

The Magazine

LIGHT

For Faith & Family

MORE THAN NATIONAL CHAMPIONS—

THEY'RE CHAMPIONS FOR THE FAITH

Inside:

- White House faith-based initiatives: A dangerous temptation for churches?
- Soccer moms and dads look out—your children are watching!
- Stressed to the breaking point? God has a better way.
- New *LifeLight* (center) and Citizenship/Religious Liberty resources

AND MORE ►

Constitutionally Safe, Religiously Dangerous?

There are constitutionally safe ways for the federal government to aid faith-based groups. But at religion's expense?

BY RICHARD D. LAND

President Bush speaks eloquently of the tremendously constructive role religion has played in American society throughout our history. He has made it clear that his "compassionate conservatism" intends to recognize and to encourage religion's vital role in society.

At the annual National Prayer Breakfast, Bush inspired the crowd with his fervent endorsement of our nation's religious faith. The remarks that elicited the most enthusiastic response were these: "My administration will put the federal government squarely on the side of America's armies of compassion. Our plan will not favor religious institutions over non-religious institutions. As president, I'm interested in what is constitutional, and I'm interested in what works. The days of discriminating against religious institutions simply because they are religious must come to an end."

Sen. Joseph Lieberman (D-Conn.) recently praised Bush's idea of promoting faith-based organizations. President Bush, Lieberman said, had "seen firsthand the extraordinarily good works these non-profits often do."

And yet the president's Faith-Based and Community Initiatives program has generated significant criticism. What about the plan is so controversial? For Christian conservatives, it is this: government oversight. If the government gives funding to religious groups, then it must oversee how the money is used—and, we fear, how churches spread their message. That worry, coupled with the knowledge that Bush will not always be president and that one of his successors may have a far less favorable posture toward faith-based groups, causes many religious Americans to have grave reservations.

I believe faith-based initiative programs, with appropriate safeguards, can be done in ways that pass constitutional muster. I further believe the resulting increase in faith-based initiatives will help many people not being reached by government programs.

So I support constitutionally safeguarded faith-based initiatives with this sobering warning to all faith-based ministries: Partnering with the government in this way will increase your exposure to government intervention in your ministries. Is working with the government to obey our biblical mandate to help the poor, the hungry and the hurting worth that exposure?

That is a question each church, synagogue, temple and mosque must decide for itself. As for me and my house, I would not touch the money with the proverbial 10-foot pole.

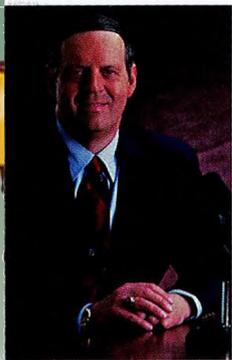
However, there are ways I can see to make the initiative more acceptable to groups that intend to take the money. Under the plan, offices will be set up in five federal departments—Education, Health and Human Services, Housing and Urban Development, Justice, and Labor—to coordinate the effort. The president explained that government "will not fund religious activities, but when people of faith provide social services, we will not discriminate against them." The anti-religious discrimination directive is an important corrective to the hostility often displayed by government toward religious institutions.

And government cooperation in funding faith-based social services can be done in ways that abide by the Constitution. First, there must always be a secular alternative to the faith-based social service available to the eligible recipients. No one must be faced with the choice of a faith-based service or no service at all. Second, the religious activities connected with the faith-based social service must be funded by the sponsoring ministry. Government money should not fund religion. Third, any religious activity related to the faith-based social service must be voluntary for those receiving the services. Fourth, the government can't favor some religious groups over others as recipients of federal money based on anything other than their merits.

People who are tempted to find some religious groups objectionable should always remember that the government permitted to discriminate against Hare Krishnas today may very well discriminate against Baptists and Catholics tomorrow.

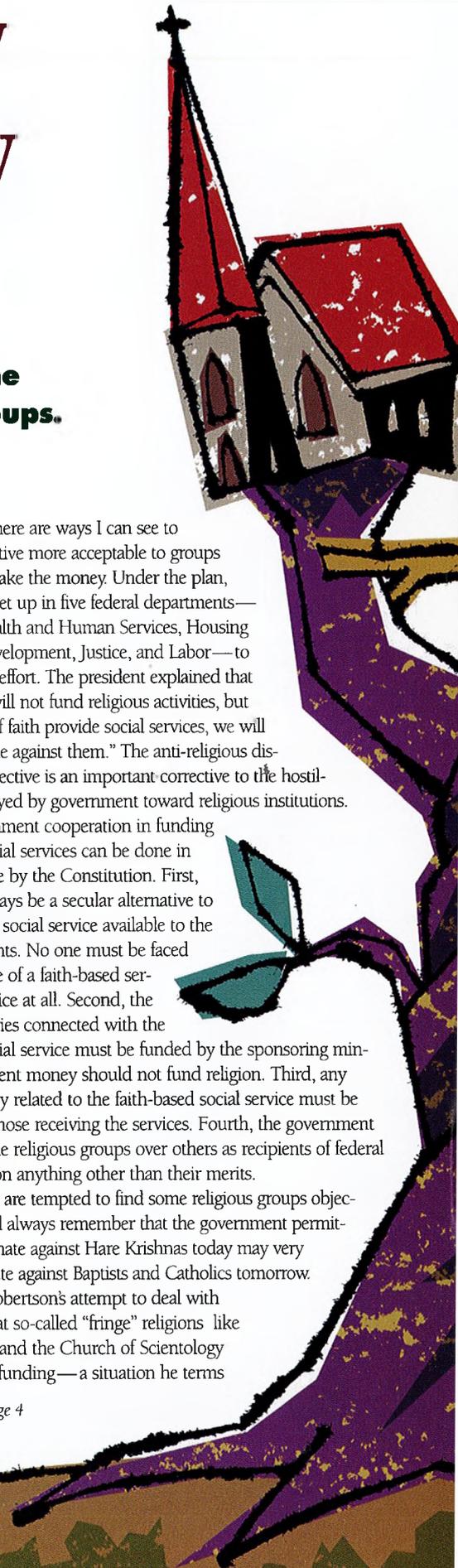
Even Pat Robertson's attempt to deal with his concern that so-called "fringe" religions like Hare Krishnas and the Church of Scientology would receive funding—a situation he terms

Continued on page 4



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

This column originally appeared on www.beliefnet.com, a multi-faith web site on religion, spirituality and morality.



"Partnering with the government in this way will increase your exposure to government intervention in your ministries. Is working with the government to obey our biblical mandate to help the poor, the hungry, and the hurting worth that exposure?"

— RICHARD LAND

Richard Land's concerns about President Bush's faith-based initiative proposals received a lofty hearing March 27. Land was invited to the White House for a private meeting with John Dilulio, director of the President's Office of Faith-Based and Community Initiatives, after Land publicly took issue with Dilulio's March 7 remarks. Dilulio had characterized some evangelicals' criticism of the initiatives as long-standing insensitivity to the poor.

During the hour-and-a-half meeting with Land and the ERLC's director of legislative concerns, Shannon Royce, Dilulio apologized for his statement, telling Land he didn't have Southern Baptists in mind when he made the accusation. Land presented him with a 14-page document that summarized much of what Southern Baptists are doing at the national, state and local level in terms of urban and social ministries.*

The White House meeting also gave Land an opportunity to refute comments made by Eugene Rivers, a Boston pastor and social activist who told the *Boston Globe* the divide between those fully supporting the White House's faith-based initiative proposals and those who expressed concern with the measures was a matter of "race and class." Rivers asserted conservative evangelical opposition to the proposals could be traced to the fact the programs most often will serve "people who are poor, black and brown."

Land criticized Rivers' allegations as "strident, inaccurate and inflammatory," noting that Southern Baptist ministries serve all Americans, with a strong emphasis on the poor and disenfranchised in America's urban cores, and that 15 percent of new SBC church starts are non-Anglo. Land said his concern with the president's proposals centered on the fact that "government is most often not a friend of religion," while at the same time providing Dilulio facts that reveal an ethnically diverse SBC.

Southern Baptists are not Johnny-come-latelys to speaking out against racial and ethnic prejudices, Land said, noting that when she was a child Shannon Royce's family had to be evacuated from their home in Mississippi because of bomb threats against her pastor father by the Ku Klux Klan. Royce is the daughter of Harold O'Chester, now pastor of Great Hills Baptist Church in Austin, Tex.

After the meetings, Land expressed his appreciation to Southern Baptists for their dedicated ministry to all sectors of American society, which made it possible for him to deliver such an impressive report on their wide-ranging ministries to the White House.

*Contact the ERLC (615-244-2495) for a copy of the report provided to the White House.

ON THE FRONTLINES IN D.C.

Shannon Royce began work as legislative counsel for the Ethics & Religious Liberty Commission's Washington, D.C., office in 1999 after 15 years of experience in the nation's capital. She moved to Washington in 1984 to join the staff of Concerned Women for America. She served on staff in the U.S. Senate five years later, focusing on domestic social policy for Sen. Slade Gorton, R.-Wash., then Sen. Charles Grassley, R.-Iowa. Immediately prior to taking the ERLC post, she served part-time as a consultant and counsel for the parental-rights organization, Of the People, for more than two years.

Shannon works with members of Congress and their staffs, as well as like-minded organizations, on legislative initiatives and would like to see Southern Baptists' role continue to increase in public policy issues. "I would love to have such a network established with Southern Baptists that on any given issue at any given time I could send out an alert and we would get hundreds, if not thousands, of responses to Congress. When an issue comes up, I would like us to be where Congress would call us to find out what we think as America's largest Protestant denomination."

Shannon holds a law degree from George Washington University and a bachelor's degree in behavioral science from Hardin-Simmons University. She and her husband, Bill, have two sons.



"intolerable"—requires government oversight. Robertson's alternative (detailed in a *USA Today* op-ed on March 5, 2001) would allow government-approved faith-based charities to receive donations that would be credited against tax owed if donated for a social service ministry—as opposed to a mere tax deduction if given for an overtly religious ministry.

Under Robertson's alternative, the government would still have to discern which were merely social service ministries worthy of the tax credit and which were religious ministries eligible only for the tax deduction. I suspect many religious people join me in finding that to be "intolerable."

Still, the problem with all of these safeguards is that they require governmental oversight. Unless you are the National Endowment for the Arts, government money always brings government oversight. One suggestion to reduce that problem: voucherize the recipients of services. Then the people receiving the assistance are empowered to seek the social services program that best meets their needs—public, private or faith-based.

Another Bush administration faith-based initiative, contained in the president's tax program, has received comparatively little discussion, despite its potentially enormous impact. This tax reform would allow the approximately 70 million families who do not file itemized tax returns to deduct charitable contributions from their taxable income. More than \$14 billion in additional charitable contributions would be generated during the first full year's implementation, according to the government. A significant proportion of those new charitable contributions would find its way into collection plates.

If the government really wants to empower the nation's "armies of compassion," then this plank in the tax reform package is a potentially revolutionary step. And because it is following the spectacularly successful American practice of government encouraging citizens to donate their own money to causes they embrace, it has none of the controversial government entanglements and church-state questions that have greeted the faith-based initiative. ①



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FROM THE EDITOR

**“My feet have followed closely to His steps;
I have kept to His way without turning aside.”**

JOB 23:10-11

Each issue of this magazine is crafted to help you, the reader, think biblically and act Christianly for the sake of your faith and your family. It is our desire to aid you as you integrate the truths of Scripture into your everyday life, seeking to embrace a Christian lifeview in every aspect of your life every day of the week. When we obey the Bible's teaching, we resist turning our backs on the pressing cultural and social issues of our day and instead seek God's wisdom and strength by standing as salt in a bland culture and as His light in a polluted society.



In this issue, we'll introduce you to several young men who were crowned national champions at the close of the 2000 NCAA football season but who stood tall as champions for the faith before and after their team's thrilling season-capping victory in the 2001 Orange Bowl.

("These Champions Are the Real Thing," pp. 6-7)



Next we'll travel north of the U.S. border to visit Heartland Community Church, where the members take seriously Christ's charge to be salt and light in their community. As champions for the faith in their western Canadian town, Heartland's members are taking a stand and making a difference for good and for God. **("The Little Church That Could—And Did—And Is," pp. 10-11)**

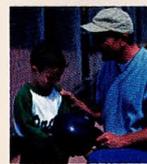


While we enjoy freedoms that are unparalleled in the world, it is hard to imagine that elsewhere people are being harassed, harmed and even murdered for their refusal to renounce their faith in Jesus Christ. Yet at this very moment in many nations around the globe, Christians are being brutally persecuted for their faith. It is an issue that doesn't make the daily news but should trouble Christians in America.

("The Persecution Continues," pp. 12-13)



Stress! Some of it is good, but too much can be a bad thing. We all must deal with it, but a failure to heed God's plans for our life can push us over the edge and make us no earthly good to serve His heavenly purposes. **("Stressed and Stretched to the Breaking Point?" pp. 14-16)**



As parents most of us have spent a fair amount of time on the sidelines as our children compete in youth sports. And as a spectator or perhaps a coach, many of us have struggled to contain our emotions in the "heat" of the game. Yet our courtside behavior reflects—well or ill—on our relationship with Jesus. We are walking, talking testimonies for Him—even in the grandstands. **("Playing by the Rules," pp. 18-19)**

Bellevue Baptist Church pastor Adrian Rogers takes us to the Bible in stressing that character does count—in our nation's leaders and her citizens. Moreover, the popular preacher makes us aware of our God-given duties and responsibilities as citizen Christians in the marketplace of ideas and thought. **("The Character That God Requests of Every Citizen," p. 21)**

And finally, no matter your age you can be sure God has a plan for your life. In this issue's Ethics for the Younger Set, we are reminded that God created each of us special for His purposes and truly knows what's best for us. **("God Has a Plan for Your Life," p. 24)**

It is our prayer that this issue of *For Faith & Family's Light Magazine* will richly benefit you and your family. We encourage you to contact us to share your thoughts on our ministry and your ideas for future issues of the magazine.

Dwayne Hastings
Dwayne Hastings
EDITOR-IN-CHIEF
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P.S. A sample of the ERLC's *LifeLight* focusing on Citizenship and Religious Liberty is included in the center of this magazine for reference. While not actual size, the sample will give you an idea of the wonderful content of this invaluable bulletin insert as you plan for this emphasis in your church. **(See "Resources," pp. 22-23.)**

This Teacher Is Always on Duty

Richard Land just can't resist—he's a natural teacher. And even now, with nearly 13 years as head of the SBC's Ethics & Religious Liberty Commission under his belt, there isn't a week that goes by that doesn't find this scholar teaching.

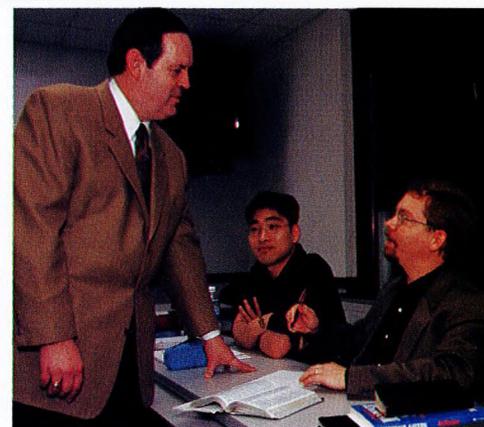
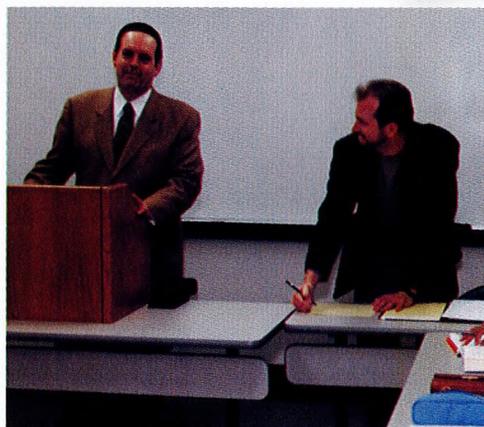
room. "It's important to me because I spent the most significant portion of my life—in terms of years—involved in academics and involved in preparation for teaching," he explains, noting that he taught for 13 years.

Land adds that as a bonus he

bubbling up on the college campuses or in the local church,"

Land says. "So then I'm not quite as surprised as I would be if I were one more step removed back at my office."

As a case in point, he recalls learning what a pervasive issue



LEFT: Dr. Richard Land teaches a class on *Christian Ethics & the Family* at The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, Louisville, Ky., in March 2001. Pictured clockwise are Dr. Land, Phil Gloyer, Eric Bailey, Sang-hee Ahn, Leonard Smith, Kyoungwon Choi and Michael Withers. CENTER: Dr. Land and his grader, Phil Gloyer, share a humorous moment regarding test questions. RIGHT: Dr. Land responds to student questions during a class break. PHOTOS BY JONATHAN ROBERTS.

"It is one of my gifts. I'm a teacher; it's just what I do," Land says. "It is the way God knitted and embroidered me together. Whether I am on the radio, speaking before the Southern Baptist Convention or talking to students in a classroom, I approach it as a teacher. That's just who I am."

Land, who spent many years of his own life sitting under some excellent teaching—Princeton University, New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary and Oxford—dedicates a fair amount of time each year to be back in the classroom, but now he is in front of the class.

And he makes clear it's not an obligation but a love for teaching that draws him back to the class-

room. "It's important to me because I spent the most significant portion of my life—in terms of years—involved in academics and involved in preparation for teaching," he explains, noting that he taught for 13 years.

Land adds that as a bonus he finds his time on Southern Baptist campuses keeps him fresh on the issues. "Being with students helps me hone my message to ensure it effectively resonates with my audience," Land says. "It provides an excellent dress rehearsal for speaking in a local church or denominational meeting. It's almost like a focus group," he says, offering that he misses the opportunity "to bounce ideas off the students" the semesters he is not in the classroom.

When this denominational executive dons his professor's garb he is also able to uncover breaking issues that pastors are facing on a day-to-day basis. "It's a great way for me to find out what issues are

reproductive technology is from talking to seminary students dealing with the issue in their churches.

And being on campus also gives him the opportunity to introduce a new generation of seminary students to the ministry of the ERLC.

Land is impressed with the students at the SBC's seminaries, saying they are not lacking for boldness or courage. "I have come away from my interaction with seminary students humbled by their commitment and their dedication. They are sold out to the Lord," he continues. "They want to do whatever it is God wants them to do, and they are ready to go wherever He wants them to go." ☛

TEACHING SCHEDULE

The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary

J-TERM (JAN.) 2000	The Church & Sexuality
SPRING 2000	The Church, the World & Politics
J-TERM (JAN.) 2001	The Church, the World & Politics
SPRING 2001	Christian Ethics & the Family
J-TERM (JAN.) 2002	Christian Ethics & the Environment
SPRING 2002	Church-State Relations
SPRING 2002	Biblical Ethics (Nashville)

Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary

SUMMER 2000	The Bible & Moral Issues: Sexuality
SUMMER 2001	Christianity & Human Sexuality

New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary

MAY 2001	Current Ethical Issues
FALL 2002	Baptist Heritage (Birmingham)



THESE CHAMPIONS ARE

The Real Thing

"We have a great bunch of kids and a strong FCA chapter. We have a voluntary chapel service before every game. We encourage players to be a part of it because we know the need for a spiritual life. About 75% of the players and all of the coaches attend. The coaches feel strongly about it, and the players feed off that. We have some great Christian players who are better role models than we as coaches are. They are great players and good students who walk the walk every day. They exemplify what you want in good football players. They have been an influence in my life."

Bobby Jack Wright
DEFENSIVE ENDS COACH AND
RECRUITING COORDINATOR
MEMBER, TRINITY BAPTIST
CHURCH, NORMAN, OKLA.

For the young men who invest their blood, sweat, tears and years on the gridiron, there is nothing more glorious than to be crowned national collegiate football champions. Yet for more than a few players on the 2000 National Champion Oklahoma Sooners, winning the Sears trophy paled in comparison to the victory they had gained sometime earlier in their lives — the joy of coming to know Jesus Christ as their Lord and Savior.

And while they celebrated being national champs, they didn't let the moment go to their heads. In fact, they used the occasion of winning to champion their faith in Christ in every media opportunity they had. Their acknowledgment of God's role in their lives did not involve showboating for the camera but rather a humble admission that the glory should go to God and not themselves. Their faith is deep and sure; it is the stuff of real champions — champions for the faith who take bold, uncompromising steps to not only proclaim their faith but to

quietly and selflessly serve in Jesus' name.

After capturing the Big 12 Conference championship 27-24 over Kansas State and arriving back on campus Sunday at 3:00 a.m., Josh Heupel, Bubba Burcham, Quentin Griffin, Bary Holleyman and several other of their teammates were at Council Road Baptist Church in Oklahoma City at 9:00 that morning to testify of their faith in Christ. Teammates Rocky Calmus and Ryan Fisher resisted the opportunity to sleep the day away as well, showing up at their church, Emmaus Baptist

Church in Oklahoma City.

Team chaplain Mike Whitson, a member of Bethel Baptist Church in Norman, Okla., credits OU coach Bob Stoops with protecting the integrity of the team's chapels. "He is adamant about that time being a time to focus on God and not football or motivational speeches. His desire is for the players and coaches to be challenged by Scripture and to grow closer to God."

These guys and others on the team are real champions, not for their prowess on the football field, but for their unwavering declaration of faith in Jesus. **✠**

Photos this page courtesy of OU Athletic Media Relations. Thanks to Mike Whitson, team chaplain, and Jerry Pierce and Dana Williamson of the Baptist Messenger for their help with this report.

STARTING EACH DAY RIGHT

BY BUBBA BURCHAM

In 1996, I fulfilled a dream by walking on to the University of Oklahoma football team. The next year, as a redshirt freshman, I made the travel squad, and the Lord began working profoundly in my life.

Through the messages of pre-game chapel speakers, who preached the importance of a daily walk with Jesus, I realized I wasn't growing daily in Christ. Though I had accepted Christ as Savior at age 12, I decided from that point on I would strive to grow daily in Him.

I earned a scholarship and started at offensive tackle my sophomore season. I believe it is no coincidence that my success on the field grew as I grew in my daily commitment to God.

During 1999 spring workouts, I severely tore a pectoral muscle and questioned my ability to rehabilitate it before the season. Hebrews 12:11 says: "No discipline seems pleasant at the time, but painful. Later on, how-

ever, it produces a harvest of righteousness and peace for those who have been trained by it." This motivated me to fight through the pain of rehab, and I eventually started all 12 games that season.

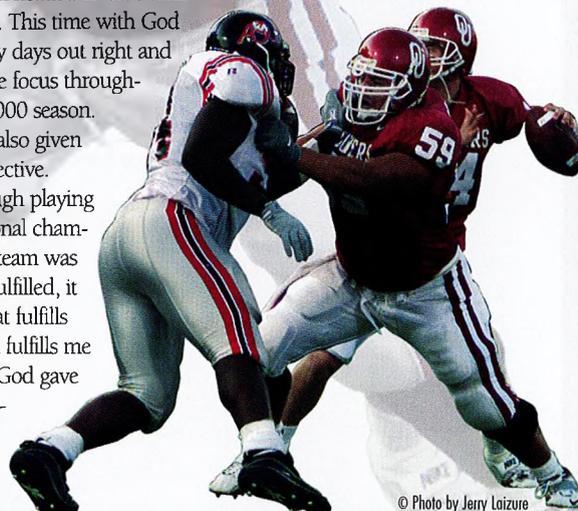
One practice that has changed my life is spending time daily with God. Last summer I rose at 5:20 each morning to study the Bible, then headed to 6:00 a.m. workouts. This time with God started my days out right and helped me focus throughout the 2000 season.

It has also given me perspective.

Although playing on a national championship team was a dream fulfilled, it is not what fulfills me. What fulfills me is Christ. God gave me a competitive nature. I don't like

losing; I don't like being second best. But football is not what I live for; it's not why I run the race. I run for the "crown that will last forever" (1 Cor. 9:25).¹

Bubba Burcham, number 59, was the starting center for the University of Oklahoma football team during last year's 13-0 national championship season. He will serve the Sooners next season as a graduate assistant coach.



© Photo by Jerry Loizure

IN THEIR OWN WORDS

"I came to OU and lost six [games] my freshman year — more than I'd lost my entire life. It was really a down time for me, but I knew I was at OU for a reason. I probably wouldn't be able to do half the things I do without the Lord because I'm always injured. I need something else to help me through. It's not my willpower."



Rocky Calmus, linebacker

"I'm just like anyone else. I'm not special because I play football. The Lord helps me in battles off the field as well as on the field."



Quentin Griffin, running back

"I felt a great peace every time I walked on the field. I knew many of the guys on the field with me shared that same relationship with the Lord, and that bond was very special."



Josh Heupel, quarterback

"I like how 1 Corinthians 9:24 challenges me to run in such a way as to get the prize. I've seen my share of hard times at OU with three injuries and two surgeries in four years, but I have my relationship with Christ to hold on to. I know God led me to OU for His purpose and not mine."

Trevor Nutt, guard

"It's a commitment I made to myself, that no matter — winning or losing — I was going to come to church. It wouldn't be right to come sometimes, and then all of a sudden you have a big victory and you're like, 'I'm just not going to go tomorrow.' I made that commitment to myself before the season began."

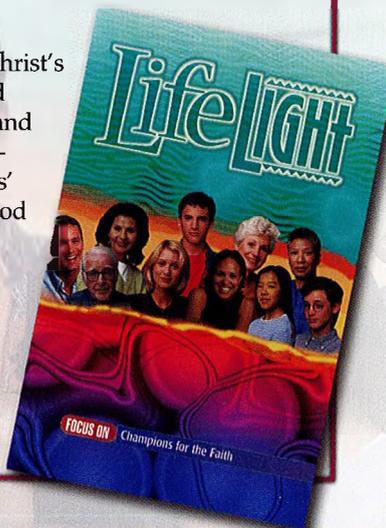
Ryan Fisher, defensive lineman

You can be a champion for the faith.

Like Bubba Burcham, you can be a champion for the faith by seeking to change the culture for good, one heart and one mind at a time. No special skills are required, just a willingness to commit to serving God by serving others.

Our "Champions for the Faith" *LifeLight* is designed to encourage Christians to fulfill Christ's commands for His followers to be "salt" and "light" — change agents in society for good and for God. It is suitable as a handout to accompany a sermon series that outlines Christians' obligations to carry the life-transforming Good News of the Gospel out into the culture as they "live holy and godly lives" (2 Pet. 11b). Further, it encourages the creation of Christian Life Committees in local churches.

For more information or to place an order for LifeLights or any other of our useful resources, call the Southern Baptist Ethics & Religious Liberty Commission at 1-800-475-9127 or send e-mail to orders@erlc.com.



Pack of 50 LifeLights: \$4.95

Product Code: CFBULK

The Prophetic

According to George Grant, the church CAN free itself from the bondage it is in today.

The prophetic church exposes the evil deeds of darkness and guides the people into all truth, as revealed in Holy Scripture. It believes that "the Bible is authoritative on everything of which it speaks" and applies the Bible to every sphere of life: art, music, ideas, government, education, medicine, history, economics, agriculture, and science.



Church

BY GEORGE GRANT

Part of the reason the church is in such bondage today is that it has failed to teach the truth. Instead of nurturing God's People with the rich truths of practical Biblical instruction, we have indulged in theological junk food, sectarian arcana, and intellectual irrelevancies. Instead of cultivating commitment on the unwavering foundation of God's Word, we have humored ourselves with ecclesiastical white elephants.

Therefore My people go into exile for their lack of knowledge; and their honorable men are famished, and their multitude is parched with thirst (Isaiah 5:13).

"Behold, days are coming," declares the Lord God, "when I will send a famine on the land, not a famine for bread or a thirst for water, but rather for hearing the words of the Lord. And people will stagger from sea to sea, and from the north even to the east; they will go to and fro to seek the word of the Lord, but they will not find it" (Amos 8:11-12).

When Sava of Tmova visited the Kievan Christian republic in 1202, he was struck by the glorious architecture of the churches, by their magnificent music, by their extravagant art, and by their elaborate liturgies. But it was the preaching that impressed him the most. "The vaunted greatness of this land," he wrote, "is surely rooted in the vaunted greatness of its church. The vaunted greatness of its church, though steeped in the mighty weight of orthodoxy, is surely rooted in the power and persuasion of its prophetic proclamation from the pulpit." The church *taught* its people then. And, as a result, those people had built a marvelous culture with liberty and justice for all.

When Alexis de Toqueville visited the United States in 1830, he had a similar experience. He attributed much of the greatness he observed in the land to the vibrancy and relevancy of the church's prophetic role. He noted that virtually every community in the vast new republic was indelibly marked by "pulpits aflame with righteousness." The church *taught* its people then. And, as a result, those people had built a marvelous culture with liberty and justice for all.

The prophetic church applies the Bible to every sphere of life:

art, music, ideas, government, education, medicine, history, economics, agriculture, and science. It believes that "the Bible is authoritative on everything of which it speaks." And it believes that "it speaks of everything." It believes that "all Scripture is God-breathed, and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting, and training in righteousness, so that the man of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work" (2 Timothy 3:16-17). It believes that "not one jot or tittle" has in any wise passed from it (Matthew 5:18). It believes that it is "settled in heaven" (Psalm 119:89) and "established on earth" (Psalm 119:90). It believes the Bible, and it teaches it systematically at all times, "in season and out of season" (2 Timothy 4:20).

Jesus therefore was saying to those Jews who had believed Him, "If you abide in My word, then you are truly disciples of Mine; and you shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free" (John 8:31-32).

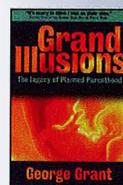
The prophetic church does not just *teach* the Bible though. It also *applies* it. The word *prophet* literally means *guide*. Whenever and wherever sin exists, the prophetic church is there: exposing, rebuking, improving, correcting—and guiding.

Let no one deceive you with empty words, for because of these things the wrath of God comes upon the sons of disobedience. Therefore do not be partakers with them; for you were formerly darkness, but now you are light in the Lord; walk as children of light (for the fruit of the light consists in all goodness and righteousness and truth), trying to learn what is pleasing to the Lord. And do not participate in the unfruitful deeds of darkness, but instead even expose them (Ephesians 5:6-11).

If the church refuses the prophetic mantle of John the Baptist (Matthew 4:3-12), of Elijah (1 Kings 21:1-25), and of Nathan (2 Samuel 12:1-13) in exposing the evil deeds of darkness and guiding the people into all truth, then the innocent are sure to perish, and God's vast army will slumber through one Megiddo after another.

For if the bugle produces an indistinct sound, who will prepare himself for battle? (1 Corinthians 14:8) ①

This article is excerpted with permission from:



Grand Illusions

Dr. George Grant describes the legacy of Planned Parenthood and its chilling agenda of abortion and sex education, subsidized by our tax dollars. No other book has so thoroughly surveyed the educational and political initiatives, social consequences and global impact of this organization. R. C. Sproul says, "Grand Illusions peeks behind the curtain of Planned Parenthood, exposing the lies that have made it a 'respectable institution.'"

BKGRA (408 pages)
\$7.00 \$15.00 ea.

...who will prepare
himself for battle?

Heartland Community

THE LITTLE CHURCH THAT COU

Heartland Community Church came to our attention through a news article entitled "Courageous Stands Carry a Price for 30-Member Church in Canada." (Read that story on the web at www.bpnews.net/bpnews.asp?ID=5775.)

We at Light magazine are always on the lookout for Champions for the Faith (individuals and churches who are taking an uncompromising stand for Christ in the culture), and we were happy to read about an SBC church tackling the issue of substance abuse in such a bold and creative way. To our pleasure, we discovered that the tiny Heartland Community Church is a shining example of "The Prophetic Church," applying the standards of God's Word to "every sphere of life." (See book excerpt on page 9.) It is our privilege to tell others how God is working through His people in Pincher Creek.

THE EDITORS

BY KAREN COLE

Can a church of only 35 members influence its community? Absolutely! Heartland Community Church, in Pincher Creek, Alberta, is an example of a small congregation that in only three years has made a difference in this western Canadian community.

While many people choose to live in southern Alberta for its breath-taking scenic beauty, Murray Pura, a church planter affiliated with the Canadian Convention of Southern Baptists and the North American Mission Board, prayerfully chose Pincher Creek to start the Heartland Community Church in 1998 after discovering families there who shared his vision for church planting and church purpose.

"I suppose you would call

our model purpose-driven and relationship-driven and ethic-driven," Pura says. "We believe very strongly that a saved life must bloom into a Christianity that cares about values and social justice. We do not believe evangelism and ethics ought to be mutually exclusive. And when we invite people to Christ we invite them to a new and ethical lifestyle, not just an 'I'm saved and everything's great for me and mine' kind of attitude."

Because of the prevailing culture in southern Alberta, that new lifestyle has been both a point of contention and an opportunity for witness for the members of Heartland. Pura explains: "In some ways, this is still like the Old West out here. These are rugged individualists. Nobody is going to tell some of these folks they need Christ.

Nobody is going to tell some of them they can't cuss and drink and cuff their wife. This area has one of Canada's highest rates of domestic violence. It's not everyone. Lots of fine people live here. But there are enough rough-necks to have a strong impact.

"Alcohol is part of the whole abuse picture," Pura continues. "Kids are given keg parties at age 16 here. Minors are encouraged to drink to intoxication. Even some Christians—including evangelicals—don't see what the problem is. They have been brainwashed into believing that alcohol consumption to excess is not abuse. That's the mindset we're dealing with."

Not surprisingly, Pura notes that evangelical churches in the area face an uphill battle and that Pincher Creek is known as a "pastors' graveyard." After serv-



1999 Dry Grads, ready for an evening of fun.

Ryan Plesko, fourth from the left, first expressed the idea of planning an alternative, no-alcohol event for high school graduates in Pincher Creek.

Community Church

D — AND DID — AND IS

ing in the area for three years, he is one of the longest-tenured ministers in the community. Of the ones who have left, all but one crashed and burned," he adds. "It's a war zone. Growth is slow, but we've had nine baptisms in the last year—pretty good for a hardscrabble area. What has not been slow, however, is our growth in

Christian maturity, intimacy with one another and courage."

That "hardscrabble" environment has energized Pura and the other Heartland members, however, who meet for Sunday School and worship in two meeting rooms at a hotel and in home groups during the week.

Shortly after arriving in Pincher Creek, Pura, a published author, was asked to write a column for the *Pincher Creek Echo*, the area's weekly newspaper. "While I don't use the column as a pulpit as such, the editor does want me to raise controversial issues and doesn't mind if I am highly moral in my content," he notes.

Other church members take bold public stands as well. "We have quite a little crew!" Pura declares. "Our people, including our youth, write letters to the editor. They speak out at school and in their workplaces. They sit on various school boards and parent-teacher boards. They show up at town council meetings when an issue of concern is on the agenda."

Heartland's first major trial by fire occurred in 1999 when they tacitly challenged a community tradition. For many years the town's high school graduates have attended Safe Grad, an adult-sanctioned, graduation-night drinking party. The 50-60 graduates, their escorts and friends from lower grades (age

14+) are admitted to the rodeo grounds, where they are allowed to drink as much as they want—"partying" the night away. (The legal drinking age in Alberta is 18.) Parent volunteers drive the students home after breakfast. The event is considered "safe" because the young people are not allowed to drive while intoxicated.

Ryan Plesko, a 1999 graduate and Heartland member, approached Murray Pura with the idea of planning an alternative, no-alcohol event. Thus Dry Grad was born. Yet many in Pincher Creek did not appreciate Heartland's challenge of the status quo. The Puras' answering machine filled with obscenities and a death threat, and students that expressed interest in Dry Grad were harassed at school.

Despite the hometown resistance, Dry Grad was a fun-filled success. About 20 Dry Grad youth were picked up by limousines after the graduation ceremony and taken to a nearby city where they dined at a restaurant that stayed open just for them, played miniature golf, bowled, swam, watched movies and ate breakfast at a hotel.

Afterward, parents and students flooded the local newspaper with letters, both attacking and affirming Pura's stand on alcohol. In the fall of 1999, at a planning meeting of students and parents for the 2000 graduation events, a young man stood to talk about the Dry Grad option. He was booed, yelled at and shouted down—by the parents. In time, the students have come to respect and accept Dry Grad, even though many of their parents have not.

Church members have spoken up regarding other local issues, including the presence

of bars on Main Street and the area's high incidence of domestic violence and child abuse

Another of the church's controversial stances has been their insistence that a Royal Canadian Mounted Police officer charged with second-degree murder be considered innocent until proven guilty and that he have the right to a fair trial. Pura estimates that the fury unleashed over this issue is probably greater than that over the first Dry Grad.

Importantly, one of Heartland's goals—based on 1 Corinthians 13—is for the church to be as well known for its friendliness and acts of compassion in the community as for its stand on thorny issues. The members volunteer in local ministries such as the Christian Outreach thrift store and the teen center. They take an active role in interchurch activities such as community praise services, potlucks and picnics, and lead worship at the seniors lodge on a rotating basis. Pura's intent is that "We are not isolated or marginalized. We will not let that happen, even if we are quite different from the other churches in style and stance."

So, can a church of only 35 members be a champion for the faith? Absolutely!

Pura admits that "It sure does get lonely up here. It would be wonderful if some other churches wrote to encourage us and tell us they're praying. And we would love for people to visit us when they're on vacation in Montana or western Canada." If you would like to contact this pastor and congregation, please write to Box 2411, Pincher Creek, Alberta, TOK 1W0 CANADA, or send e-mail to murlin@telusplanet.net.

Some believe that all that's needed
Christians
is to bring a person to Christ and
have criticized
their bad habits will be changed.
Heartland for
But history and the Scriptures prove
taking a stand.
otherwise. When John Newton was
They say it is
born again, he wrote *Amazing*
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Grace, but he did not cease being a
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ing out a saved life in all spheres of
gospel and an
human existence is quite another.
anemic Christ.

MURRAY PURA, PASTOR
HEARTLAND COMMUNITY CHURCH



In Indonesia, thousands of Christians have been forced out of their homes and placed in refugee camps like this one in Tobelo.

Photo courtesy of International Christian Concern

"I was deeply struck by the faith of the Moluccan Christians—their love for God and the beautiful hymns they sang by memory. These people have deep convictions. They are our brothers and sisters in Christ. They have asked, 'Why hasn't anyone helped us?' It is our responsibility to answer their plea and to make every effort to comfort them in their time of distress, and to rescue as many as we possibly can before it is too late...."

ICC PRESIDENT AND FOUNDER STEVEN SNYDER



The Persecution Continues

The following interview with Rev. Steve Snyder, president of International Christian Concern (ICC) in Washington, D.C., was conducted by World Evangelical Fellowship's Religious Liberty Commission director Johan Candelin recently. Indonesian authorities detained Snyder this past February in the strife-torn Molucca Islands, where he had gone to assess the refugee situation.*

CANDELIN: Steve, you just came back from Indonesia. Could you describe where you went and what happened there?

SNYDER: We went to Indonesia to assess the situation in preparation for evacuation of some 7,000 Christians still trapped by the Laskar Jihad warriors. We traveled to Jakarta but did not stay there long. We went on to Manado, where we met with refugees from the northern Molucca Islands. From there we went to Halmahera. This is the island where for the past 18 months Laskar Jihad attacks have taken place.

CANDELIN: It is difficult to get a full picture of what's happening in Indonesia, because it varies from island to island and from area to area.

SNYDER: The refugees have lost their homes, churches and possessions; everything has been destroyed by Jihad warriors who have attacked their villages. There is testimony after testimony of gruesome violence which

includes beheadings, chopping off limbs, stabbing and cutting victims into pieces. Obviously the refugees were traumatized from this, yet amazingly they remained in high spirits. They were hopeful to return to their homeland, but under the present circumstances this looks impossible any time in the near future.

There are about 200,000 refugees. They are concentrated mostly in northern Halmahera, with about 50,000 of them in Tobelo. The Christians there are hoping to make this place a refuge for others, as it gives strength in numbers. We know of at least another 7,000 Christians remaining in the hands of Jihad warriors. They are not allowed to leave, and these, like many that we interviewed, were forced to be circumcised, embrace Islam, or face death by sword. All the Christians we met had gone through forced circumcision. They said they had done so in fear for their lives but that in their hearts they are still Christians.

CANDELIN: What can be done?

SNYDER: Part of the tragedy of what's happening in the Molucca Islands is that the rest of the world has been silent. The Indonesian government itself has refused to intervene or allow any western assistance. This is partly because the military forces have actually participated in many of these attacks against Christians. I don't believe the military wants the word out or that the government wants to acknowledge it, but the evidence was very clear from different people who have never met each other.

As Christians we must go to our knees in prayer. We must raise our voice to our governments and speak up on behalf of these Christians, demanding that there be justice and that the Indonesian government receive international help to end the violence. Lastly, there is a need to practically help those still trapped. ICC has launched a campaign to do this. ①

INTERNATIONAL CHRISTIAN CONCERN: 2020 Pennsylvania Ave. NW, Box 941, Washington, DC 20006-1846, USA, 1-800-422-5441, www.persecution.org.

For more information on the plight of Christians on the violence-stricken Moluccan Islands of Indonesia, see this BP report: <http://www.bpnews.org/bpnews.asp?ID=10364>. For more information on the Christian persecution issue, visit www.persecutedchurch.org.

* World Evangelical Fellowship's Religious Liberty E-mail Conference

EMPHASIS PRODUCTS

Lifelight: Religious Persecution

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

RPBULK \$4.95/50

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.

RPFAC (individual) \$.32 ea.
RPFACU (bulk) \$4.00/20

Stephen's Test of Faith

This video chronicles a young boy's journey through history as he meets Jesus, Stephen the martyr, William Tyndale, Christian children in today's Middle East, and others who dare to share their faith. It is an inspiring challenge to all ages to continue following Christ when we are "tested."

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

Jesus Freaks

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

BKJES (368 pages) \$16.00 ea.

Please Pray for Us

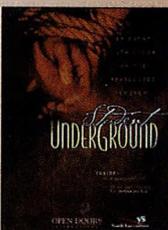
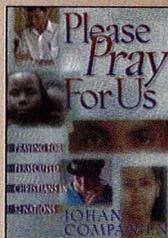
Millions of Christians worldwide suffer from persecution and restrictions on their religious freedom, but most of us do not know how to intercede effectively. This inspiring prayer guide offers specific prayer requests from the world's 52 most hurting countries.

BKPLE (219 pages) \$9.99 ea.

Student Underground

During an hour-long youth group meeting, 17 Christians will be martyred somewhere in the world. This easy-to-use curriculum and companion 60-minute video will open students' eyes to the scope of religious persecution and give realistic plans for action. The four sessions can be used in a retreat or lock-in setting or in a month of weekly meetings.

RPSTUKIT (Leader's Guide & Video) \$29.99 ea.





Stressed and Stretched to the Breaking Point?

GOD HAS A BETTER WAY!

BY DWAYNE HASTINGS

"Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy and my burden is light" (Jesus, Matt. 11:28-30).

Cardboard boxes are imprinted with a bursting limit, such as "200 lbs. per square inch." There is a temperature at which even a pressure cooker blows its top; an RPM at which an engine self-destructs; a stress point at which a rope will fray and snap; and a weight that a body-builder, his muscles trembling, will be unable to lift.

We all have limits, and to some extent we all seem to revel in nudging up to and beyond our limits—living on the sharp edge of life and having the lacerations to prove it. Many of us are stressed to the point of distress and we are suffering physically, emotionally, relationally and spiritually for our refusal to heed God's limits on our life.

Hurricane force winds cannot uproot an oak tree until the soil around its roots becomes saturated from the storm's rain, then it takes little more than a gale to bring a mighty oak down.

Likewise, when we allow our spiritual footing to get soggy we are in danger of being bowled over by the whirlwinds of life. We are most quickly out of balance when we neglect spiritual discipline and allow "things" to loosen our foundation in Christ. Our faith and family suffer when

we move from stress to distress. The good news is He is waiting to take upon Himself most of what we struggle to carry.

I have learned to be content whatever the circumstances. I know what it is to be in need, and I know what it is to have plenty. I have learned the secret of being content in any and every situation, whether well fed or hungry, whether living in plenty or in want (Phil. 4:11-12).

Stress is the "normal and necessary psychophysiological process in our body that adapts us to change. It is a process that God purposely designed in our body," Robert Swenson says in *Margin: Restoring Emotional, Physical, Financial, and Time Reserves to Overloaded Lives*. When we move from stress to distress, the stress response becomes negative or destructive. When we push beyond the limit for too long we enter a state of hyperstress.

When we are out of balance, this "distress" has a high cost; it ruins our health, tears apart our families and impacts our jobs. As a car engine run consistently at a high RPM begins to show signs of premature wear and failure, we run a high risk of physical, emotional and relational breakdown.

Swenson says the solution lies in ensuring that we have sufficient margin to thrive. Margin is the opposite of overload and is the amount allowed beyond that which is needed—a reserve. It is that which is "held in reserve for contingencies or unanticipated

situations." Just as a printed page with no margins is difficult to read and unappealing to the eye, a life without margin is quickly in "distress."

In his workbook, *Restoring Margin to Overloaded Lives*, Swenson states the obvious: "Overload harms us physically." He notes that overload steals the energy we should be using to love God and love people.

Discontent drives us to overload our lives, which invariably leads to more discontentment. True contentment is found in giving every concern—real and imagined—over to God, confident that He is more than able to provide for our needs. It is placing your trust in Him, not in things. It is living according to His standards and not being consumed with your standard of living. It isn't "having arrived" but knowing where you are going because of Christ's redeeming work.

"Be on your guard against all kinds of greed; a man's life does not consist in the abundance of his possessions" (Luke 12:15).

In Luke 12 Jesus spoke of the rich man and his trust in his earthly wealth. This man was satisfied in the abundance of his harvest, so he determined he would build bigger barns for his stuff so that he could take life easy: eating, drinking and being merry in the largesse of the moment. But God made clear to him the tragic consequences of his attitude—one who stores up things for himself but is not rich

Some people quote the apostle Paul—'I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me'—to argue that believing in limits reflects lack of faith in an unlimited God. But when Paul said he could do all things, he meant all that God had given him to do. It's unlikely that Paul believed he could preach the gospel in every city in the Roman Empire before his death. He didn't even try. Jesus didn't minister to everyone in Palestine during His earthly life. Far from working twenty-four hour ministry days, He took time off for rest and prayer, and He left towns with the people still clamoring for more healings.

Restoring Margin to Overloaded Lives (workbook), Richard A. Swenson, M.D.

toward God has invested his resources in the wrong account. Our pursuit of things often gets in the way of our praise of Him.

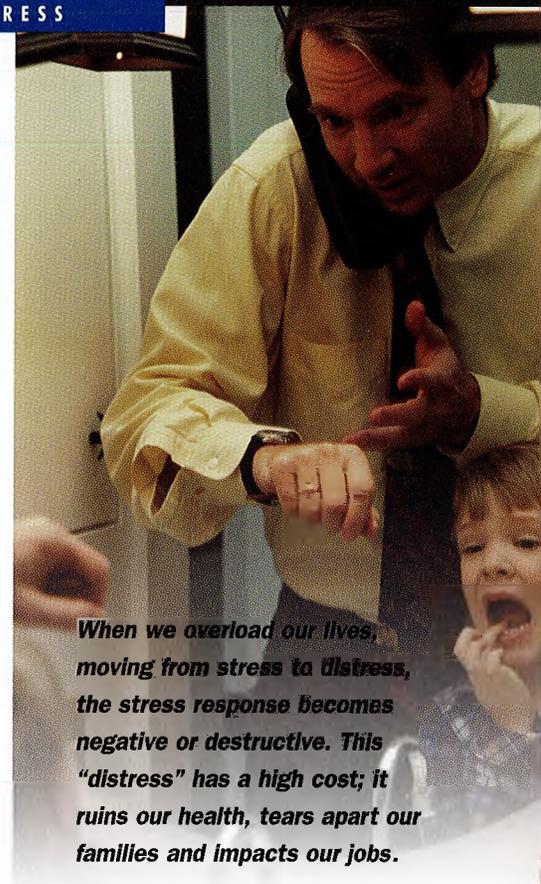
When Jesus sent His disciples out, he basically told them not to worry about their worldly provisions and that God would provide what they need if only they "seek His kingdom"

(Luke 12:31).

Consider the Apostle Paul's counsel to his son in the faith, Timothy: "But godliness with contentment is great gain. For we brought nothing into the world, and we can take nothing out of it. But if we have food and clothing, we will be content with that. People who want to get rich fall

into temptation and a trap and into many foolish and harmful desires that plunge men into ruin and destruction. For the love of money is a root of all kinds of evil. Some people, eager for money, have wandered from the faith and pierced themselves with many griefs (1 Tim. 6:6-10).

Continued on page 16



When we overload our lives, moving from stress to distress, the stress response becomes negative or destructive. This "distress" has a high cost; it ruins our health, tears apart our families and impacts our jobs.

FIVE MYTHS ABOUT STRESS

For many, life has become a juggling act in an attempt to fulfill expectations of others and meet demands we place on ourselves. As a result, we often find ourselves stressed and stretched to the limit. But is stress really a problem with no solution? Is it always a bad thing? Dispelling myths surrounding stress enables us to understand our problems and take action against them.

MYTH 1: Stress is the same for everybody.

Completely wrong. Stress is different for each of us. What is stressful for one person may or may not be stressful for another; each of us responds to stress in an entirely different way.

MYTH 2: Stress is always bad for you.

According to this view, zero stress makes us happy and healthy. Wrong. Stress is to the human condition what tension is to the violin string: too little and the music is dull and raspy; too much and the music is shrill or the string snaps. Stress can be the kiss of death or the spice of life. The issue is how to manage it. Managed stress makes us productive and happy; mismanaged stress hurts and even kills us.

MYTH 3: You can't do anything about stress.

Not so. You can plan your life so that stress does not overwhelm you. Effective planning involves setting priorities and working on simple problems first, solving them, and then going on to more complex difficulties. When stress is mismanaged, it's difficult to prioritize. All your problems seem to be equal, and stress seems to be everywhere.



MYTH 4: No symptoms, no stress.

Absence of symptoms does not mean the absence of stress. In fact, camouflaging symptoms with medication may deprive you of the signals you need to reduce the strain on your physiological and psychological systems.

MYTH 5: Only major symptoms of stress require attention.

This myth assumes that the "minor" symptoms, such as headaches or stomach acid, may be safely ignored. Minor symptoms of stress are the early warnings that your life is getting out of hand and that you need to do a better job of managing stress.

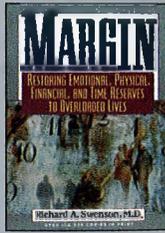
Adapted from The Stress Solution by Lyle H. Miller, Ph.D., and Alma Dell Smith, Ph.D. Copyright ©1997 American Psychological Association. All rights reserved. (<http://helping.apa.org/work/stress3.html>)

OTHER BOOKS BY RICHARD A. SWENSON, M.D.

Margin: Restoring Emotional, Physical, Financial, and Time Reserves to Overloaded Lives

You don't have time to do the things you have to do—let alone the things you'd like to do. Dr. Swenson provides a prescription against the danger of overloaded lives and offers an overall picture of health characterized by contentment, simplicity, balance and rest.

NovPress, 1992, ISBN 0-89109-888-7



Restoring Margin to Overloaded Lives

This companion workbook to *Margin* and *The Overload Syndrome* leads groups or individuals through 11 lessons designed to help you understand personal load and limits, find balance and maintain priorities.

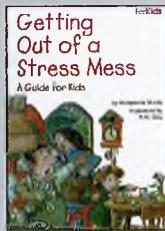
NovPress, 1999, ISBN 1-57683-184-1



BOOKLETS AVAILABLE FROM ABBEY PRESS

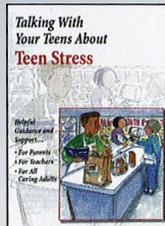
Getting Out of a Stress Mess: A Guide for Kids*

This booklet gives some of the simplest advice to kids experiencing stress: Be yourself—be a kid! A certain amount of stress is natural as children face developmental challenges. But throw in societal and family pressures, and kids can end up in a "stress mess."



Talking With Your Teens About Teen Stress

The teen years are stressful ones, with disturbing physical changes, emotional ups and downs, fear of social blunders, pressure to get good grades or to make the team or to be attractive to those they're attracted to, and to get along with their parents. Add to that the prevalence of violence and drugs, the pressure to have premarital sex, and the breakdown of the family. This booklet offers caring adults six steps to help teens recognize stress and develop healthy strategies for managing it.



These booklets are available from Abbey Press for 75¢ each, with the price decreasing as the quantity ordered increases. Visit www.carenotes.com or call 1-800-325-2511 for more information.

*Also available in book form for \$5.95.

From page 15

Money, and the pursuit thereof, is not of necessity an evil. It becomes an evil when the chase for more overtakes and replaces our dependence upon God. He is no longer then the object of our worship.

God expects us to act responsibly in every area of life. And Swenson says prioritizing the areas of our lives—(1) God; (2) spouse/marriage; (3) children; (4) self; (5) work, etc.—may be a noble effort but is wrongheaded. "We cannot achieve balance by stacking our priorities one on top of another, even though this is a common practice," he writes in *Restoring Margin to Overloaded Lives*. It is far wiser (and less stressful) to consider God as central to all we do.

"We do not love God, then spouse, then children, then self, then church. We love God, spouse, children, self and church all at the same time," Swenson explains, noting God expects that we love "all of them all of the time."

Once you have determined that you lack balance in your life, don't pursue it with such a frantic pace that you add undue stress in the race to alleviate other stress. "Before anything else," Swenson writes, "take a



When we look to God for strength and wisdom, we can do a much better job of managing the ups and downs in our life and regaining the margin He wants us to have.

moment to pray. God made you limited and dependent on Him. God made you with the need for margin. Within the ways of God there is a way for you to fulfill your most important commitments without living in constant overload."

You will never achieve perfect balance in your life, nor will you ever achieve a totally stress-free life.

"In this world you will have trouble. But take heart! I have overcome the world" (John 16:33).

When we look to God for strength and wisdom, we can do a much better job of managing the ups and downs in our lives and regaining the margin He wants us to have.

Swenson encourages us to literally lay our calendar before God and to pray "for guidance about priorities and areas for pruning." He reminds us that

"God is able to get more eternally significant things done in 20 minutes" than we can in 20 years on our own.

The first step in restoring margin to our overloaded lives is to schedule time with God each day. In fact, why not put that appointment down in your DayTimer® right now? That is an appointment we dare not break. We won't waste time and energy doing unimportant things when we wait on God for His priorities for our life.

God cares about you, and He wants you to live each day fulfilled and prosperous. The Psalmist wrote that God "is close to the brokenhearted and saves those who are crushed in spirit" (Ps. 34:18). We can never be too far out of balance or upside down to know the tender, restorative mercies of God. ☩

Make Your Bulletin Count

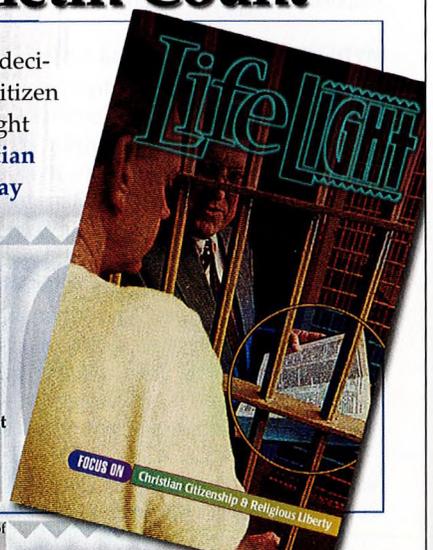
Placing one's faith in Christ is a personal decision, but it shouldn't remain private. As citizen Christians, the church must be salt and light in a culture of darkness. **Celebrate Christian Citizenship and Religious Liberty Sunday** by providing your members *LifeLight*—a biblical guide for practicing your faith in the public square. Product Code: CCBULK

Pack of 50 *LifeLight*

\$4.95

For more information or to place an order for *LifeLight* or any other of our useful resources, call the Southern Baptist Ethics & Religious Liberty Commission at (800) 475-9127 or send e-mail to orders@erlc.com.

Visit www.erlc.com to view and download full-color catalog listings of Citizenship and Religious Liberty resources available from the ERLC.



See reduced-size *LifeLight* sample in the center of this magazine.



**PARTNERS
IN THE HARVEST**

Matthew 9:37-38

Are You a Partner?

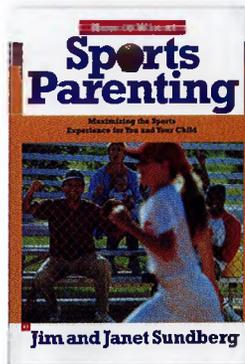
I'm also a wife, mother, part-time student. And I'm part of CP Missions. I share God's love with people in my own neighborhood, and when I pray for missionaries, I help spread His love all over the world. That's exciting. Join me.

Are you a partner?

To find out more about *Partners in the Harvest*, call your state convention or visit www.cpmissions.net.

RULES OF THE GAME

Jim Sundberg, who spent 22 years in major league baseball, says, "I'm troubled by the increase in aggression and unsportsmanlike conduct—not by the players, but by their parents!" Jim and his wife, Janet, a behavior specialist, believe that sports activities offer Christian families an ideal opportunity to integrate positive values and character traits with real-life situations. In their book, *How to Win at Sports Parenting*, the Sundbergs help parents navigate the pressure-packed sports scene with less stress for themselves and their children. Jim suggests that parents abide by a few basic "never" and "always" rules of parental ethics at game time:



WaterBrook Press
ISBN: 1-57856-354-2

- ⚽ Never yell instructions, advice or coaching tips to your child during the game.
- ⚽ Always be willing to cheer for a good play, no matter which team makes it.
- ⚽ Never denigrate another player on your team or on the opposing team—even in conversation in the stands.
- ⚽ Always help others appreciate the skill and effort of all the athletes involved in the competition.
- ⚽ Never question a coach's strategies, decisions, or overall skills in public; if you have a beef with the coach, make an appointment to see him or her in private.
- ⚽ Always accept a win with humility.
- ⚽ Never verbally abuse an umpire or referee.
- ⚽ Always accept a defeat with good-natured sportsmanship.
- ⚽ Never use whining, disparaging questions in your conversations with other parents (for example: Why can't he just make a play? Why doesn't she put in number 33?).
- ⚽ Always be ready to give credit to adult volunteers; they give so much of their time and energy.
- ⚽ Never use sarcasm in a "cheer."
- ⚽ Always remain quiet when in doubt as to the helpfulness of a contemplated comment or cheer.
- ⚽ Always show interest in other parents and their children as persons and as families. We do have lives outside the game, remember?

Upward Basketball Reaches Lost Families

America is sports crazy—crazy enough to spend billions of dollars each year on sports that we play or watch. However, our culture's obsession with sports also gives churches an opportunity to reach out to their communities. Sports can be a non-threatening way to share Christ. Folks who would never come to a worship service on a Sunday morning will come to a sporting event—especially one including their children.

Running a regular sports league is not a job for the church, however. The church must be intentional—looking for every opportunity to share the message of the gospel with participants and spectators alike. One ministry, Upward Basketball, uses sports as an evangelism tool and is reaching people by leaps and bounds.

Upward Basketball is not like your ordinary church softball league. It is led by laypeople and is intentionally evangelistic, pointing participants and adults "upward" beyond basketball to know the saving knowledge of Jesus Christ. Every player hears the gospel at every practice. Every parent hears the gospel at every game. Life application is made using basketball and sports terminology. Parents are encouraged to praise the efforts of players, coaches and referees.

Started at First Baptist Church of Spartanburg, S.C., in 1986 with 200 children, Upward has grown into a ministry to over 80,000 participants this past season. Over 6000 first-time decisions were recorded this year; many of these were parents of children who participated.

PURPOSE STATEMENTS OF UPWARD BASKETBALL:

1. To share the love of Jesus Christ with each player, coach, referee and family.
2. To help every player grow as Jesus did—spiritually, physically, mentally and socially.
3. To help every player develop character, an understanding of sportsmanship and a respect for authority in any situation, on and off the court.
4. To help every player develop self-esteem and a sense of personal value.
5. To teach every player the fundamentals of basketball and help them grow in their understanding and enjoyment of the sport.

Upward Unlimited is a not-for-profit entity. LifeWay Christian Resources supports Upward Basketball leagues with publicity and printing helps. For more information, contact Upward Basketball at 864-574-4454 or 1-800-585-4721.



FREE Bulletin Inserts

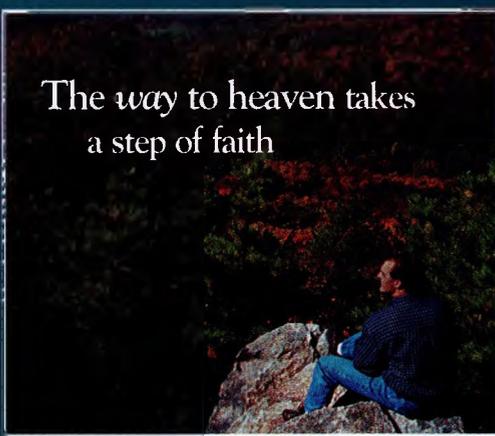
Give everyone attending your worship service a colorful bulletin insert that clearly presents God's *Plan of Salvation*. These bulletin inserts also provide your church with important information on the ministries of *LifeWay Christian Resources of the Southern Baptist Convention*. The *LifeWay* name is grounded in John 14:6: "Jesus told him, 'I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me.'" (HCSB)

These *Plan of Salvation* bulletin inserts are available free from *LifeWay* for use in one of your worship services. Simply contact the *LifeWay* Communications Department.

Phone: 615.251.5686
 or email: info@lifeway.com
 or mail the order form below to LifeWay.

(Plan of Salvation Scripture quotations are taken from the Here's Hope New Testament version of the Holman Christian Standard Bible, © Copyright 2000 by Holman Bible Publishers. Used by permission.)

The way to heaven takes
 a step of faith



God's Plan of Salvation

God's power can make us secure. - "For I am not ashamed of the gospel, because it is God's power for salvation to everyone who believes, first to the Jew, and also to the Greek" (Romans 1:16, HCSB).
God's power can result in change. - "Or do you despise the riches of His kindness, restraint, and patience, not recognizing that God's kindness is intended to lead you to repentance" (Romans 2:4, HCSB)?
Sin makes change necessary. - "For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God" (Romans 3:23, HCSB).
God still loves us. - "But God proves His own love for us in that while we were still sinners Christ died for us" (Romans 5:8, HCSB)!
Sin earns death, but God gives life. - "For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord" (Rom. 6:23, HCSB).
Confess, repent, believe, call. - "If you confess with your mouth, 'Jesus is Lord,' and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you will be saved. With the heart one believes, resulting in righteousness, and with the mouth one confesses, resulting in salvation. For everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved" (Rom. 10:9-10,13, HCSB).

Scripture quotations are taken from the Here's Hope New Testament version of the Holman Christian Standard Bible, © Copyright 2000 by Holman Bible Publishers. Used by permission.


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OF THE SOUTHERN BAPTIST CONVENTION
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LifeWay Christian Resources of the Southern Baptist Convention
 Attn: Brand Manager
 127 Ninth Avenue, North
 Nashville, TN 37234-0192
 (allow 4 weeks for delivery)

Please be sure to include your shipping address and the quantity of bulletin inserts you need for your order of worship. All bulletin inserts are 4" x 7-1/2" in size.

The Character That God Requests of Every Citizen

BY ADRIAN ROGERS

Do you appreciate the liberties you have as an American?

Then, you must also appreciate the character that purchased that liberty. Character and liberty are inextricably interwoven—you cannot have one without the other.

America was founded upon the moral character of godly men and women who came to this country for religious freedom. Their character purchased our freedom, and we have a responsibility to see that this freedom is upheld as a sacred trust. What is our duty?

PRAY FOR OUR GOVERNMENT

First Timothy 2:1-3 says: *I exhort therefore, that, first of all, supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks, be made for all men; For kings, and for all that are in authority; that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty. For this is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Saviour.*

You say, “Well, should I pray for my leader if he’s wicked?” You ought to pray all the more for him. Why? Because, God is in control of the ruler. Proverbs 21:1 says, “The king’s heart is in the hand of the LORD, as the rivers of water: He turneth it whithersoever He will.”

PAY FOR OUR GOVERNMENT

Romans 13:6-7 explains: *For this cause pay ye tribute also: for they are God’s ministers, attending continually upon this very thing. Render therefore to all their dues: tribute to whom tribute is due; custom to whom custom; fear to whom fear; honour to whom honour.*

In the New Testament we find

that Jesus paid tribute (or taxes) to Caesar (see Matt. 17:24-27). I believe in paying taxes, but I don’t believe in paying excessive taxes. We’ve become a nation in crisis when half the people get the idea they don’t have to work because the other half will take care of them. And the other half gets the idea it does no good to work because somebody else gets what they work for. A Frenchman said that France fell when people got the idea that the government was a cow to be milked rather than a watchdog to be fed.

PRAISE OUR GOVERNMENT

There are those who don’t want us to wave our flags with pride for our cherished freedom. But I don’t believe there’s anything wrong with patriotism. First Peter 2:17 says, *Honour all men. Love the brotherhood. Fear God. Honour the king.*

My patriotism doesn’t mean that I love other nations less. It just means that I especially love America because this is my native land. Likewise, I love my family in a way that I don’t love your family. They are my family. Love of your homeland is never wrong.

PREACH TO OUR GOVERNMENT

God’s people dare not be silent in the affairs of our government. At the same time, I caution people against identifying the Christian faith with any political party. Christians need to be free to tell both parties to repent and get right with God. Second Timothy 4:1-2: *I charge thee therefore before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judge the quick and the dead at His appear-*

ing and His kingdom; Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all long-suffering and doctrine.

Nathan warned David. Elijah preached to Ahab. Daniel preached to Nebuchadnezzar. Moses warned Pharaoh. John the Baptist preached to Herod. And let me tell you, as long as things happen in this nation that go against the clear commands of God, I will not be silent. I will preach and declare to our government that whatever is morally wrong is not politically right.

PARTICIPATE IN OUR GOVERNMENT

Our government is a government “of the people, by the people, and for the people,” so if you do not participate in your government, you have not rendered to your Caesar the things that belong to your Caesar.

For example, if you do not inform yourself about the candidates in an election and go to the polls to vote, then, in my estimation, you have disobeyed the Lord Jesus Christ. If God calls you to be a part of the political process and you refuse the call, then you have disobeyed God.

It is inconceivable that God would ordain human government, then tell His people to stay out of it. When Christians abdicate this arena, who runs the government? Christians are to participate, not on the basis of parties or persons, or politics or policies, or prince or principles. We are to get involved.

You say, “Well, my little vote

won’t make any difference.” I disagree. In 1645, one vote gave Oliver Cromwell control over all of England. In 1649, one vote caused Charles the Third of England to be executed. In 1776, one vote gave America the English language rather than German. In 1845, one vote saved President Andrew Jackson from impeachment. In 1876, one vote gave Rutherford B. Hayes the presidency of the United States. In 1923, one vote gave Adolf Hitler the leadership of the Nazi party.

PERSUADE OUR GOVERNMENT

America’s government is a republic—representative rule by law. The only hope for America is to change public opinion... and the only thing that can change public opinion is the Word of God!

We’re not going to out-argue people who are against the things of God. They’re blind and cannot see the Truth of God’s Word. They’ve got to know Jesus Christ. And it’s our responsibility to tell them!

I have been to Rome and have seen the great Coliseum. The Romans would make Christians fight with gladiators and redden the mouths of lions with their blood. And it was all for entertainment! But underneath that Coliseum were the catacombs where Christians would meet to worship. Those people, not Caesar, brought that Coliseum crashing down. That’s where the power is.

It’s not political influence that we need. It is the power of God that we need. When we change America, we’ll change the politics. 🙏

This text is excerpted from a booklet entitled “Does Character Count?” Dr. Adrian Rogers is one of America’s most respected Bible teachers and pastor of Bellevue Baptist Church in Memphis, Tenn. His broadcast ministry, Love Worth Finding, is declaring the Gospel and changing lives around the world. For more information, contact Love Worth Finding at P.O. Box 38300, Memphis, TN 38183-0300, (901) 382-7900. You also can learn more about Love Worth Finding at www.lwf.org.

DR. ADRIAN ROGERS ▶



E N C O U R A G I N G

Christianian

**JULY EMPHASIS:
CITIZENSHIP AND
RELIGIOUS LIBERTY**

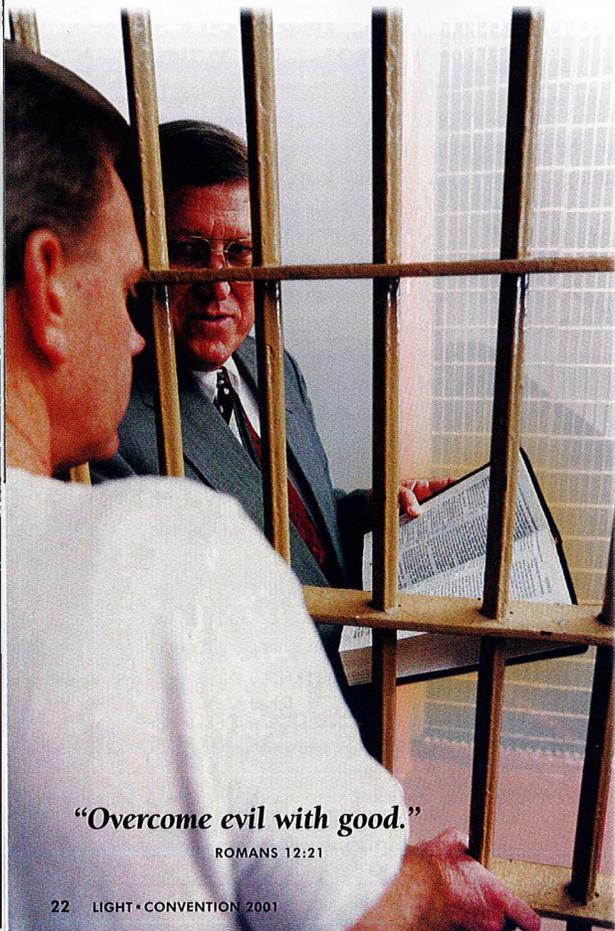
**SUGGESTED FOCUS SUNDAY:
JULY 1, 2001**

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. To order resources featured on this page or obtain a color catalog with additional product information, contact us at:

1.800.475.9127

orders@erlc.com

EDITOR'S NOTE: We are instituting a streamlined, more cost-efficient process to promote the SBC emphasis Sundays. Thus, you will not receive a separate promotional mailer. We encourage you to order materials for this important Sunday today.



"Overcome evil with good."

ROMANS 12:21



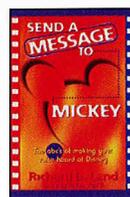
LifeLight

This undated publication includes biblical application, statistics, action points and resources. It can be used as a bulletin insert or handout when addressing citizenship and religious liberty.

CCBULK \$4.95/50

Citizenship & Religious Liberty Poster

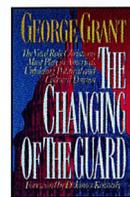
CCPOS \$1.50 ea.



Send a Message to Mickey

Richard Land and Frank York discuss the violence and sexual perversion that have crept into Disney films 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 \$2.00 \$4.95 ea.



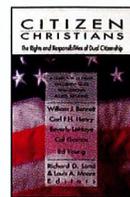
The Changing of the Guard

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 \$4.00 \$6.00 ea.

Sermon Outline

CCSER (individual) \$.25 ea.



Citizen Christians

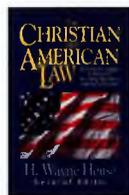
This book helps Christians balance their responsibilities as subjects in God's Kingdom with the requirements of citizenship in an earthly nation. From the 1992 ERLC seminar.

BKCID \$8.00 ea.

Fact Sheet

CCFAC (individual) \$.50 ea.

CCFACU (bulk) \$4.00/10



The Christian and American Law

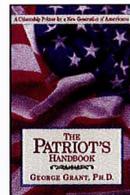
The contributors to this volume examine Christianity's rich contribution to American law, explore ways Christians can relate to current laws, and propose strategies whereby Christians may influence the legal community to ensure equal opportunity for the Christian faith in the public forum.

BKLAW \$9.99 ea.

One Nation Under God

These key documents of U.S. history help Southern Baptists be the type of citizens the Word of God instructs us to be (Rom. 13:1-7). Foreword and commentary by Richard Land.

RLKEYU \$3.95 ea.



The Patriot's Handbook

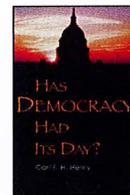
Continuing a tradition that began in the early 1800s, this book captures the essence of the great American experiment in liberty, featuring a sterling collection of key documents, speeches, and profiles of leaders who have shaped U.S. history.

BKPAT \$14.00 ea.

Citizen Christians

This ERLC video 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 \$9.00 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 \$4.00 ea.

Citizen Christian Awareness Campaign

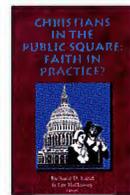
This Voter Registration/Awareness Manual is a revision of the NAE's Citizenship Campaign and encourages readers to engage in our nation's political process.

CLCAWA \$1.00 ea.

The Bible Speaks on Christian Citizenship

This pamphlet takes a look at the nature of government and the call of God's people to citizenship.

BSCHRU \$3.80/20



Christians in the Public Square: Faith in Practice?

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

BKCHR \$7.50 ea.

CRITICAL ISSUES PAMPHLET SERIES

A Baptist's View of Prayer in Schools

CIBAPU \$6.50/20

Tax Exemption and Political Candidate Campaigns

CITAXU \$6.50/20

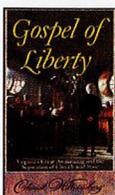
The Homosexual Political Agenda

CIHOMSU \$6.50/20

Citizens



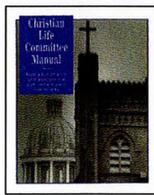
A Just Cause: Why Boycott Disney?
Richard Land, James Dobson, Adrian Rogers and Don Wildmon address the new Disney agenda in this video, which includes clips from several of Disney's productions that promote the homosexual agenda and smear the institution of the traditional family. (30 min.)
VTDIS \$7.00 \$14.95 ea.



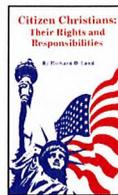
Gospel of Liberty
This inspiring video addresses Virginia's Great Awakening, which shook the foundations of hierarchical authority and led to the separation of church and state at the foundation of American democracy.
VTGOS \$19.99 ea.



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



Christian Life Committee Manual
This guide defines a Christian Life Committee and shares how churches or Baptist associations can lead members to be aware of legislative and public policy issues and make a difference in their communities by standing for biblical values.
CLCMAN \$1.00 ea.



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.
CCCITU (Tract) \$1.80/20

The growing secularization of American culture makes it more important than ever that citizen Christians exert their influence in the public square. Followers of Christ need to boldly engage the culture with the life-changing and future-securing truths of Scripture. It is not the time for Christians to retreat or deny the value of their presence and point of view in the public policy process. Citizen Christians are called upon not just to enjoy, but to exercise; not just to preach, but to practice the precious liberties we enjoy in America.

RICHARD LAND, ERLC PRESIDENT
Richard D. Land

ORDER FORM

To order Citizenship/Religious Liberty resources, complete this form and MAIL TO Ethics & Religious Liberty Commission, 901 Commerce St., Suite 550, Nashville, TN 37203, CALL (800) 475-9127, FAX TO (615) 242-0065, or E-MAIL TO orders@erlc.com. MAKE CHECK PAYABLE TO Ethics & Religious Liberty Commission. U.S. funds only.

WE CAN BILL YOU OR YOUR CHURCH. BILL PAID AMOUNT: \$

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	CCBULK	Lifelight (Citizenship/Religious Liberty, 50 per pack)	4.95	

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*Building a Foundation for Life***God Has a Plan
for Your Life**

Once every few years our family would go to the zoo. It wasn't a fancy zoo, but I always looked forward to going. Though the animals were in cages and I was free outside, sometimes I wished I could change places with them—especially when we came to “monkey island.” How I

wished I could scramble up a tree trunk so easily and swing from limb to limb like those incredible monkeys. What fun I would have back in my neighborhood if I were a monkey. The little monkeys were even carried around on their parent's back when they got tired. What a life!

Now it wasn't that I wanted to be a monkey all the time. No way. The zoo was full of neat animals that each could do something special. I knew that I would be popular on the school playground if I were as funny as a chimpanzee; could run as fast as an antelope; were as tall as a giraffe; could jump as high as a kangaroo; or sprayed water out of my nose like an elephant.

And I knew that my teacher would never give me homework if I were as ferocious as a lion or as wise as an owl. And my mom would never again complain that I was wearing that same old t-shirt if I were as well dressed as a penguin.

Yet no matter what I imagined,
I went home the same little
person I was when I came
to the zoo earlier in the day.

It's fun to dream about being able to do things you normally can't do, but it is an even better feeling to know that God made you just the way you are and to be happy about that.

All of us, even adults, sometimes wish we could do something better than we can.

Whether you're tall or short, dark-skinned or light-skinned, big or little, God has created you special to make a difference for Him right where He put you—in your family, in your neighborhood and even in your school!

You may not be able to jump very high or read big words or keep your hair from sticking up in funny places—but God made you special. He has great plans for you just as you are. If you obey God, you can be sure you will make a big difference in the world for Him.

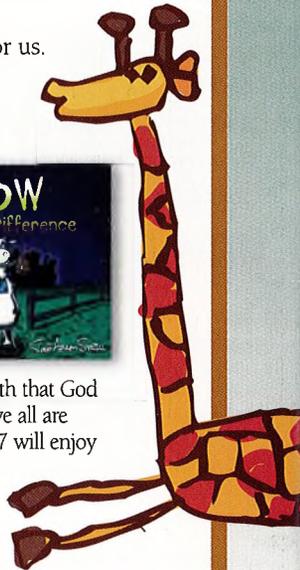
Bible truth: God knows what is best for us. Trust Him always.

Bible verse: Jeremiah 29:11

RECOMMENDED READING:**Cow Makes a Difference**

Cow wants to be so much more than just a regular old cow. She tries to get a job at a local zoo but soon discovers she is just not cut out for that kind of work. As Cow tries to be something she is not, she learns the truth that God has created each one of us unique and that we all are made for a special purpose. Children ages 4-7 will enjoy this delightful book.

Baker Books, ISBN: 0-8010-4475-8



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