of the night for the first time in weeks.

The next morning, I knew I needed a vacation. My husband and I agreed to get away over the Thanksgiving holidays; we took a week to drive through eight states. We had no agenda and enjoyed a wonderful, relaxing time.

Arriving back home, however, we were hit with another blow: Ron and Mike had packed up all their possessions and moved across the country to California. Ron hadn't said good-bye or even left a note. From that day on, my hatred toward Mike began to grow. Many

point, Ron called to let us know he was in the hospital with a "knot" in his throat, but it was just an infected gland and not to worry.

During this time, I knew the hatred inside was eating away at me and I needed to do something. So I wrote one last letter, telling Ron that I loved him and God loved him, too. I also sent him scriptures on the plan of salvation.

Then one day I came home from the grocery store to find his car in the driveway. Mike was still sitting in the front seat. "Ron's in the house," he said.

"He'd better be!" I snapped, not trying to hide my hatred. Moments later, Ron was in my arms and I was crying. I wanted him to stay, but he wanted to rush off so Mike could see his mother. My hatred raged again. *His mother is more important than me? How dare they!*

They moved to an apartment nearby. Then Ron called and told me Mike was sick.

"What's wrong?" I asked.

"Mom," he replied in a calm voice, "Mike has AIDS." I had already suspected it, because I knew Mike was taking a lot of medications. My heart began to break for his mother. But what could I say? "I'm sorry your son has AIDS, but he deserves it for what he did to my son!"

Mike died the next month. We took time off from work to try and help Ron work through his grief. It was hard for me to attend the funeral, to look at Mike's body and know that I had not shown any compassion toward him. I had not even taken the time to tell him about God's love.

A month later, Ron moved in with an older doctor, Israel. "Mom, he even has the same birthday as you!" he announced. Needless to say, I was not impressed.

They lived close by and we saw them a lot. We even had them over for Christmas and Easter. Although Israel was Jewish, he respect-



Juanita Sutphin and her husband, Ron, are directors of Walking Together Ministry in Skyland, NC. Walking Together is a non-denominational Christian ministry called to equip and unify the body of Christ in the mission of bringing the Gospel message of salvation and wholeness to the homosexual, as well as others who are sexually broken.

*Walking Together Inc.
P.O. Box 111
Skyland, NC 28776
(828) 274-9408*

Love Again

times I wished he were dead; maybe then my son would come home.

Weeks went by without a word. On the worst days, I wondered if Ron was still alive. Who would call us if something happened? Certainly not Mike, who knew by this time how I felt about him.

Then one morning the phone rang and I answered it. "Hi, Mom. What are you doing?" Ron talked as if nothing had ever happened. He gave me a post office box where I could write him; I went out and bought presents for him. They would arrive after Christmas, but at least he would know that we still loved him.

Weeks later, I got a note from Ron, saying he had received the box and would write later. It was almost spring when he called again, letting me know they had moved. This time, he gave me a phone number where I could reach him.

Between infrequent calls stretched long periods of silence. At one

ed our faith. During the next two years, we got to know and love Israel, even though we still hated homosexuality. Then he grew gravely ill with AIDS. Just before his death, I was able to share the truth about Jesus being the Messiah with him. He never answered me, but looked at me with big brown eyes, like a little boy who has just been told a big secret. Then he went to sleep and died shortly afterward.

Through this experience, my husband and I felt called into ministry to other parents. I still think of Mike and his mother, and wish that I could have helped them years ago.

In February 1997, our son died of AIDS-related illness. Before his death, my husband prayed with him to receive Christ. In spite of our grief, we had an eternal hope to hang onto. No parent should have to go through this valley alone. God has comforted us through our trials—now it is our turn to share that comfort with others. ■

This article originally ran in Exodus Update, April 1998. Copyright ©1998 Juanita Sutphin. Reprinted with permission.

Exodus International is a ministry to those overcoming homosexuality: (206) 784-7799. <http://exodus.base.org>

Kosovo — from page 2

war on people within their own borders? If so, then it is a just cause and it is defensive.

Milosevic is making criminal war against defenseless civilians, and the allied effort is a defense of human dignity and security.

Some object that we are intervening in a civil war. In a sense, perhaps that is so. But if the American government denied all the basic human rights of 90% of a state's population because of their ethnicity and sought to terrorize, slaughter and forcibly remove that

population from the state, I would argue that the American government had forfeited the right to govern that state.

Others ask why we should intervene in Kosovo when we did not intervene in other human tragedies like the horrific bloodshed between the Hutus and the Tutsis in Central Africa. The inability of the United States, even as the world's only remaining superpower, to intervene effectively everywhere does not relieve us of the moral responsibility of

intervening where we can make a critical difference. Also, Europe is not everywhere, it is somewhere that regional conflicts like Kosovo have been known to, left unchecked, escalate into the two bloodiest wars in human history in which millions of Americans had to fight to salvage the entire continent from its worst instincts at enormous cost both to Europeans and Americans.

Is our goal to stop Milosevic's genocidal war on his own citizens and to restore a representative government in Belgrade as well as Kosovo? If so, then armed force is justified.

Can such goals be achieved without disproportionate casualties? Are there no effective alternatives to avoid conflict? Will measures be taken to ensure the minimizing of non-combatant casualties? If so, then resort to armed force is justified.

Perhaps most importantly, in the present context, given the history of the United States since 1960, is the armed force authorized by legitimate authority? However helpful a United Nations Security Council vote or NATO resolution may be, for Americans the duly constituted authority is the government of the United States, and the authorizing vehicle is either a joint resolution of Congress or a declaration of war.

President Kennedy said in his inaugural address that "a new generation of Americans has risen to leadership ready to pay any price, bear any burden, meet any hardship, support any friend, oppose any foe, in order to assure the survival and the success of liberty." Subsequent events revealed that we were willing to bear some burdens, meet some hardships, support some friends, and oppose some foes.

Now another generation has risen to leadership, one that has learned the bitter lessons of the

limits of American power and resolve. The harshly learned lessons of Vietnam endure. For many of us, with the names of friends, relatives, and playmates inscribed on the onyx marble of the Vietnam memorial embedded in the hallowed ground near the Lincoln Memorial — a promise has been made, a vow taken — "Never again!"

Never again will we allow our soldiers to be placed at the uncertain end of a long tether without sufficient support and resolve at home to give them all necessary means to do the job. If it is worth American soldiers dying, it is worth winning. And unless our survival or liberty is at stake, it must be winnable. If it is not worth winning (including the just-war criteria), it is not worth the shedding of our citizens' blood. And as Vietnam taught us, the worst and most destabilizing thing that could be done is to intervene indecisively, inviting a protracted struggle with no final goal or exit strategy.

For this Christian, for this American, for this father, these are serious questions with the gravest repercussions. To our elected leaders, I say, "If you send our young people to war, you must have firm, acceptable answers to these questions. We are accountable for asking. You are accountable for your answers. Make the case to the American people; they will respond when they understand what is at stake."

It is well past time to put Slobodan Milosevic out of the world's misery. It must be done and it must be done quickly, before his evil tribe of imitators metastasizes exponentially. And without American leadership and resolve, it will not be done. And frankly, I am not willing to leave a world dominated by Milosevic to my children and grandchildren. They deserve far better than that. ■

The Criteria of Just War Theory

As outlined by Richard Land

The following are the criteria traditionally applied by the Christian church to determine if armed conflict is to be considered just:

1. **Just cause.** War is only permissible to resist aggression and defend those victimized by it. Only defensive war is defensible.

2. **Just intent.** The only acceptable motive must be to secure justice for all involved. Revenge, conquest, and economic benefit are insufficient, illegitimate, and unacceptable motives.

3. **Last resort.** Resort to arms can only be morally legitimate when all other avenues of conflict resolution have been rebuffed or have demonstrably failed.

4. **Legitimate authority.** The use of military force is only the prerogative of governments. Consequently, only the duly constituted civil authority can legitimize military action. However helpful a United Nations Security Council vote may be, for Americans the duly constituted authority is the government of the United States, and the authorizing vehicle is a declaration of war or a special joint resolution of Congress.

5. **Limited goals.** If the purpose is peace, then annihilation of the enemy or total destruction of his civilization is not acceptable. "Total war" is beyond the pale. Also, unless one's survival or liberty is imperiled, it is not acceptable to resort to war unless the goals are achievable.

6. **Proportionality.** Will the human cost of the armed conflict to both sides be proportionate to the stated objectives and goals? Does the good gained by resort to armed conflict justify the cost of lives lost and bodies maimed?

7. **Noncombatant immunity.** No war can be just which does not disqualify noncombatants as legitimate military targets and which does not seek to minimize collateral, inadvertent civilian casualties. No one has the right to make war on civilians.

DR. RICHARD D. LAND:

CHALLENGING

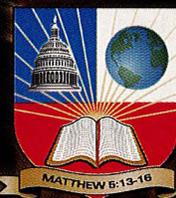
**Southern
Baptists**

TO BE

SALT & LIGHT
**IN A NEW
CENTURY**

1988–1998: *A Decade of "Helping Changed People Change The World"**

* ERLC motto



**THE ETHICS &
RELIGIOUS LIBERTY
COMMISSION**
OF THE SOUTHERN BAPTIST CONVENTION

COVER PHOTO:

Dr. Land explains why he chose both a bust of Abraham Lincoln and a photo of Theodore Roosevelt from his office to be featured in his official 10th anniversary photo:

“Clearly, the greatest president in our nation’s history is Abraham Lincoln. Lincoln represents the quintessential definition of American character — a man of the people who went from a log cabin to the White House. He is the president who held the nation together during its greatest national crisis. And the greatest tragedy in American history was the assassination of President Lincoln, because his dreams of national reconciliation as articulated in his eloquent second inaugural address died with him. Finally, the greatest speech ever given by an American President remains the Gettysburg Address.

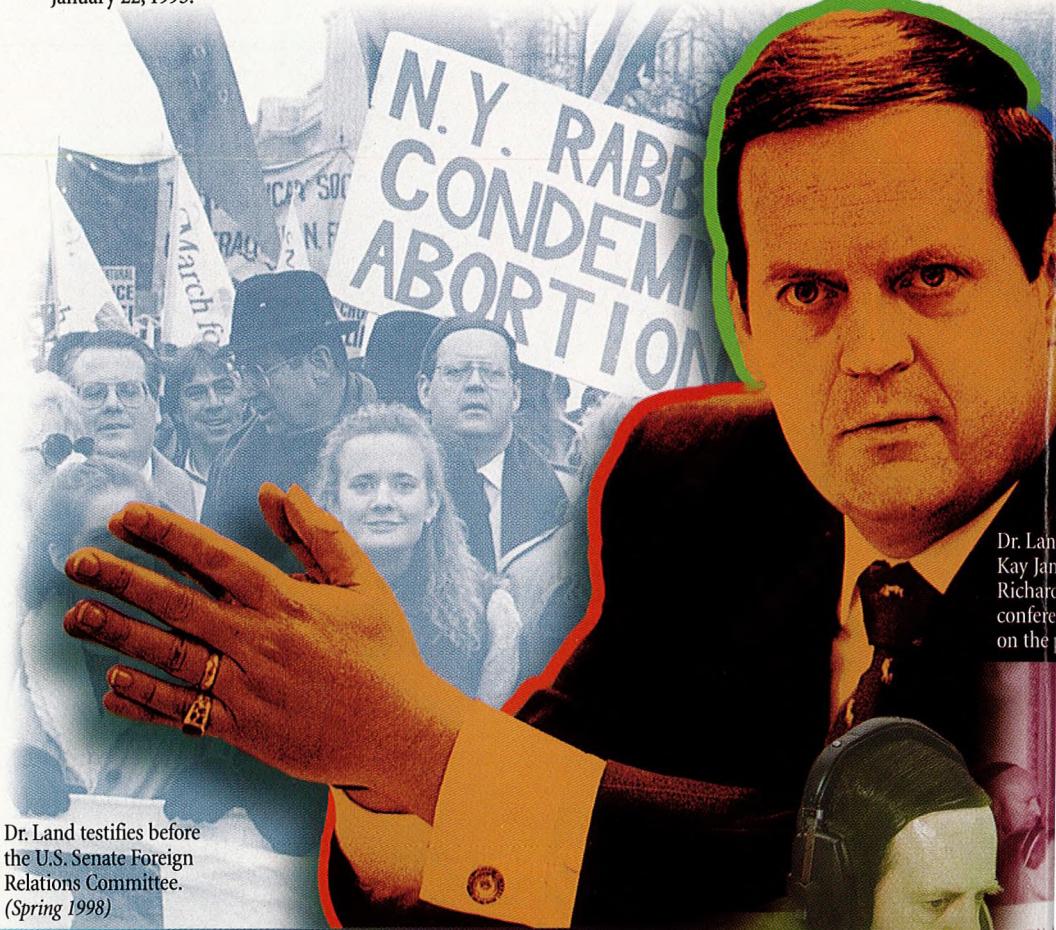
“Now, Theodore Roosevelt is my favorite U.S. president. I admire his exuberance and zest for life. He was the first ‘modern’ president and always exhibited the courage of his convictions as typified by my favorite non-biblical quotation, framed on my office wall, which says:

It is not the critic who counts, not the man who points out how the strong man stumbled, or where the doer of deeds could have done them better. The credit belongs to the man who is actually in the arena; whose face is marred by dust and sweat and blood, who strives valiantly; who errs and comes short again and again, who knows the great enthusiasms; the great devotions; who spends himself in a worthy cause; who, at the best, knows in the end the triumph of high achievement, and who, at the worst, if he fails, at least fails while daring greatly.

Far better it is to dare mighty things, to win glorious triumphs even though checkered by failure, than to rank with those spirits who neither enjoy nor suffer much because they live in the gray twilight that knows neither victory nor defeat.

THEODORE ROOSEVELT

Dr. Land joins Cardinal O'Connor and other right-to-life advocates in the National Right-to-Life march in Washington, D.C., January 22, 1995.



Dr. Land testifies before the U.S. Senate Foreign Relations Committee. (Spring 1998)

Dr. Land meets with the Board of Trustees in Nashville, September 1988, prior to being called as the President of the ERLC, then the Christian Life Commission.

Dr. Land, Kay Jan, Richard confer on the



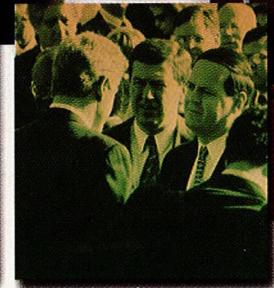
Tony Evans joins Dr. Land at the microphones live on For Faith & Family.



Dr. Land with Vice-President Al Gore during a White House reception (President Bill Clinton in background)



Dr. Land meets with President George Bush in the Roosevelt room of the White House.



Dr. Land speaks with President Clinton during the signing of the Religious Freedom Restoration Act in the White House Rose Garden. (1993)



In a press conference resolution of Dr. Land joins vice-president Carter, chair Committee Baptist Church

Dr. and Mrs. Land with their son, Richard Jr., a high school All-American and now an offensive lineman for the University of Texas

Dr. Land's daughters, Mrs. Jennifer McMahon and Rachel, share a moment during the ERLC's banquet celebrating Dr. Land's decade of service to the Commission. (September 1998)



THE ETHICS & RELIGIOUS LIBERTY COMMISSION

OF THE SOUTHERN BAPTIST CONVENTION

HISTORY:

Under Dr. Land's direction and with God's guidance, the Ethics & Religious Liberty Commission has changed dramatically during the first ten years of his tenure. The Commission is now better positioned to educate, equip, and encourage Southern Baptists to be salt and light in their communities, impacting the culture for good in the name of Christ. The numbers speak for themselves:

Human Resources

- 1989 Three program staff and salary for two replacements (which could not be funded because of the debt), four support staff, and one part-time literature clerk
- 1999 Seven program staff, eleven support staff, and one full-time literature clerk

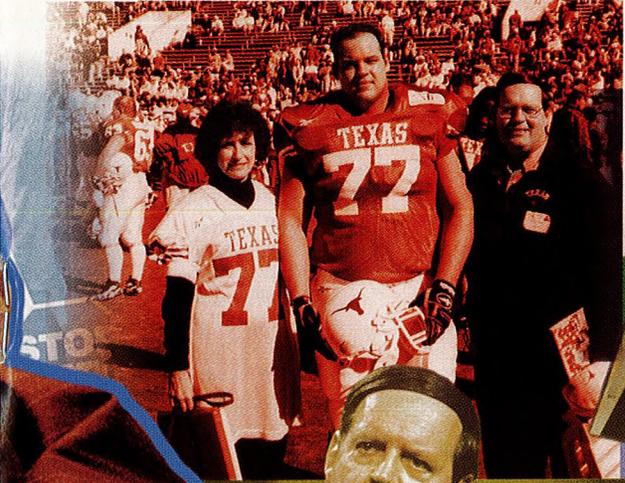
Washington, D.C. Presence

- 1989 The Washington office was an empty rental space which was sometimes used by the Nashville program staff.
- 1999 Southern Baptists now own a building in Washington, the Leland House, with three full-time program staff and an administrative assistant.

BUDGET YEAR	1988-1989	1998-1999
Budget:	\$1,017,000	\$3,002,000
Prior Debt:	\$50,900	-0-
Cooperative Program Receipts:	\$860,000	\$2,309,000
Commission's % of CP:	.69	1.49
Gift income for products:	\$93,000	\$290,000 (est.)
Periodical subscriptions:	50,000 (4 times annually) (Light only)	89,000 (6 times annually) (Light and Salt)

New Media 1999

- Two new ways to spread God's word began this year:
- *For Faith & Family* is a nationally syndicated radio program broadcast live every weekday on what will soon be over 500 outlets across the nation and is simulcast on the Internet's broadcast.com Lightsource. (go to www.erc.com)
 - An online virtual bookstore has been established to offer books, videos, and brochures 24 hours a day. Browse this resource at www.familybookstore.net.



Dr. Land meets with Texas Governor George W. Bush in Austin, Texas. (March 1999)



Dr. Land preaches the annual convention sermon during the 1997 Southern Baptist Convention in Dallas.



Dr. Land leads in prayer at the 1990 Rally for Life on the National Mall in Washington, D.C. (Dr. and Mrs. Jack Wilke are sitting at Dr. Land's left)



The installation service of Dr. Richard Land as President of the Ethics & Religious Liberty Commission, formerly the Christian Life Commission, in Kansas City, Kan., in March 1989. Joining Land on the platform is Dr. Spurgeon Gibbins (*Becky Land's uncle*), Mrs. Roland VanHooser (*Becky Land's mother*), Mr. and Mrs. Leggette Land (*Dr. Land's parents*), Richard Land, Jr. (*then 11*), Rachel Land (*then 10*), Dr. Lamar Cooper (*CLC staff member*), Jennifer Land (*then 15*), Dr. Rebekah Land (*wife of Dr. Richard Land*).

Dr. Land addressing the SBC annual conference in June 1995, with Beverly LaHue, James Cole, Paul Weyrich, and John Neuhaus in a press conference following a Senate vote on a partial-birth abortion ban.

"Once in a great while there is born into God's world a character at once so colorful, so unique, so perceptive, and so incisive that whether you love him or despise him, you have to admire him. And you cannot ignore him. If ever a contemporary figure fit that mold, Dr. Richard Land is that man. A scholar, biblical exegete, theologian, historian, churchman, and pastor, Dr. Land may well be the most uniquely qualified individual for the position he now holds that could ever have been found."

Dr. Paige Patterson
President, Southeastern Baptist
Theological Seminary

"Dr. Richard Land is an articulate voice with intellectual depth who has been an effective spokesman for the cause of Christ in the public square. He has been a leader in the most exciting story of the 20th century American church — the return of the Southern Baptist Convention to its historic, unapologetic biblical roots."

Dr. James C. Dobson
President, Focus on the Family

"Richard Land's selection as the President of our Southern Baptist Ethics & Religious Liberty Commission was a decisive moment for our convention. We are benefiting today from his deep-rooted concerns, watchful eye, and boundless energy. Dr. Land is worthy of our accolades as a faithful 'watchman on the wall,' calling us to attention and action as a convention."

Dr. Thomas Elliff
Pastor, First Southern Baptist Church

"Southern Baptists have been unquestionably and immeasurably blessed to have Richard Land as head of the ERLC. He speaks with a prophetic clarity and cultural relevancy that is imperative for our day."

Dr. James T. Draper, Jr.
President, LifeWay Christian Resources

"Thank you for ten wonderful years of leadership for all Southern Baptists. What a difference a decade can make! Thank you for leading us with 'the integrity of your heart and the skillfulness of your hands.'"

Dr. O.S. Hawkins
President & CEO, Amnity Board of the
Southern Baptist Convention

"In an era in which our nation has lost its moral compass, Dr. Land has faithfully, consistently, courageously, and intelligently articulated the great ethical, moral, and spiritual absolutes derived from God's Word that can point our wandering feet back into the Way."

Dr. James Henry, Pastor
First Baptist Church, Orlando, Fla.

"Richard Land has the academic learning, the public vision, the doctrinal fidelity, and high courage to stir Southern Baptists to eager involvement in Christian social ethics."

Dr. Carl F. H. Henry
Evangelical Theologian

"It has been a joy to see Southern Baptists on the cutting edge of ethical issues that impact our culture. I appreciate Dr. Land's sensitive, balanced, and biblical leadership."

Dr. Kenneth Hemphill
President, Southwestern Baptist
Theological Seminary

"Dr. Richard D. Land is one of the great Christian leaders of the nation, and a clarion voice for truth and righteousness in this generation. His leadership at the ERLC has transformed the agency into a powerful and respected voice on the great moral and ethical issues facing Christian citizens. All Southern Baptists are in his debt, and generations to come will be touched by his ministry."

Dr. R. Albert Mohler, Jr.
President, The Southern Baptist
Theological Seminary

"Dr. Land's tenacity for the truth has been a great inspiration to believers across the nation. With clear and challenging proclamation he has 'cried aloud' to awaken Christians to their responsibility to be salt and light in a decaying and dark culture."

Reverend Gary L. Frost
Pastor, Rising Star Baptist Church,
Youngstown, Ohio

"Competent, concise, compelling! Richard Land has been the catalyst for needed change — the change of uncompromising scriptural answers to the controversies of our day."

June Hunt
President, Hope For The Heart

"For the last ten years Richard Land has become, through his outstanding leadership at the ERLC, the moral conscience of Southern Baptists. He has kept Southern Baptists in the forefront of standing for that which is right and true. Southern Baptists owe him a debt we could never repay."

Dr. James Merritt
Pastor, First Baptist Church,
Snellville, Ga.

"God has lifted up Richard Land as a prophetic voice of morality and justice, blended with mercy, for Southern Baptists worldwide. Long ago it was obvious that God put a passion for ethics and religious liberty issues in the heart of Richard, and Richard has faithfully obeyed God's leadership and has powerfully used that gifting as a moral voice of conscience for both the denomination and the nation."

Dr. Robert E. Reccord
President, North American Mission Board

"The whole world is aware of the God-given leadership of Dr. Richard Land for our Southern Baptist Convention. He is truly the appointee for that work from heaven itself. We deeply appreciate what he has already done and we are looking forward to the wonderful things he will guide us to in the coming year and the years to come."

Dr. W. A. Criswell
Pastor, First Baptist Church, Dallas, Tex.

"Richard is a gifted leader who well understands the cultural crisis of our age and eloquently addresses the solution."

Charles Colson
Executive Director, Prison
Fellowship Ministries

"Thanks to Richard Land for his dedicated service to the ERLC and the SBC for this decade."

Dellanna W. O'Brien
Former Executive Director-
Treasurer, Woman's Missionary
Union, Birmingham, Ala.

"Dr. Land's bold leadership and biblically-based convictions have given Southern Baptists the strong and aggressive leadership and influence our denomination should have in the marketplace and public forums."

Dr. Jerry Rankin
President, International Mission Board

"Richard Land has led Southern Baptists with clarity, conviction, and compassion. His mind is keen, his heart is warm, and his courage is dauntless. I give thanks for him."

Dr. Adrian P. Rogers
Pastor, Bellevue Baptist Church,
Memphis, Tenn.

"Dr. Land has been a powerful and cogent voice defending religious freedom, not only within the SBC, but throughout America at large. He never lets us forget — neither in our prayers nor in our politics — that more Christians are being persecuted for their faith today than during the days of the Roman emperors."

Nina Shea
Freedom House

"No one is more perfectly suited for the position he holds than Dr. Richard Land. He is a world class intellectual who possesses a profound and unwavering faith in our Lord Jesus Christ. He is an invaluable interpreter of God's Word to and for Southern Baptists on the moral, ethical, social, and political issues of our day."

Dr. Morris H. Chapman
President and CEO,
SBC Executive Committee

"Dr. Richard Land is the quintessential Baptist statesman and communicator! Brilliantly articulate, he adroitly moves our convention through a labyrinth of complex issues. From the White House to 'our house,' he speaks the mind of Christ."

Dr. Steven Wright
ERLC Trustee Chairman



THE ETHICS &
RELIGIOUS LIBERTY
COMMISSION
OF THE SOUTHERN BAPTIST CONVENTION

Church, State, & Welfare Reform

BY RANDY SINGER

A few years ago, the government threw in the towel on Welfare Reform. Recognizing that the Welfare program could change a recipient's finances but not transform a recipient's life, the government turned to faith-based groups for help.

The thoughts of Don Taylor, head of Mississippi Department of Health and Human Services, are representative of the growing recognition that the government cannot take the place of God: "I'm a pragmatist, I go with what works. And I know that faith works where nothing else will. The government can't dry every tear, sweep every sidewalk, hire every worker. And it can't solve any problem as long as it keeps confusing material poverty with behavioral poverty."

But as states turn to the church for help, some Southern Baptist churches turn the other way. Many churches throughout the country have not responded to the ministry opportunities of welfare reform due primarily to a cynicism surrounding any relationship between church and state.

I understand that cynicism. For 12 years as an attorney in a large law firm representing churches and other ministry groups, I advised clients not to take one dime of government money and not to become involved with the welfare bureaucracy. But the Charitable Choice provisions of the Welfare Reform Act of 1996 convinced me that the church will not be forced to compromise its testimony if it ministers to those in need under that program. It is time for the church to step up efforts to show the love of Christ to welfare recipients as we proclaim the Gospel of Christ to them.

Churches that are reluctant to take advantage of these new opportunities for ministry, are typically haunted by three questions:

IS IT CONSTITUTIONAL?

Charitable Choice is a special provision in the 1996 welfare reform law that is designed to enable faith-based organizations to participate in government-funded social services without compromising their spiritual mission. The administration of these programs varies from state to state, but typically involves the use of voucher arrangements or point-of-service contracts which may now include faith-based providers. The purpose of the welfare reform legislation is to make recipients self-sufficient. Therefore, Charitable Choice provisions may apply to a broad range of programs, including job training, GED programs, food pantries, maternity homes for unwed mothers, medical clinics, and alcohol/drug rehab centers.

Charitable Choice is constitutional because it does not coerce any recipients of these services into using faith-based groups, thereby avoiding an "establishment" of any religion. For every program administered, the government must use at least one secular provider so that recipients of the services may always choose a non-religious provider.

IS IT SAFE?

The issue that concerns most churches is whether involvement with these government programs will impact religious freedom. The answer for this program (unlike most others) is an emphatic "no."

In the words of the bill's sponsor, Sen. John Ashcroft, "One of my goals . . . was to encourage faith-based organizations to expand their involvement in the welfare reform effort by providing assurances that their religious integrity would be protected." As he said during a debate on the subject, "a pastor shouldn't have to climb up on the steeple and remove the cross" in order to help the needy.

The safeguards incorporated

into the law to protect the religious integrity of participating churches include the following:

▲ Independence and control safeguards—churches "retain [their] independence from Federal, State, and local governments," including their "control over the definition, development, practice, and expression of religious beliefs . . ."

▲ Churches may not be required to remove any religious symbols from their property.

▲ Churches may continue to make hiring and other personnel decisions on religious grounds.

▲ Limited audits—Faith-based organizations may limit the scope of government audits by segregating funds received from the government, in which case the government can audit only that individual account.

While the Charitable Choice law goes to great lengths to safeguard the religious freedom of participating churches, it is recommended that those churches take additional precautions to avoid any issues. First, any church that intends to become involved should set up a subsidiary 501(c)3 Corporation to keep these funds separate from the church. Second, churches should become involved only with voucher type programs as opposed to programs that allow the government to contract directly with the church. There are critical distinctions in these programs, including a non-prosecuting clause that typically applies in direct contract cases. Third, churches that are reluctant to receive any government funding, even under voucher types of programs, can still participate in welfare reform but simply fund the ministry independent of government sources.

DOES IT WORK?

Many Southern Baptist churches can testify that the welfare reform legislation has created new opportunities to reach the

poor with both the love and Gospel of Jesus Christ. It works only so long as the social ministry is not divorced from evangelism. The church changes society by changing hearts. If we emphasize the social ministry to the exclusion of the spiritual ministry, we are only duplicating an approach that has proven to be a failure.

A former trial attorney, Randy Singer is Executive Vice President and Chief Operating Officer of the North American Mission Board (NAMB) of the Southern Baptist Convention.

DOES CHURCH INVOLVEMENT IN WELFARE REFORM REALLY WORK?

It worked for Karen, a single mother of a preschooler and three grown sons. When she became involved with Christian Women's Job Corps (CWJC), a WMU-sponsored ministry that works in the welfare reform arena but does not accept government funds, she was homeless, jobless, and could not control her handicapped four-year-old. She was without Christ and so depressed that on most days she would not even get dressed, wearing her nightgown all day. Through the efforts of CWJC and a local church, she learned job skills, parenting skills (like tough love), and, most importantly, learned that Christ loved her and died for her. She is now a maturing Christian and has been employed for over 20 months. If not for the love of the church, Karen believes her depression would have won out and she would have ended her life without the hope Christ brings.

It worked for Herlinda. Prior to help through CWJC and a local church, Herlinda would not leave the house. She passed each day glued to the television set. But this shy recluse has been transformed by the love of Christ into a powerful advocate for the Kingdom. In July of 1988, Herlinda stood with grace and poise before a bank of TV cameras, a crowd of 150, and the Vice-President of the United States to tell her story. During spring break of this year, she went on a mission trip to Mexico with her church and boldly witnessed to others. And recently the transformation became complete in Herlinda's home as she reported that her daughter accepted Christ as her Lord and Savior.

It works. One person, one heart, and one soul at a time. Through charitable choice and welfare reform, the church has a unique opportunity to move people from dependency on the government to dependency on Christ.

Indifference or Christian

CONCERN?

BY T.W. HUNT

RECOMMENDED READING

Their Blood Cries Out

In more than 60 countries worldwide, Christians are harassed, abused, arrested, tortured, or executed. Paul Marshall tells of modern Christians who are dying for their faith.

BKBLO (335 pages)

\$12.00 ea.



In The Lion's Den

More people have died for their faith this century than in the previous 19 centuries combined. Nina Shea shares what's happening and what America's Christians must do.

BKLI0 (125 pages)

\$9.00 ea.

Let My People Go

The gripping, heartrending, sometimes infuriating account of a 1997 mission to return Sudanese slaves to their southern homeland, buy them, and set them free in the name of the Lord.

BKPE0 (192 pages)

\$12.99 ea.

Day of Prayer for the Persecuted Church Resource Kit (1998 version)

Kit includes a 5-minute video; a Prayer Resource Magazine with an overview of persecuted churches and ways to pray for them; photocopy-ready Leadership Sheets showing how to focus a church service or meeting on the cause of the persecuted church, and a world map of persecution hot spots.

DOPKIT

\$12.00 ea.

To order, see page 19.

T.W. Hunt served as the Sunday School Board's prayer consultant until his retirement in 1994.



A critical prayer need that affects many of our missionaries is going unnoticed. Numerous efforts have attempted to call our people to prayer for the persecuted church, yet few prayer ministries and few prayer warriors are taking seriously the call. The call for prayer for the persecuted church is the most serious prayer challenge facing the body of Christ today.

In 1997, the Southern Baptist Convention passed a resolution on the persecuted church. *Light* has repeatedly published articles informing the public about the persecuted church (in 1998 alone "When Silence Is Not Golden," by Steven L. Snyder, Jan.-Feb., 12-13; "How to Pray for Persecuted Christians," by John Franklin, July-Aug., 8-9; "Redeemed," by Jim Jacobson, Sept.-Oct., 8-9). The church as a whole remains indifferent to this desperate need. The time has come to give serious attention in prayer to the urgent plight of many brothers and sisters who are suffering for Christ. Prayer is not the only measure we can take for these heroic Christians, but it is one which is available to all Christian people.

Through the ages, it has been the fate of Christians to suffer for Christ. Early Christians suffered under Roman emperors. In the 16th century, suffering in England produced one of the great classics of Christian literature, *Foxe's Book of Martyrs*. In the 20th century, persecution of Christians has escalated, reaching more than 200 million people and claiming more martyrs than all of history combined to this point. An additional 400 million suffer in repressive regimes.

Pray first for public awareness of the situation. Pray for the indifference that permeates evangelical Christianity to the terrible plight of fellow believers in hard countries. Three books that detail Christian suffering include: *By Their Blood*, by James Hefley; *Their Blood Cries Out*, by Paul Marshall, and *In the Lion's Den*, by Nina Shea. (Don't read these books at bedtime!) *Pray also for official American government action toward persecuting nations.* Pray the same thing for the United Nations.

Pray for the agencies trying to get help to persecuted Christians—the ERLC, Open Doors (Brother Andrew), Freedom House, Voice of the Martyrs, International Christian Concern, and Christian Freedom International. In addition, most evangelical mission agencies have to deal with legal red tape, protection of covert missionaries, and occasional arrests and imprisonments. For example, the Southern Baptist International Mission Board no longer lists the names of covert missionaries in the missionary birthday calendar. Pray regularly for these, even though you don't know their names.

Include the repressive governments in your prayers. Ask the Lord to lighten their attitude on the granting of visas and work permits. Ask for the easing of restrictions on Christian worship. Ask that they allow more Bibles to be imported into their borders.

Pray for the believers themselves. The areas of persecution can be separated into three large blocks: Communist countries, Islamic countries, and (to a lesser degree) countries where one of the Orthodox churches predominates. You will become aware of the different needs as you read the books listed above.

Having lived in one repressive country, I can testify to the importance of *praying for wisdom in conducting meetings*. Even singing can attract the attention of authorities. Where I lived, we could not even carry a Bible on the street unless it was in a brown paper sack. (That country is now open to evangelical work, so prayer really helps!) Witnessing is especially dangerous.

However, do pray for boldness of witness and for wisdom in knowing how to witness. Evangelical Christianity is growing faster in the Sudan than any other Muslim country, although persecution is more severe there in comparison. It is also growing in China, despite overwhelming obstacles.

Pray for endurance under the pressures of difficult daily life. Pray for courage and steadfastness under torture or intimidation. Few Christians in the West appreciate the urgency of this prayer. With all my heart, I believe that my prayers for one individual in a Communist prison eased his last six months of life. *Pray also for the release of prisoners who are imprisoned for their faith.*

Through the centuries, Christianity has prospered when obstacles were great. We have the privilege of participating in some of God's greatest work in the countries where persecution is prevalent. ■

Dear Sir,

My name is L

Dear Sir,

9 am 15 year old

I am 15 years old and
a resident of Imphal
Manipur, India...I am
requesting your...Southern

Baptist Convention to
pray for my family and
my village peoples who [are]
against the Christian.

Our village has a rule [that]
those who become a Christian
will have to get out from the
village....

The people of our village even
told my family that they will burn
down our house if my family do
not stop becoming Christian. Now
our weapon to protect us is only
our Lord Jesus Christ....

This year...all my 5 brothers
and two sisters and myself have
formed a Association...to fight
the non-Christian by preaching the
words of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Please pray for our Association
[and] for my ambition...to become
a Theologian.

Yours faithfully,

Languingam Palmei

Dated: 23 Feb 1999

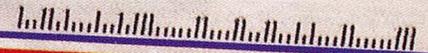


BY AIR MAIL



RECEIVED MAR 10 1999

RICHARD LAN
901 COMMERCE,
NO. 550 NASHVI
TN 37203,
USA



The Campaign of Conscience for Sudan seeks to end America's silence in the face of starvation tactics, enslavement, and genocide which the government of Sudan is waging against the African country's south Sudanese and Nuba Mountain Christians and animists, two million of which have reportedly already died.

In response to the human rights tragedy in Sudan, students from across the U.S. have joined together in forming The Campaign of Conscience for Sudan.



SUDAN
Campaign of Conscience

Believing the U.S. government has a moral

obligation to speak out against the horrors being perpetuated against followers of Christ in Sudan, the effort is aimed at flooding Congress with at least a quarter of a million letters and e-mails petitioning the Congress to heed the persecution of the Sudanese.

By visiting www.freedomhouse.org/religion, individuals can find more details on the tragedy in Sudan and send a nearly instant e-mail to their U.S. Senators and congressional representative asking the U.S. government to take action on the child slavery, genocide, and other liberty and life issues in Sudan.

For more information, contact project coordinator Scott Michael at (610) 361-8164 (mmichael2@juno.com) or the Center for Religious Freedom at (202) 296-5101.

The Alcohol Nightmare— The Way Out

BY TED STONE

For over 22 years Ted Stone has devoted his ministry to the prevention and cure of the serious drug problem that has brought endless pain to our nation and world. He has spoken in thousands of churches, schools, prisons, treatment centers, and civic meetings, and has authored two books about the subject. *The Durham, NC*, native has twice walked across America to bring a greater emphasis to the drug problem and its solution. An active Southern Baptist, he was elected a trustee of Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary in 1997 and also serves on the Southeastern Seminary Board of Visitors. At the Salt Lake City convention of Southern Baptists last year, he authored a motion which established a drug abuse task force which is scheduled to present to this year's SBC a proposed plan of action for a greater involvement by our denomination in the solution of the drug problem.

During my first cross-country trek in 1996, I spoke at a luncheon meeting of a West Texas civic club. I told those in attendance about a teenage girl who asked for my help in dealing with her drug-related problem.

Teresa would meet her friends that sultry summer at a local car wash, which in the evenings became another teenage hangout. They would sit on the hoods of their cars, drinking a beer or two, just letting off a little steam. But what started as a little social drinking fast escalated into several beers, and an occasional joint of marijuana. The teenager became so drunk one night that she blacked out, not even remembering the risky drive home. Her parents, active members of a local Baptist church, gave their errant daughter an ultimatum. "You find help, or we'll find help." Teresa had turned to me, remembering my comment when I spoke to her youth group previously, "If you ever have a drug problem, and you can't find assistance locally, call me and I'll be there as soon as humanly possible."

The recent high school graduate struggled with her drinking habit. She even slipped a couple of times, but she made it back, achieving total sobriety. Teresa went to college that fall. She met a wonderful young man, and they are happily married today.

I will never never forget what she told me after her recovery: "I've learned something about alcohol, Ted. You don't have to be an alcoholic to have an alcohol problem."

As we left the hotel site of that civic club's luncheon, my



Casual attitudes about alcohol can have a deadly impact on teenagers in Christian and nonbelieving households alike. "My sister and I grew up in a family in which my parents were social drinkers, only one drink with the evening meal. They never got drunk or drove automobiles under the influence. It apparently did not have a negative effect on me, but it was different with my sister. She started off as an occasional drinker and never stopped. It totally destroyed her life..."

associate remarked, "Did you notice how quiet it became in that room when you mentioned alcohol?"

I immediately responded, "Mike, have you noticed how quiet it becomes in Baptist churches when I mention the subject?"

To our young people, adult society has become roundly hypocritical in its handling of the serious drug dilemma that plagues our nation. A huge and

willing army of righteous believers stands ready to declare war on the highly addictive substances, like crack cocaine and heroin, and the misery which they bring to our communities. But we speak of alcohol and drugs separately, as if a cloak of legality and public acceptance has placed the beverage drug in a different category. I have often told my listeners, "If you have a six-pack of beer in your refrigerator, you will be on thin ice if

you try to counsel teenagers about the dangers posed by marijuana and a host of other illegal substances. These wary and observant teenagers will have some very embarrassing questions for you."

The pain runs deep across our land because of our number one drug problem—alcohol. And it touches nearly every family—churchgoers or not. Everywhere I travel, I urge my audiences to become positive role models. "The young people need a new set of heroes. What better hero could one have than a family member or friend who embraces sobriety and self-control as the road to happiness, success, and inner peace?"

After a Wednesday evening church service, a young lady obviously disabled from an auto accident approached me. "I wish that the drunk driver who crashed into my family's car had decided to become a hero before he did this," she agonized.

I affirmed this to a large group of singles in a prestigious church recently, "The alcohol problem certainly brings hurt to a lot of families." I realized that many of these concerned individuals were separated or divorced because of family difficulties posed by beer, wine, or liquor. "God understands your pain," I assured them.

In school after school I ask my young listeners the same question. "How many of you know of a family that right now is having a problem because of alcoholic beverages?" How I wish the parents of our country could view the sea of hands held high.

In an Oklahoma church a

young man told me of his father. He had a miserable life for years because he was an alcoholic. He brought unhappiness not only to himself but to others around him. "I had given up hope. But then he met a person who led him to Jesus and he was finally able to break the shackles of the bottle. At last I'm getting to know my real father, a sober man who has good in him."

I need only recall my own personal experiences to see how drugs once changed my life. The person I became, a criminal monster, was a person no one in his right mind would want to be around.

I have tried to be reasonable in my approach to this devastating problem. Of course, there are people who can take it or leave it when it comes to alcohol. But for every individual who can take it or leave it, there is another one who can't. How on this earth can we know from the beginning to which category we belong?

We cannot. At best it becomes a risky game of chance. Users are always betting that the bad days will never come for them. Maybe so. Maybe not. Even a social user may find it difficult not to overdo in times of stress, such as family difficulties, job loss, or health problems. And even if the user survives such disasters, what about his children, grandchildren, other family members, or friends who are watching? Will one of them assume that it is safe to drink because the person they admire most drinks? And

will this loved one develop a problem that will not go away and that will eventually destroy his life? If this sad event were to occur, will the one who served as the role model be able to bear the guilt that surely will rest on his shoulders?

For this reason, I ask those who consider themselves social drinkers to consider giving up their habits for the sake of someone that they love.

After kneeling with about 30 caring supporters on the sands of Virginia Beach following my second walk across the USA, a young lady from the church at which I spoke the previous evening confided to me, "I'm glad you came to our church. My sister and I grew up in a family in which my parents were social drinkers, only one drink with the evening meal. They never got drunk or drove automobiles under the influence. It apparently did not have a negative effect on me, but it was different with my sister. She started off as an occasional drinker and never stopped. It totally destroyed her life, and she killed herself just a few weeks ago. I signed the commitment card to a life free from drug abuse last night, because I don't want what happened to my sister to happen to my child. I want to be a good example for her," she cried.

Just a few weeks ago I received a letter from a young man who had heard my message near the close of my last cross-country adventure for a drug-free America.

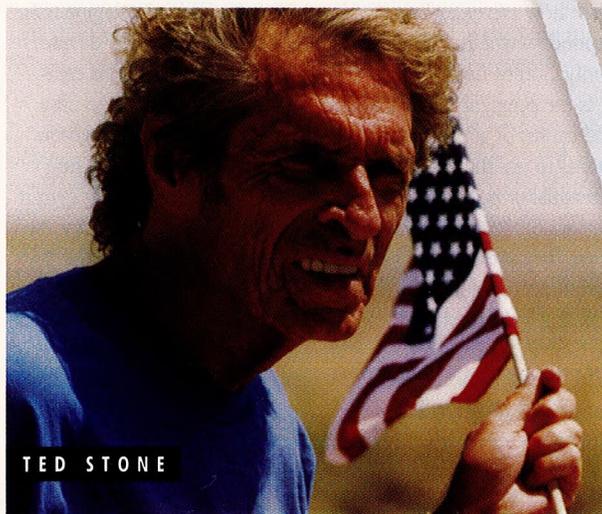
Dear Ted,

You spoke at my church on October 4, 1998. At that time I was celebrating a rebirth of my faith that was just a week old. I was also a regular alcohol abuser who had been living with this habit for the past 20 years. Before the service the ushers distributed your slips of paper, pledging a lifestyle free from drug abuse. I, in good conscience, could not fill out the card and make this commitment because I was fully aware of the problem that controlled my life.

I am proud to enclose this pledge that I have since made to God. Your message moved me so that Sunday morning that I promised I would never ingest another alcoholic beverage again. I started on my journey that evening. I prayed to God for His help to keep me strong. The thought of a dependence-free lifestyle excited me. Day by day I felt more in control of myself and felt a lesser need to use alcohol as a crutch in my life. I have prayed to God, and continue to do so daily, to help keep me focused and to thank Him for the lifestyle changes He has accomplished in me. Easter Sunday, April 4, 1999, commemorated six months to the day that I made that commitment. It has been half a year that I have not imbibed alcohol in any form or fashion. I am now in control of myself and proud to sign this formal pledge to abstain, knowing that I will fulfill my obligation to the Lord, to my family, and to myself. . . .

My prayer for you is that you can continue reaching out to people, with the hope that you can touch their lives in the same way you have touched mine . . .

Yes, the pain does continue to run deep, but there is a way out of this self-imposed nightmare. The American people do have the will, but they need the direction and the inspiration. If the Christian church does not lead, who then will lead? ■



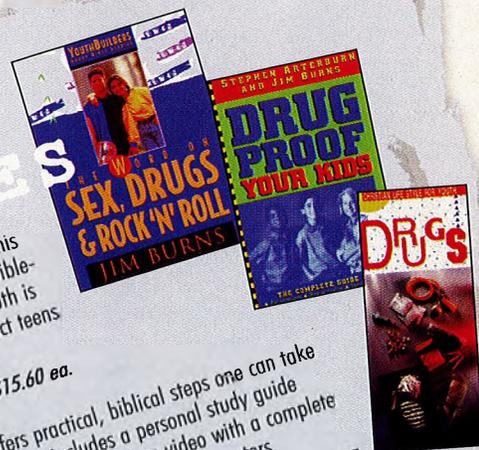
TED STONE

RESOURCES
The Word on Sex, Drugs & Rock 'n' Roll: This high-involvement, discussion-oriented, and Bible-centered resource for those working with youth is filled with action-packed exercises that direct teens to find answers in God's Word.
Book: BKWOR (186 pages) \$15.60 ea.

Drugproof Your Kids: This resource offers practical, biblical steps one can take to head off or work through a drug crisis. It includes a personal study guide and discussion leader's guide. In addition, it is offered on video with a complete syllabus that can be used for parents, kids, teachers, and youth pastors.
Book: BKDRU (222 pages) \$9.90 ea.
Video: VTDRU (VHS, 90 min.) \$18.60 ea.

Christian Life Style for Youth — Drugs: This revised pamphlet takes a look at some reasons teenagers experiment with drugs, specific drugs and their effects, Christian principles to apply to drug usage, and where to go for help. Includes section on crack and herbs as drugs.
YODRU \$35 ea.

See ordering instructions on page 19.



How Did God View of President Clinton

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.

This article is the first in a series by John Franklin to be featured in *Light*. In the next issue, John will look at a root cause distorting our nation's view of God.

BY JOHN FRANKLIN

Our final year before the millennium will forever record that President William Jefferson Clinton was tried and acquitted on two articles of impeachment. The twentieth century science of opinion polls chronicled exactly where Americans stood or shifted during the controversy, and just about every possible nuance in between. Nightly news reports interviewed the man on the street. Web sites allowed Americans to state their viewpoints. Talk radio explored the affair in depth. All the avenues of media scrutiny chronicled this wearisome process in exquisite detail. Everyone had an opinion it seemed, and everyone's opinion was sought, whether formally by the press or over the coffeepot at work.

Everyone's opinion, that is, but God's.

How did God view the President's trial? What was His perspective? Was He working in it? If so, what was He trying to say... to Christians? ... to the country at large? Ultimately no other opinion matters except His alone. So what was God's perspective?

This being a conservative, Christian publication, you, the reader, might well assume that I will proceed to give a spirited denouncement of our President's behavior, but I'm not going to do that. Not that his conduct doesn't merit denouncement, but that's not

news. The vast majority of Americans agree on that point, whether they be Christian or not. No, I believe something else is at stake, something far greater and of more infinite significance than reiterating the shortcomings of one man's behavior. And I believe that God had a hand in shaping these affairs of our national life for the very purpose that we might grasp it.

Please allow me to prove this assertion by posing a question. Could the circumstances of this trial be caused or at least allowed by God because He's trying to tell us something? Here's what I mean: Scripture often depicts God working to arrange circumstances so that the heart of a person or nation might be revealed. He either constructs or allows events to happen for the purpose of demonstrating where we stand with Him. Let me give you just two of several examples in the Bible. Deuteronomy 8:2 says, "And you shall remember that the LORD your God led you all the way these forty years in the wilderness, to humble you and test you, to know what was in your heart, whether you would keep His commandments or not." This scripture explicitly teaches that at least one reason for the 40 years of wandering had as its intended result to test and reveal exactly where the heart of the children of Israel was. God deliberately led them into the wilderness and deliber-

ately kept them there all those years so that when they were tested, the quality of their relationship with Him would be clear and evident. Consider the other example of Hezekiah. After God had slain all the Assyrians who were besieging Jerusalem, Hezekiah suddenly became famous. Scripture records that this notoriety caused him to be exalted in the sight of all the nations, and they gave him many gifts. Then God, who promised never to leave or forsake His own, did a very strange thing. When the messengers of the Babylonian empire came to Jerusalem, 2 Chronicles 32 records, "However, regarding the ambassadors of the princes of Babylon, whom they sent to him to inquire about the wonder that was done in the land, God withdrew from him, in order to test him, that He might know all that was in his heart." When they came to find out about what God had done, He stood back at a distance just to see how Hezekiah would respond—whether he would glorify God or not.

Is the principle clear? Often God causes or allows circumstances to test the heart of an individual or people for the purpose of revealing exactly where they stand before Him. (Scriptures repeat this pattern of testing in other verses. See Gen. 22:1; Exod. 16:4; Exod. 15:25; Deut. 13:3; Psalms 105:19; Jer. 6:27;

Jer. 12:3; John 6:6.)

So what was God doing? Ostensibly our President was on trial, but ironically, could it be that we were the ones really on trial? Since clearly God's pattern is to test hearts, could it be that the ultimate significance of this whole impeachment process was that God revealed statistically and systematically exactly where our heart is with Him? Suddenly our national broadcasts, magazines, and newspapers contained words like "sin," "confession," and "forgiveness." Americans were forced to state personal convictions concerning spiritual matters. Was God orchestrating or allowing this? Were the opinion polls, if you will, our spiritual deposition regarding our national beliefs of morality and character? Did we go on record as publicly testifying that the things God holds dear we value little?

I think all these realities match the pattern of how God has worked in the Scripture, and I shudder to imagine if He should decide to call us into His court tomorrow to catalogue our beliefs of morality and character. Did we go on record as publicly testifying that a good economy is better than integrity, and that moral failings do not impact the qualification to lead? How would we fare in such a trial? Surely no legal defense or technical wranglings would avail in acquitting us one smidgen. If

ew the Trial nton?

we were to think about this too long we could become quite fearful, and rightfully so.

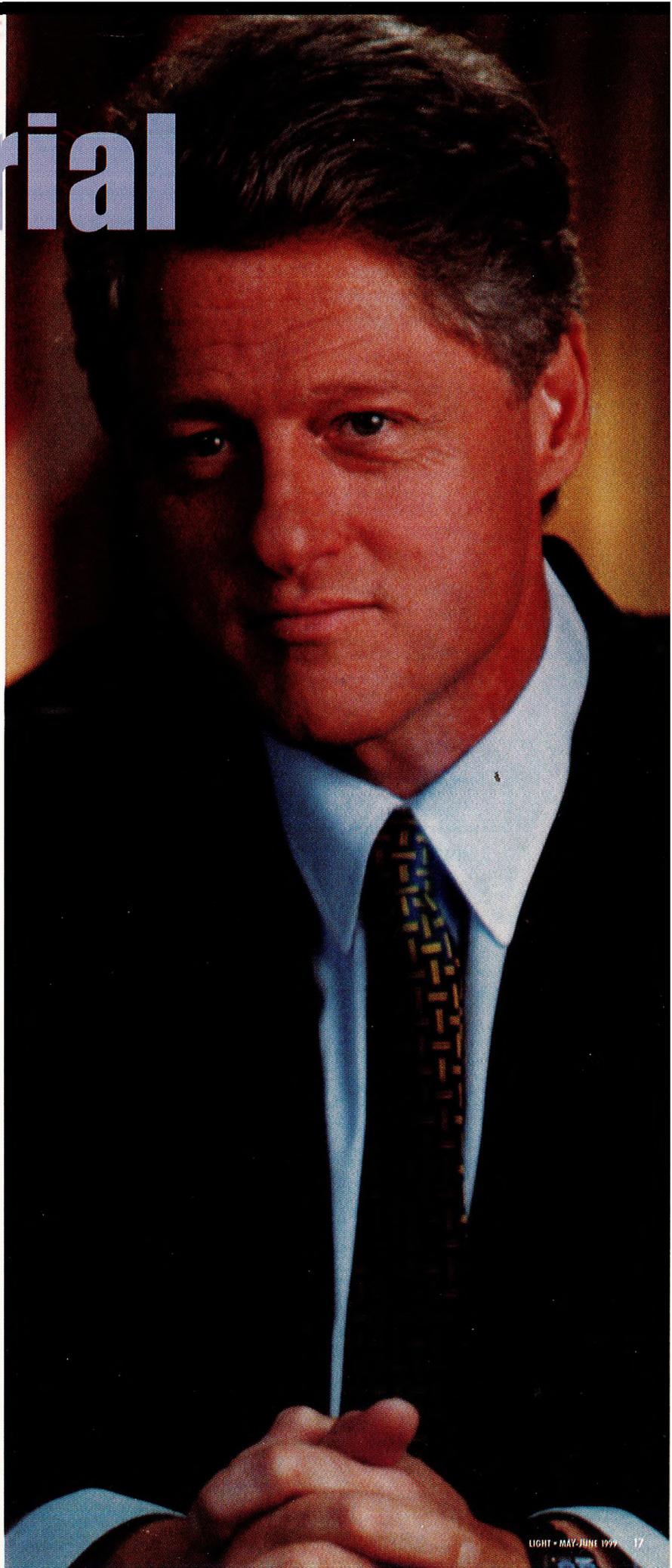
However, I do believe there is a glimmer of hope precisely because of why God does these things. Such testing benefits God not one iota, nor does it inform Him, as if He needed to discover where we stand. No, the testing is for our benefit, for our instruction, and for our own awakening that we might realize the condition of our heart. It ought to cause us to ask questions while there is yet hope, that we might come to our senses and do whatever it takes to settle out of court with Him.

I've thought quite some time about the question we ought to ask in view of the Clinton ordeal. For the sake of space, I deliberately limit the question to the church, especially in light of another poll. Did you know that Barna and Gallup have conducted polls and discovered that no significant difference exists between those who claim to be Christian and those who don't? When it comes to voting issues such as abortion, or lifestyles habits such as living together before marriage, both Christians and non-Christians believe and do the same things in basically the same proportions. Now we could lament such a deplorable condition by blaming the uncommitted among us as the culprits for these embarrassing facts.

However, is it really their fault? Are they really the ones to blame, or has there been a colossal failure on the part of our churches to adequately convey the requirements of Christ? What is it about the quality of our discipleship in our day that allows wholesale numbers of professing Christians to comfortably cling to such abhorrent lifestyles and still believe that a holy God accepts them?

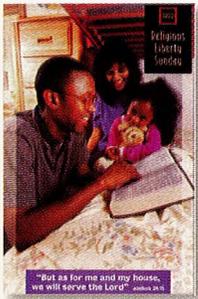
Ultimately, the trial wasn't about whether or not our President should be removed from office, but it was about what our nation believes about God, and why our brand of Christianity failed to adequately communicate who God is. I believe a root cause exists for this fatal malady infecting America in general and Christians more specifically. If we can correct this problem, then America could return to God. If we do not correct this problem, even if the whole country turns to God, it will do little good in the long run. So what is the problem?

Unfortunately I must address it in the next issue, but for now suffice it to say that God was testing us by either allowing or causing the circumstances leading to the trial for the purpose of waking us up, that we might recognize the condition of our heart and repent before a final judgment falls on this nation. ■



Religious Liberty

Southern Baptists focus special attention on the issue of religious liberty on the first Sunday in June. The erosion of religious liberty and the misapplications of the separation of church and state indicate the need for a renewed understanding and emphasis on Baptists' proud heritage in this area.



1999 Religious Liberty Bulletin Insert/Leaflet*

The ERLC's emphasis leaflets are an inexpensive way to inform your congregation about critical social issues facing America. These pieces double as bulletin inserts and handouts, providing concise text with a thought-provoking photo to coincide with annual emphases on the Southern Baptist calendar. The glossy 5.5" X 8" leaflets will spark discussion and prompt readers to consider ways they can address pressing social needs with the life-changing power of the Gospel. The leaflet pictured left serves as a gentle reminder of the price Jesus paid and the value of our religious liberty. Full color/undated. One of a series. Sold in lots of 50. (One leaflet is included in resource set at right.)

RLBULK \$2.75 / 50

1999 Religious Liberty Poster*

This color 14"x22" poster complements the insert above to promote Religious Liberty Sunday. Undated. One of a series.

RLPOS \$.95 ea.

Religious Liberty Sermon Outline*

Suggested for Religious Liberty Sunday, this sermon can be used in its entirety or as a resource.

RLSER \$.22 ea.

Religious Liberty Fact Sheet*

This new fact sheet offers statistics to show Christians how desperately their input is needed as morality is challenged in the public arena.

RLFAC \$2.22 ea.

Religious Liberty/Christian Citizenship Resource Set

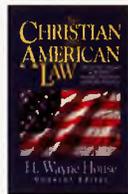
Includes one of each item in this section, pp. 18-19, indicated by an asterisk (*).

CCSET \$6.83 ea.

BOOKS

The Christian and American Law

The truths of our faith provide a better foundation for a just society than the shifting sands of contemporary relativism and postmodernism. The contributors to this volume examine Christianity's rich contribution to American law, explore ways Christians can relate to current laws, and propose strategies whereby Christians may influence the legal community to ensure equal opportunity for the Christian faith.



BKLAW (301 pages) \$9.99 ea.

Character IS the Issue

A Southern Baptist minister for 12 years, Mike Huckabee was elected lieutenant governor of Arkansas in 1993 and began his term as governor in 1996 when his predecessor was convicted in the Whitewater investigation. He underscores the power of honor, faith, and integrity in our culture.



BKCHAR (191 pages) \$15.00 ea.

Send A Message to Mickey

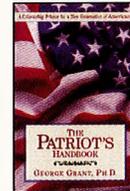
This book by Dr. Richard Land and Frank York introduces films that go out of their way to cram violence and sexual perversion into an evening's entertainment and addresses TV shows, theme park events, and corporate policies that undermine the family—and are at odds with the Bible and our most cherished values.



BKSEN (87 pages) \$4.95 ea.

The Patriot's Handbook

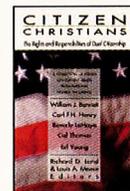
This book captures the essence of the great American experiment in liberty, featuring a sterling collection of key documents, speeches, and profiles of leaders who shaped U.S. history.



BKPAT (464 pages) \$14.00 ea.

Citizen Christians

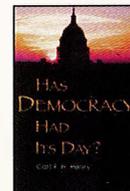
This book helps Christians balance responsibilities as subjects in God's Kingdom with requirements of citizenship in an earthly nation. From 1992 CLC seminar.



BK CIT (136 pages) \$8.00 ea.

Has Democracy Had Its Day?

A look at whether a democratic society can continue to exist when the religious underpinnings that have made freedom possible have been abandoned.



BKHAS (63 pages) \$4.00 ea.

Christians in the Public Square: Faith in Practice?

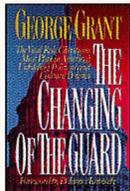
These messages from the 1996 CLC seminar offer solutions to some of today's critical issues and help define the Christian's role in the nation's public life.



BKCHR (144 pages) \$7.50 ea.

The Changing of the Guard

George Grant asserts that a meaningful shift in the way our country is governed comes only when Christians realize the place to look for answers is the Bible, not the ballot box.



BKCHA (228 pages) \$6.00 ea.

VIDEOS

Stephen's Test of Faith

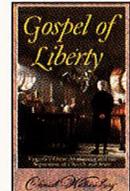
A young boy takes a journey through history meeting Jesus, Stephen the martyr, William Tyndale, Christian children in today's Middle East, and others who dare to share their faith. Stephen's Test is an inspiring challenge to all ages to continue following Christ when put to "the test."



VTTST (VHS, 22 min.) \$15.00 ea.

Gospel of Liberty

This inspiring video addresses Virginia's Great Awakening which shook the foundations of hierarchical authority and led to the separation of church and state at the foundation of American democracy.



VTGOS (VHS, 37 min.) \$19.99 ea.

A Just Cause: Why Boycott Disney?

Scenes Disney executives would rather you not see are collected on this video, presenting a compelling case for the Disney boycott. Richard Land, James Dobson, Adrian Rogers, and Don Wildmon address the new Disney agenda, with clips from several Disney productions which promote the homosexual agenda and smear the institution of the traditional family.



VTDIS (VHS, 30 min.) \$14.95 ea.

LEADERS IN ACTION BOOKS

Edited by George Grant, each book in the engaging biographical series is designed for individual leadership studies and can be ordered individually or as a set.

BKRLSET (all four titles) \$55.00 ea.

Not a Tame Lion

A tremendous intellect, C.S. Lewis was perhaps the foremost Christian apologist of the 20th century. This book reveals why, a generation after his death, Lewis continues to be numbered among our best-selling authors and most influential thinkers.



BKLEW \$14.99 ea.

Never Give In

This inspirational biography examines the extraordinary character of Winston Churchill and proves to be an inspiring portrait of a truly great leader who understood what it meant to "never give in."



BKCHU \$14.99 ea.

Carry a Big Stick

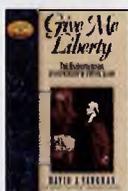
Theodore Roosevelt stands out as one of the most exceptional leaders in American history—a devoted husband and father, a politician, a soldier, a war hero, a writer, and a diplomat. His commitment to what he believed was right and good and true were dynamically compelling, even to those who opposed him.



BKROO \$14.99 ea.

Give Me Liberty

Patrick Henry was a brilliant orator whose love of liberty fueled the fire of the American Revolution. This book shows how his conviction gave him the courage to face tyranny and prevail.



BKHEN \$14.99 ea.

RELIGIOUS LIBERTY SUNDAY

JUNE 6, 1999

Retrace the steps of the bold American pioneers who invested their lives in the struggle for civil rights in the South.

As the annual Southern Baptist Convention convenes in Atlanta, Ga., participants can take advantage of a tremendously unique opportunity to visit historical sites in Alabama where the chant of Freedom Riders and the cries of demonstrators still seem to hang in the air. Dr. Richard Land, president of the SBC Ethics & Religious Liberty Commission, and Emmanuel McCall, senior pastor of the Christian Fellowship Baptist Church, College Park, Ga., will recreate a portion of the annual civil rights pilgrimage taken by U.S. Senators and members of Congress earlier this year. The Historic Civil Rights Tour will include stops at:

BIRMINGHAM CIVIL RIGHTS INSTITUTE – Exhibits introduce visitors to the history of this city, once referred to as the most segregated city in America, and to the broader campaign by brave men, women, boys, and girls who dared speak out and risk their lives for equal rights for black Americans.

KELLY INGRAM PARK (setting of many civil rights demonstrations in Birmingham, across the street from 16th Street Baptist Church). Birmingham fire fighters turned their hoses on demonstrators there — fire hoses that reportedly could peel the bark off trees at 80 feet.

16TH STREET BAPTIST CHURCH – On Sept. 15, 1963, four children in Sunday School were killed by a bomb which exploded near the sanctuary. The event was a major turning point in civil rights protest in Birmingham and became a rallying cry for unity across the nation.

CIVIL RIGHTS MEMORIAL – Located on the Southern Poverty

Law Center grounds in Montgomery, this stunning memorial was designed by Vietnam Memorial artist Maya Lin. Engravings in this unique memorial chronicle key events in the 1955 to 1968 struggle for racial equality in the South.

DEXTER AVENUE KING MEMORIAL BAPTIST CHURCH – Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. began his leadership in the Civil Rights Movement while serving here. The church is regarded as the birthplace of the Civil Rights Movement.

Cost for the tour is \$35.00 per person and includes box lunch in transit. *Seating is limited, so contact the ERLC today at (615) 244-2495 to express your interest in this inspiring tour.*

Tour Schedule (TENTATIVE):

Thursday, June 17, 1999

- 7:30 AM Tour begins at Ebenezer Baptist Church (Atlanta) for wreath-laying and dedication
- 8:00 AM Buses depart for Montgomery, AL
- 10:00 AM Tour King Memorial - Dexter Avenue Baptist Church and wreath-laying at Civil Rights Memorial (Montgomery)
- 11:00 AM Buses depart for Birmingham, AL
- 1:00 PM Tour 16th St. Baptist Church and Birmingham Civil Rights Institute • Wreath-laying in Kelly Ingram Park to mark 36th anniversary of church bombing (Birmingham)
- 4:30 PM Reception at Beeson Divinity School (Samford University)
- 5:15 PM Buses depart for Atlanta, GA



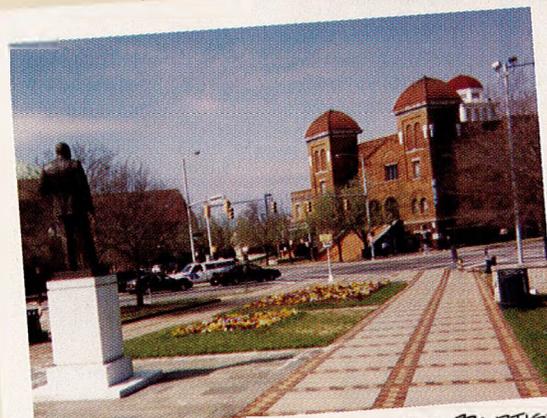
LEFT: Students remember civil rights protesters by placing a wreath in Birmingham's Kelly Ingram Park.

STUDENT



ITS PILGRIMAGE

ABOVE (L-R): Rep. Fred Upton (R-Mich.), Rep. Marion Berry (D-Ark.), Dr. Richard Land, Rep. Jay Dickey (R-Ark.), and press reflect at the Civil Rights Memorial in Montgomery, Ala., during the congressional civil rights pilgrimage. LEFT: Across from 16th St. Baptist Church, a statue of Martin Luther King Jr. overlooks the park where activists met to march.



PARK ACROSS FROM 16TH ST. BAPTIST

OVERHEARD DURING THE CONGRESSIONAL PILGRIMAGE:

"My message to young people is that they have an obligation, a mission, and a mandate from history to forget about their own circumstances and to get involved in the circumstances of others." — **REV. FRED SHUTTLEWORTH, FORMER PASTOR OF 16TH STREET BAPTIST CHURCH.**

"[Ours is] a country that is still in need of healing. We still struggle over divisions. And the ability to see people for what they really are is the first step to repair the divisions." — **U.S. REP. TOM SAWYER (D-OHIO)**



THE ETHICS & RELIGIOUS LIBERTY COMMISSION
OF THE SOUTHERN BAPTIST CONVENTION

901 Commerce, #550 ■ Nashville, TN 37203-3696

Non-profit Org.
U.S. POSTAGE PAID
Nashville, Tennessee
Permit No. 518