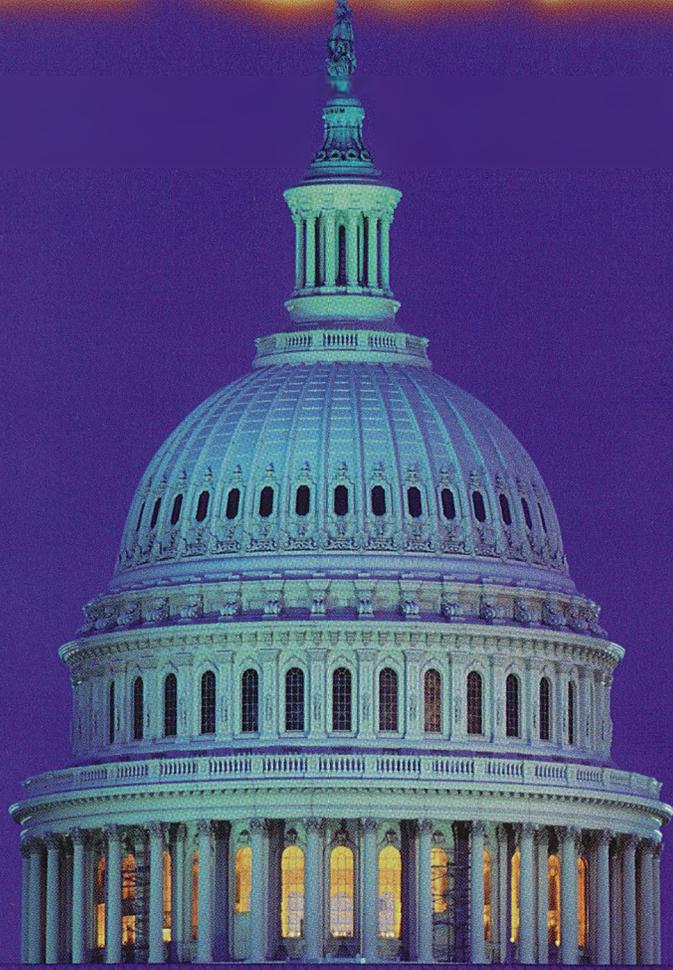


LIGHT



**“Let your light
so shine...”**

**CAN CHRISTIANS CHANGE AMERICA
FOR GOOD? SHOULD THEY TRY?**

What do these leaders have to say?



Richard Land



Jay Sekulow



Rep. Tom Coburn



Kay Coles James



Carl F. H. Henry

"As If They

Is invoking God in public before a football game constitutional?
The Supreme Court will decide in a case involving a Texas school.

BY RICHARD D. LAND



Had Cursed"

Once again, the emotional and volatile issue of prayer and religious expression in our nation's public schools is before the U.S. Supreme Court. This is hardly surprising, since the most contentious battles in the struggle over values are at the intersection of religion and government, and no government institution affects more Americans than public schools.

The current case before the court, *Santa Fe Independent School District v. Doe*, started in 1995 when two families—one Mormon and the other Roman Catholic—objected to Christian prayers being offered at school events by various community clergy and sued the school district.

Santa Fe, Tex., about 35 miles from Houston, is an overwhelmingly religious community of about 8,500 people, with more churches than restaurants. In response to the suit, the school district, seeking to accommodate strong community desire to allow student religious expression at football games and other extracurricular events, constructed a policy they believed would pass constitutional muster.

The school district's new policy involved a multi-step, student-determined process. First, students vote on whether to have a pre-game student speaker "solemnize" the event and promote good sportsmanship. Second, if students vote to have a student speaker, they vote again to select the student speaker. Third, the student speaker expresses a pre-game message that can be either religious or non-religious. The 11th Federal Circuit Court of Appeals recently upheld a virtually identical policy in Florida.

However, the 5th Federal Circuit Court of Appeals, where this case was heard, ruled in 1999 by a 2-1 vote that prayer over a public address system before high school football games, as well as the mention of any deity, was unconstitutional. The appeals court did allow a revised policy that required the student speaker's speech to be "nonsectarian and non-proselytizing." In his dissent from this ruling, Judge E. Grady Jolly noted that "today, for the first time in the court's history, the majority expressly exerts control over the content of its citizens' prayer."

The Santa Fe high school students voted to have a pre-game student speaker; Stephanie Vega was the speaker, and Marian Ward was the alternate. The Santa Fe school superintendent said if Ms. Vega or others invoked God or used other "sectarian" speech, they would be punished "as if they had cursed."

In the face of such intimidation, Stephanie Vega, 16, declined to fulfill her role as pre-game football speaker. Marian Ward agreed to speak.

When U.S. District Judge Sim Lake issued a last-minute temporary restraining order preventing the school from pre-censoring or punishing her speech, Ms. Ward, a Baptist minister's daughter, approached the microphone just before the game in her band uniform and uttered a prayer that mentioned "God" four times and concluded with "in Jesus' name I pray."

The crowd's response was a standing ovation that lasted more than a minute before the announcer intervened.

This is the human story that furnishes context for the case before the highest court in the land.

A key reason the Santa Fe case is before the court, in addition to the conflicting appellate court decisions, is that this case differs in several important ways from what the court ruled unconstitutional in the early 1960s.

Unlike the situation before 1962, the prayer is student-initiated, not state-initiated; it is student-led, not state official-led; and the content of the speech or prayer is student-determined. Finally, it is not in a classroom, where parents are not present to provide context or explain any divergence from their families' religious expression.

I would hope that a majority of this divided court would accept this attempt by a school district to accommodate itself to the desire of a community. It would have been better—and based on the justices' questions during oral arguments, increased the odds for a favorable decision—if there had been some provision by the school district to allow students from as wide a religious perspective as possible to have an opportunity to "solemnize" an athletic event, in keeping with their own faith perspective, at some time during the school year. That would have answered the objections that said a student majority, through an election process, could effectively silence minority faiths from participation.

Nevertheless, I hope and pray the court will affirm the Santa Fe practice that neither does a minority have the right to silence a majority. I hope the court will use this occasion to encourage greater sensitivity on the part of all Americans on the need to accommodate religious expression by our citizens in a public square that is as robust and diverse as our citizenry.

However the court decides this case, and I predict a close decision, this will not be the last religious expression case before the court. The case promises to be a factor in this year's elections, since Texas Gov. George W. Bush, the presumptive Republican presidential nominee, has signed on to the state's brief in the Santa Fe case.

Interestingly, public opinion appears to be on the side of the Santa Fe school district. A recent ABC news poll revealed that 67% of Americans support student-initiated and student-led prayer in public schools, with only 27% opposing such prayer.

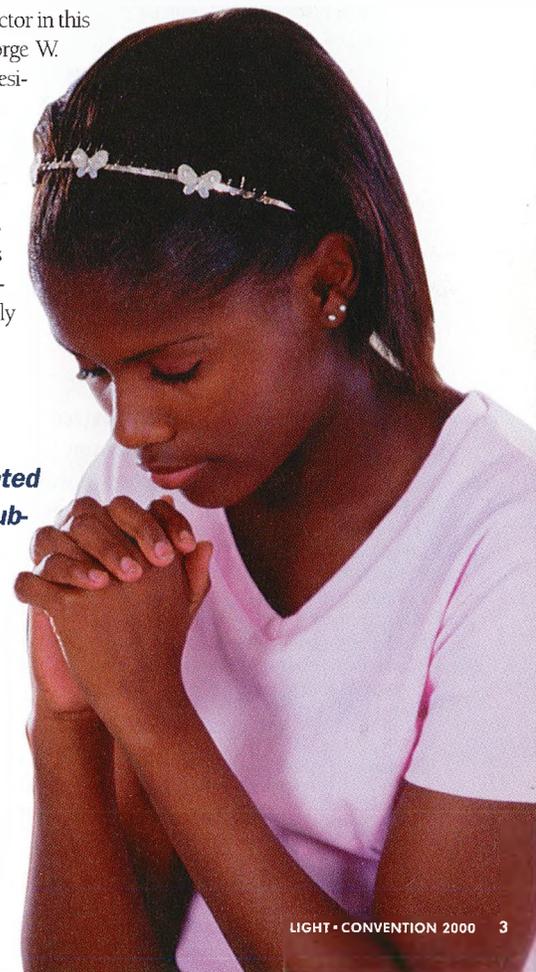
A recent ABC news poll revealed that 67% of Americans support student-initiated and student-led prayer in public schools, with only 27% opposing such prayer.

Let us all pray that God will give the Supreme Court justices wisdom to make a decision that will maximize individual religious expression—while still protecting the rights of those whose faith is in the minority as well as those who claim no religious faith whatsoever. †

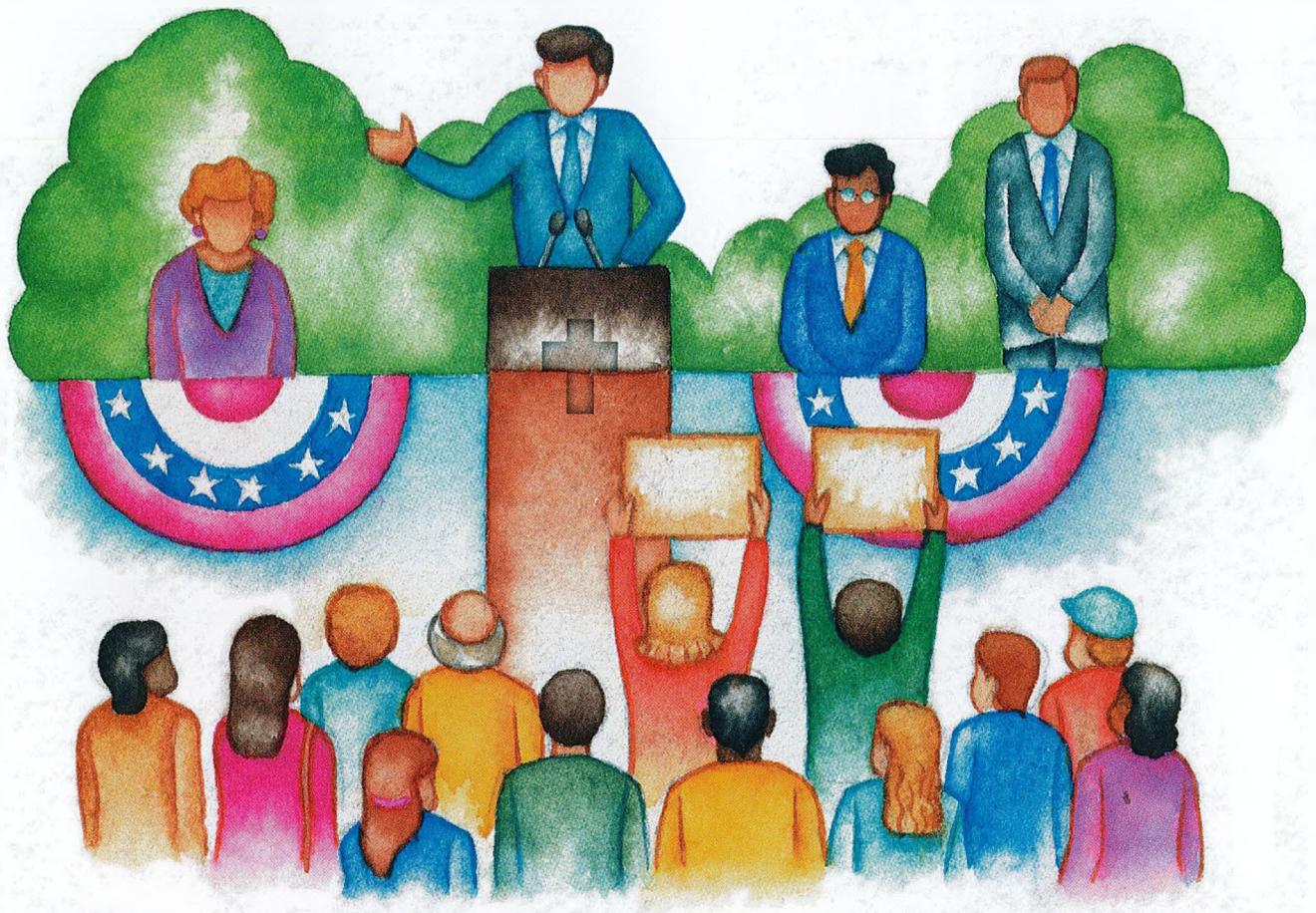


Richard Land is President of the SBC's Ethics & Religious Liberty Commission and host of the nationally syndicated daily radio talk show, *For Faith & Family*.

This column originally appeared on www.beliefnet.com, a Web site for the sharing of diverse religious perspectives on issues of the day.



Can churches endorse or oppose political candidates? Can they lobby and take a stand on legislative measures? Discover what role your church can and cannot play in the political process.



Election Year Jitters: How far is too far?

BY JAY SEKULOW

The political season has arrived, and with it many churches and houses of worship are wondering just what are the lines that must be observed concerning any political issues or activities they might undertake. While every circumstance is unique, there are some helpful guidelines to keep in mind if you decide to "get involved."

There are two broad areas of concern regarding the effect of political activity by churches that hold tax exempt status under Internal Revenue Code (IRC)

§ 501(c)(3). First, the IRC prohibits churches from participating or intervening in the political campaign of a candidate for public office. Second, the IRC permits churches to influence legislation and/or ballot measures, so long as the activity is insubstantial in relation to the church's overall activities and expenditures.

VOTER GUIDES

For example, under IRS regulations, churches may distribute a voter guide which includes all viable candidates

for an office, within certain guidelines which must be strictly followed. The guidelines require that the voter guide must be neutral and unbiased in its statement of candidates and must include candidates' positions on a broad range of issues. A voter guide cannot endorse candidates or direct individuals to vote for or against a candidate. Also, the voter guide or scorecard must not contain editorial comments about any political party aimed at inducing voters in a particular way.

The specific guidelines are found in IRS Revenue Rulings 78-248; 80-282, which provides that voter guides must include: (1) the voting records of all incumbent members of the legislative body who represent the local area, (2) no identification of legislators as candidates for re-election, (3) no comment on an individual's overall qualifications for office, and (4) no statement expressly or impliedly endorsing or rejecting any incumbent as a candidate for public office, and the voting

report should (5) not be linked to any election campaign by, for example, widely distributing the voting report on the eve of an election, and (6) cover a broad range of issues and not target issues that track the organization's known "agenda."

CHURCHES MAY INFLUENCE LEGISLATION OR BALLOT MEASURES

During the recent public debate on California's Proposition 22, many churches mistakenly believed that if they took any position on the measure the IRS would revoke their tax exemption. Proposition 22 was a "defense of marriage" act that simply stated "[o]nly marriage between a man and a woman is valid or recognized in California." As the Supreme Court recognized over 30 years ago, "adherents of particular faiths and individual churches frequently take strong positions on public issues including, . . . vigorous advocacy of legal or constitutional positions" (*Waltz v. Tax Comm'n*, 397 U.S. 664, 670 (1969)). Clearly, churches as much as secular bodies, and private citizens have the same constitutional right. In addition, IRC section 501(c)(3)

only prohibits churches from devoting a "substantial part" of their organizational efforts to such ends.

In determining whether an activity is "substantial," the IRS looks to what it calls "the facts and circumstances." *Kentucky Bar Foundation, Inc. v. Comm'r*, 78 T.C. 971 (1982), and courts have taken different approaches on the matter. For example, in *Seasongood v. Comm'r*, 227 F.2d 907, 912 (6th Cir. 1955), the court established a five percent safe harbor rule based on total expenditures applied to legislative activities. In a more recent case, *World Family Corp. v. Comm'r*, 81 T.C. 958 (1983), the bar was set at 10 percent.

Other courts have used a balancing test, rather than a percentage of expenditures, in determining that a tax exempt religious organization had devoted a "substantial part" of its resources to influencing legislation. In *Christian Echoes Nat'l Ministry, Inc. v. U.S.*, 470 F.2d 849, 855 (10th Cir. 1972), the court observed that "the political [activity] must be balanced in the context of the objectives and circumstances of the organization to determine whether a substantial

part of its objectives [not just expenditures] was to influence or attempt to influence legislation." The lobbying activities undertaken by the Christian Echoes ministry, however, were most extensive, and involved more than 22 measures in a single year. For the average church, taking a position on one or two legislative or ballot propositions is highly unlikely to constitute a substantial portion of its activities and expenditures.

CONCLUSION

While this can be a confusing area of the law, just remember these three rules:

- (1) Endorsing or opposing a candidate for office is off limits, and should not be undertaken by your church;
- (2) Neutral voter guides are fine; and
- (3) Lobbying and taking a stand on legislative and ballot measures is fine, just keep it as an insubstantial amount in terms of both money and time expenditures.

If you heed these rules, your church will be just fine during the upcoming political cycle. ☺



JAY SEKULOW

Jay Sekulow is chief counsel of the American Center for Law and Justice (ACLJ). The ACLJ is an international public interest law firm that specializes in First Amendment law and is involved in pro-family, pro-life, and pro-liberty issues.

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FOR FURTHER READING

The ERLC offers these products related to the church's role in American politics:

Tax Exemption and Political Candidate Campaigns

This pamphlet urges church leaders to avoid letting fears of losing the church's tax-exempt status keep them from taking their religious convictions into the political arena.

CITAXU \$6.50/20

Citizen Christian Awareness Campaign

This Voter Registration/Awareness Manual is a revision of the NAE's Citizenship Campaign and encourages Southern Baptists to engage in our nation's political process as a part of discipleship.

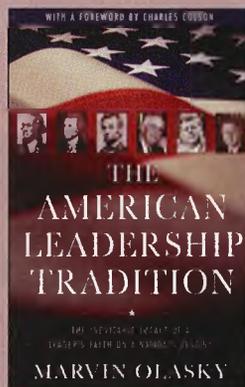
CLCAWA (Manual) \$1.00 ea.

To order featured products, call: 1-800-475-9127.

RECOMMENDED READING

The American Leadership Tradition

Focusing on the lives and careers of 13 American leaders from Washington to Clinton, Marvin Olasky systematically examines the connections between personal faith and political decisions, offering indisputable evidence that private morality does indeed affect public policy. And that it does so in ways you may never have considered until now.



BKAME (295 pages; available through the ERLC)

\$15.00 ea.



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RETURNING TO A GOVERNMENT OF THE PEOPLE, BY THE PEOPLE, AND FOR THE PEOPLE

We The

From the delivery room to the House floor, Christian physician-turned-politician Tom Coburn stands up for what he believes in—and encourages other Americans, particularly Christians, to do the same.

BY TOM STRODE

Ever know a politician who not only did not mind losing but seemed actually to thrive on it? If not, meet Tom Coburn.

It probably is a misnomer even to call the United States representative from northeastern Oklahoma a politician.

He pledged when he was first elected in 1994 to spend no more than three terms in the House of Representatives. He declined his government pension and health-care benefits. As a Republican, he has frequently exasperated his party's leaders, especially in his resolve to reduce federal spending. His outspoken convictions on moral issues have not ingratiated him with liberals. He infuriated moderate and liberal House members of his own party earlier this year when he campaigned on behalf of a conservative challenger to a congresswoman in a GOP primary. He has continued to practice medicine weekly in Muskogee, Okla., throughout more than five years in Congress.

Congressman Tom Coburn believes people besides career politicians ought to be in Washington. "We will never have a true representative body in Washington as long as we have the careerism that we have now. And the reason that I feel that way is because decisions are made to the benefit of the political goal instead of the benefit of the country. I don't believe that [the country's founders] thought that decisions would be made on how to maintain power rather than how to represent people," he says.

And he takes on losing causes. He is able to do so, Coburn says, because of the security found in his relationship with Jesus.

If the things you believe in are "really [grounded] in biblical principles, it's okay to stand up for them and lose," Coburn, a Southern Baptist, says in an interview in his office on Capitol Hill. "I don't win a whole lot of victories up here, but I don't back down from any fight if it's based on something that I believe is right.

"The real thing I've learned is losing is a way of serving. . . . [Christians] have already won. We don't have to have a victory."

Coburn's time in Congress has reinforced for him "that self-esteem comes mainly from the Lord." When you know "the price was paid for you, even though you're fallen and you fail every day, [and] that you have tremendous value . . . that's enough security. I don't have to have security from winning."

The willingness to lose on principle was one of the reasons Coburn ran for Congress in the first place, he says.

"I believe that it's okay to stand up for what you believe in, even if some other people don't like it," he says. "[W]hen you do that, it builds trust. And one of the things that we're lacking today in our country is confidence and trust in our leadership."

Another reason he decided to seek a congressional seat is based on his belief

"people besides career politicians ought to be in Washington," the maverick from Muskogee says.

"I honestly believe . . . that we will never have a true representative body in Washington as long as we have the careerism that we have now," he says. "And the reason that I feel that way is because decisions are made to the

benefit of the political goal instead of the benefit of the country. I don't believe that [the country's founders]



People

thought that decisions would be made on how to maintain power rather than how to represent people."

One of numerous times Coburn's determination to stand for his beliefs clashed with congressional careerism came on the ongoing attempt to introduce RU 486, the French abortion pill, into this country. Twice, the House passed a measure by Coburn that would have prevented the Food and Drug Administration from using federal funds for the testing, development, or approval of any abortion-inducing drug. The last time, 1999, the margin was only three votes. Both times, however,

the Senate failed to follow the House's example.

"Just go out and ask Americans, 'Should the federal government be figuring out how to kill babies in the womb, and should we be spending tax dollars on how to do that?' And I would tell you I think 85 percent of this country would say, 'No, you really shouldn't be doing it.'"

"[W]e've got careerists in the Senate that are beholden to the special interests, and they never consider the moral question," Coburn says. "They consider, 'Well, here's the way things are. They've worked this way, so why rock the boat. It might hurt my election chances.'"

When asked about accomplishments he is pleased with as he nears the end of his time in Congress, Coburn declines specifics, saying, "They're very general. We've kind of been the wall that they run into when they go too far."

His three terms have been marked by successes in battling government waste and encouraging HIV testing of infants. He founded the Congressional Family Caucus, a coalition of representatives who seek to support the family. Coburn also has become known for his annual sex-education slide show. Each summer when the intern population on Capitol Hill is at its peak, Coburn hosts a luncheon/slide presentation with graphic evidence of the harm caused by sexually transmitted diseases. About 400 young men and women attended last year.

With two exceptions for House votes, Coburn has returned to Muskogee every weekend he has been in

Congress. When he is home, he not only spends time with his wife, Carolyn, and their family, which includes three grown daughters and two grandchildren, and attends New Community Church, but he sees patients and does congressional work in the district. Every fourth weekend he is the doctor on call for the practice. The weekend prior to this interview, Coburn delivered five babies, three to unmarried teenagers. Last year, he delivered about 100 children.

Though it has taken him away from home and his practice, being in Congress has strengthened him spiritually, Coburn says.

He has memorized, as he put it, "a ton of Scripture" on airplanes and in Washington; he meets with House colleagues from both parties in a Bible study on Tuesday nights, and he leads six House staffers, all but one from other offices, in a Wednesday morning study.

"Scripture has become more real to me," Coburn says, "the realization that it is inerrant, that the truths that Jesus spoke apply in Washington, D.C., and the House of Representatives as much as they apply if you were going to work or anything else you do. And, matter of fact, they probably have more impact. The greater the challenge, the more impact they have."

While his losses in Congress have been numerous, it appears Coburn will leave Washington at the end of this session with a decisive personal win.

"My greatest victory is the closer walk [with Christ] that I have now than what I had when I came up here," he says. ☪

Conservative Christians "have a real problem" when it comes to their image in Washington, one of their own says.

"I do question a lot about the political activity of the Christians, because it comes off as judgmentalism. . . . I can tell you that the positions that some of the groups take that come across as harsh, unforgiving and unloving [are] exactly the opposite of what Jesus, I believe, would want them to do," says Rep. Tom Coburn, a Republican from Oklahoma. "And so I think people of faith have a lot of work to do to change" their image.

"I think the danger with the Christian community becoming political is they lose sight of what they're about, and the end ends up justifying the means of how we get there," the Southern Baptist church member continues. "I think that walking two by two we will have greater accomplishment than we will with any Christian organization trying to influence the political."



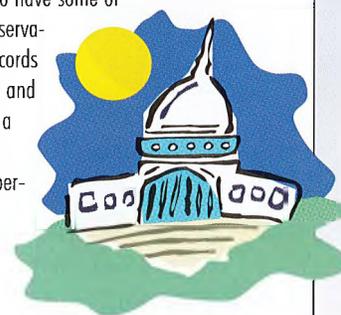
TOM COBURN

REP. COBURN AUTHORS PRO-LIFE RESOLUTION

Called the "Presence of Life Resolution," House Concurrent Resolution 305 introduced by pro-life stalwart Rep. Tom Coburn (R-OK), would establish that the right to life be guaranteed to human beings in the womb once brain waves and a heartbeat are detectable. Supporters of the resolution recognize that human life must be protected from conception, and will continue to work toward that goal. However the resolution points out the universal agreement that death occurs upon the cessation of a heartbeat and brainwaves. Therefore, their detection at 42 days gestation is clear evidence that life is in the womb and that baby is deserving of 14th Amendment protection at least from that point onward. For more information, contact Congressman Tom Coburn at (202) 225-2701.

DID YOU KNOW...

At least 31 members of the 106th Congress identify themselves as Southern Baptists—six in the Senate and 25 in the House of Representatives. Five are Democrats; the remainder are Republicans. Several would be assessed to have some of the more conservative voting records in the Senate and House, while a few would be considered liberals on some moral issues.



How to Change the Culture

Being a citizen of the United States means enjoying the fruits of a society dedicated to freedom, liberty, justice, and opportunity. America shines, as it has for more than 220 years, as a beacon of hope to the rest of the world—a world often marred by governments that oppress or exploit their citizens rather than draw their power from them.

Civic responsibility involves many things. It means voting regularly and in an informed manner. It means teaching your children about what it means to be an American. As Ronald Reagan noted, “All great change in America begins at the dinner table.” It means understanding the issues and getting involved with organizations that promote the things you believe. It means working for political candidates at the local, state, and national levels and holding them accountable after the elections.



KAY COLES JAMES

TEN STEPS TO CITIZENSHIP FROM THE INSIDE OUT

1 **Vote regularly and in an informed manner.** Men and women have died to protect a right we often take for granted—honor their sacrifice and legacy. Don't forget to vote. A single vote often makes the difference. And take four friends with you to the polls on Election Day or provide transport for an elderly neighbor.

2 **Hold elected officials accountable after the election.** Call or write your city or county executives, state legislators, governor, and members of Congress. Thank them for the principles upon which they ran and remind them to be consistent. And if they aren't, then consider running yourself.



3 **Talk to your children about what it means to be an American.** Take time as a family to read the Declaration of Independence, the Constitution, and the Bill of Rights. Add some samples from the rich tapestry of American history to your children's bedtime stories. Ask them to tell you something they have learned about America. Tell them what freedom means to you.

4 **Be informed.** Read the papers every day. Don't rely on any single source of news. Stay informed even about topics that don't seem to affect you (eventually they probably will). Watch C-SPAN. Subscribe to magazines and periodicals.



5 **Get involved.** Make your voice heard and your presence felt through professional organizations, political campaigns, and civic groups.

6 **Contribute.** It is important to back up your commitment and your time with your financial support. Give—even if it is just a little—to those organizations and candidates that are working for causes you believe in.



7 **Pick an issue that affects your family and become an activist.** For instance, if you are interested in education policy (and everyone should be), attend a few school board meetings. That is where much of what will affect your child is determined. Even if you home school, the decisions made here could affect you.

8 **Get on mailing lists.** Most cost you nothing, and the information you receive can make all the difference.

9 **Volunteer.** Don't let the government do what you should be doing as a good citizen. Find an organization or church group or issue you care about and see what a difference one person can make.

10 **Share this information with three friends.** If everyone reading these ten steps shared them with three friends next week, in one month millions of Americans would be involved. Talk about changing the culture!



Kay Coles James has served as Secretary of Health and Human Resources for Virginia Governor George Allen and Associate Director of the White House Office of National Drug Control Policy and Assistant Secretary for Public Affairs at the Health and Human Services Department under the Bush and Reagan administrations. She is Senior Fellow for the Citizenship Project of The Heritage Foundation. For more information, please contact:

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THE CASE FOR A CHRISTIAN LIFE COMMITTEE

BY DONALD R. MCFADDEN

The Christian Life Committee, while not a new concept, has renewed and far reaching implications for evangelism and the preservation of Christian moral values in our culture.

A Christian Life Committee is a group of believers within a local church who take an active role in promoting a Christian worldview to their community through education, communication, and evangelism. It is also a vehicle for educating and exhorting church members and the local Christian community about cultural issues from a Christian perspective (i.e., a Christian worldview), and, most importantly, assisting the pastor and the church leadership.

David A. Noebel in *Understanding the Times* defines a worldview as "an overarching approach to understanding God, the world, and man's relations to God and the world. Specifically, a worldview should contain a particular perspective regarding each of the following ten disciplines: theology, philosophy, ethics, biology, psychology, sociology, law, politics, economics, and history."

Our culture is in the process of abandoning its foundational ethics and is descending into an eclectic blend of moral relativism, philosophical naturalism, and various pagan worldviews with no apparent dominant worldview. Therefore, it should not be a complete surprise that "tolerance" has become one of the most revered "virtues" in our land. Along with this tolerance has come the view that absolute truth does not exist or cannot be apprehended by man. Without absolute truth all religions become merely beliefs. "I am the way, the truth, and the life" (John 14:6) becomes subjective and limited to those who believe it is true for them.

There is no doubt that Christians should care where our culture is headed. We have an obligation to God, our families, and our neighbors to support and promote social values based on the immutable morality of God's will as revealed in Scripture.

The culture is imperiled if the church abandons its role within society and government. If a significant part of the church in America had not compromised its message to the culture, perhaps the horrors of the Civil War might have been avoided. In *Sounding Forth the Trumpet*, Peter Marshall and David Manuel describe the years prior to the Civil War:

But Southern Evangelicals were now giving up the Church's historic prophetic role and submitting to the standards of their culture. Getting involved in social reform, they felt, was outside the Church's jurisdiction.

Some within the church became apologists for the slave-based society, providing "biblical" reasoning for continuing slavery.

One could argue that we have done the same thing in our time. We have among us those who profess Christ but who have accommodated the dehumanizing of an entire class of individuals in our society. The abortion debate has some similarities to the abolition movement of antebellum America. The "preborn" have been defined as being less than fully human and, therefore, without the fundamental right to life. Under our laws, they have become property, as once were African Americans in our nation. It appears that our politicians are making the same mistakes as their political forefathers.

We clearly need to reach our society with an uncompromising biblical message. The Bible provides a model for our times in the record of the Apostle Paul's visit to Athens. Paul was surrounded by a culture that did not have a connection to the Law and the prophets of Israel, although it did have a pluralistic system of pagan religions. Paul spoke

"There is no doubt that Christians should care where our culture is headed. We have an obligation to God, our families, and our neighbors to support and promote social values based on the immutable morality of God's will as revealed in Scripture..."

to the Athenians using terminology and concepts that were familiar to his audience. He found common ground with the culture without compromising his message. There is no reason we cannot do the same.

FAITH IN AMERICA

Although many in the U.S. claim to identify with Christianity, Barna Research's findings on the state of religious belief within our country tells a different story. Barna's 1998 annual survey shows a big gap between perception and reality in how people view their position with Christ. With a large majority of adults — over two out of every three — describing themselves as religious, less than 40 percent consider themselves "born again" and only six percent see themselves as "evangelical."

Barna defines evangelicals as follows:

The term "evangelical" is applied to born again Christians who also meet seven additional criteria. Those include saying their faith is very important in their life; believing they have a responsibility to share their faith in Christ with non-Christians; believing in the existence of Satan; believing that eternal salvation is gained through God's grace alone, not through our efforts; believing that Jesus Christ lived a sinless life while on earth; believing the Bible is accurate in all that it teaches; and choosing an orthodox definition of God. This definition has no relationship to church attendance, membership, or denominational affiliation.

continued on page 10

Donald McFadden is Senior Vice President of Capstone Asset Management Company, an investment management firm based in Houston, Tex. He is involved in the ministry of encouraging Christians to adopt a thorough worldview and to reach out to our increasingly hostile culture.



Faith in America

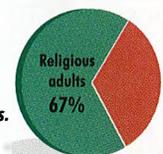
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This information is based on telephone interviews conducted in January 1998 among a national random sample of 1,006 adults (ages of 18 or older).

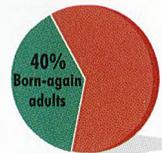
Barna Research, "Christianity Showing No Visible Signs of a Nationwide Revival, Annual Survey by Barna Research Reveals Current Trends Regarding Spiritual Behavior," <http://www.barna.org/PressNoRevival.htm> (12/1/98).

HOW PEOPLE VIEW THEIR POSITION WITH CHRIST:

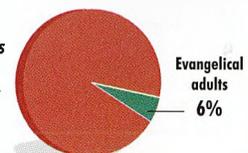
A large majority of adults — over 2 out of every 3 — describe themselves as religious.

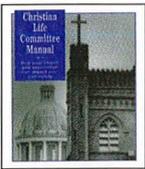


Less than 40% of adults consider themselves "born again."



Only 6% of adults see themselves as "evangelical."





Christian Life Committee Manual

This manual defines a Christian Life Committee and shares how churches or Baptist associations can lead members to be aware of moral, social, religious liberty, legislative, and public policy issues and make a difference in their communities by standing for biblical values.

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An accurate inference from that definition is that approximately six percent of the population would be considered true believers in orthodox Christianity, as detailed by Barna in his study.

Additionally, he reported that nine out of ten pastors called their church "evangelistic." However, less than one out of three church attenders has shared his/her faith in Christ with a non-Christian within the past 12 months.

Barna summarizes the data by writing:

The fact that so many people behave in ways that contradict the principles of the faith they claim to possess may be attributed to spiritual ignorance as much as to cultural seduction.

Perhaps a better way to explain this phenomenon is that spiritual ignorance has led to cultural seduction.

EDUCATION AND COMMUNICATION

The CLC assists Christians in the development and application of a Christian worldview to Christian's daily lives. The CLC would provide instruction regarding prevailing cultural assumptions and philosophies with which we consciously or unconsciously interact in our daily lives. Christians would learn to give a defense of the Christian worldview through biblical and/or philosophical reasoning, depending on the circumstances and the audience. "But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts, and always be ready to give a defense to everyone who asks you a reason for the hope that is in you, with meekness and fear..." (1 Pet. 3:15).

Since most people, including Christians, look to their daily newspaper, and television and radio news broadcasts to receive their perspective on the news, very few Christians are receiving information sorted or interpreted with a Christian worldview. The CLC provides an alternate source of information and analyses of issues and cultural developments for Christians to consider.

EVANGELISM

An equipped and motivated congregation is, of course, a powerful source of evangelism in the community. If a Christian identifies strongly with the Christian worldview, evangelism effectively results from natural responses to situations where the prevailing cultural answers to a problem are inadequate or directly opposed to the Christian world-

view. Evangelism would not be a forced or mechanical duty but would flow from our interaction with our cultural environment.

GOVERNMENT AND SOCIETY

Jesus has this to say about our role in the culture in which he has placed us: "You are the salt of the earth; but if the salt loses its flavor, how shall it be seasoned? It is then good for nothing but to be thrown out and trampled underfoot by men. You are the light of the world. A city that is set on a hill cannot be hidden. Nor do they light a lamp and put it under a basket, but on a lamp stand..." (Matt. 5:13-16).

Our role as salt of the earth can have profound effects on our culture. If we present the truth without compromise, we can help maintain reason and sanity within society. Our culture seems to be demonstrating 1 Timothy 4:2, "speaking lies in hypocrisy, having their own conscience seared with a hot iron..."

If we truly love our neighbor, we must respond to evil in our society. Hiding our light under a basket and remaining in a "holy huddle" does not further the Kingdom of God.

The CLC monitors moral, social, religious liberty, legislative and public policy issues that impact our society and particularly, our families. This complements the educational process providing a Christian worldview. Once individual Christians begin to observe issues from a Christian worldview perspective, appropriate action regarding social and governmental issues becomes clearer. Christians would then take action by discussing important issues with their peers and neighbors, contacting legislators, writing letters to newspapers, or participating in some form of public testimony (including protest).

CONCLUSION

This is not a time to withdraw into our "evangelical" enclaves. It is a time to speak out and work with what God has given us. We have many tools and spiritual gifts within the church that can be used to further His Kingdom. We are not expected to win the battle, but we are expected to stand for Him (Eph. 6:12-13).

A Christian Life Committee within a local church can assist each Christian in fulfilling the directive of Colossians 4:5-6: "Walk in wisdom toward those who are outside, redeeming the time. Let your speech always be with grace, seasoned with salt, that you may know how you ought to answer each one." ①

Sources for this article include *Understanding the Times* by David A. Noebel (Manitou Springs, Colo.: Summit Press, 1991); *Sounding Forth the Trumpet* by Peter Marshall and David Manuel (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Fleming H. Revell, 1997); Barna Research, "Christianity Showing No Visible Signs of a Nationwide Revival, Annual Survey by Barna Research Reveals Current Trends Regarding Spiritual Behavior," "An Inside Look at Today's Churches, Barna Survey Reveals Current Statistics on Protestant Churches," and "How Americans See Themselves," www.barna.org (12/1/98).

FROM THE EDITOR

We've all experienced it: In the midst of a crowd, but nonetheless you're seized by a feeling of being all alone.

There are those times when no one seems to understand—When it seems the whole world has turned its back on you, and no matter how hard you try, it appears you can't do anything right. In a day and time when affections are casually discarded, there remains One who will not abandon you. His allegiance is not divided. Jesus cares for you and has promised never to forsake you if only you will trust in Him and Him alone. He took your place; He suffered your penalty (Galatians 3:13). What a friend we have in Jesus!

"And surely I am with you always to the very end of the age."

Matthew 28:20 (NIV)

HOW CAN YOU KNOW THIS ONE WHO STICKS CLOSER THAN A BROTHER?

- ▲ **Acknowledge you have fallen short of God's standards. Admit that there is no one good except God and God alone. (Romans 3:23; Luke 18:19)**
- ▲ **Believe that God has provided a way in Jesus for you to restore your relationship with Him and in Christ to meet the mark. (John 14:6)**
- ▲ **Commit your life to Him to live according to His will and way and in His strength. Place your faith in Jesus. (2 Corinthians 4:5-9)**
- ▲ **Share your decision to accept Christ as your Savior. Be bold in proclaiming His righteousness as you hoist high His standard as your life's guide and rule.**

Can Western civilization escape inner chaos and self-destruction if it faces the future without a significant role for transcendent justice and the revealed will of God? If you think not—as I think not—then your Christian commitment imposes upon you a heavy duty to share in the present effort to preserve the American republic and to warn and instruct all the modern powers that are marching off the map to join once-great nations of antiquity in their oblivion.

Carl Henry at His Best, Multnomah Press, p. 46.

Democracy on skid row?

It's winning here and there, but losing its sustaining culture

BY CARL F. H. HENRY

In a swiftly passing half century the relationship of evangelicals to American culture has undergone colossal change.

My *The Uneasy Conscience of Modern Fundamentalism* (1947) lamented the withdrawal of religious conservatives from the cultural arena, then powerfully dominated by modernist ideology. Failure of evangelicals to engage the culture on biblical premise, I warned, could only abandon society to expectations shaped by Darwin and Marx, and yield the political climate to liberal optimism.

One would think that the collapse of illusionary communism would stimulate resounding praise for political democracy since the defeat of Marxism was a decisive moral victory over totalitarianism. Instead, doubts about the superiority of democracy seem to run deeper in much of the Free World than

at any time during the Cold War.

The adequacy of political democracy is being questioned somewhere on almost all continents and, most surprising, America itself now reflects a distressing disaffection over various aspects of the democratic process. Representative democracy and the culture it sustains is today in trouble.

Contributory factors are multiple. Latin American liberation theologians insist (quite apart from their Marxist propensities) that democracy is too slow a catalyst to promote social change. Singapore critics think political freedom stifles government authority by exaggerating individual rights.

Some Russian leaders wonder whether a democracy can cope successfully with high inflation and steep unemployment in a post-Marxist era. Many Americans are now skeptical of executive, legislative, and judicial personnel or pro-

cedures, of the jury system, and of the educational merit of a free press, and they forfeit voting privileges in distressing numbers.

The deepest threat to democracy lies in its elevation of economic and political factors to priority and its failure to respect the precedence of spiritual and moral concerns. All political action presupposes ethical and religious assumptions. Those who argue that religious and moral imperatives have no place in a pluralistic society merely conceal their own naturalistic worldview. If democracy neglects theological and ethical realities, it is headed for chaos or for totalitarianism.

To be sure, democracy's survival does not require an express cultural commitment to the Christian worldview. But not any and every worldview will escape inevitable deteriora-

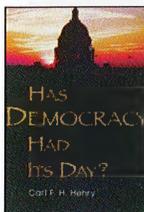
tion. If democracy's patron saint becomes the devil, it is hell-bound. Democracy functions best in a culture permeated by the biblical emphasis on the universal Creator and Judge of mankind and on the regeneration of human character.

But such books as my *Twilight of a Great Civilization*, Chuck Colson's *Against the Night: Living in the New Dark Ages*, and Alan Bloom's *The Closing of the American Mind* are nonetheless appropriate.

The forfeiture of democracy need not be a forfeiture of Christianity, but if we are going to let democracy disintegrate by neglect, we had better look closely at the alternatives. Evangelicals should realize that democracy is not self-sustaining, and we should probe possibilities of walking alongside those who seek to sustain it. **†**

President Richard Land recognized Carl F.H. Henry, founding editor of *Christianity Today* and renowned evangelical scholar, as one of 12 Founding Fellows of the Research Institute of the Ethics & Religious Liberty Commission in a ceremony held in the Southern Baptist Convention offices on Feb. 17. Founded in 1999, the Research Institute is charged with advising the ERLC in developing strategies and resources that bring biblical truth to bear on moral and public policy issues.

CARL F. H. HENRY WRITES...



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

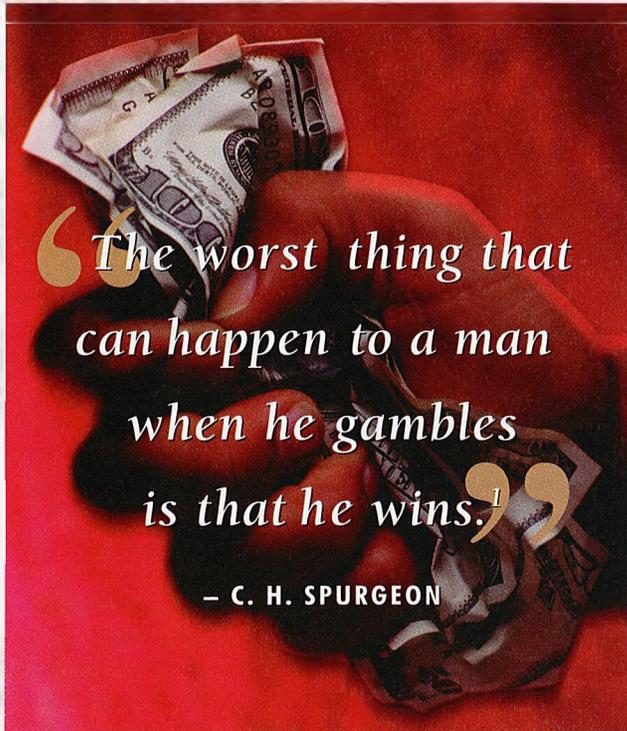
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God and

BY DAVI



Come with me for a moment to a hill and on it you will see three crosses. There hanging on the one in the center is Jesus, dying for the sins of the world. Below it you will notice a detachment of Roman soldiers, four of them, and their commanding officer. The four soldiers are not looking up to see what is taking place or listening to what is being said. They have their eyes down, waiting for the numbers to come up as they roll a set of dice. They are gambling for the seamless robe Jesus had been wearing before He was stripped naked and beaten (see Mark 15:24). Only the commander looks up to see what is going on; the others are too busy to take notice.

Gambling can be a great distraction to the Cross.

Just before World War I a British politician and horse owner, Horatio Bottomley, carefully devised "a sure way" of making a fortune. His plan was beautifully simple. Prior to a race at Blankengurghe in Belgium, he bought all six horses entered in the race. He then hired six English jockeys who were given careful instructions on what order to finish the race. Leaving nothing to chance, he backed all the horses as a precaution.

All was going well until halfway through the race, when a thick sea mist rolled in and engulfed the racecourse. The jockeys could not see each other, and the judges could not see the horses. Only a few finished the race and in completely the wrong order. Mr. Bottomley ended up losing a fortune. Like many other gamblers before and since, he learned that a sure bet can be a very risky thing.²

WHAT DOES THE BIBLE TEACH?

Merriam Webster's *Tenth Collegiate Dictionary* defines the verb "gamble" as "to play a game for money or property; to bet on an uncertain outcome." Gambling is the attempt to gain something for nothing at someone else's expense.

No one text in the Bible clearly defines what gambling is and whether it is right or wrong. It is one of those areas that some Christians believe to be acceptable and others believe to be totally wrong. Some Christians gamble but do so with a guilty conscience, justifying their actions with the caveat that gambling a dollar or two cannot be wrong. Besides, they think, if I win I will give it to God's work.

I once heard conference speaker and writer Edwin Lewis Cole tell about a young lady in his church who asked him about dancing. The woman had said to him, "Pastor, you have taught us that we need to find a Scripture reference for everything to test whether a thing is right or wrong. Where does it say it's wrong to go disco dancing?"

He took her to Galatians 5:21 where it warns against the lust of the flesh, finishing with the phrase "and the like."

She said, "It doesn't mention disco dancing."

Cole replied, "Yes, it does." She asked where, and he answered, "And such like."

Ed Cole laughed as he told the story, but it does address the issue by asking: Is gambling of the flesh or of the spirit?

In reply to her son's questions, John Wesley's godly mother, Susanna, wrote this wise counsel to help him through his college days at Oxford:

When you judge the lawfulness of a pleasure, take this rule: Whatever weakens your reason, impairs the tenderness of your conscience, obscures your sense of God or takes away the relish of spiritual things; whatever increases the authority of your body over your mind, that thing is sin for you however innocent it may be in itself.³

In the Old Testament, at times lots were cast by a priest to seek God's will in a given matter. A black stone and a white stone were used, black signifying no and white indicating yes. The belief behind casting lots in both the Old and New Testaments is summed up well in Proverbs 16:33: "The lot is cast into the lap, but its every decision is from the Lord." One

¹Hanna Ward and Jennifer Wild, *The Lion Christian Quotation Collection* (London: Lion Publishing PLC, 1997), p. 191. ²Stephen Pile, *The Book of Heroic Failures* (London: Futura Publications, 1979), pp. 111, 112. ³Hanna Ward and Jennifer Wild, *The Lion Christian Quotation Collection*, p. 156. ⁴Billy Graham, *The Billy Graham Christian Worker's Handbook* (Minneapolis, Minn.: World Wide Publications, 1984), p. 110.

Gambling

HOLD AWAY

form of casting lots was the sacred Urim and Thummim cast by the high priest (see Exod. 28:30). The scapegoat and the goat for sacrifice were chosen by lot (see Lev. 16:8-10); so were the tribal inheritances (see Num. 26:55,56).

The decision to go to battle was sometimes decided by lot (see Judg. 20:9). Lots were sometimes used to narrow the field down to a final choice, such as the selection of Saul (see 1 Sam. 10:20-24) and the detecting of the cause for the defeat at Ai (see Josh. 7:16-18). Lots were also cast for the duties of priests (see Neh. 10:34; Luke 1:9), to determine who could live in Jerusalem (see Neh. 11:1), and for distribution of prisoners (see Joel 3:3). Matthias, the disciple chosen to replace Judas Iscariot, was chosen by lot (see Acts 1:26).

You may be asking whether or not casting lots is a form of gambling. No, it is not. We can toss a coin to remove any human decision; the biblical characters cast lots to specifically include God's decision. This was not luck, chance, or fatalism—this was done by faith. After the Day of Pentecost we never hear of this method again, for a better way had come: The Holy Spirit was given to direct and lead God's people (Acts 13:1,2).

WHAT DOES JESUS SAY?

When Jesus was asked what was the greatest commandment, He said, "Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind" (Matt. 22:37). Gambling violates this statute because you cannot trust in God and in Lady Luck at the same time. In fact, the Bible makes it clear that God is to be our provider. Do we really believe He needs to do it through gambling? As Christians, we are to be stewards of all we have been given. Does God want us to use His resources in this way?

Jesus also identified the second greatest commandment: "Love your neighbor as yourself" (Matt. 22:39). Can we do this and seek to gain at our neighbor's expense? Does it benefit our society that a few seek to gain at the loss of others? Gambling destroys the distribution of wealth as it takes from the many and gives to the few. Gambling does not just take away from the many; it takes from the poor, who can least afford it. The poor often sell their food stamps to play state-run lotteries. Why? They need hope, like everyone else. But their chances of actually winning are slim to the vanishing point. Gambling for them becomes just another tax on a limited income.

CHURCH TRADITIONS

Generally, the Early Church fathers believed that gambling was wrong. Third-century Church father Tertullian said, "If you say you are

a Christian while a dice thrower you are saying what you are not."

It is interesting to observe that during seasons of revival, not only have crime and drunkenness decreased, but gambling has as well. Christian researcher and author George Otis, Jr., in his book *Informed Intercession* (Ventura, Calif.: Renew Books, 1999), tells about the village of Almolonga in the highlands of Guatemala. Once ravaged by alcoholism and spousal abuse, now some 90 percent of the population have become Christian. Because of this local revival, all four jails in the city—once depositories for alcoholics and brawlers—have closed, and some have since become churches. If alcohol use and fighting decreased, it is probably safe to say that gambling fell as well.

William Wilberforce is a name usually associated with the abolition of the slave trade, but in 1826 he led the way for the abolition of the last state lottery in Great Britain. He saw clearly the power and effects of gambling in ruining and controlling so many lives.

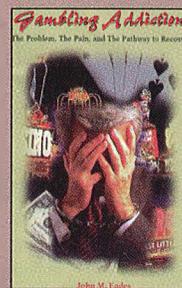
Billy Graham writes:

The appeal of gambling is somewhat understandable. There is something alluring about getting something for nothing. I realize that, and that is where the sin lies. Gambling of any kind amounts to theft by permission. The coin is flipped, the dice is rolled, or the horses run, and somebody rakes in that which belongs to another. The Bible says, "In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread" (Gen. 3:19, KJV). It doesn't say, "By the flip of a coin shalt thou eat thy lunch." I realize that in most petty gambling no harm is intended, but the principle is the same as in big gambling. The only difference is the amount of money involved.

RECOMMENDED READING

Gambling Addictions

Author John M. Eades, a former 20-year veteran in the field of alcohol and drug addiction treatment, writes with experience and frankness about his personal battle with gambling addiction. After trying all of the secular solutions and contemplating suicide in light of their failure, Eades cried out to God for healing. He found, as did the Prodigal Son, that God ran to meet him and make a new creature of him.



BKGAM (113 pages; available through the ERLC)

\$10.50 ea.

Excerpted from *Never Enough* by David Holdaway, © 2000, Gospel Light/Regal Books, Ventura, CA 93003. Used by permission.

Modern Bondage:

THE CHAINS OF CONSUMER DEBT

AN INTERVIEW WITH MARY HUNT

As fewer and fewer families today have a secure handle on their finances, particularly with the accessibility and deceptive attractiveness of easy consumer financing, it behooves us all to listen in as Mary Hunt tells *For Faith & Family* how obedience to God means living a lifestyle within the resources He provides for our families.



Mary Hunt, author of *Debt-Proof Living: The Complete Guide to Living Financially Free* and other books on spending habits and financial responsibility, was recently a featured guest on *For Faith & Family*, the informative radio program on the family hosted by ERLC President Richard Land and heard weekdays on hundreds of radio stations across the U.S. www.faithandfamily.com

At one time in your marriage, you owed over \$100,000 of unsecured debt.

It started with a single credit card. I never intended to abuse or misuse it. A newlywed living in Southern California, I bought into the notion that the consumer credit industry has put into our brains, that I needed a credit card in case of emergency. So we got a gasoline card. Now who can get in trouble with a gas card? I can tell you—me. Something told me I was entitled to free gas whenever I needed it and my husband would take care of the bill. And I'm not a stupid woman, but I was the victim of stupid thinking. I bought into what [credit card companies] wanted me to think, and we

started consuming more gasoline than we had before when we used cash. It was a red flag that I should have noticed; yet, we acquired several more gasoline cards. Suddenly we were living beyond our means because money that had been designated for gasoline purchases was now being spent on other stuff. That left the gasoline credit cards to be paid from other sources.

And buying a home altered your thinking about saving and planning for the future.

I viewed the purchase of a home as automatic appreciation. I believed a three-bedroom home in Southern California would be worth \$5-15 million if we kept it long enough. I figured, "Why worry about today? The house will take care of us tomorrow." So I continued spending.

And you tried the oft-advertised trick of consolidating your debt to save money.

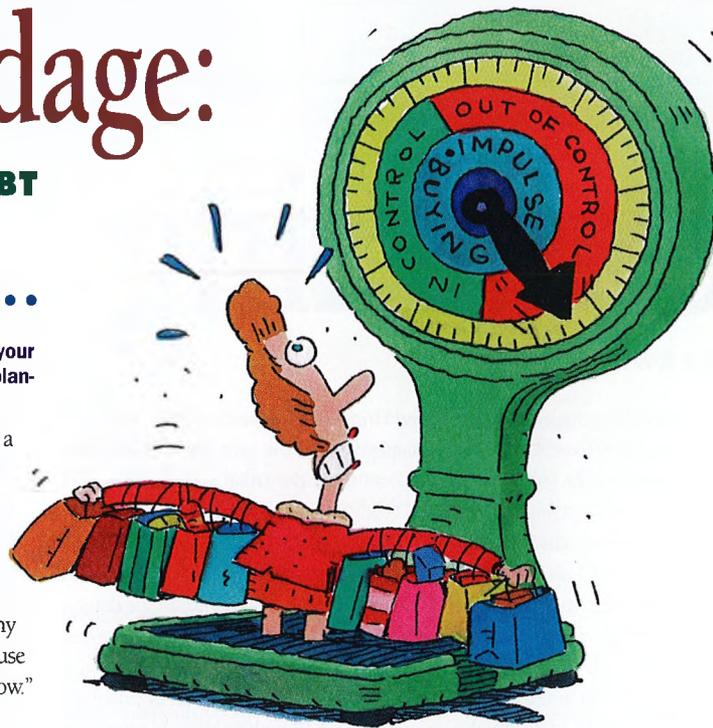
Many times. As my husband was in the banking business, we were aware of how you could get a signature loan to pay off your debts. Of course, we did that thinking that getting the lowest interest rate was the wise thing to do. But the problem, of course, was that I was not learning the lessons. We'd pay off the credit cards and then it would appear to me that they were now available to use again.

And that ended up doubling your debt?

Yes. Doubling, tripling even. Because once we had the consolidation loan, then we'd bring the credit card balances right back up again.

You sought other sources of income to pull free of this trap.

I looked everywhere. But for me, credit cards were the only other sources. I attempted to work. I had two little boys, and I would sign up for every multi-level marketing thing coming along, believing that I would become a millionaire overnight. I always dreamed of winning a lottery; getting some unexpected inheritance; I always thought somehow that would happen.



Spending habits out of control? You can break the cycle.

Yet God used your overwhelming debt to make you a seasoned financial expert?

God is so amazing. He can take cracked vessels and use them to His glory. I still have a hard time understanding and explaining how it happened.

In 1982, we lost a business that was supposed to rescue us. It was a real turning point.

I was afraid to find out how much we owed. Our home was ready to go into foreclosure because we hadn't made the payments. The pain was so great; for the first time in my life I realized what I had done was sin. I had not trusted my husband; I had not depended on the Lord for our needs. I just fell on my face and begged for God's forgiveness.

In the years since I have discovered that getting debt-free is not the finish line; it is really the starting point. Only then are we ready to go on and do great things and be good stewards of what God graciously provides for us. It is getting debt-free, then debt-proofing our lives based upon principles, values, and formulas from God's Word.

You often note that while the economy is booming, unemployment is down, and the stock market is up, Americans are deeper in debt than ever before.

Our society has believed the credit industry's slick marketing pitches: What you have makes a nice down payment on what you want. You deserve to have everything you want now and pay for it later. You are entitled to it if you can get the credit. And as long as you make the minimum monthly payments, you will be just fine.

But as long as we don't know how to manage the money that we have, it will never be enough to satisfy our needs.

My deepest regret is that as I made all those wild attempts to take care of the emergencies in my family's life, I will never know how God intended to take care of us. I kept stepping ahead of Him, saying, "I don't need your help, God. I don't want what You have planned for me in this world; I'll take care of myself." ①

To order *Debt-Proof Living*, call toll-free, 1-888-324-8450. Suggested donation: \$20.00.



You've been asking...

RARE GLIMPSE OF LIFE INSIDE THE WOMB SERVES AS WAKE-UP CALL FOR ABORTION ADVOCATES

It will be years before Samuel Armas can understand all the fuss a photo of his hand sparked. And of course it was less his hand, than where the photograph captured his hand—protruding from a surgical incision of his mother's womb—that made the photo such a sensation.

A sonogram of Samuel, born barely 15 weeks after the now-famous photo was snapped in an operating suite at Vanderbilt University Medical Center, suggested a diagnosis of spina bifida—a serious birth defect that affects the spinal cord, causing serious physical problems for the child.

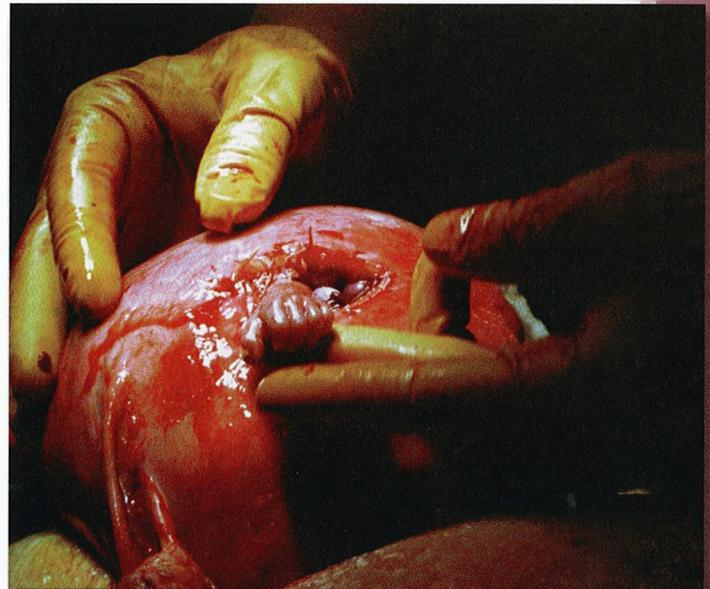
Born relatively healthy in December, Samuel shows few of the signs that alarmed the physicians who viewed the sonogram last July. While he may have some slight damage to nerves in his lower body, a report in the *Atlanta Journal-Constitution* (April 8, 2000) notes Samuel's father saying, "He's doing everything a baby should be doing, and that is what we wanted."

The surgery to correct the defect is a relatively rare procedure and is not without its own risks. Mother and child are sedated while surgeons in effect partially deliver the baby by Caesarean section but actually operate on the child still in the womb.

Samuel's parents, Alex and Julie Armas, went forward with the surgery cognizant that their heroic efforts to rescue Samuel were not the norm, as many babies diagnosed with the malady are aborted. Writing to radio talk show host Dr. Laura Schlessinger after the surgery, Julie Armas said, "We wanted people to know that there is an educated, professional couple out there who love and value their child even though he is 'defective' by society's definition. . . . No matter what Samuel's outcome is, we know that God has allowed him to impact others with a photograph of his tiny, unborn hand."

The Powder Springs, Ga., family never considered anything but life for tiny Samuel, and according to the *Atlanta Journal-Constitution's* account, they are perfectly content with the fact that the well-traveled photograph is generally regarded as a pro-life icon, telling the newspaper that they "believe God is using him [Samuel], and He's going to continue to."

Surgeon and photographer disagree on whether Samuel's hand reached out of the opening in his mother's uterus or whether, as the doctor asserts, the anesthetized baby shifted in the womb and he grabbed the little hand. Regardless, the striking photo



Michael Clancy/SABA

This photo of Samuel Armas, 21 weeks after conception, his tiny hand protruding from his mother's womb, prompted the free-lance photographer who took the picture at Nashville's Vanderbilt University Medical Center to declare, "It has made a pro-lifer out of me." At the time, Samuel was the youngest child to ever undergo the fetal surgery to reduce the effects of spina bifida.

FETAL SURGERIES FOR SPINA BIFIDA (As of Feb. 13, 2000)

Vanderbilt University Medical Center:	4 - Endoscopic 76 - Open-womb
Children's Hospital of Philadelphia:	12 - Open-womb

of a 21-week-old preborn infant—whose mother could, in any state of the union, with little difficulty, abort—is testimony to the fact that secreted away out of sight is a tiny human life, beautiful and crafted by God (Psa. 139:13-16). †

Precious Hands Pins

Symbolizing the pro-life stance internationally, these tiny hands are the exact size and shape of an unborn baby's hands at 10-12 weeks after conception.



SAHAN (14k plated) \$2.50 ea.

Kuwa Bashir is a Sudanese youth pastor from the Uduk tribe in Chali. A dedicated believer, he was attempting to go back to seminary and become a pastor.

In 1987, he was arrested because of his faith in Jesus. Muslim forces attempted to convert him to Islam, but he refused. He was severely beaten and tortured for seven days, then released. He was told never to organize youth activities in the church and was forbidden to attend church or pray.

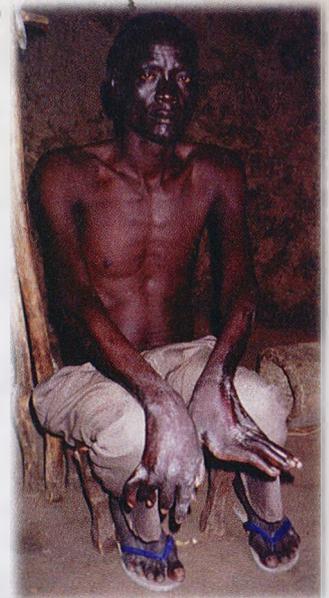
Bashir's faith and testimony of Jesus' love remained strong. When arrested again, he testified, "If I die or am shot dead, I will be very happy because I will leave an example for other Christians to follow in my steps. I will die without fear, like Jesus on the cross."

Because Bashir continued to talk to his captors about the Bible, the commanding officer ordered that acid be poured on his hands to leave a permanent reminder of his refusal to convert to Islam.

Thirteen years later, Bashir remains an active member of the church in the Bonga refugee camp on the Sudanese-Ethiopian border. There are about 15,000 Uduks in the refugee camp—a large field ripe for harvest.

Bashir's scarred hands have become a living testimony to the reality of his faith. Many refugees will listen to his message because of the persecution he has endured, and he now has one of the largest groups of believers in the area.

From "Do Not Fear the Scarecrows" by Tom White, *The Voice of the Martyrs*, April 2000



Defining "the persecuted Church" —

The Church is the worldwide body of people who have chosen Jesus as Lord and leader of their lives. In over 60 countries, Christians face the reality of massacre, rape, torture, mutilation, family division, harassment, imprisonment, slavery, discrimination in education and employment, and even death, according to an official United States State Department report (1997). Paul Marshall states in his book, Their Blood Cries Out, "This plague affects over 200 million people, with an additional 400 million suffering from discrimination and legal impediments." Christ's followers are persecuted all over the world simply for what they believe.

Source: <http://www.persecutedchurch.org/faq.htm>

Remember.

P R A Y F O R T H E P E R S E C U T E D C H U R C H

FROM THE FRONTLINES OF CHRISTIAN PERSECUTION

In a further crackdown on unregistered religious groups, Turkmen authorities arrested a Baptist believer, the Keston News Service reports.

Baptist church member Chariyar Atakov was arrested on Mar. 3 in the town of Kaakhka southwest of the capital Ashgabad, according to a report from the Friedensstimme Mission in Germany. Local church members claim he "has been deprived of his liberty because he is a Christian."

Last April, authorities confiscated Turkmen Bibles from Atakov, and a Baptist colleague, Anatoli Belyayev (who remains in prison since his arrest Feb. 2), at a police checkpoint. The men were told that the Baptist faith is "forbidden" in Turkmenistan and escorted to a National Security Committee (KNB, formerly KGB) office where they were interrogated. Atakov was reportedly beaten severely for refusing to give information about the church.

Islamic troops are waging a war of extermination against Christians in Indonesia's Moluccas Islands, a church leader says. Pastors have been killed, churches burned, and thousands of church members have been forced to flee into the woods or to refugee camps...

White-clad Muslims from outside the region are carrying out the jihad, or holy war, aided by local Muslims and Indonesian military units, survivors say. About 3,000 people, most of them Christians, have died in the past 14 months in religious violence in the Moluccas, a chain of 17 islands about 250 miles west of New Guinea, news reports say. The islands were once mostly Christian, but the Muslim population has increased in recent years with a "radical minority" causing unrest, news reports said.

Religion Today, April 7, 2000

Eleven people, including two students and a retired maintenance man, were killed when a mob overran their campus Feb. 22. Another student had been killed in town the day before.

Rioters killed 21 members of one Baptist church and burned 17 Baptist church buildings and 13 pastors' homes, reported Southern Baptist missionary Don Copeland. Another six church buildings were only looted, apparently because they were located too close to Muslim homes to be burned.

Four days of clashes between Muslims and Christians in the northern Nigeria city broke out Feb. 20 as Christians protested Muslim activist appeals to institute Islamic criminal law in Kaduna state. Hundreds of people were killed. Mosques, churches, and businesses were burned. Hundreds of vehicles were destroyed or damaged.

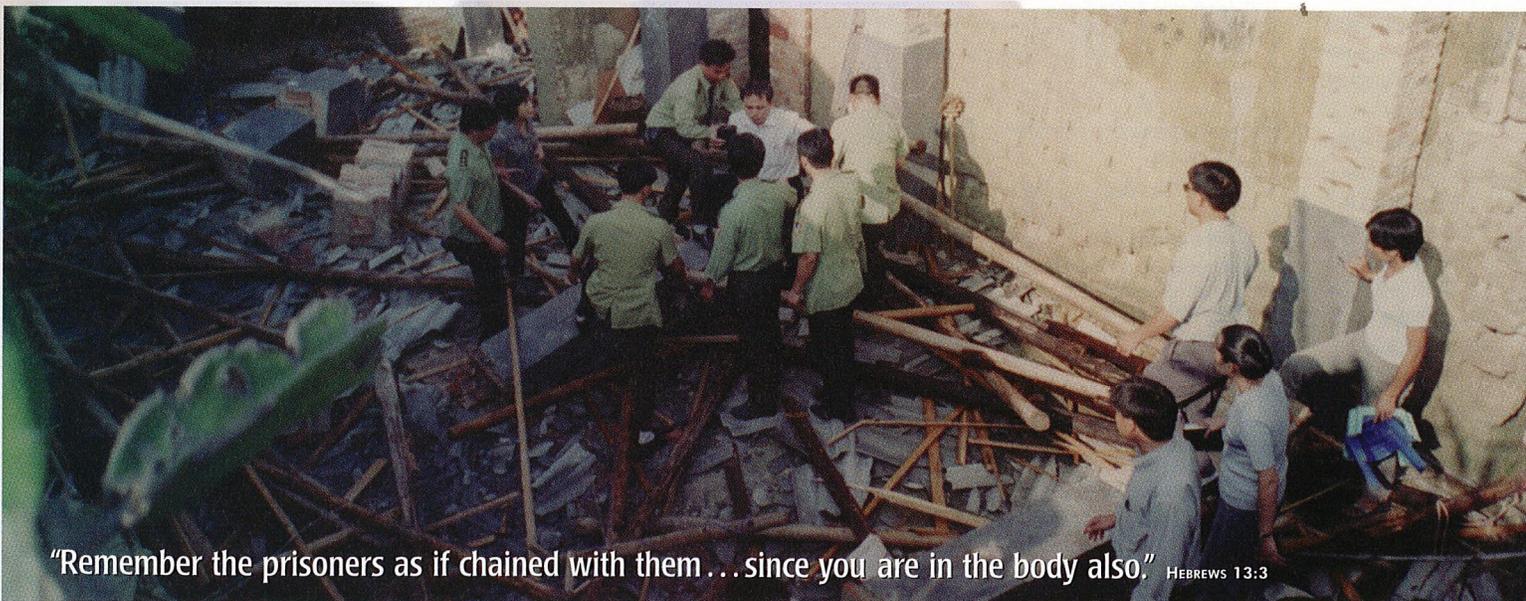
Mark Kelly for Baptist Press,
March 27, 2000

In a sharply worded report, Amnesty International today accused the government of Saudi Arabia of widespread human rights abuses, including arbitrary arrests, the torture of detainees, and the barring of prisoner access to family members or lawyers.

The group said it has received and published graphic accounts of mistreatment, discrimination against religious minorities, and suppression of political dissent in the Persian Gulf kingdom for years. But Saudi Arabia has escaped international condemnation for its record, Amnesty officials added, because oil-dependent nations like the United States have not wanted to offend the kingdom's rulers.

Saudi officials, who rarely respond to outside critics, this time reacted swiftly, emphatically rejecting Amnesty's findings as biased and inaccurate.

Susan Sachs for *The New York Times*, March 28, 2000



"Remember the prisoners as if chained with them . . . since you are in the body also." HEBREWS 13:3

Having earlier ransacked Pastor Li De Xian's church in Guangdong Province (PRC), police move in to arrest him as he violates their order to not enter the partially demolished church. Pastor Li's wife (top left) is restrained from interfering. Despite opposition, the church of China now has twice as many members as the Communist Party.

Social Issues Sunday: Religious Persecution

Aug. 6, 2000

International Day of Prayer for the Persecuted Church

Nov. 12, 2000

Pray.

citizenship and religious liberty

The Sunday before or on July 4 has been designated Citizenship and Religious Liberty Sunday to promote the active involvement of Christians in the life and government of their community, state, and nation. Further, it addresses the erosion of religious liberty and the misapplications of the separation of church and state.

CITIZENSHIP & RELIGIOUS LIBERTY SUNDAY

JULY 2, 2000



LifeLight: Citizenship and Religious Liberty

Formerly billed as a bulletin insert, this piece has been expanded to a 4-page format and includes commentary which relates real-life scenarios along with biblical application. The piece also includes statistics, prayer and action points, and steps to becoming a Christian. It can be used in conjunction with the emphasis Sunday or anytime throughout the year when addressing matters pertaining to citizenship and religious liberty. Undated. One of a series.

CCBULK \$3.50/50

EMPHASIS PRODUCTS

Citizenship and Religious Liberty Poster

This full-color 14" x 22" poster complements *LifeLight* featured at left to promote Citizenship and Religious Liberty Sunday. Undated. One of a series.

CCPOS \$.95 ea.

Citizenship and Religious Liberty Fact Sheet

Revised each year, this product has been upgraded to a 2-color format that includes compelling graphics and statistics to show Christians how desperately their input is needed as morality is challenged in the public arena.

CCFACU \$4.00/20

Citizenship and Religious Liberty Sermon Outline

This suggested sermon for Citizenship and Religious Liberty Sunday can be used in its entirety or as an informative resource.

CCSERU \$4.00/20



BOOKS

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.

BOOK SERIES EDITED BY GEORGE GRANT

Leaders in Action Series

Each book in the engaging biographical series is designed for individual leadership studies. Order books by individual product codes, or order the set by specifying:

BKRLSET (all 4 titles) \$55.00 ea.

Not a Tame Lion

A tremendous intellect with a powerful imagination, 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 (243 pages) \$14.99 ea.

Carry a Big Stick

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

BKROD (203 pages) \$14.99 ea.

Never Give In

This inspirational biography examines the 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 (225 pages) \$14.99 ea.

Give Me Liberty

Patrick Henry was a brilliant orator whose love of liberty, won at any cost, fueled the fire of the American Revolution. This book allows the reader to see why Henry's love of liberty gave him the courage to stand in the face of tyranny and prevail.

BKHEN (285 pages) \$14.99 ea.



Send a Message to Mickey

Not sure where you stand on the controversial Disney boycott? Before you dismiss the idea as

narrow and unfruitful, explore the Magic Kingdom's seamier side as authors Richard Land and Frank York introduce the newest members of the Disney family—films that cram violence and sexual perversion into an evening's entertainment, plus theme park events and corporate policies that undermine the family. Get the facts... and do what you can to urge a childhood friend to return to its family roots.

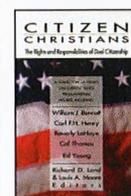
BKSEN (87 pages) \$4.95 ea.



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.

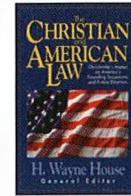
BKCHAR (191 pages) \$15.00 ea.



Citizen Christians

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

BKCIT (136 pages) \$8.00 ea.



The Christian and American Law

The truths of our faith provide a better foundation for a just society than the shifting sands of contem-

porary 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 in the public forum.

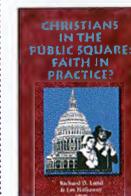
BKLaw (301 pages) \$9.99 ea.



The Patriot's Handbook

Continuing a tradition that began in the early 1800s, this handbook captures the essence of the great American experiment in liberty, featuring a sterling collection of key documents, speeches, and profiles of leaders who have shaped U.S. history.

BKPAT (464 pages) \$14.00 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.



Featured on pages 5, 10, 11, 18, and 19 are resources offered through the ERLC that deal with citizenship, religious liberty, and Christian persecution. Watch your mail for a catalog sheet with order form, or call to order featured products: 1-800-475-9127.

Amounts shown are suggested donations. Prices effective through 6/1/01.

religious persecution

The first Sunday in August is designated as Social Issues Sunday to spotlight a particular social issue of concern to Christians. With more Christians dying for their faith in the 20th century than the 19 previous centuries combined, it is fitting that Southern Baptists focus on religious persecution. Future emphases for this Sunday include: Pornography (2001); Human Rights (2002); World Peace (2003); and Environmental Stewardship (2004).

EMPHASIS PRODUCTS

Religious Persecution Poster

This color 14" x 22" poster complements *LifeLight* at far right to promote Social Issues Sunday. Undated. One of a series.

RPPOS \$9.95 ea.

Religious Persecution Sermon

This complete sermon can be used in its entirety or as a resource.

RPSEU \$4.00/20

Religious Persecution Fact Sheet

This new fact sheet offers statistics to raise awareness among Christians of the plight of their brothers and sisters who are being persecuted for their beliefs worldwide.

RPFACU \$4.00/20

Bumper Stickers

Prepared by Voice of the Martyrs, Inc., these items are designed to urge Christians to pray for their brothers and sisters in Christ who face persecution worldwide.



BSREM (sold in lots of 25) \$15.00/25

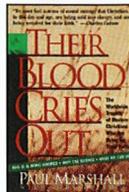


VIDEO

Stephen's Test of Faith

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

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

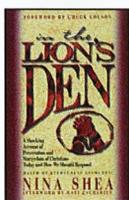


BOOKS

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.

BKBL0 (335 pages) \$12.00 ea.



In The Lion's Den*

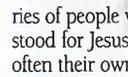
More people died for their faith in the 20th century than in the previous 19 centuries combined. Nina Shea shares what's happening and what America's Christians must do.

BKLI0 (125 pages) Reduced! \$6.50 ea.



Jesus Freaks

The world often labels people who are zealous in their commitment as "freaks." Voice of the Martyrs and dc Talk share stories of people who unflinchingly stood for Jesus at great costs — often their own lives.



Let My People Go

BKJES (368 pages) \$16.00 ea.



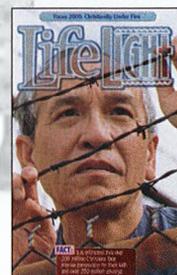
Let My People Go

This book is the gripping, heart-rending, 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.

SOCIAL ISSUES SUNDAY: RELIGIOUS PERSECUTION

AUG. 6, 2000



LifeLight: Religious Persecution

A reminder of the price Jesus paid and the value of our religious liberty. This 4-page piece includes real-life scenarios along with biblical application plus statistics, prayer and action points, and steps to becoming a Christian. It can be used anytime when addressing religious persecution in the U.S. and throughout the world. Undated.

RPBULK \$3.50/50

Most orders are shipped via UPS Ground Service (requires up to 7 business days for delivery; continental U.S. only). Rush shipping is available for an additional charge. UPS provides insurance and tracking in case of damage or delay. UPS shipping charges:

\$1.00-\$14.99	.....	\$4.00
\$15.00-\$29.99	.....	\$4.50
\$30.00-\$44.99	.....	\$5.05
\$45.00-\$59.99	.....	\$5.90
\$60.00-\$84.99	.....	\$6.70
\$85.00-\$109.99	.....	\$8.10
\$110.00 +	.....	8% OF TOTAL

Shipment via the U.S. Postal Service is available on some small orders. Tracking and insurance are not available with this service.

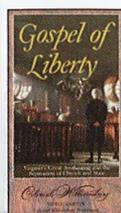
citizenship and religious liberty

VIDEOS

Citizen Christians

This ERLC production addresses legislating morality and school prayer. It includes a word from Prison Fellowship chairman Charles Colson, plus a segment on the role of Baptist preacher John Leland in securing First Amendment religious freedom protection.

VTCIT (VHS, 30 min.) \$9.00 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.

PAMPHLETS



Key Documents of U.S. History

The ERLC offers these documents to help Southern Baptists be the type of citizens the Word of God instructs us to be (Rom. 13:1-7). Foreword by Richard Land.

RLKEYU \$9.80/20

Critical Issues: Ten Commandments for Christian Citizens

This succinctly written pamphlet lays out the biblical underpinnings for Christians' participation in civic enterprises. The piece challenges Christians to recall their right and their obligation to bring their faith into the public square to impact politics and public policy. Christians have a command from God to play measured but decisive roles in our nation's public life as a legitimate expression of their religious faith and practice.

CITENU \$6.50/20



Citizen Christians: Their Rights and Responsibilities

ERLC President Richard Land recognizes that Christians are citizens of two realms—the earthly and the spiritual—and defines their rights and responsibilities in both spheres.

CCCIU (Tract) \$1.80/20

A Baptist's View of Prayer in Schools

ERLC President Richard Land addresses the confusion over the "establishment" and "free exercise" clauses of the First Amendment in relation to prayer in public schools.

CIBAPU \$6.50/20

The Homosexual Political Agenda

Discover the destructive agenda of a Gay Rights Platform designed not just to "protect civil rights" but to re-engineer society while calling for repeal of criminal penalties for acts such as sodomy, prostitution, pedophilia, and statutory rape.

CIHOMSU \$6.50/20



The Bible Speaks on Christian Citizenship

A look at the nature of government, the call of God's people to citizenship, and the Christian's responsibilities.

BSCHRU \$3.80/20



Declaration of Human Rights

Approved by the 1978 Southern Baptist Convention, this declaration defines human rights from a biblical perspective and issues a call to action to Southern Baptist citizens, pastors, churches, and agencies.

RADECU \$5.40/20

* Limited quantities

View "bulletin inserts" in a whole new light!

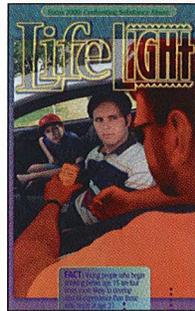
Introducing *LifeLight*, the new millennium's answer to the bulletin insert and the ERLC's answer to the growing demand by Southern Baptists for cutting-edge reference materials that address some of life's most critical social needs. *LifeLight* replaces the traditional bulletin insert offered by the ERLC with an expanded 4-page format with special features outlined at right.

LifeLight can be used as a bulletin insert or informational hand-out in conjunction with social issues Sundays on the Southern Baptist calendar or anytime when addressing these topics in your church:

- Sanctity of Human Life (Jan. 16)
- Racial Reconciliation (Feb. 13)
- Substance Abuse Prevention (Mar. 19)
- Citizenship & Religious Liberty (July 2)
- Religious Persecution (Aug. 6)
- Gambling (Sept. 17)
- Hunger (Oct. 8)

Touch your congregation with *LifeLight* as you encourage each member to let his light "shine before men," showing them that with Jesus they can overcome the wiles of the world, confidant in their eternal salvation.

Consider ordering extra copies of these invaluable resources for your church foyer and prayer room!



Substance Abuse

ADBULK \$3.50/50

Relevant statistic

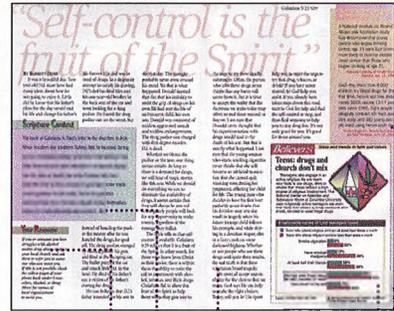
Provocative photo



Specific prayer points for individuals and congregations related to issue

Action steps for concerned Christians as well as individuals ensnared by the featured cultural issue

Plan of salvation to bring individual(s) to a saving knowledge of Jesus Christ



Contact resources

Scripture context

Commentary written in layman's terms relating real-life scenario along with biblical application

Visual illustration

"Factoids" on featured issue relating current statistics from real-life situations

LifeLight can be ordered in lots of 50 by specifying the product code at the bottom left corner of each issue (1-800-475-9127). Pictured here (and above) are the new releases for 2000:



Sanctity

SABULK \$3.50/50



Race

RABULK \$3.50/50



Citizenship

CCBULK \$3.50/50



Persecution

RPBULK \$3.50/50



Gambling

GABULK \$3.50/50



Hunger

WHBULK \$3.50/50



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