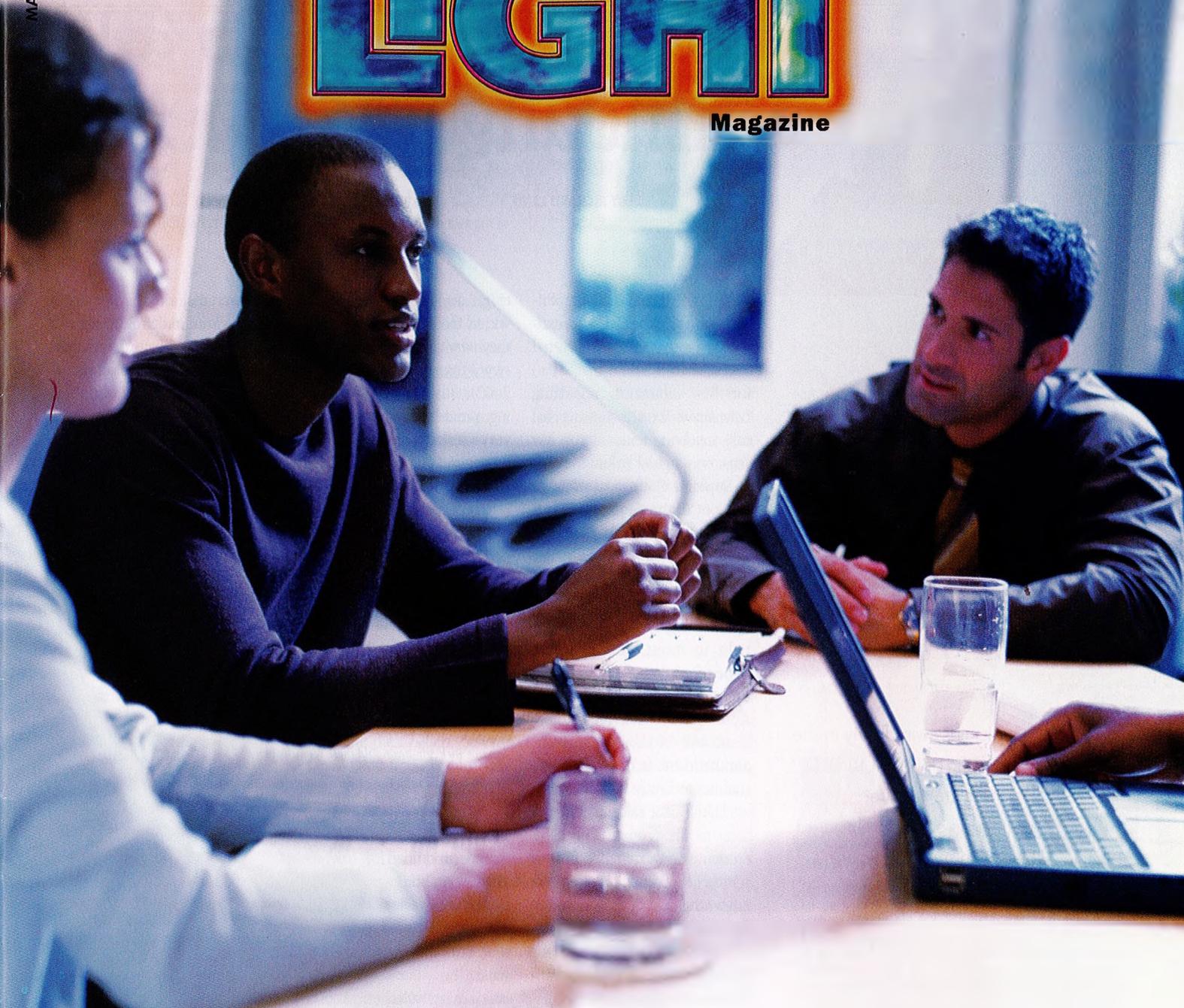


# For Faith & Family's **LIGHT**

Magazine



## Executive Influence

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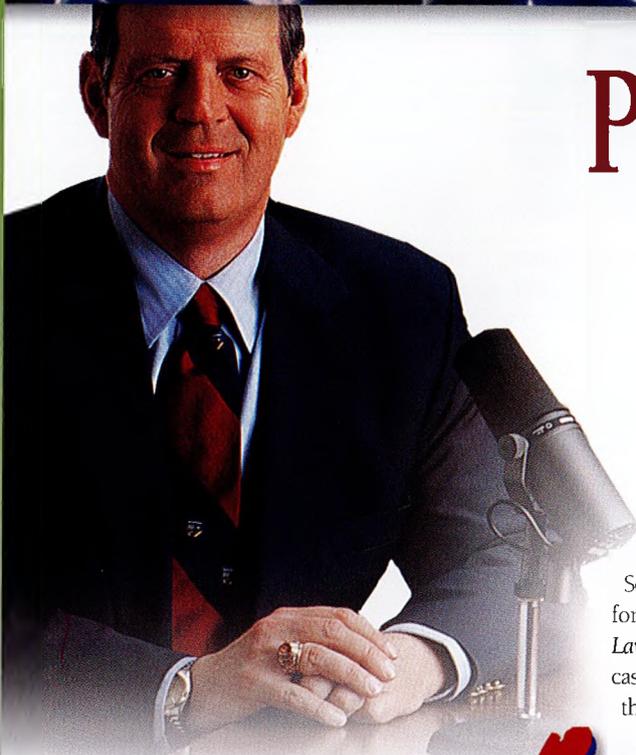
PLUS:

## A Life Worth Living

Euthanasia takes decisions on "quality" of life out of God's hands. **PAGE 6**

## A Soul Worth Saving

Christ offers salvation to everyone — including the homosexual. **PAGE 10**



# Protected Turtles and Endangered Speech

BY RICHARD LAND, *President of the SBC's Ethics & Religious Liberty Commission and host of the nationally syndicated daily radio broadcast, For Faith & Family*



The liberal media, politicians, and pro-homosexual groups recently targeted Senator Rick Santorum (R-Pa.) for his comments regarding *Lawrence v. Texas*, a controversial case involving anti-sodomy law that was argued before the U.S. Supreme Court.

"If the Supreme Court says that you have the right to consensual [homosexual] sex within your home, then you have the right to bigamy, you have the right to incest, you have the right to adultery. You have the right to anything," he said in an April 7 *Associated Press* interview. "All of those things are antithetical to a healthy, stable, traditional family."

The senator said his remarks were in the context of a 1965 Supreme Court ruling on privacy (*Griswold v. Connecticut*) and were not meant as "a statement on individual lifestyles."

"In the interview, I expressed the same concern as many constitutional scholars, and discussed arguments put forward by the State of Texas, as well as Supreme Court justices. If such a law restricting personal conduct is held unconstitutional, so could other existing state laws," the senator went on to say.

"What I was saying was that if you say there is an absolute right

to privacy for consenting adults within the home to do whatever they want," he told Fox News ([www.foxnews.com](http://www.foxnews.com), April 23, 2003), "[then] this has far-reaching ramifications, which has a very serious impact on the American family, and that is what I was talking about."

The plaintiffs in this case, who were arrested by Houston sheriff's

the court majority said nothing in the Constitution "would extend a fundamental right to homosexuals to engage in acts of consensual sodomy."

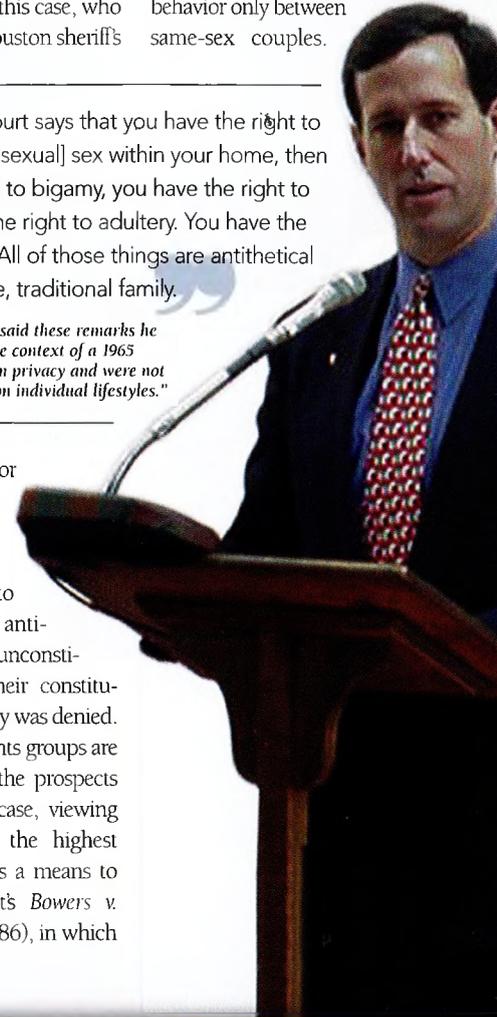
Thirteen states still have sodomy laws. Statutes in Texas, Kansas, Oklahoma, and Missouri outlaw the unnatural sexual behavior only between same-sex couples.

"If the Supreme Court says that you have the right to consensual [homosexual] sex within your home, then you have the right to bigamy, you have the right to incest, you have the right to adultery. You have the right to anything. All of those things are antithetical to a healthy, stable, traditional family."

*Senator Rick Santorum said these remarks he made April 7 were in the context of a 1965 Supreme Court ruling on privacy and were not meant as "a statement on individual lifestyles."*

deputies and fined for engaging in homosexual behavior outlawed in Texas, are attempting to have the state's anti-sodomy law ruled unconstitutional, arguing their constitutional right to privacy was denied.

Homosexual-rights groups are almost giddy over the prospects for victory in this case, viewing the appeal before the highest court in the land as a means to overturn the court's *Bowers v. Hardwick* ruling (1986), in which



**D**olphins swim freely in the Pacific now that tuna nets are required to be dolphin-safe. Endangered Hawaiian monk seals are carefully monitored in the Northwest Hawaiian Islands to ensure their survival. Sea turtles paddle aimlessly off the coast of Florida, confident they can now escape from redesigned shrimping nets. While we are doing an admirable job of protecting endangered animal species, we are doing a less-than-admirable job of protecting the free speech rights of individuals who dare question the morality of certain behaviors.

## GREAT NEWS in the Battle against Porn

Two corporate giants have divested themselves of media entities that offer pornography to their subscribers. AT&T announced earlier this spring that it was ridding itself of all its cable television business, selling it to Comcast and ending its relationship with Liberty Media, thus removing itself from the television programming business. Likewise, General Motors sold Hughes Electronics, the parent company of DirectTV, in April. The National Coalition for the Protection of Children and Families ([www.nationalcoalition.org](http://www.nationalcoalition.org)) and the Religious Alliance Against Pornography spearheaded the efforts to get the two Fortune 500 companies out of the hard-core pornography business. ERLC President Richard Land serves on the executive boards of both groups.

Consensual sodomy is banned totally in Alabama, Florida, Idaho, Louisiana, Mississippi, North Carolina, South Carolina, Utah, and Virginia.

In return for stating his honest opinion, Senator Santorum has been subjected to an endless, venomous diatribe. Liberals and pro-homosexual groups have decided the senator is bigoted and intolerant and no longer worthy of Senate leadership.

David Smith, communications director at the Human Rights Campaign, a homosexual activist group, lashed out at the senator's statement: "We find what Senator Santorum said as egregious as what Sen. [Trent] Lott said last December, and we believe he should pay a price for those comments."

The treatment Mr. Santorum has endured for stating his opinion, which, by the way, is the opinion of the vast majority of Americans, serves as a vivid reminder of the tactics of his attackers. Speech unbecoming these moral relativists is endangered speech.

Because homosexual rights groups have been unable to persuade the majority of Americans that homosexuality is good for us, they have resorted to attacking anyone who speaks the majority opinion. In so doing, the gay "thought police" have revealed themselves for what they really are—bullies who threaten and intimidate those who dare to speak out against them.

We must ask who the real bigots are here. In America, speaking one's mind is a constitutionally protected right. The real bigots are those who label anyone who disagrees with them as bigoted and intolerant and attack them for sharing their beliefs. Senator Santorum has not called for anyone's resignation or dismissal. His detractors have.

Our society has the responsibility and the right to discourage the practice of homosexuality. The Judeo-Christian teaching on this is clear. Homosexuality is a deviance from God's norm. It is neither normal nor healthy behavior. Lest anyone think that this theological position is merely sectarian, it is important to note that even the renowned theologian Wolfhart Pannenberg concluded that when the church has "ceased to treat homosexual activity as a departure from the biblical norm" it "would no

longer stand on biblical ground but against the unequivocal witness of Scripture."<sup>\*</sup>

Furthermore, any attempt to equate homosexuality with race or ethnicity should offend all of us. There is no evidence that homosexuality is an inborn trait, in spite of numerous efforts to prove the contrary. Homosexuality has many contributing causes, but it is obviously not to be equated with race or ethnicity. A person's ethnicity is what one is, whereas homosexual behavior is what one does.

While we busy ourselves protecting sea turtles and monk seals, we should not neglect the protection and preservation of our right to speak freely on ethical and moral matters.

As Christians, we should continue to support politicians and others who speak out against homosexuality and to oppose those who support special rights for homosexuals and who seek to support societal approval of homosexual behavior.

I applaud Senator Santorum for courageously sharing his beliefs. It is my hope other politicians will be emboldened by his stand to hold firm to their convictions about the immorality of homosexual behavior and resist the intimidation tactics of radical homosexual-rights groups. <sup>1</sup>

<sup>\*</sup> As quoted by Charles H. Talbert, *Romans* (Macon, Ga.: Smith & Helwys, 2002), 77.

## Attention, Pastors and Church Leaders!

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# Executive Influence:

## IMPACTING YOUR WORKPLACE FOR CHRIST

BY CHRISTOPHER A. CRANE AND MIKE HAMEL

**C**hristianity is a 24/7 calling, to apply a new phrase to an old truth. Jesus cautioned would-be disciples to count the cost before enlisting to make sure they could finish what they started.

Starting a business is also a demanding, all-consuming undertaking. So what's a believer who wants to be both a committed disciple and a successful entrepreneur to do? It is possible to put God first and run a thriving business at the same time—but it isn't easy. Just ask Ken Eldred, founder or cofounder of such fast-growing technology companies as Inmac and Ariba Technologies, Inc.

Ken's aggressiveness in business is an expression of his commitment to Christ. "When I became a Christian in 1972," he recalls, "it seemed that too many people were weekend warriors. I had a problem with this attitude. Within six months of becoming a believer, I decided to make Jesus Christ lord of everything, not only Sunday but every day. Becoming a Christian meant I was a new person and I needed to be that person at all times."

This full-time commitment is why Ken took his faith to work with him when he started Inmac, the first company to market computer products via catalog. The company soon expanded to other countries and eventually generated annual revenues of \$400 million. "We started Inmac with \$5,000 and a grocery bag of connector parts," says Eldred with a trace of nostalgia. "I put in forty hours a week, and of course nobody would invest in a company like this because VCs [venture capitalists] want you putting in sixty or seventy hours a week minimum. But I wasn't going to do that. I'd committed to God that He was first, my wife was second, and my kids came next.

I told Him that He would have to run the business while I was gone because I could only give it forty hours a week.

Not that Ken was "letting go and letting God." "It was a very intense forty hours, but when I left, I went home and spent time with my family. God defines success differently from our culture. Success means that my relationship with Him is good and growing. It means that I have a quality relationship with my wife. It means my children know I love them and feel like I'm there for them. And then if the company is prosperous, that's a bonus."

Ken's time at work had boundaries, but it wasn't compartmentalized or segregated from the rest of his life. A year after he started Inmac, he asked a pastor how he could make Inmac a Christian company. The wise man told him, "There's no such thing; only people are Christians. But believers can use their businesses as opportunities to make Christ known." This led Ken to put tracts such as *The Four Spiritual Laws* and *Got Life?* in the office lobby, a practice that generated both light and heat. He vividly remembers the day a very angry employee came to his office and loudly complained, "I don't like those tracts! I've been taking them out of the lobby!" "What do you want me to do?" Eldred replied. "You knew they were there before you came to work here, and they will be there as long as I'm president. As we continued to talk she softened and eventually asked, 'How do I become a Christian?'"

Because of that conversation, Ken put a letter in the lobby explaining that the literature didn't represent everyone's views, but it did represent his opinion of what was important in life. He invited anyone who wanted to know more to call his office, which people did every now and then.

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## As a business owner, can I witness to my employees?

An employer can talk about his religious beliefs with employees as long as employees know that continued employment or advancement within the company is not conditioned upon acquiescence in the employer's religious beliefs. For instance, one court has held that an employer did not discriminate against an employee by sharing the gospel with him and inviting him to church. Employers must be careful, however, not to persist in witnessing if the employee objects. Such unwanted proselytizing could be deemed religious harassment. Employers cannot impose their religious beliefs on their employees.

From the Web site of the American Center for Law and Justice. For more information about the rights of Christians in the workplace, visit [www.acli.org](http://www.acli.org).

"Believers should not be afraid to be public about their faith," Ken says. "Yes, I've taken flak for being so open about what I believe. However, I've also had people who have given me a bad time come back privately and say they respect the fact that I'm not ashamed of my faith."

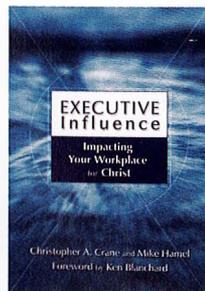
Overt displays of faith can create sharing opportunities. Praying as part of normal business operations can be another door opener. If done flippantly it can easily backfire, but it can be very powerful if done carefully. Reaching back to Inmac's early days, Eldred tells of the time, "I had four or five employees, and none of them were Christians. Sales were way down, and we were very worried. My wife and I had been praying, and the Lord showed us that we would have a \$7,000 day that Monday instead of our average \$2,200. I sat down with my employees and said, 'God has told me we're going to have a \$7,000 day.' The look on their faces said, 'I'd better update my resume. This guy has flipped his lid!'"

"As the day wore on, our customer rep came into my office to announce that we could actually have a \$5,000 day. I said, 'No, Nancy, \$7,000 is what we're expecting.' At 5 p.m. we added the total twice, and it came to \$7,050. The employees were just as excited as I was. Talk about making an impression!"

Prayer is so important to Ken that it permeates his leadership style. It was standard operating procedure at banquets, meetings, and company lunches. If an employee or executive came to him with a difficult personal issue, Ken would offer to pray with them. "I've never had anyone say no," he says. "I've seen men cry who never shed tears before because they were deeply touched by someone caring enough to pray with them."

Most Christians are called to the marketplace as their sphere of service. As in Jesus' day, only a few are called to make their living from spreading the gospel. The vast majority of believers are to dispense salt and light in daily doses in the workplace.

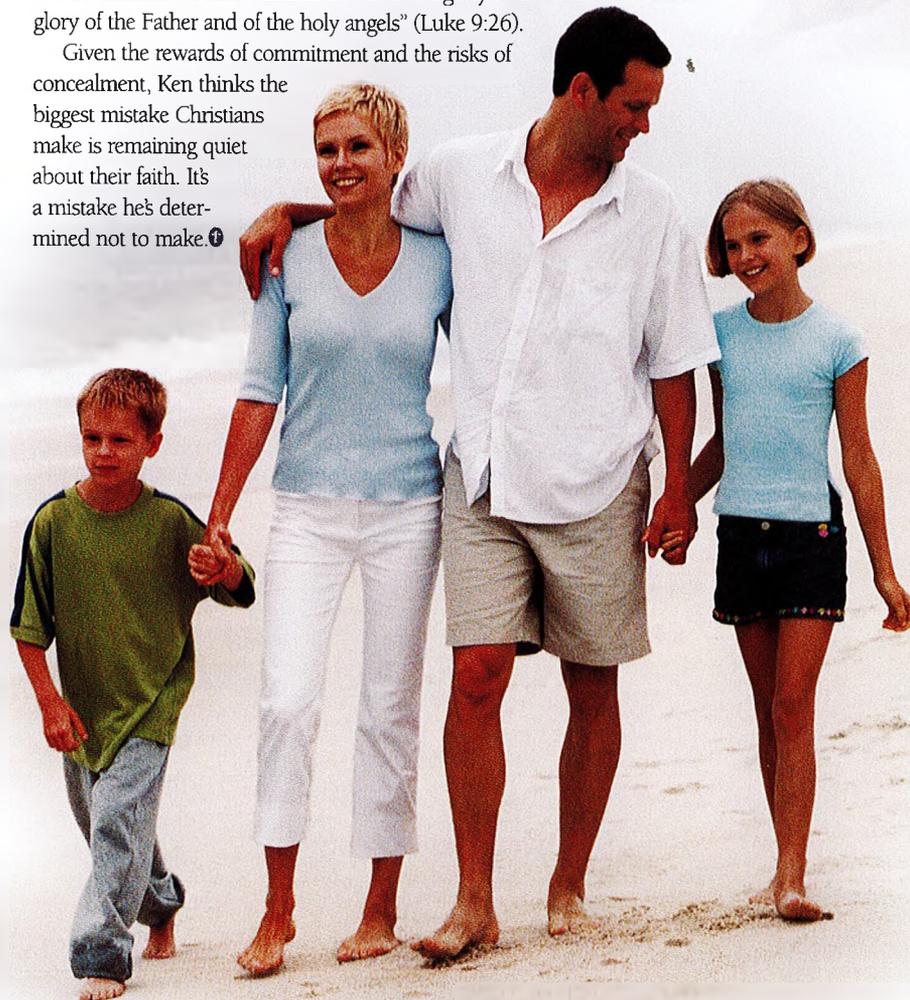
*Executive Influence* is full of sound advice on "taking your faith to work." Over forty respected executives and professionals talk candidly about the challenges of using their positions of influence without abusing their authority. Their personal stories and practical suggestions will help all believers become more effective witnesses at work. (Nov/Press)



Inmac merged with Microwarehouse in 1996, and this provided another chance to talk about Jesus. The day of the merger Eldred told the new chairman, "You're taking over a company that's been very important to me. I've built it from scratch to around \$400 million in revenues. I'm happy for you to have it, but I want to give you something more important.' At that point I shared my faith in Jesus Christ. After thirty minutes he thanked me and went into the then-president's office. 'Eldred just talked to me about Jesus,' he stammered. 'Is he serious?' The president, who is also a Christian, smiled and said, 'Yes he is.'"

Ken left Inmac after the sale and cofounded Ariba Technologies, Inc., an Internet-based B2B platform. He and his wife also started Living Stones Foundation to encourage Christian work around the world. They have proven the reality of Jesus' promise, "But seek first his [God's] kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well" (Matt. 6:33). They also have taken to heart His warning, "If anyone is ashamed of me and my words, the Son of Man will be ashamed of him when he comes in his glory and in the glory of the Father and of the holy angels" (Luke 9:26).

Given the rewards of commitment and the risks of concealment, Ken thinks the biggest mistake Christians make is remaining quiet about their faith. It's a mistake he's determined not to make. ❶



Putting God, marriage, and family ahead of financial gain is a winning formula for achieving success in God's eyes, according to businessman Ken Eldred in *Executive Influence*.

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# A Life Worth Living

## Euthanasia takes decisions on "quality" of life out of God's hands. BY TOM STRODE

It was New Year's Day, but Sidney Cohen cared nothing about the year ahead. He longed to be killed.

He had been diagnosed with cancer less than two months before, when his physician told him he could expect to die a painful death within three months. He was "bed bound by pain and weakness, having been able to drink only water for six weeks." He was "desperate, isolated, and frightened." He said, "I truly wished that euthanasia could have been administered."

Six months later, having lived over four months longer than expected, Sidney Cohen had a different perspective. Since coming under the care of a hospice homecare service, he stated, "My pain has been relieved completely, my ability to enjoy life restored and my fears of an agonizing end allayed." He was eating normally. His wife and he had accepted his pending death and were able to discuss it openly.

"My experiences have served

to convince me that euthanasia, even if voluntary, is fundamentally wrong and I'm now staunchly against it on religious, moral, intellectual, and spiritual grounds," he said. "My wife's

one time of a person with a terminal or debilitating illness may not be true a short time later.

In spite of this, organizations such as the Hemlock Society aggressively promote assisted

### Glossary

- ❖ **Assisted suicide** – A physician prescribes a lethal drug, or a physician or another person otherwise provides the means for a patient to take his own life.
- ❖ **Voluntary euthanasia** – A physician or another person administers a lethal drug or uses other means to take a patient's life intentionally, at the patient's request.
- ❖ **Non-voluntary euthanasia** – A physician or another person administers a lethal drug or uses other means to take a patient's life intentionally, without the patient's consent.

views have changed similarly."

Sidney Cohen's reversal, as described by ethicist Arthur Dyck in his book, *Life's Worth: The Case Against Assisted Suicide*, illustrates one of the many problems with assisted suicide and euthanasia. Proper care, including pain relief, can transform a person's view of dying. What may be true at

death in the name of mercy—even for people who do not have a terminal illness. When a physician prescribes a lethal drug, or a physician or another person provides the means for a person to take his own life, that is assisted suicide. When a doctor or another person uses a drug or other means to kill a person, that is euthanasia.

## 1828

New York enacts the first state law explicitly outlawing assisted suicide.

## 1938

The Euthanasia Society of America is founded.

## 1939

Adolf Hitler orders widespread euthanasia of "life unworthy of life" under Nazi regime.

## 1990

Dr. Jack Kevorkian helps the first of at least 130 people commit suicide.

## TASK FORCE

The International Task Force on Euthanasia and Assisted Suicide is an international leader in the ever-increasing debate over both practices. The goal of the International Task Force is to make certain that a patient's right to receive care and compassion is not replaced by a doctor's right to prescribe poison or administer a lethal injection.

The task force provides information to individuals, medical professionals, and journalists through their *Update* newsletter, print and video resources, and a comprehensive Web site. Through its Center for Law and Bioethics, the task force analyzes the legal and bioethical implications of laws and public policies and provides assistance to attorneys and those involved in the field of bioethics. The task force is developing a network of attorneys willing to devote time to protecting the rights of vulnerable people and their families.

For more information, visit [www.internationaltaskforce.org](http://www.internationaltaskforce.org).

Societal acceptance of voluntary euthanasia has led to societal acceptance of involuntary euthanasia, however, as experiences in The Netherlands have demonstrated.

Pro-life organizations are not the only ones in the fight against assisted killing. The American Medical Association, not usually known for its conservative public policy positions, says doctor-assisted suicide "is fundamentally incompatible with the physician's role as healer, would be difficult or impossible to control, and would pose serious societal risks."

The fact that a terminally or seriously ill person's attitude toward life and death can be transformed by the proper care has not prevented proponents of assisted suicide and euthanasia from beating the drums loudly for their legalization.

While the U.S. Supreme Court ruled in 1997 that states have the authority to outlaw assisted suicide, the justices' decision did not prohibit state legislatures from making it legal.

After a long and contentious campaign and a statewide ballot, legalized assisted suicide took effect in the state of Oregon in 1997. In the last five years, doctors have helped 129 people commit suicide in the state, according to Oregon's records. Efforts to legalize the practice are mounting in Hawaii and Vermont.

Internationally, Belgium and The Netherlands are the only countries that have legalized

assisted suicide and euthanasia. Switzerland, though it has not legalized the practice, has become a favorite destination for those seeking assisted suicide. Campaigns to sanction assisted suicide and euthanasia are being pushed in such countries as Australia and China.

The solution to the needs of the terminally and gravely ill is not the disposal of restrictions against assisted suicide and euthanasia. It is compassionate

and aggressive medical care, sacrificial spiritual ministry, and the interrelated affirmation that God is the Lord of life and His glory is the purpose for which all made in His image should live. **†**

.....

**FIVE YEARS UNDER OREGON'S ASSISTED SUICIDE LAW\***

	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002
Number of reported assisted suicide deaths:	16	27	27	21	38
Number of reported lethal prescriptions written:	24	33	39	44	58
Number of reporting doctors who wrote lethal prescriptions:	14	22	22	33	33
Patients referred for psychiatric evaluations:	5	10	5	3	5
Median duration (weeks) of patient-doctor relationship before lethal prescription provided:	11	22	8	14	11

\*Compiled from data supplied by lethally prescribing doctors to the Oregon Health Department. The OHD has acknowledged that it has no way of knowing if data provided by prescribing physicians is accurate or complete.

According to the American Medical Association, doctor-assisted suicide "is fundamentally incompatible with the physician's role as healer."

## 1997

U.S. Supreme Court rules states can outlaw assisted suicide.

Oregon becomes the first state to legalize assisted suicide.

## 1999

Dr. Kevorkian is convicted of second-degree murder and sentenced to 10 to 25 years in prison after an act of euthanasia on CBS's *60 Minutes*.

## 2001

The Netherlands, after years of permitting euthanasia, becomes the first country to legalize the practice.

## 2002

Belgium legalizes euthanasia.



# Death with True Dignity

**AN EVANGELICAL BIOETHICIST TALKS ABOUT DEATH & DYING**

C. Ben Mitchell, Ph.D., is unusually qualified to address the difficult bioethical issues of the day. His training and experiences as a Southern Baptist pastor, seminary professor, editor, and internationally regarded bioethicist give him a depth of perspective that is unique. Dr. Mitchell recently addressed some questions about assisted suicide for *Light*.

C. Ben Mitchell, Ph.D., is associate professor of bioethics and contemporary culture at Trinity Evangelical Divinity School, co-director of the biotechnology project and fellow of the Council of Biotechnology Policy for the Wilberforce Forum, senior fellow of the Center for Bioethics & Human Dignity, and editor of Ethics & Medicine: An International Journal of Bioethics. To read Dr. Mitchell's writings on end-of-life and other bioethics issues, visit the Web site of the Center for Bioethics and Human Dignity at [www.cbhd.org](http://www.cbhd.org).

**Light:** Can we turn back the assisted suicide and euthanasia movements?

**CBM:** I think it's possible. However, it will take a great deal of work both at the personal level and the policy level, as well as advancement in our understanding of pain management. Only vigilance will keep pro-euthanasia legislation at bay.

**Light:** Pain is a significant reason people think assisted suicide should be legal. Can pain at the end of life be managed effectively?

**CBM:** Physicians have the medical technology to treat physical pain effectively. They will continue to hone their skills at keeping every patient comfortable at the

end of life. If we permit assisted suicide, they may be less motivated to do so. But, physical pain isn't the only kind of suffering that patients experience at the end of their lives. We treat physical pain with drug therapy, but we have to treat other forms of suffering in other ways.

**Light:** What are some other forms of suffering?

**CBM:** There is emotional suffering caused by broken relationships or unresolved family problems. Sometimes patients feel the inheritance they hoped to pass to their children will go for medical expenses. There also is spiritual suffering. Sometimes patients feel fearful of death or guilty about their past. Dying patients may fear being abandoned.

**Light:** Patients fear being abandoned?

**CBM:** In surveys of dying patients, fear of abandonment is one of the leading experiences patients report. Once a patient has been declared to be terminal, most medical treatments are withdrawn. The medical team usually begins to focus on other patients. That's just the time when additional care is required. There's a difference between "treatment" and "care." While health care professionals administer "treatments," anyone can give "care."

**Light:** How can we keep patients from suffering?

**CBM:** In addition to better pain management, we should talk about death and dying while we are healthy. We have removed death and dying from conversation. We don't talk about death until it's upon us. We should prepare for death, not be surprised by it.

The irony of ironies is that at the core of our faith is the death of Christ. We remember His death through the Lord's Supper. We come together every Sunday to celebrate His resurrection. We follow His death and resurrection symbolically in baptism. Yet we seldom talk about our own death and dying.

We also should do a better job of ministering to dying persons. We can spend time with them in prayer and Scripture reading. Not surprisingly, dying

persons often are eager to talk about spiritual things. The normalcy of simple companionship and everyday conversation is a pleasure often denied the dying. Gestures of friendship take on new significance at the end of one's days. Small acts of kindness can go far in alleviating their sense of abandonment while relieving their caregiver's load.

The evidence suggests that when pain is properly treated and the emotional and spiritual suffering of dying patients is relieved, most patients don't want assisted suicide.

**Light:** What place does hospice have?

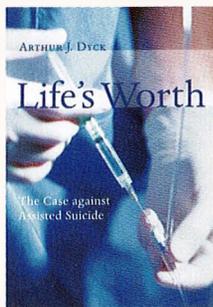
**CBM:** Hospice can be very effective in helping dying patients and their families. Through home-hospice, patients can live at home, surrounded by their loved ones and the things that are familiar to them. In-patient hospices are designed to feel much more like a home than a hospital. Often, in-patient hospice is even better for families because they sometimes have large rooms where family members can gather for fellowship and reunions. Christians should be much more active in hospice ministry.

Just as pregnancy care centers have been a huge factor in reducing the number of abortions in this country, hospice can be an equally huge factor in reducing the number of requests for assisted suicide.

## Life's Worth: The Case against Assisted Suicide

Today there is a growing acceptance of the idea of physician-assisted suicide. Even Christians are beginning to factor the possibility into their ethical understandings. Would it not be compassionate to acquiesce in a terminally ill patient's request to die? This sentiment seems reasonable, even human. Harvard ethicist Arthur J. Dyck shows in this powerful work that there are solid moral and practical bases for the existing laws against assisted suicide in the U.S. and elsewhere and that assisted suicide bodes ill for society as a whole.

Dyck takes readers from a basic concern for human suffering—the main focus of those who support assisted suicide—to the deeper truths of life's inherent worth. A must-read for anyone grappling with this hotly debated issue. (Eerdmans)



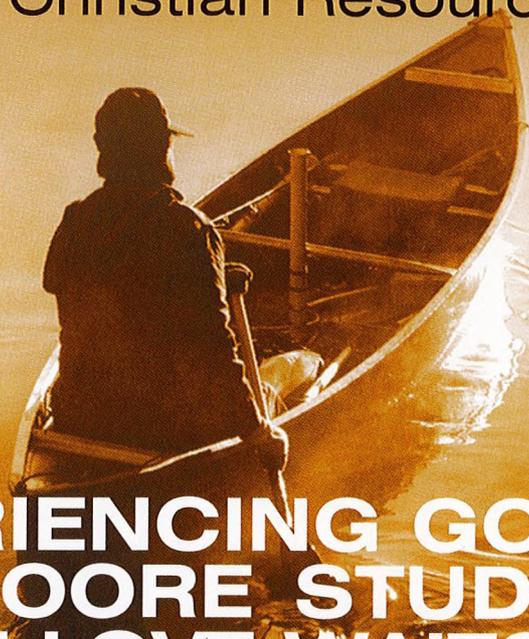
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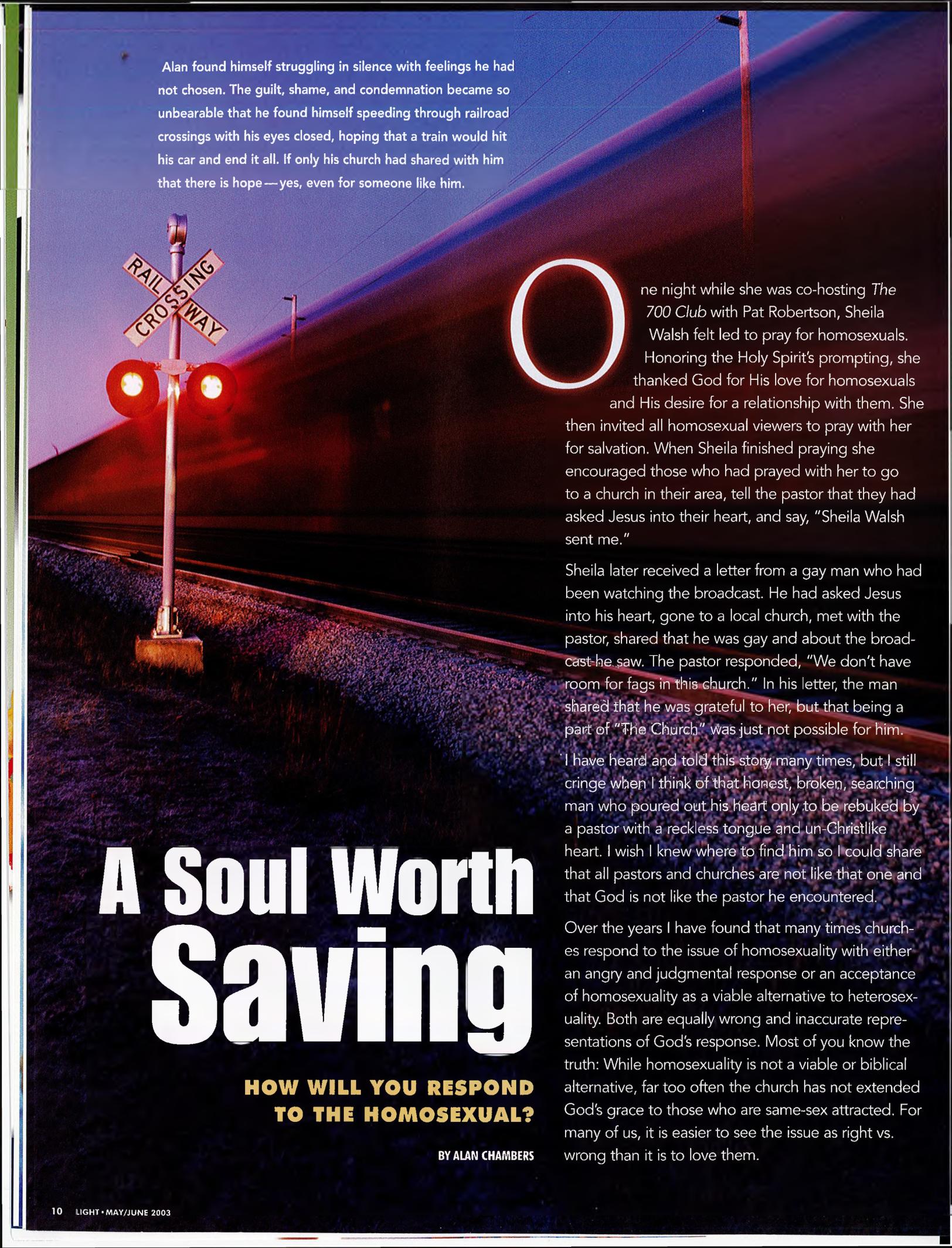


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Alan found himself struggling in silence with feelings he had not chosen. The guilt, shame, and condemnation became so unbearable that he found himself speeding through railroad crossings with his eyes closed, hoping that a train would hit his car and end it all. If only his church had shared with him that there is hope — yes, even for someone like him.

# A Soul Worth Saving

**HOW WILL YOU RESPOND  
TO THE HOMOSEXUAL?**

BY ALAN CHAMBERS

One night while she was co-hosting *The 700 Club* with Pat Robertson, Sheila Walsh felt led to pray for homosexuals. Honoring the Holy Spirit's prompting, she thanked God for His love for homosexuals and His desire for a relationship with them. She then invited all homosexual viewers to pray with her for salvation. When Sheila finished praying she encouraged those who had prayed with her to go to a church in their area, tell the pastor that they had asked Jesus into their heart, and say, "Sheila Walsh sent me."

Sheila later received a letter from a gay man who had been watching the broadcast. He had asked Jesus into his heart, gone to a local church, met with the pastor, shared that he was gay and about the broadcast he saw. The pastor responded, "We don't have room for fags in this church." In his letter, the man shared that he was grateful to her, but that being a part of "The Church" was just not possible for him.

I have heard and told this story many times, but I still cringe when I think of that honest, broken, searching man who poured out his heart only to be rebuked by a pastor with a reckless tongue and un-Christlike heart. I wish I knew where to find him so I could share that all pastors and churches are not like that one and that God is not like the pastor he encountered.

Over the years I have found that many times churches respond to the issue of homosexuality with either an angry and judgmental response or an acceptance of homosexuality as a viable alternative to heterosexuality. Both are equally wrong and inaccurate representations of God's response. Most of you know the truth: While homosexuality is not a viable or biblical alternative, far too often the church has not extended God's grace to those who are same-sex attracted. For many of us, it is easier to see the issue as right vs. wrong than it is to love them.

*"For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but to save the world through him." JOHN 3:17*

As a member of the Body of Christ, I have experienced nearly every side of the issue of homosexuality. As a young Southern Baptist, I remember hearing my pastor say, "All homosexuals go to hell" and "Homosexuals will not inherit the kingdom of God." I remember how hopeless that made me feel because, if my thoughts were any indication of who I was becoming, I was one of those homosexuals. As a teenager, I struggled in silence with feelings I had not chosen. Though I had not yet acted on those feelings, I was condemned to hell by a pastor and church that never once shared that there was hope for someone like me. The guilt, shame, and condemnation became so unbearable that I sped through railroad crossings with my eyes closed hoping that a train would hit my car and end it all. At age eighteen I vowed that I would never return to church because it did not have an answer for me. From my perspective, the Body of Christ made it very easy for me to run bloodied and bruised into the open arms of a gay community that was glad to have me. Indeed, many of those people had their own "church stories" to tell.

Unfortunately, I had to find out firsthand that gay life only offered more loneliness, desperation, and death; had the Church offered some small sign that it was a safe place for me, maybe I could have avoided immersing myself in gay culture at the age of eighteen. Thankfully, my brother introduced me to a church that called sin "sin" and yet loved people who were unlovely. After I had attended that church only a few weeks, two bold and loving church members walked into a gay bar to find me on Easter Sunday 1991. They said that God had had sent them to remind me that He loved me, they loved me, and they were committed to walking with me on the journey out of homosexuality. Recommitted to obedience, I was restored by that church. They taught me that change requires not only pointing the way, but also grabbing a person's hand and walking alongside.

Today I am the Executive Director of Exodus International, North America, the world's leading Christian organization dedicated to proclaiming, educating, and impacting the world with the biblical truth that freedom from homosexuality is possible when Jesus is Lord of one's life. Exodus exists because the Body of Christ has a long history of turning away those whom they do not understand. I long for the Church to be the living example of God's "kindness, tolerance and patience" so that many will come to repentance (Rom. 2:4).

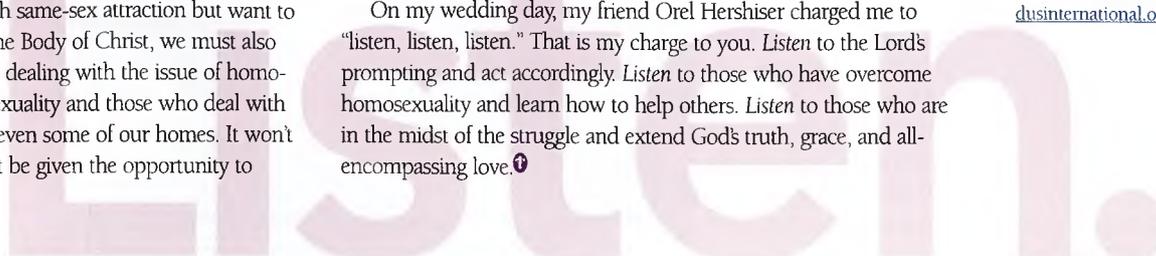
In order for that longing to become reality, we, as the members of the Body of Christ, need to be reminded of our own desperation prior to coming into a personal relationship with Christ. We need to admit that we may be ignorant, perhaps by choice, of the issues surrounding homosexuality: What are its roots and causes? What is it like for Christians who struggle with same-sex attraction but want to experience freedom in Christ? As the Body of Christ, we must also renounce our fear and insecurity in dealing with the issue of homosexuality. The reality is that homosexuality and those who deal with it exist in our cities, churches, and even some of our homes. It won't just go away. Those struggling must be given the opportunity to



**Often churches respond to the issue of homosexuality with either an angry and judgmental response or an acceptance of homosexuality as a viable alternative to heterosexuality. Both are equally wrong and inaccurate representations of God's response. The truth is that homosexuality is *not* a viable or biblical alternative, but far too often the church has not extended God's grace to those who are same-sex attracted. For many of us, it is easier to see the issue as right vs. wrong than it is to love them.**

choose Christ and change if they desire to do so. We must not be afraid to offer the truth in love.

Take a moment to think about your feelings regarding homosexuals. Have you offered only condemnation to the homosexual? Have you chosen to ignore the issue completely out of fear or out of the misguided belief that it doesn't exist in your congregation? Have you acted out of ignorance, believing that the opposite of homosexuality is heterosexuality, when actually it is holiness? I encourage you to face the issue, learn all you can about it, and offer what you find to your congregation. There are numerous resources available. Visit the Exodus Web site ([www.exodus-international.org](http://www.exodus-international.org)) to find a ministry in your area, then glean from their knowledge. Check the Exodus calendar for a training event in your area. Read one of the books on homosexuality the ERLC offers on [www.familybookstore.net](http://www.familybookstore.net).

On my wedding day, my friend Orel Hershiser charged me to "listen, listen, listen." That is my charge to you. Listen to the Lord's prompting and act accordingly. Listen to those who have overcome homosexuality and learn how to help others. Listen to those who are in the midst of the struggle and extend God's truth, grace, and all-encompassing love. 

*Alan Chambers is the Executive Director of Exodus International, North America, a world-wide outreach with over 175 ministries in 17 countries. Alan and his wife Leslie live in Orlando, Florida. For more information on having Alan speak to your congregation or to support Exodus, call 888-264-0877 or visit [info@exodusinternational.org](mailto:info@exodusinternational.org).*

Most Christians probably claim to *believe* what the Bible says. But when it comes to relationships and behavior, are we *doing* what the Bible says to do? Discerning believers will realize that the Bible is not just a book of laws but a *book of life* that governs one's outward behavior through the transformation of his attitude, heart, and will.



# Forming Biblical

BY TOM ATWOOD

**M**y thoughts had been focused on how I wanted my barbecue sandwich prepared, but the conversation behind me diverted my attention. "What are we going to do with these gays?" a man asked. His friend confidently replied, "I think we need to do what the Bible says — stone them to death!"

A conversation about racial reconciliation outraged a pastor of my acquaintance. His forbears were slave owners, who, by his account, gave their slow-witted slaves a better life than they would have had otherwise. He assured me that Genesis 9:25-27 teaches that whites are to be masters and blacks are to be servants.

These are just two examples of the serious problem of "Bible abuse." The Scriptures have been misused to justify not only

the killing of homosexuals and slavery, but also polygamy, the extermination of Jews, white supremacy, and the murder of doctors who perform abortions. The use of the Bible to support non-Christian and sub-Christian morality always damages the witness of those who seek to bring authentic biblical values into the marketplace of ideas.

## The Nature of Scripture

How one approaches the Bible as a whole often will determine how a smaller part of Scripture is interpreted. Obviously, some view the Bible as a book of laws. This form of legalism has serious consequences because it relegates this critical element of the faith to outward action only and never touches the attitude, the heart, or the will.

Jesus taught that the more fundamental issue is internal motivation. In a climate of legalism that clearly condemned

murder, Jesus said that the inner impulse of anger was the critical issue (Matt. 5:21-22). He addressed adultery in a similar manner, saying that although anyone who committed adultery was wrong, the heart of the matter was looking "at a woman lustfully" (Matt. 5:27-28).

Though these examples are oversimplified, we begin to see that the Bible is not just a book of laws, but a book of life that governs outward behavior through transformation of the inward attitude. "Therefore, get rid of all moral filth and the evil that is so prevalent, and humbly accept the word planted in you, which can save you" (James 1:21).

## The Purpose of Scripture

Surely a part of God's intent in supernaturally providing and protecting His truth for us is to give us a guide for moral decision making. We must grasp its pur-

pose if we are to avoid confusion. At the heart of God's purpose is the redemption of His sinful creatures, but that is not to be isolated from other purposes. As believers we are under the authority of God's Word as the sufficient guide for belief and action. It is critical that we grasp its big picture and how the parts make up the whole. As a "people of the Bible," we also understand that Scripture "reveals the principles by which God judges us, and therefore is, and will remain to the end of the world . . . the supreme standard by which all human conduct . . . should be tried" (Baptist Faith and Message).

Knowing that the essential purpose of God in Scripture is redemption and the revealing of Himself and His will for us gives us a broad context for understanding a particular passage.

## Problem Areas

**Isolated Passages**—The development of moral perspective from isolated passages can create distortion and misunderstanding. Often a single passage offers only one piece of the puzzle. Biblical moral perspective requires all the pieces that form the whole.

**Obscure Passages**—Sometimes difficulty is encountered because translation or interpretation of a passage is simply unclear. Since there is no consensus as to what it means or how it is to be applied, moral principles should be drawn from other passages.

**Contextual Confusion**—A common problem is applying a principle found in a specific context either universally or in an inappropriate situation. The “turn the other cheek” passage (Matt. 5:39) often is cited as

teaching pacifism, but the context indicates that Jesus is addressing the proper response to personal humiliation rather than the security and defense of home or country.

**Old Testament Limitations**—Remembering that the Old Testament is the truth but not the whole truth may save us from error. Though accurate, it is not complete. It reveals much about God and His will, but the fullest revelation comes in Christ and the apostolic interpretation of Christ recorded in the pages of the New Testament. Biblical moral formulations may see the Old Testament as important, even foundational, but the final word comes from Matthew to Revelation.

**Truth Pushed to Extremes**—Someone said that any truth can be stretched so far that it ceases to be true. This distortion is common when ethical concepts

are formed by implication. While one truth may imply a tangential truth, the implication never has the weight of the original assertion. For example, Scripture teaches that one should eat in moderation and to overeat is gluttony. From that, one might imply that if moderate eating is good, then not eating at all would be better.

Wrong! Starvation will certainly avoid gluttony; but starvation, too, is a sinful abuse of the body and a distortion of the truth.

As believers we are under the authority of God’s Word as the sufficient guide for belief and action. It is critical that we grasp its big picture and how the parts make up the whole. Divinely revealed truth must be illuminated by the Holy Spirit, but we should always make a conscientious effort to interpret it responsibly.

## THE MORAL DIRECTIVES OF SCRIPTURE

Moral instruction from God’s Word comes to us in several forms. Understanding those forms is essential to one “who correctly handles the word of truth” (2 Tim. 2:15). Though by no means definitive, the following gives us a good start in understanding the shape of ethical teaching in Scripture.

**Direct Command**—These imperatives are usually easy to recognize. They clearly state what we are to do or refrain from doing. There is little or no confusion about their meaning, but appropriate application may not be as clear.

**Statement of Fact**—These passages declare plainly what is right or wrong, what is good or evil: “Anyone who hates his brother is a murderer” (1 John 3:15).

**Warnings**—The Bible often uses warnings or admonitions to refrain from dangerous acts or damaging attitudes. Most of the scriptural teachings concerning the use of alcohol are warnings. Proverbs 20:1 warns, “Wine is a mocker and beer a brawler; whoever is led astray by them is not wise.” If warnings are taken seriously, then alcohol becomes a moral issue.

**Appeals to Wisdom and/or Discipline**—The wise person, Scripture teaches, chooses the ethical course of wisdom and disciplines that reflect love for his fellow humans and respect for himself. “A generous man will prosper; he who refreshes others will himself be refreshed” (Prov. 11:25).

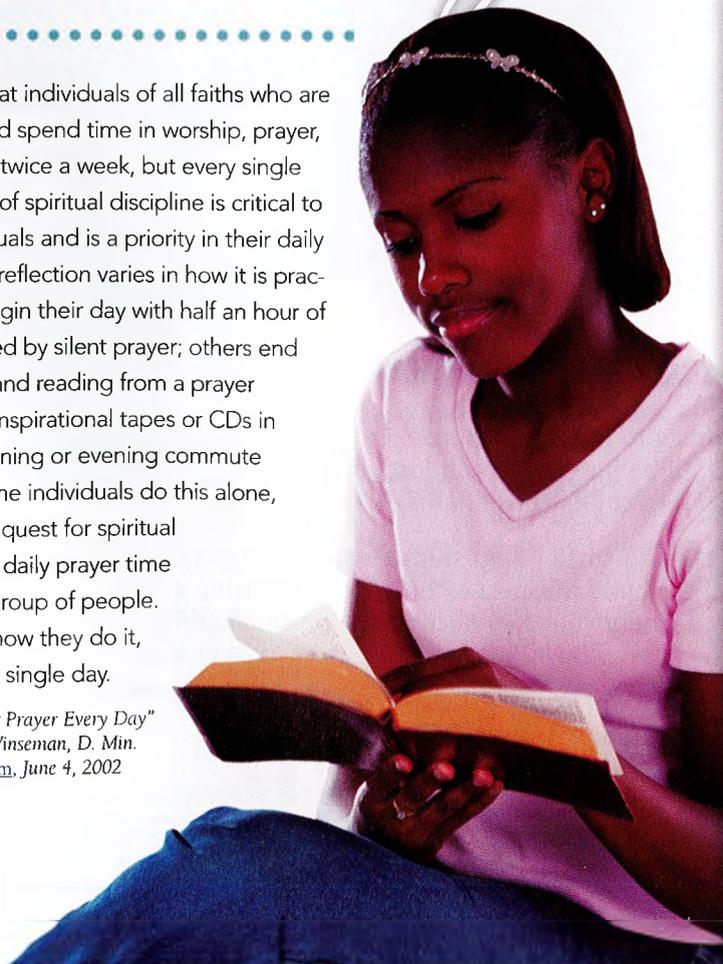
**General Principle**—Stated both clearly and subtly, ethical principles are some of the most common ways that the Bible reveals important truth. They can be simple statements: “A man reaps what he sows” (Gal. 6:7). They also can be the broad consensus of many passages such as those regarding the sanctity of human life (Gen. 1:26-28; Psa. 139:13-16; Jer. 1:5; etc.).

**Example**—The Bible is replete with examples of both moral and immoral behavior. We see the destructive behavior of King David (2 Sam. 11) and the hypocritical and bigoted behavior of Peter (Gal. 2:11-14). Examples are best understood as illustrations of moral principles that are elsewhere taught as commands, statements, principles, or warnings. 

Tom Atwood is pastor of First Baptist Church, Oxford, Mississippi.

Gallup’s research shows that individuals of all faiths who are highly spiritually committed spend time in worship, prayer, or meditation not once or twice a week, but every single day. Establishing this type of spiritual discipline is critical to the growth of such individuals and is a priority in their daily lives. This time of spiritual reflection varies in how it is practiced. Some individuals begin their day with half an hour of devotional reading followed by silent prayer; others end their day with meditation and reading from a prayer book; still others listen to inspirational tapes or CDs in their car and use their morning or evening commute as a time of reflection. Some individuals do this alone, preferring solitude in their quest for spiritual growth. Others share their daily prayer time with another person or a group of people. The essential point is not how they do it, but that they do it—every single day.

from “I Spend Time in Worship or Prayer Every Day”  
by Albert L. Winseman, D. Min.  
[www.gallup.com](http://www.gallup.com), June 4, 2002



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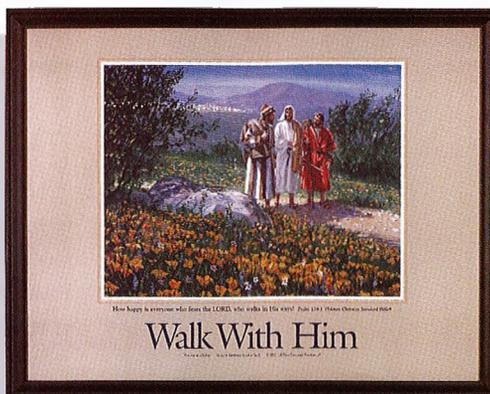
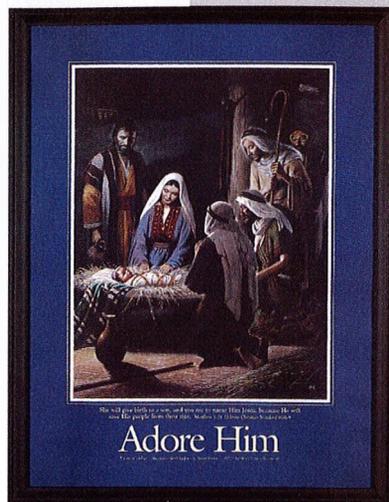


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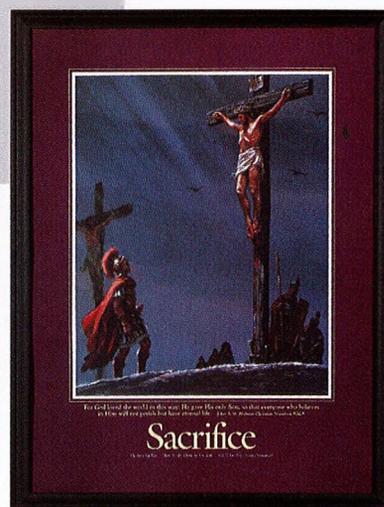
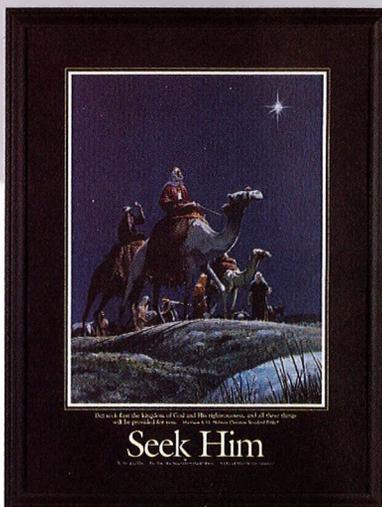
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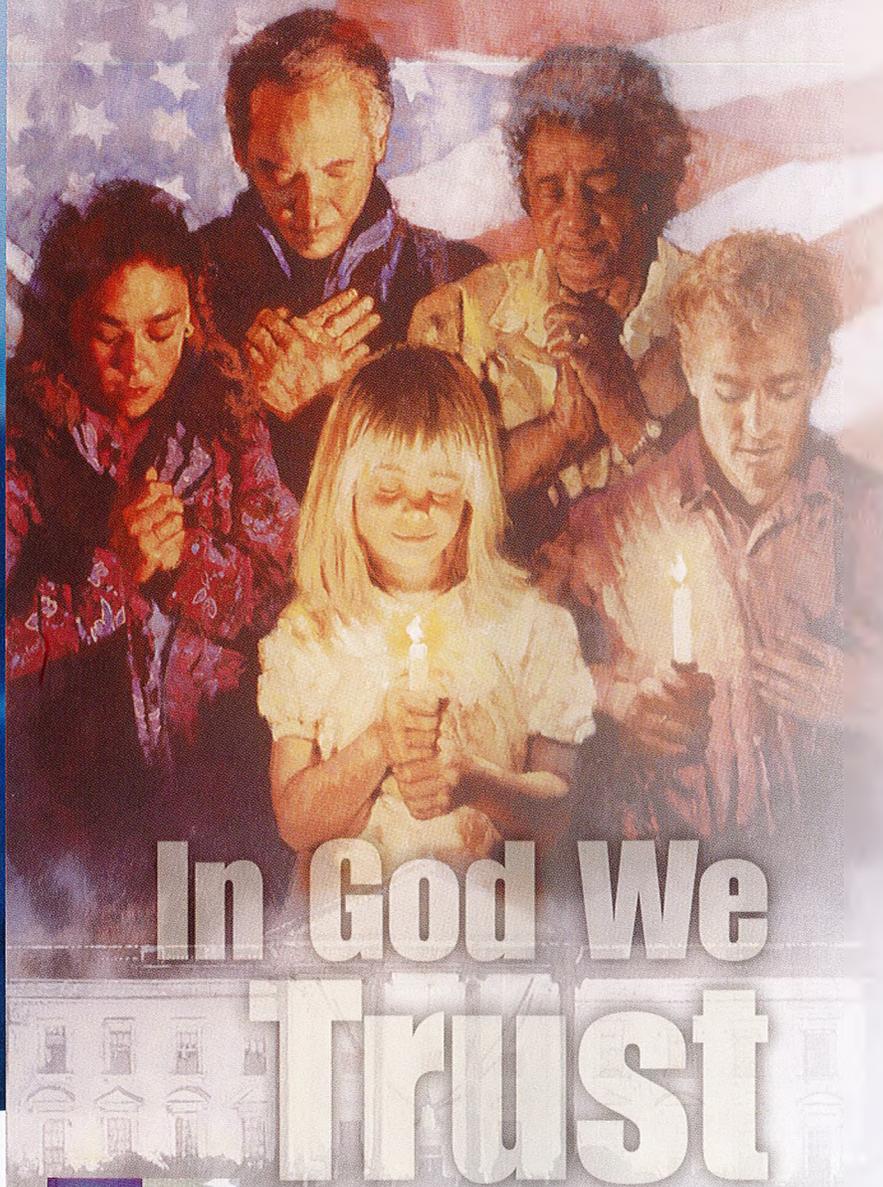
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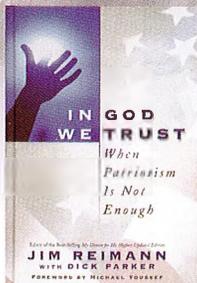
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# In God We Trust



Excerpted with permission from  
In God We Trust by Jim  
Reimann, Promise Press, 2002.

BY JIM REIMANN

I grew up in the Age of Aquarius—the 1960s, when young people across the nation painted peace signs on walls and greeted each other with the casual lifting of two fingers. “Peace, man. Make love, not war.”

As the 1970s began, with no end in sight to the Vietnam War, John Lennon gave the Woodstock generation a new motto: “All we are saying is give peace a chance.” Then Coca-Cola aired one of the most popular television commercials of all time: “I’d like to teach the world to sing in perfect harmony.”

Peace—the world’s peace—was a rock ‘n’ roll festival on a farm in New York or a chorus of people from across the world holding hands on a beautiful hillside and singing about drinking a Coke. Everyone, it seemed, was talking about peace, and yet those years are remembered by most people in my generation as the least peaceful, most turbulent time of the twentieth century.

The peace the world sought could not be achieved. That’s not a pessimistic statement. It’s plain fact. Even if we could convince nations to lay down their weapons and lock arms in unity then criminals, inner-city gangs, and extremists would assail us in the pursuit of their own desires.

Many of the peace protesters themselves proved the impossibility of their own kind of peace by spitting in the faces of soldiers returning from Vietnam and throwing stones at “fascist pigs,” better known as police officers. These protesters may have had “peace” written on their signs, but they did not have it written on their hearts. The flowers of “the flower power movement” had quickly wilted, and violence took their place.

## A Radical’s Peace

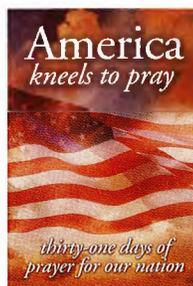
We called the protesters radicals, but their ideas paled in comparison with the radical nature of the apostle Paul’s prescription for true peace: “Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus” (Phil. 4:6-7).

This is the peace that I believe every human being on earth seeks—peace in our hearts, minds, and souls. The apostles, in their search for peace, did not ask Christ to teach them to sing in perfect harmony. Instead, they said, “Lord, teach us to pray . . .” (Luke 11:1).

We should begin our search for peace in prayer as well, just as our nation did in another time of great crisis. The Civil War was not going well in the latter half of 1862. In August the outmanned Confederates defeated Union soldiers at the second battle of Bull Run, sending the Union army retreating to Washington. Eighteen days later the Confederates were stopped at Antietam in the bloodiest day in United States military history; twenty-six thousand were dead, wounded, or missing. Then in December, 12,653 Union soldiers were lost in the defeat at Fredericksburg, Virginia.

President Abraham Lincoln, seeking peace in the land, appears to have understood the way to find peace in our hearts as well. In March 1863, he issued a proclamation designating “a day of national humiliation, fasting, and prayer. And I do hereby request all the people to abstain on that day from their ordinary secular pursuits and to unite at their several places of public worship and their respective homes in keeping the day holy to the Lord and devoted to the humble discharge of the religious duties proper to that solemn occasion.”

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America desperately needs our prayers. *America Kneels to Pray* is a collection of devotional readings designed to lead readers through a 31-day prayer vigil for our leaders, our military, our fellow citizens, our families, and our nation. (Elm Hill Books/Thomas Nelson)

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In making his proclamation, President Lincoln's observation of our nation was eerily similar to what we see in America today:

*We have been the recipients of the choicest bounties of Heaven; we have been preserved these many years in peace and prosperity; we have grown in numbers, wealth, and power as no other nation has ever grown. But we have forgotten God. We have forgotten the gracious hand which preserved in peace and multiplied and enriched and strengthened us, and have vainly imagined, in the deceitfulness of our hearts, that all these blessings were produced by some superior wisdom and virtue of our own. Intoxicated with unbroken success, we have become too self-sufficient to feel the necessity of redeeming and preserving grace, too proud to pray to the God that made us.*

*It behooves us, then, to humble ourselves before the offended Power; to confess our national sins, and to pray for clemency and forgiveness.*

When President Lincoln prayed for peace, it wasn't the sweet, hand-holding peace young people would sing about one hundred years later. It was God's peace—a lasting peace in the hearts of all people. It behooves us again today to humble ourselves before God, confess our sins, and pray for clemency and forgiveness—and for peace.

We must pray for the president as our nation's leader and as a professing member of the Church, the body of Christ. "Who knows but that you have come to royal position for such a time as this?" (Esther 4:14). As brothers and sisters in Christ with our president, we pray not only for him, but also alongside him.

Pray that we, and the president, will see this battle with spiritual eyes, as the prophet Elisha did when he was surrounded by the Syrian army. When Elisha's servant saw the army with horses and chariots, he asked in fear, "Oh, my lord, what shall we do?"

"Don't be afraid," the prophet answered. "Those who are with us are more than those who are with them." And Elisha prayed, "O LORD, open his eyes so he may see." Then the LORD opened the servant's eyes, and he looked and saw the hills full of horses and chariots of fire all around Elisha" (2 Kings 6:15-17).

Through our prayers we must call the heavenly hosts into the fight on our behalf, to pray for their active engagement. For the war against evil will be won, "Not by might nor by power, but by my Spirit," says the LORD Almighty" (Zech. 4:6). 

.....

"I know, from firsthand knowledge, that this is a nation of prayer. See, I work the ropelines a lot, and I hear all kinds of things on the ropelines. But the thing I hear the most, the comment I hear the most from our fellow citizens, regardless of their political party or philosophy, is, Mr. President, I pray for you and your family, and so does my family. That's what I hear. I turn to them without hesitation and say, it is the greatest gift you can give anybody... to pray on their behalf.

I especially feel that because I believe in prayer. I pray. I pray for strength, I pray for guidance, I pray for forgiveness. And I pray to offer my thanks for a kind and generous Almighty God.

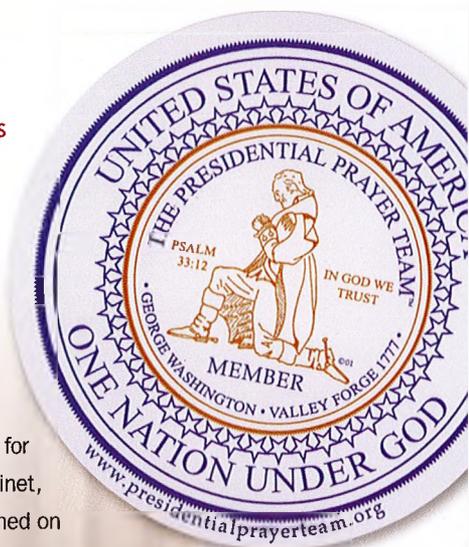
—FROM PRESIDENT GEORGE W. BUSH'S REMARKS TO THE NATIONAL PRAYER BREAKFAST, FEBRUARY 6, 2003

## PRESIDENTIAL PRAYER TEAM PETITIONS FOR GOVERNMENT LEADERS

The Presidential Prayer Team is a non-partisan, national effort to enlist 1 percent of the American population—2.8 million people—to pray daily for the president, the cabinet, and the nation. Launched on September 21, 2001, the group announced in May 2003 that it had reached its goal.

The Presidential Prayer Team also has made it possible for Americans to pray for individual members of the military.

For more information and to sign up for e-mail updates, visit [www.presidentialprayerteam.org](http://www.presidentialprayerteam.org).



White House photo of President George W. Bush by Eric Draper

## GOD'S BLUEPRINT FOR MARRIAGE

BY DON AND SALLY MEREDITH

Can anything save our marriage?

**"I honestly don't think I love**

**John anymore,"** said Suzie, her

voice calm and sure. "I resent him so

very, very much. *I don't even know*

*if I like him anymore."*



In a separate counseling session, John told us, "I was hurting her for so long, but I didn't even see it. What is wrong with me?" With his face buried in his hands, he said, "I don't think there's any hope for our marriage. This is unbelievable."

It would seem unbelievable. When you first meet John and Suzie, they appear to have a lot going for them. First and foremost, both are strong Christians from strong families. During the twenty years of their marriage, they've been active members of vibrant evangelical churches. You'd never suspect that they are separated and unsure if their marriage will survive another year.

John and Suzie's situation is not unique. Nearly a third of all marriages between Christians end up in divorce or separation, about the same percentage as marriages between non-Christians. What is going on here?

*Why are Christians' marriages faring no better than other marriages?*

As an engaged couple, John and Suzie assumed they'd have few problems in their marriage—they were Christian, intelligent, and thought they knew each other well. But, like other couples, they struggled with communication, sex, finances, and their marital roles—among other things. John was a strong, domineering husband and father to their three girls. Suzie kept the peace for years by not communicating her deep frustration to John. Over time they drifted apart, however, and now find themselves separated, trying hard to rekindle the love they had for each other. Can their marriage be saved? Can you avoid this trauma in your marriage?

It depends. When it comes to marriage, many Christians rely on their own strength in combination with some biblical knowledge and worldly advice. Many, like John and Suzie, reason, "If I read the latest marriage book, take a marriage enrichment course, and am a member of a good church, my marriage will be fine." The results of this approach can be unfortunate.

In thirty years of marriage counseling, we've observed that Christians are often unaware that every single marriage is important to God's epic plan for mankind and that He has specific purposes for their marriage. Instead, couples tend to focus solely on correcting specific problem areas such as communication or romance and miss God's vital plan for their marriage.

*Your marriage is the frontline in an epic battle.*

The original oneness of eternity past was a wonderful reflection of God's image in all of creation. The angels, beings created by God, depended entirely on Him and were completely one with Him and His will. But Satan's pride became a threat to this oneness. For the first time, a being had a thought apart from God's will. Satan, or Lucifer, the most beautiful angel of God's creation, decided that he did not need God. Scripture reveals that since that

Most couples who take vows in the 2.4 million weddings each year in America intend for the relationships to last. Yet 33 percent of Christian marriages end in separation or divorce. How do so many marriages that start with good intentions end in disillusionment?

event he has challenged God's will and purposes time and again.

With that backdrop, God gives three mandates for Christian couples in marriage: to reflect His image, to reproduce that image in their children, and to reign in the spiritual warfare that is already taking place. Because of the importance of these purposes, Satan works hard to keep Christian marriages from accomplishing them.

#### **Christian marriages are to reflect God's image.**

The first purpose of a Christian marriage is to reflect God's image:

Then God said, "Let us make man in our image, in our likeness, and let them rule over the fish of the sea and the birds of the air, over the livestock, over all the earth, and over all the creatures that move along the ground." So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them (Gen. 1:26-27).

Three times God mentions "image" and also mentions "likeness." His desire for Adam and Eve—and all married couples that follow—is to reflect Him. God also creates "them" as a unit to accomplish oneness and reflection.

When we criticize our spouse, or foster division and competition, we are reflecting the disunity of Satan and dishonoring God. On the other hand, when we recognize that our purpose is to reflect the image of God, the Holy Spirit quickly convicts us when we fail to live up to that standard. Knowing that one of God's purposes for our marriage is to reflect Him can protect us from hardening our hearts toward one another.

#### **Christian marriages are to reproduce children in God's likeness.**

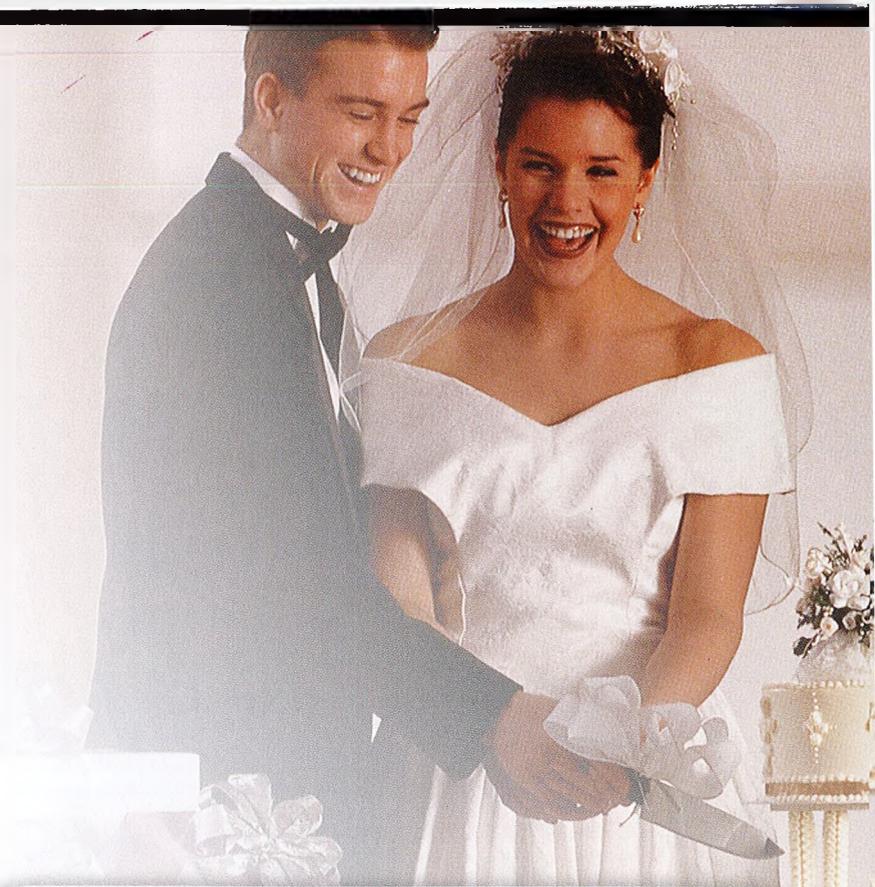
Further on in the first chapter of Genesis, we see God's second purpose for our marriage:

God blessed them and said to them, "**Be fruitful and increase in number; fill the earth and subdue it**" (Gen. 1:28a).

Having children is a great blessing from God. But, it is important to note that in context of the rest of Scripture, God wants us to reproduce children in His "likeness"—disciples that will ultimately reflect the image of God. Spouses who are competitive, angry, jealous, or divided cannot fully nurture children in God's image. Why? In order to teach children the principles of *agape* love, godly discipline, and good morals, parents first must model them. Words are not enough! As each parent puts aside their innate selfishness and trusts God to meet their needs, petty disagreements fade in comparison to their love for their children.

It is important to note here that we are commanded to "go and make disciples of all nations" (Matt. 28:19a). A Christian couple who do not have children will nevertheless be fulfilling this purpose by making others disciples of Jesus Christ.

*continued on page 20*



## **A Marriage Based on Faith**

There are 2.4 million weddings a year in America. Most who say "I do" don't intend to hurt their spouse, yet 33 percent of Christian marriages end in separation or divorce. How do so many marriages start with good intentions and end up in disillusionment? Quite often spouses focus on the performance of their mate rather than on God's promises for their marriage.

Most of us are self-centered and come into marriage expecting our spouse to behave and meet our needs in a certain way. This leads us to focus on their performance. "I'll be happy when my husband does this," says the wife. "If only my wife would change that," says the husband. Resentment and retaliation increase. This is a natural human response in relationships.

In a faith relationship, however, the focus is on God and His promises, not our mate's performance. Christ modeled this for us: "To this you were called, because Christ suffered for you, leaving you an example, that you should follow in his steps. 'He committed no sin, and no deceit was found in his mouth.' When they hurled their insults at him, he did not retaliate; when he suffered, he made no threats. Instead, he entrusted himself to him who judges justly" (1 Pet. 2:21-23).

Christ did not deserve His suffering, but He did not retaliate against His tormentors. Instead, He trusted himself to God and put His hope in Him. This is our model for Christian marriage. It is opposite of a natural human relationship in two ways: First, it is not natural at all—it is supernatural—and can be learned only from God through His Word. Second, it is not focused on human performance but on God's promises and faithfulness.

God is the guarantor of the faith relationship. He promises a blessing when we "live in harmony with one another . . . compassionate and humble" (1 Pet. 3:8-9). As couples, we need to follow the example of Christ and move our marriages from performance to faith. We need to love as Christ loved, for that love is the door to the greatest blessing possible in marriage.

**To accomplish**

**God's purposes** for your marriage — to reflect His image, to reproduce children in His likeness, and to reign together in spiritual warfare — you and your spouse must be one with each other and one with God. **Oneness happens as a result of believing that God has uniquely placed you together in agreement with God's will and with each other.** The practical results are cooperation, unity, and encouragement.

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 19

**Christian marriages are to reign in spiritual warfare.**

God's third purpose for marriage is to reign in spiritual warfare:

God blessed them and said to them, "Be fruitful and increase in number; **fill the earth and subdue it**" (Gen. 1:28a).

In addition to our responsibility to be stewards of physical resources, we have a responsibility in the spiritual realm. We know that a spiritual battle goes on in every heart, in every home, in every church, in every nation. Only as married couples come together in unity and oneness will the enemy of our souls be defeated. Just as the Godhead represents perfect unity and is a force for God's will in His universe, the Christian couple — husband and wife — are to pray and discern God's will in situations in which they are placed and are to see themselves as His soldiers.

**Two must become one.**

To accomplish God's purposes for your marriage — to reflect His image, to reproduce children in His likeness, and to reign together in spiritual warfare — you and your spouse must be one with each other and one with God. Oneness happens as a result of believing that God has uniquely placed you together in agreement with God's will and with each other. The practical results are cooperation, unity, and encouragement.

We learn in Ephesians 6:12: "For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms."

*This material is drawn from the Two Becoming One study course. For thirty years, these concepts have helped couples move their relationships from performance to faith by understanding God's design for marriage. If you'd like to learn more about enhancing your marriage, visit [www.twobecomingone.com](http://www.twobecomingone.com).*

*Don and Sally Meredith created the Two Becoming One marriage enrichment material and helped found FamilyLife Ministries, which uses these concepts in their popular "Weekend to Remember" seminars and resources. Don also is the Executive Vice President of Joe Gibbs Racing, which he helped found in 1989.*

Studies show that the benefits of growing up in a household with both biological parents can hardly be overstated, regardless of race or economic status. Children who live in intact two-parent families consistently fare better than children who grow up in single-parent homes or even stepfamilies. Their parents are more involved in school activities, and they make higher grades. They are more likely to stay in high school and then attend and graduate from college. They are less likely to exhibit depression and behavior problems such as drug and alcohol abuse. They are less likely to engage in premarital sexual intercourse and less likely to become single parents. They are less likely to be arrested. Children in two-parent families score higher on measures of self-concept, social competence, conduct, psychological adjustment, and long-term health.

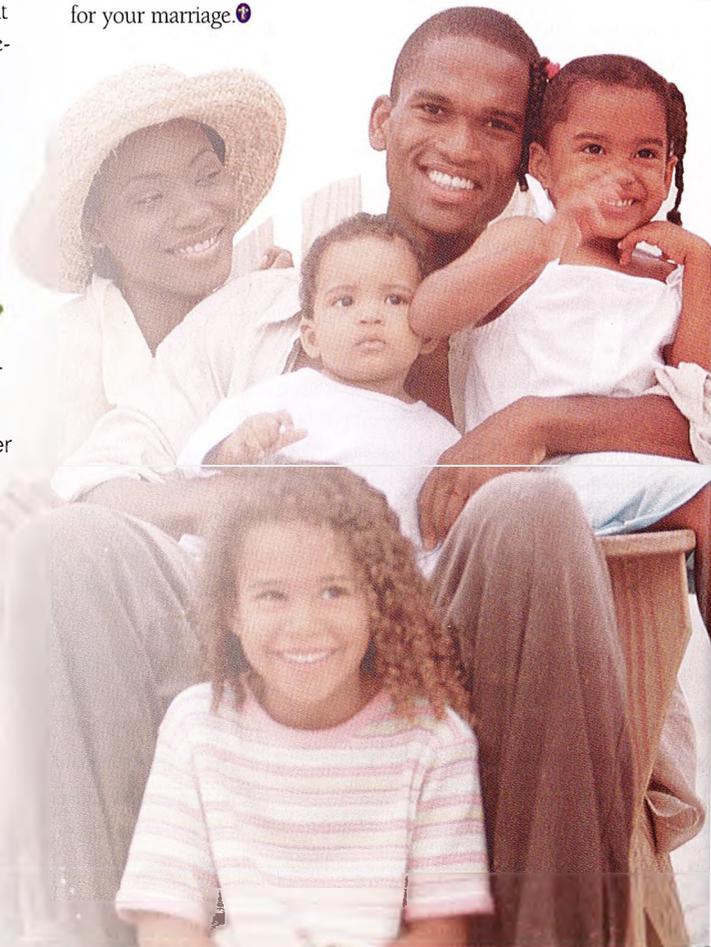
—from "First Marriage Dissolution, Divorce, and Remarriage: United States," Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, May 31, 2001

In practical terms, our struggle is not against our spouse! It is against Satan who wants us to believe that our spouse is the problem. How many Christians have thought, "If I wasn't married to him/her, I'd have a good life." That's Satan's deception, and it's exactly the spiritual battle God has called us to win. We must learn to keep our eyes on Jesus Christ and not on people.

**There is hope!**

John and Suzie now are working through the three purposes of their marriage, and they are allowing the Holy Spirit to minister to them in a whole new way. Each is learning that by focusing on God and His purposes for their marriage — and not on each other's failings — their true love is being rekindled. They are planning to end their six-month separation, and they are placing their entire trust in God.

Whether you are planning to get married, have been married and think things are going pretty well, or are in a marriage that is in trouble, God can make the most of your situation — if you turn to His Word and follow His plan for your marriage. ☺





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you've been asking

After the tragic loss of the shuttle Columbia on February 1, 2003, President Bush called for all U.S. flags to be flown at half-staff. Some of my neighbors kept their flags lowered for weeks. Isn't there a specific number of days that flags are kept lowered after a national tragedy?

—Inquiring Patriot

Yes. The flag is to be flown at half-staff thirty days from the death of the president or a former president and ten days from the day of death of the vice president, the chief justice or a retired chief justice of the United States, or the speaker of the House of Representatives. The number of days it is kept lowered upon the deaths of many other government officials is also stipulated in the U.S. Code. For example, when a member of Congress dies, the flag is to be flown at half-staff on the day of death and the following day. In the case of the astronauts lost in the Columbia accident, the president decreed that flags be flown at half-staff for five days.

The flag, when flown at half-staff, should be first hoisted to the peak for an instant and then lowered to the half-staff position. When lowering the flag at sunset, the flag should again be raised to the peak. On Memorial Day the flag should be displayed at half-staff until noon only, then raised to the top of the staff.

Perhaps more homes than ever have an American flag hanging outside—twenty-four hours a day—and most of them are not flying the flag according to the Flag Code, which states, "The flag may be displayed twenty-four hours a day if properly illuminated during the hours of darkness." Otherwise, the code says, it is "universal custom" to display the flag outside only from sunrise to sunset and only in good weather.

And what do you do when the flag becomes tattered or worn? "The flag, when it is in such condition that it is no longer a fitting emblem for display, should be destroyed in a dignified way, preferably by burning," states the code. The American Legion and Boy Scout groups in your community may hold "flag retirement ceremonies" for worn flags. See <http://www.usscouts.org/ceremony/flagret1.html> for information on flag disposal.

Families can plan a relaxing and fun-filled summer vacation without embracing Disney's new agenda.

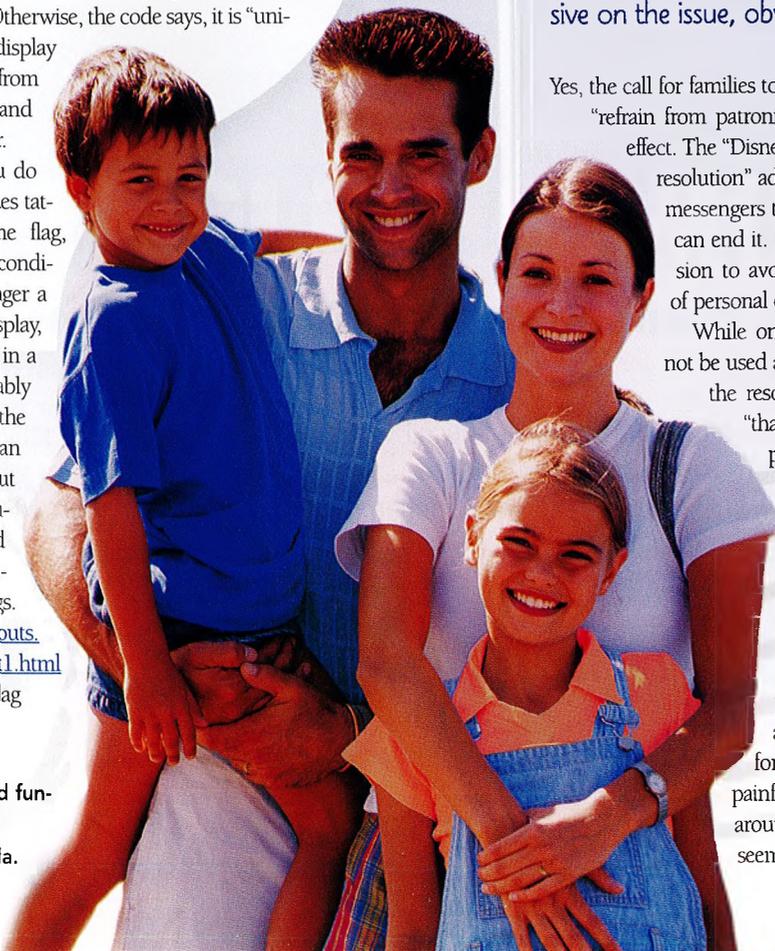
My daughter will soon enter the youth department of our church, and our minister to students takes our youth to Disney World every year. Isn't the boycott still in effect? We are a Southern Baptist church, but the pastor is passive on the issue, obviously.

—Heartbroken Dad

Yes, the call for families to exercise moral stewardship and to "refrain from patronizing" Disney enterprises is still in effect. The "Disney boycott" is a result of the "Disney resolution" adopted in 1997, and only a vote by messengers to the Southern Baptist Convention can end it. In line with Baptist polity, the decision to avoid or embrace Disney is a matter of personal conscience.

While one's support of the boycott should not be used as a test of faith, few can argue with the resolution's criticism of any company "that promotes immoral ideologies and practices," or its reminder that we should be discerning in where we spend our entertainment budget.

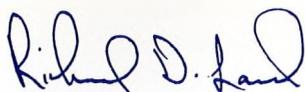
I know your family feels like you're alone, but you're not. We often hear from folks who are committed to keeping their dollars out of Disney's pockets. We're sorry your church is putting you in this awkward position. Taking a stand for morality is more often than not a painful endeavor, especially when those around you who share your faith in God seem to be going with the flow. ☹



Our values and our families are under attack today more than ever before. However, America's future does not depend on what happens in the White House, the Congress, or the Supreme Court. America's future depends on people like you. When committed, informed Christians live out their beliefs in their homes, their communities, their jobs, and in the public square, they bring the truth of God to the great moral dilemmas of the day.

Are you fulfilling your responsibilities and exercising your rights as a "citizen Christian"? It has never been enough to "talk the talk." We must "walk the walk." We must plant our feet firmly and reassert the time-tested, life-changing Christian values that have made the United States a great nation. I urge you to pray about how you can be the "citizen Christian" God wants you to be.

I highly recommend these Scripture-based resources that will inform you and motivate you to fulfill the biblical mandate of Christian citizenship.



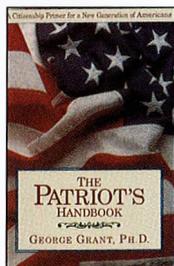
Richard D. Land, ERLC President

### The Patriot's Handbook

Early in the nineteenth century, educators realized that if America's experiment in liberty was to be maintained, an informed patriotism would have to be instilled in its youth; thus, rising citizens were presented with a handbook containing the essential elements of American ideals. *The Patriot's Handbook* perpetuates that tradition. Included are key documents, speeches, poems, songs, and profiles of many leaders who have contributed to American history.

BKPAT (464 pages)

\$11.66 ea.

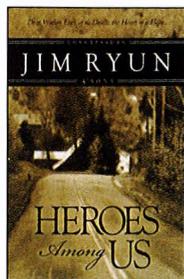


### Heroes Among Us

In a world where superstar musicians, athletes, and celebrities are paraded across the big screen and featured on the news, we seem to have lost sight of what a real hero is. Yet America needs true heroes now more than ever, people who show us what it is to be good, to be brave, to be guided by conscience and character. Congressman Jim Ryun offers stories of fourteen quiet, historical heroes, common people who stood firm in the face of tyranny, gave their lives for others, or righted the wrongs of injustice.

BKHERO (320 pages)

\$12.59 ea.



### Citizenship & Religious Liberty Response Kit

Bible study and sermon helps (based on Gen. 50:19) ■ *Faith & Family* handouts (qty: 100) ■ *Valor: A Gathering of Eagles* (see description above) ■ Citizenship & Religious Liberty Fact Sheets (qty: 10) ■ Promotional Posters (qty: 2)

CCKIT03 (monthly subscription) \$24.95 Additional quantities of kit contents are available.

### RECOMMENDED RESOURCES

#### Valor: A Gathering of Eagles

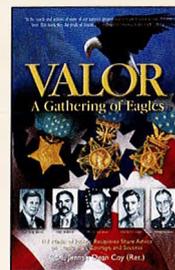
What is the stuff from which heroes are made? In *Valor: A Gathering of Eagles*, you will meet 117 brave Americans and read of the heroic acts that earned them the Congressional Medal of Honor. They share their core beliefs about leadership, success, significance, and faith.

"This wonderful book clearly portrays the courage, valor, and faith of individuals who made tremendous contributions to the greatness of our nation. A must-read for all who love freedom, America, and Almighty God."

—LTG ALONZO SHORT JR. USA (RET.)

BKVAL (304 pages)

\$11.69 ea.

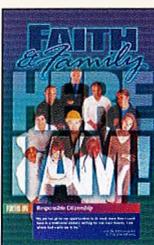


#### Faith & Family

The ERLC publication *Faith & Family* is a colorful, four-page handout that addresses critical issues affecting our faith and our families. This Citizenship and Religious Liberty edition, based on Genesis 50:19, shows how Joseph was God's man in God's place at God's time and gives examples of how we can be God's people in our place and our time.

For *Culture Response Kit* subscribers, 100 are included in the kit.

CCBULK03 (4 pages)



\$4.95/50

### 130 Questions Kids Ask About War and Terrorism

If you've tried to explain the events of September 11, 2001, or the war in Iraq to a child, help is at hand. Psychologist David Stoop and author/speaker Stephen Arterburn offer reassuring answers to real questions from elementary school children such as "Will terrorists hurt me?" and "Will bombs fall on my house?" and spiritual queries such as "Why does God let war happen?" and "Does God choose sides?" The volume includes family devotions. (Tyndale)

### Peace with God

"The yearning for peace in our world is but a mirror of an even deeper yearning for peace in our souls. And just as the search for world peace often seems frustrating and hopeless, so our search for personal peace often seems doomed to failure. Is peace in our hearts and minds possible? Yes! I invite you to come with me and discover the key to personal peace for yourself."

—BILLY GRAHAM (W Publishing Group)

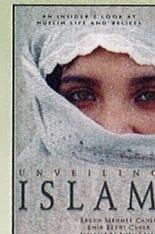
The two resources in this box are not available by phone but can be purchased at:



### Unveiling Islam

Raised as Sunni Muslims by a leader in the mosque, brothers Ergun and Emir Caner have lived the Muslim life. Now Christians and highly respected theology professors, the Caner brothers are uniquely qualified to present an insider's look at Islam—its practices, ethics, and beliefs, including the primary differences between Christianity and Islam. The authors present a practical strategy Christians can use for productive dialogue with Muslims.

BKUNV (251 pages) \$11.69 ea.



## Building a Foundation for Life

# Test Tubes, Lab Coats, and Moses

The Bible teaches us about science.

BY DWAYNE HASTINGS

*Science was always my favorite subject in school. If it involved mixing things, cutting things open, or heating things up in a glass beaker over a butane flame, I was all for it.*

*When I was really young, I learned that red tempera paint mixed with yellow tempera paint made orange tempera paint. Yellow and blue made green paint, and blue and red made purple. Those were amazing scientific findings for a kindergartner.*

Some scientists try to prove that God doesn't exist or that He had nothing to do with creation. Those scientists are wrong. Many scientists are missing the link between God and creation.

Discoveries in science are further proof of the existence of a God who created the universe in a planned and orderly way.

Neither humans nor giraffes nor dandelions came to be by accident. God planned for the earth to be just the right distance from the sun for our comfort and safety (Genesis 1:16), and He made sure all the planets would stay in their own orbit (Psalm 18:1).

Birds' bones are hollow because, as Moses writes in the Bible, God made birds to fly (Genesis 1:20). Our bones are solid because God made us to walk (unless we buy a ticket to fly on an airplane). Plants and trees need carbon dioxide to live but give off oxygen; we humans breathe out carbon dioxide but need



oxygen to live—what a great plan! Where does all the water go after a storm? Why don't the oceans overflow when it rains and rains? Where does the moisture come from to make the rain clouds? Learn about evaporation (liquid to vapor) in the Bible—Ecclesiastes 1:7!

Science tells us that everything eventually falls apart. That's no surprise—only God and His Word are unchanging, never diminishing in strength or truth (1 Peter 1:24-25).

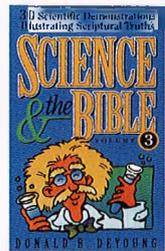
God created us and sustains us. Through His Son, Jesus, He provided a way for us to have a relationship with Him. Science can never disprove that fact.

**Bible truth:** Scientific principles are always in line with scriptural truths.

**Bible verse:** Ecclesiastes 12:1

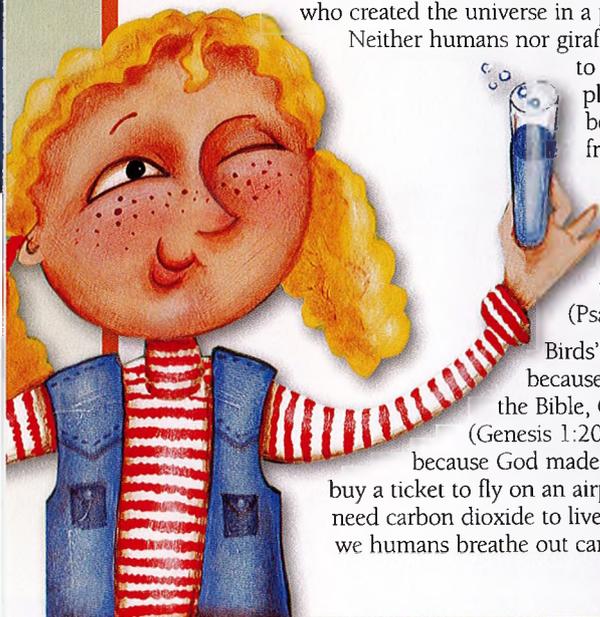
### RECOMMENDED READING

Donald DeYoung's first two volumes of *Science and the Bible* have been widely popular with children's ministry leaders, parents, and teachers. This third volume provides even more ideas for demonstrating the order and grandeur of creation to encourage an appreciation of all God has made. The book's thirty dynamic but simple experiments illustrate the laws of nature, teach Bible principles, and affirm God's power as Creator. Each demonstration has a catchy or unusual result, making the Bible truth unforgettable. The clearly explained experiments use common household objects, require little set-up time, and are illustrated by pictures and diagrams. (Baker)



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