

For Faith & Family's

LIGHT

Magazine

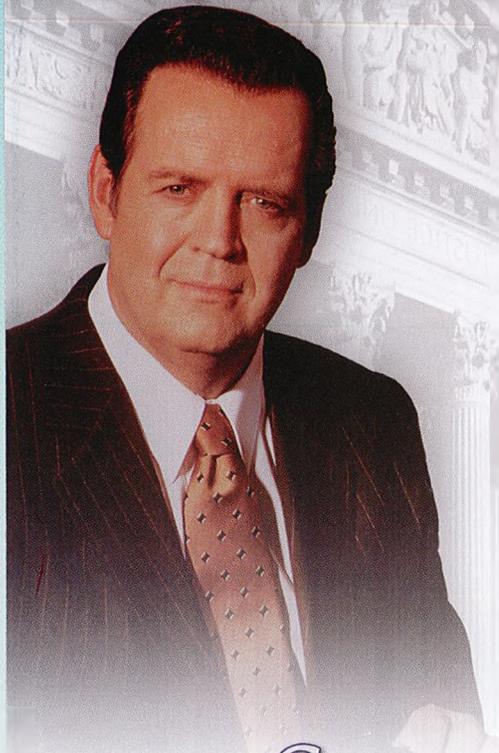


Making a Fashion Statement

The clothes you wear can speak volumes about your character.

“I Pledge Allegiance”

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



FOR **Faith & Family**
with Dr. Richard Land

Richard Land

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one Nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

—United States Code, Title 4, Chapter 1, Section 4

When the country's most liberal federal court reiterated its mind-boggling decision that the Pledge of Allegiance is unconstitutional because of the words “under God,” it revealed just how far removed it is from America's founding fathers and founding document.

No, Thomas Jefferson did not write the pledge to the flag of the United States. Nor was the phrase “one nation under God” in the original text. Yet, when Congress added those words to the pledge in 1954, it did so on the foundation of the *Declaration of Independence* and more than a century and three-fourths of our history as a republic.

The Feb. 28 affirmation of last summer's stunning ruling by the U.S. Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals underscored its well-earned reputation as the federal court most hostile to religious expression in public venues. The Court's three-judge panel did not strike down the 1954 law that added to the pledge, but it invalidated a California school district's policy sponsoring recitations of the pledge.

That is a distinction without a difference for millions of students in public school classrooms in California and eight other western states. Unless the Supreme Court rectifies this offense, future generations of young people will

know only a pledge with their Creator's name censored from it.

We would be hard-pressed to find a way in which someone could be further removed from the spirit of our country's founding than were the two judges in the panel's majority.

When the delegates presented the *Declaration of Independence* on July 4, 1776, they did so in language that manifested a theocentric view of liberty, rights, and government—even though some of the signers were not evangelical Christians.

In the most frequently quoted section of the *Declaration*, titled “A Declaration of Rights,” it says, “We hold these Truths to be self-evident, that all Men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the Pursuit of Happiness.”

When the founders made “A Statement of Independence” in the final section of the *Declaration*, they proclaimed their freedom by saying they were “appealing to the Supreme Judge of the world for the Rectitude of our Intentions.”

They closed the statement by saying, “And for the support of this Declaration, with a firm Reliance on the Protection of divine Providence, we mutually pledge to each other our Lives, our Fortunes, and our Sacred Honor.”

These resolute, brave, and far-

sighted men testified in this country's originating statement that the Creator of all human beings not only had made all human beings but had made them equal. He, not a government nor an earthly ruler, had granted them their rights, including life and liberty. They acknowledged there was an ultimate Judge to whom all mankind is accountable. The founders closed by confessing their dependence upon Him for protection as they sought to defend this *Declaration*.

Presidents from George Washington to Abraham Lincoln to George W. Bush, and most in between, have appealed to God in times of crisis and blessing. President Bush said in this year's State of the Union speech, “The liberty we prize is not America's gift to the world; it is God's gift to humanity.” When the President made that comment, his feet were firmly planted in the rich soil of this country's *Declaration of Independence*.

To include in the Pledge of Allegiance to the flag a confession that ours is “one nation under God” is not forcing every American to admit the existence of Deity or to worship a Supreme Being. It is to acknowledge our people have agreed through more than two centuries that our republic is not supreme, despite our allegiance to it, but there is One who is.

That is not a violation of the guarantees in the First Amend-

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— PRESIDENT GEORGE W. BUSH

ment to the Constitution that government is to protect the free religious exercise of all its citizens

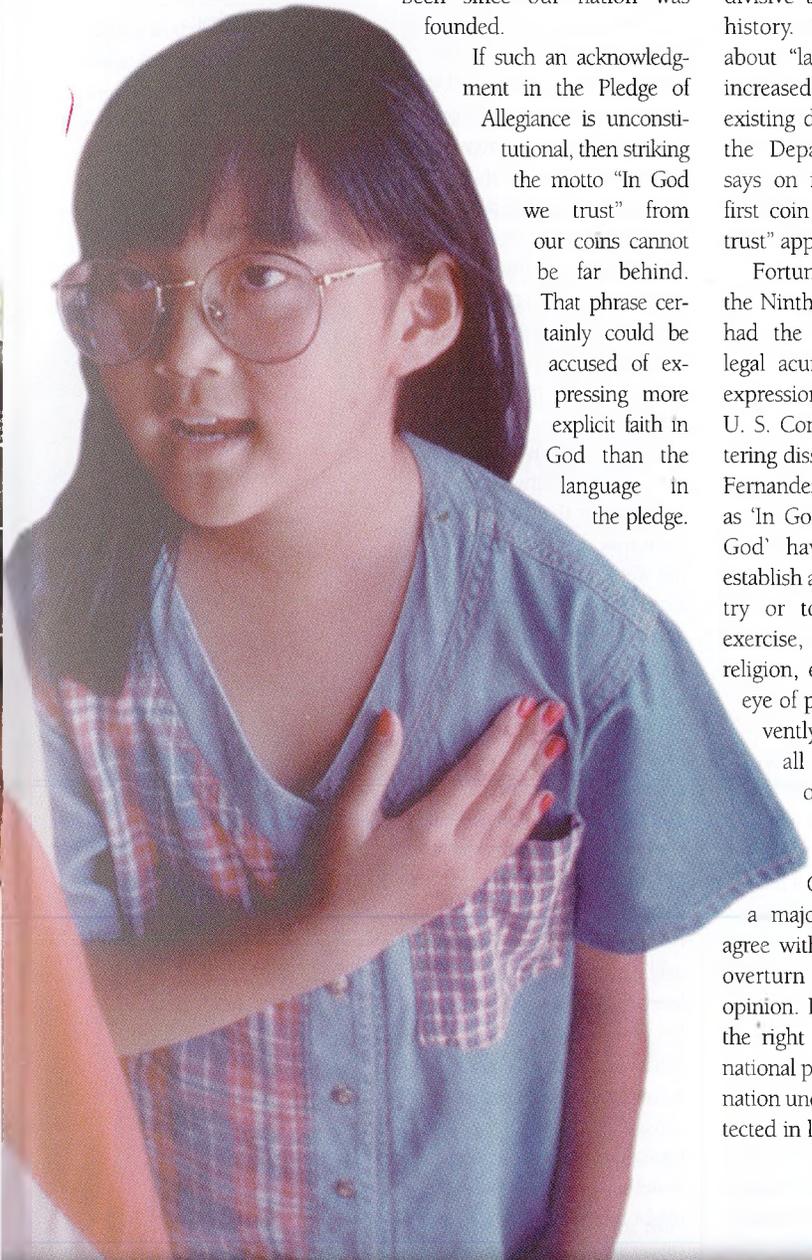
and to not establish a religion. It is an acknowledgment of what is true about our people and has been since our nation was founded.

If such an acknowledgment in the Pledge of Allegiance is unconstitutional, then striking the motto "In God we trust" from our coins cannot be far behind. That phrase certainly could be accused of expressing more explicit faith in God than the language in the pledge.

That motto was added to our coins at the American people's request during the most divisive time in our country's history. The addition came about "largely because of the increased religious sentiment existing during the Civil War," the Department of Treasury says on its Internet site. The first coin to bear "In God we trust" appeared in 1864.

Fortunately, one judge on the Ninth Circuit Court's panel had the common sense and legal acumen to see such an expression does not violate the U. S. Constitution. In his blistering dissent, Judge Ferdinand Fernandez wrote "such phrases as 'In God we trust' or 'under God' have no tendency to establish a religion in this country or to suppress anyone's exercise, or non-exercise, of religion, except in the fevered eye of persons who most fervently would like to drive all tincture of religion out of the public life of our polity."

The Supreme Court appears to have a majority of justices who agree with Fernandez and will overturn the Ninth Circuit's opinion. Let us hope and pray the right to acknowledge in a national pledge that ours is "one nation under God" remains protected in law. 



Attention, Pastors and Church Leaders!

Keeping your congregation informed about the latest issues in American culture that affect the Christian faith and family values has never been easier. Call 800-475-9127 to learn more about receiving bulk quantities of *For Faith & Family's Light* magazine for your church.



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Light, (ISSN 1538-0734), a magazine that equips and encourages readers and their families to think biblically and act Christianly, is published six times a year by The Ethics & Religious Liberty Commission and its outreach ministry, *For Faith & Family*. The magazine looks to Scripture for a proper response to the critical moral, ethical and cultural issues of our day. *Light* is sent free to those who request it. Voluntary subscriptions, for those who wish to help defray costs of printing and mailing and to help underwrite a growing mailing list, are \$10 annually. Checks should be made payable to *Light*. Canceled checks serve as tax-deductible receipts.

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The Clothes Crisis

The start of a new school year is rapidly approaching, and parents of daughters are in for a challenge. Skin-tight T-shirts and low-slung jeans are the hallmarks of style for teenage girls, creating a fashion dilemma for Christian parents. Here's how you can help your daughter make choices that show off her heart, not her body.

BY DANNAH GRESH

"What's the number one thing that causes you to feel sexually tempted?" my husband asked a room of teenage boys.

"The worst thing is the way girls dress in church," one boy quickly replied. A sea of bobbing heads affirmed his answer.

that read "Be SEXY: It doesn't mean you have to have sex." The singer Britney Spears was the first of many to pair an attitude of coy purity with revealing clothing, teaching girls how to tease and tempt with their bodies even as they

sexual promiscuity deceive themselves and others." Studies consistently show that a girl who looks older than she is has a greater risk of becoming sexually active, and clothing and make-up can help a girl look years older in minutes.

best approach is to arm girls with the information they need to make a godly decision and encourage them to reflect God in the way they dress. Here's how to do just that:

Affirm your daughter's female allure.

It's no secret that both men and women notice a woman's face and form. Advertisers have learned that a photo of a woman

A MIXED MESSAGE

Candies, a popular teen clothing and shoe label, is promoting abstinence with the sale of T-shirts—teeny, tiny, belly-baring, breast-hugging T-shirts that read "Be SEXY: It doesn't mean you have to have sex." The singer Britney Spears was the first of many to pair an attitude of coy purity with revealing clothing, teaching girls how to tease and tempt with their bodies even as they play sweet and pure with their words.

These messages have convinced our daughters that this kind of sensual exposure is "just fashion." They don't understand what's really promoted is the idea that their bodies are for show, for the pleasure of others, instead of sacred temples meant for God's glory.

"Church is supposed to be a place where you don't have to face temptation, but you walk in and Bam! There it is. How do you avoid that?"

They all looked at my husband, pleading for a good answer.

I'm sure you've noticed it, too—the crop tops, the visible lingerie, the low-slung pants. Let's face it—fashion for today's girls is all about sex.

Consider the images our daughters face every day. Candies, a popular teen clothing and shoe label, is promoting abstinence with the sale of T-shirts—teeny, tiny, belly-baring, breast-hugging T-shirts

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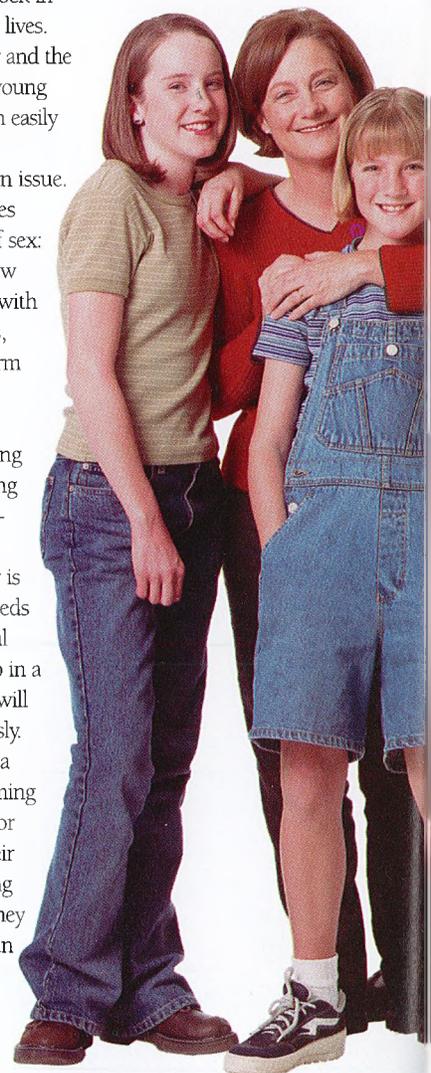
The Sex Connection

Surprisingly, it isn't just Christians who are growing concerned over this trend of sexualized fashion. An editorial in the *Indianapolis News* stated, "Those who minimize the correlation between immodesty and

This isn't just an issue for girls. As the boys my husband spoke with pointed out, the mixed messages sent by girls who look sexy but claim purity are a major stumbling block in boys' efforts to live godly lives. When the girls look easy and the boys are tempted, their young hearts and hormones can easily get carried away.

It's also not just a teen issue. Little girls' clothing stores stock outfits that hint of sex: jeans that ride well below the waist, tight T-shirts with "Sassy" in glittery letters, short shorts, and platform shoes. At the other end of the spectrum, many adult women—including mothers—are not setting a high standard of modesty themselves.

The issue of modesty is one that every parent needs to take seriously. The real question is how to do so in a way that our daughters will listen to and take seriously. We don't want to create a spirit of rebellion by coming across as unreasonable, or rob our daughters of their innocence by introducing issues of sexuality that they might not be ready for. In my work with teenage girls, I've found that the



“What’s the number one thing that causes you to feel sexually tempted?” Bob Gresh asked a room of teenage boys.

“The worst thing is the way girls dress in church,” one boy quickly replied. A sea of bobbing heads affirmed his answer.

“Church is supposed to be a place where you don’t have to face temptation, but you walk in and Bam! There it is. How do you avoid that?”

will increase the length of time someone spends with an ad by 14-30 percent. What power!

God’s Word affirms that power. Proverbs 5:18-19 says, “Rejoice in the wife of your youth. A loving doe, a graceful deer — may her breasts satisfy you always, may you be ever captivated by her love.” That word “captivated” could also be translated as “intoxicated.” The God of the universe looks down at a woman and comfortably acknowledges the power she has to intoxicate a man, but it is a power that your daughter must use wisely.

Flip through a few magazines with your daughter and point out the way images of women

are used in advertising. Talk with her about the beauty God has placed in her and the power that gives her. Then talk specifically about why God gave it to her.

Show her the purpose of her power.

Read Proverbs 5:18-19. It tells a man to “rejoice in the wife of your youth.” In other words, a man is to be intoxicated by just one woman. Again and again the Bible confirms that a woman’s intoxicating power is to be shared with only one man within the context of marriage. Until then, it should be under wraps.

Unfortunately, girls today misunderstand God’s purpose for their allure. Instead of waiting to intoxicate one man with their beauty, they intoxicate many men. Many girls enjoy that power. It feels good to

attract a boy’s attention. But what girls need to understand is that a teenage boy’s attraction typically is based on his curiosity and has little to do with what’s special or lovely about her. By using her body to attract the attention of an eager boy, she is misusing the power God has given her.

Explain how the male mind works.

Most young girls wear fashion with much naiveté. They have no idea how their appearance affects boys. A few young girls understand fully what they are doing when they flaunt their bodies, but I find them to be the exception.

To help girls understand how the male mind works, I use an aspect of Gestalt Theory called “closure,” which basically means that the brain tends to finish an incomplete picture. When a guy sees a girl with part of her body bared, he mentally completes the picture. A low-cut blouse, a tight T-shirt, low-slung pants, a mini-skirt, even a long skirt with a high slit—all bare enough to cause a guy to finish the picture.

If a female wants to use the power of her allure as God intended, she needs to be careful not to awaken the imagination of many men by inviting them to complete the picture of her body. Again, it might feel great to attract attention from men, but that attention has nothing to do with her. When a girl understands that male attention — particularly teenage male

Making a Fashion Statement

Mary Mohler believes there are certain clothes Christian women should never wear—ever. Miniskirts, hip-hugger jeans, and skin-tight shirts are some things that fall into that category. Her reason? Christian women have a biblical obligation to dress modestly and reflect holiness.

The world’s attitude toward fashion, Mohler said, should not be the church’s. “The [world’s] attitude is if you’ve got it, flaunt it. Leave as little to the imagination as possible. I don’t believe regenerate Christian women leave home with this attitude.”

Nevertheless, because of naivete, carelessness, busy lifestyles, or cultural pressures, some women dress immodestly in church, Mohler, wife of Southern Baptist Theological Seminary president R. Albert Mohler Jr., said. “What it looks like to the world is, ‘Christian women dress just like we do.’”

She admitted that there are seeker-sensitive issues involved. In the past, people may have looked down on someone not dressed in traditional Sunday morning attire, she said. But what “began as a well-intentioned move to counter that” has gone awry. “Now the flood gates are open, and anything goes. It’s going to be very hard for us to recover and to take steps back [in the other direction].”

“We must remember what battles men face to stay pure as they are stimulated visually by women,” Mohler said. “[To] have it flaunted in their faces . . . at church is an abomination.”

“Whenever I speak on this, mothers of sons say, ‘Please continue to proclaim this message wherever you can. . . . We don’t have daughters . . . but we have sons that are looking at how [other parents’] daughters dress.’”



Establish dialogue about modesty with your daughter early, preferably before puberty. If you wait until she develops to address it, she may feel self-conscious and guilty about the beauty that’s growing in her. The issue is not her body. God made it, and it is beautiful. The issue is what her clothes say about her.

Baptist Press, October 9, 2002

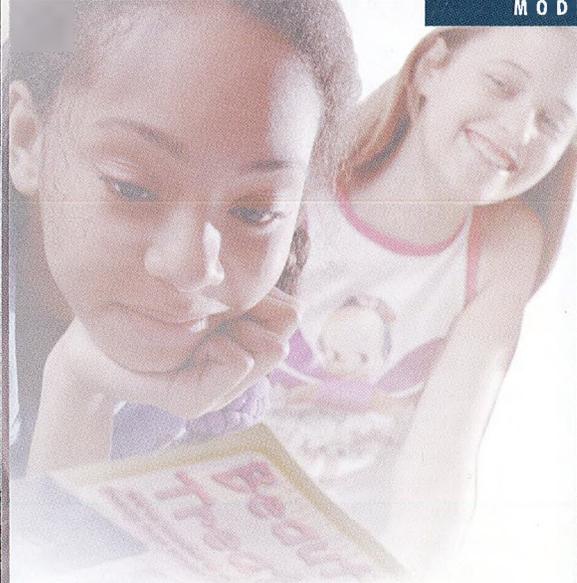
GUARDING HER REPUTATION

Wise moms will help their daughters understand that people will judge them by how they look. A girl needs to know that she invites a host of assumptions about her character when she dresses in a provocative way, and once she is labeled with a poor reputation, it can be difficult to prove otherwise.

Dannah Gresh is the author of *And the Bride Wore White: Seven Secrets to Sexual Purity and Secret Keeper: The Delicate Power of Modesty* (Moody). Both are available at www.familybookstore.net.

This is adapted with permission from an article that originally appeared in the Winter 2002 Christian Parenting Today.

Continued on page 6



Growing Up Too Fast

Fashion magazines, trendy clothing, and even toys that target young girls may be robbing our daughters of their childhood.

“Culture’s ‘hootchie’ factor steams parents of girls” yelled the headline in large print across the newspaper page. Writer Mary Kaye Ritz (Gannett News Service, June 4, 2003) had interviewed a mix of parents and social observers on the increasing sexualization of young girls.

One sixteen-year-old shopping with her family is quoted as teasing her seven-year-old sister about dressing too “hootchie,” while their mother admired a pair of shorts “no longer than a hand” for her younger daughter. And a father was unconcerned when his seven-year-old daughter pulled a Bratz doll from her McDonald’s Happy Meal. Bratz dolls, “with a passion for fashion,” wear platform heels, tube tops, hip-hugging bottoms, and short skirts.

Philosophy professor Poranee Natadecha-Sponsel said that while boys are allowed to be boys, girls don’t get a childhood. “They say girls mature faster, but now we have forced them to mature even faster . . . we channel them to . . . fit into the image that society wants.”

Kay Hymowitz, author of *Ready or Not: What Happens When We Treat Children as Small Adults* (Encounter, 2000), offered sad commentary on the toys and clothes that push children into early maturity. “We gave up in the last twenty-five or thirty years the notion that children needed to be protected from sex and from the gritty realities of life. We express shock and dismay, but there’s a huge market for this. I don’t think there’s enough parental conviction to stop it.”

THE CLOTHES CRISIS — Continued from page 5

attention—has little to do with her personally, she’ll begin to see that she only cheapens herself by playing into this male impulse.

Establish dialogue and expectations early.

If you explain these simple principles to your daughter before puberty she is more likely to embrace them. When we wait until our daughters develop to address modesty, they often feel self-conscious and guilty about the beauty that’s growing in them. The issue is not her body. God made it, and it is beautiful. The issue is what her clothes say about her.

Our daughter, Lexi, is nine, and we’ve said good-bye to spaghetti strap T-shirts. We’ve encouraged her to sit in front of the mirror before she leaves the house in shorts or a skirt so she can make sure her

underpants don’t show. And she’s quick to ask me if I’ve tested my fashion choices. She likes the responsibility that comes with these mature guidelines. Because I’ve introduced this issue early, it’s a neat “girl thing” for us to share, not a rule that causes friction between us. I hope she’ll see the benefits of these choices and keep making wise decisions as she moves into her teen years.

Remember, the battle is not just about clothes.

At the heart of the modesty issue is something precious—a girl’s sense of worth. Sexy clothes grab attention, but for all the wrong reasons. When a girl discovers how easy it is to attract boys with her body, she’ll be less likely to invest in developing the inner qualities that will make her truly beauti-

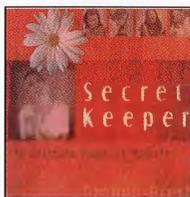
ful. She’ll eventually recognize the shallowness of the attention she’s received, but she may doubt she has more than her body to offer.

Girls also need to know that they invite a host of assumptions about their character when they dress in a provocative way. Sadly, teenagers are not always kind to girls who appear to be open to sexual activity. And once a girl is labeled with a poor reputation, it can be hard to prove otherwise.

Help your daughter discover the gifts for which she wants to be recognized and give her the opportunity to explore those gifts. And help her understand that people really will judge her by how she looks.

You might be asking yourself if this is a battle worth fighting. Isn’t your precious daughter worth a few arguments over hemlines? ☺

BOOKS BY DANNAH GRESH



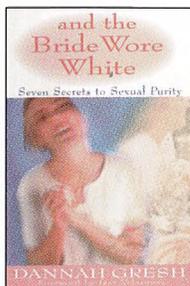
Secret Keeper: The Delicate Power of Modesty

We live in the age of low-rise jeans and backless shirts. Many girls and young women cannot even define modesty, much less know how to live it out.

Dannah Gresh has a message for them: Modesty itself holds a delicate yet formidable power. In a very “cool” way, she teaches that modesty expresses your love for and obedience to God and issues a challenge for one man to earn your virtue.

BKSEC

\$8.99 ea.



And the Bride Wore White: Seven Secrets to Sexual Purity

Dannah uses a warm and revealing writing style to reach the hearts of teen girls, exposing Satan’s lies about sex and giving seven secrets of sexual purity to apply during the dating years. She includes entries from her diaries that

show the joys and heartaches and the successes and failures of her own dating experiences.

BKBRI

\$12.99 ea.

Enough!

PARENTS JOIN LIBRARIANS FED UP WITH PORNOGRAPHY

BY TOM STRODE

The Minneapolis 12 may be "The Dirty Dozen" to the elites of the library world. These twelve librarians at the downtown public library in Minneapolis said "Enough is enough" regarding Internet pornography in their workplace. Stiff-armed by their library's administration, they filed a federal lawsuit in March seeking \$450,000 apiece in damages and an improved work environment.

Their action came after what they described as years of undesired exposure to graphic sexual images, as well as harassment by men viewing porn sites on the library's computers. The librarians said in their suit these regular patrons have engaged in sexual acts while viewing the material, threatened them, and stalked some of them outside the workplace, the *St. Paul Pioneer Press* reported. "We were living in hell, and they were unwilling to acknowledge the problem," said Wendy Adamson, one of the twelve.

The problem of patrons accessing pornography on library computers is not limited to the Minneapolis library. Encouraged by policies of the American Library Association, many public libraries have refused to restrict the use of computers for viewing and even printing hardcore pornography, including child pornography. As a result, the exposure of children to obscene images—both on their initiative and by the actions of adults—has become a reality in too many libraries.

"Librarians have actually told people to mind their own business and look away," said Jan LaRue, chief counsel at Concerned Women for America and

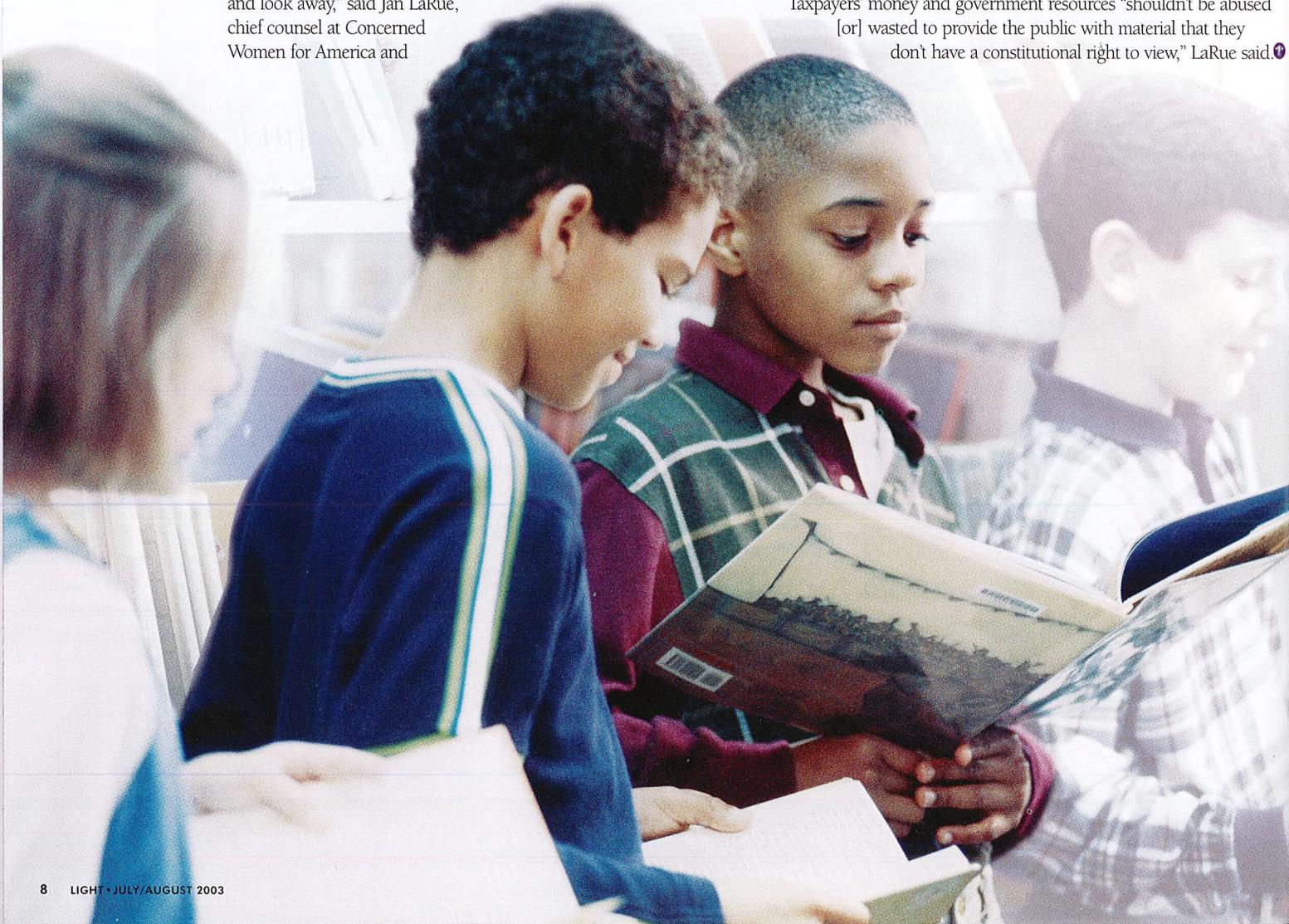
an expert on the issue. Libraries have even reported attempts by adult porn viewers to molest children.

A growing number of libraries are dealing with the problem, at least in some form. By the end of 2001, 43 percent of public libraries had installed filters to screen obscenity and child porn, at least in the children's section, *Library Journal* reported. This marked an increase from 31 percent a year earlier. "That kind of increase is a good rebuttal to the ludicrous claim by the American Library Association that filters don't work," LaRue said.

Parents and other citizens should express their concerns at a meeting of their local library board with the following facts, LaRue said:

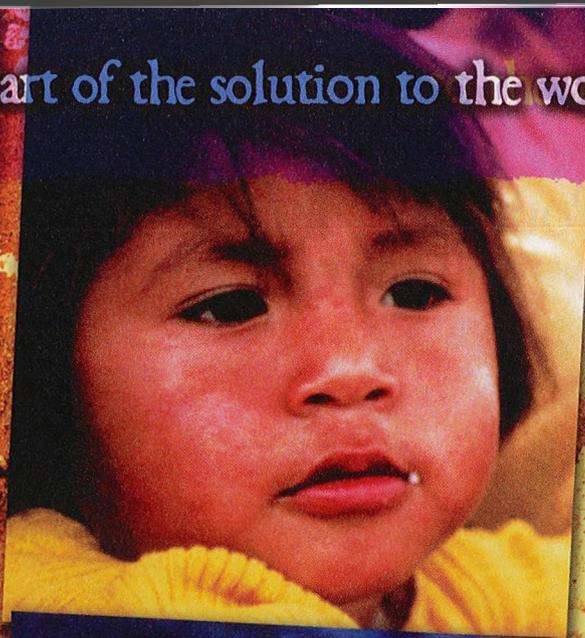
- The ALA is a private trade association that has no authority over local libraries;
- Recent studies, such as that by the Kaiser Foundation (www.kff.org/content/2002/20021210a/Internet_Filtering_News_Release.pdf), demonstrate filters are effective;
- Newer filtering software allows settings to be changed to provide access to wrongly blocked Internet sites;
- The U.S. Supreme Court recently upheld a law that requires filters at libraries that receive federal discounts for Internet use.

Taxpayers' money and government resources "shouldn't be abused [or] wasted to provide the public with material that they don't have a constitutional right to view," LaRue said.



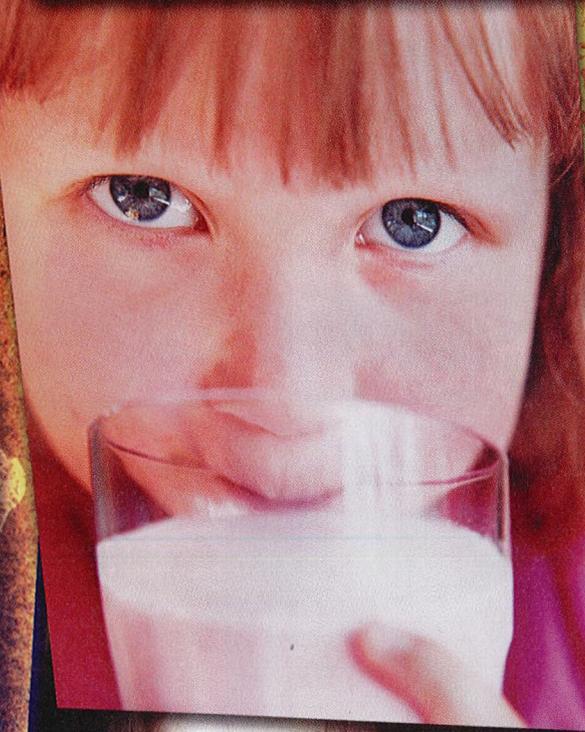
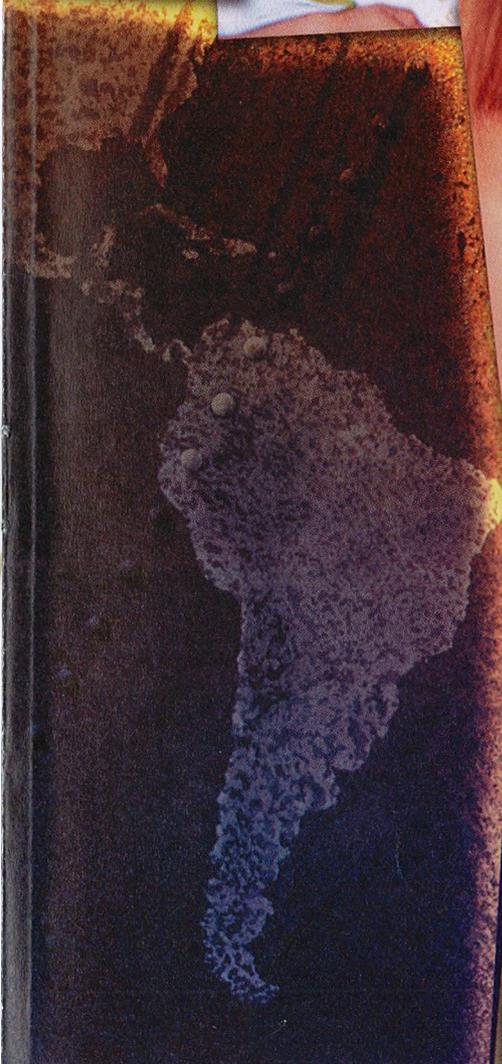
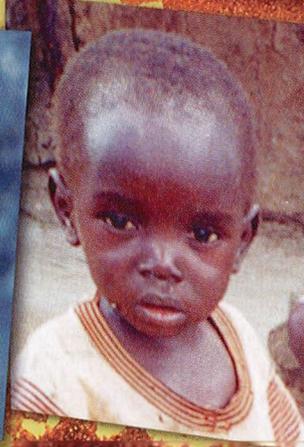
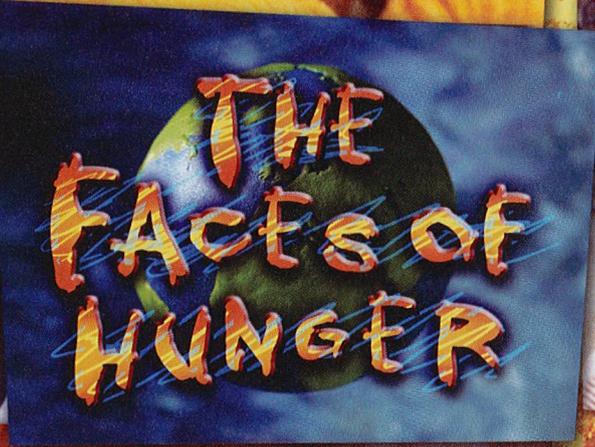
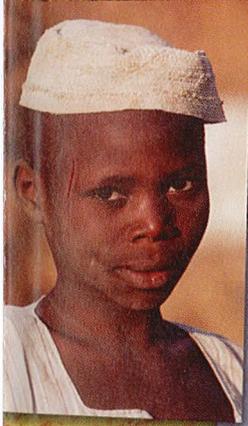


Want to be part of the solution to the world's hunger crisis?



From an inner-city mission in Hamilton, Ohio, to the nation of Malawi in South-eastern Africa, hunger has many faces. It is no respecter of persons, striking the newborn babe to the village elder with equal vehemence, claiming as many as 20,000 lives each day.

In 2002, gifts to the Southern Baptist World Hunger Fund provided over 3.5 million meals for needy people in the United States and



Canada at an amazing average cost of 33 cents each. Through these dedicated efforts to minister to people's physical and spiritual needs, over 17,500 professions of faith were recorded.

Overseas, the World Hunger Fund underwrote over 222 hunger and relief projects in 62 countries. These evangelistically oriented ministries included emergency food aid, well drilling, agricultural and vocational training, and nutrition-related healthcare.

Your gifts to the Southern Baptist World Hunger Fund are used 100 percent for hunger ministry with not a dime taken out for administration or promotion. That's a fact no other hunger ministry can match. Your participation in the Spirit-led work of the World Hunger Fund honors Christ and fulfills His command to care for those in need (Luke 3:11).

—Richard Land

President, The Ethics & Religious Liberty Commission

2.4 Million Pounds of Food Collected for Iraqi Families

By Ricky Hardison (BP)

At press time, a 2.4-million-pound "gift of love" is on its way to hungry Iraqi families, thanks to the generosity of Southern Baptists. Donors spent approximately \$2 million filling these boxes, creating a mass of food exceeding the weight of more than 590 full-size trucks.

Since mid-April, churches from across the country have been filling 70-pound boxes with rice, flour, beans, and other staples of Middle Eastern diets. One box will feed a family of five for approximately one month.

"I can't thank Southern Baptists enough—individuals, Sunday School classes, churches, state conventions, and disaster relief teams," said Jim Brown, director of world hunger and relief ministries at the International Mission Board. "Everyone pitched in to physically help needy Iraqis. I will be forever grateful for the love and concern expressed through their involvement."

The food likely will be in the hands of needy Iraqi families as soon as early August, Brown said. "Relief efforts generally push for great assistance in large cities immediately following a disaster, but humanitarian aid tends typically to die out after a few months. That's exactly when regional workers will team with local officials to supply isolated, needy areas in southern Iraq with assistance."

The boxes, stamped with John 1:17 and a greeting from Southern Baptists in Arabic, "will be specifically delivered to hungry families rather than being mass-distributed at a refugee camp," he said.



Volunteers load boxes of food onto a trailer at Mt. Pleasant Baptist Church in Colonial Heights, Va. Below, workers tightly pack boxes into a shipping container.

"This project will help aid workers build and sustain credible relationships with new Iraqi friends, relationships I believe God will honor and bless in His way and His time."

The hands-on effort has raised awareness of missions in ways that appeals for money often do not. "We've had people who have never before had anything to do with missions bring a bag of flour or a sack of beans to add to their Sunday School class's box," said Nan Sugg, a former missionary to Taiwan now serving with First Baptist Church in Jackson, Miss.

The estimated freight cost of the project is \$325,000, which will be paid out of the IMB's World Hunger Fund, monies that are donated by Southern Baptist churches.



What Difference Can I Personally Make in the Fight Against World Hunger?

\$20 per month might sponsor one child through a private charity.

But by giving \$20 per month through the Southern Baptist World Hunger Fund, you can:

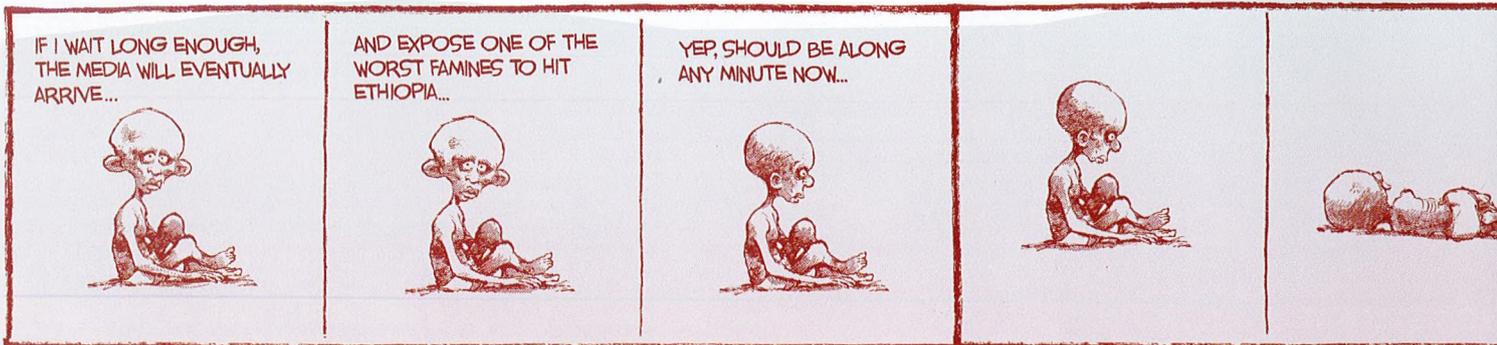
▲ Provide a constant supply of fresh water for 5 families in West Africa	\$ 6.25
▲ Give a meal to 80 homeless women and children in Uganda	9.60
▲ Supply meals to 9 homeless children in Guatemala	.99
▲ Furnish 15-lb. food boxes to 3 needy families in Washington, D.C.	3.15
TOTAL	\$19.99

With a \$20-per-month commitment, you personally can impact as many as 1500 lives in the name of Christ in one year.

Your gifts designated for the Southern Baptist World Hunger Fund can be:

- ▲ Given through your local Southern Baptist Church
- ▲ Sent to your state Baptist convention (NOTE: States vary in how hunger fund gifts are distributed. For more information, contact your state Baptist convention.)
- ▲ Sent to the International Mission Board: 3806 Monument Drive, Richmond, VA 23230-0767
- ▲ Sent to the North American Mission Board: 4200 North Point Parkway, Alpharetta, GA 30022-4176

Suffering in Silence



Cam Cardow, Ottawa Citizen, www.caglecartoons.com

Feeding the Hungry in Malawi

By MIKE CRESWELL

I want to tell you about how Southern Baptists are feeding the hungry in Malawi, a nation of some ten million people in Southeastern Africa. Thousands there are daily facing hunger and starvation. Old people say it's the worst food situation they can remember.

First, you've seen ads that plead for your money to help the starving, anonymous masses. This is not like that. These are not anonymous people! Many of these hungry people are believers in Jesus Christ.

Missionaries you support have helped develop Baptist work in Malawi since the 1950s, building on the efforts of British missionaries going back to the late 1800s, when Scottish missionary-explorer David Livingstone worked here. People say Malawi is responsive to the gospel these days,

but it has taken a century of hard missionary work for that to be said.

Second, you need to know that food is distributed with a high degree of accountability. Your missionaries work closely with Baptist pastors to identify people in their congregations or neighborhoods who are the most needy. This is hard for pastors. If all of your several hundred members are hungry, and there is only food for some, how would you decide who should receive food? Widows and orphans are given high priority—a biblical mandate. People who pick up food or seed packets are named

on lists that have received much thought and prayer.

Third, while the Southern Baptist-sponsored feeding program in Malawi went well last year, it was small when compared to what was needed. SBC missionaries have tried to identify gaps in the programs run by the government and



Families receiving food and seed also receive gospel tracts printed in the Chichewa language.

other organizations and then meet those needs.

Fourth, people in this coverage live close to the edge in the best of years. Even in a "normal" year, people may go hungry, depending on the crops they can raise on their small farms, which average an acre or less in size.

Fifth, you can read elsewhere about whether government leaders or policies contributed to Africa's hunger problem. The fact is, as Christians we're bound to help feed the hungry, whatever the cause.

Sixth, when you give to the World Hunger Fund, not one penny is used for promotion or "overhead." All money is used for food. Few other programs can make that claim.

Southern Baptist giving is saving lives in Malawi, but many people there are still hungry. They are not to the skin-and-bones, near-death state you have seen in years past. In part, Southern Baptists have helped things from getting that bad.

Adapted from Commission, March-April 2003

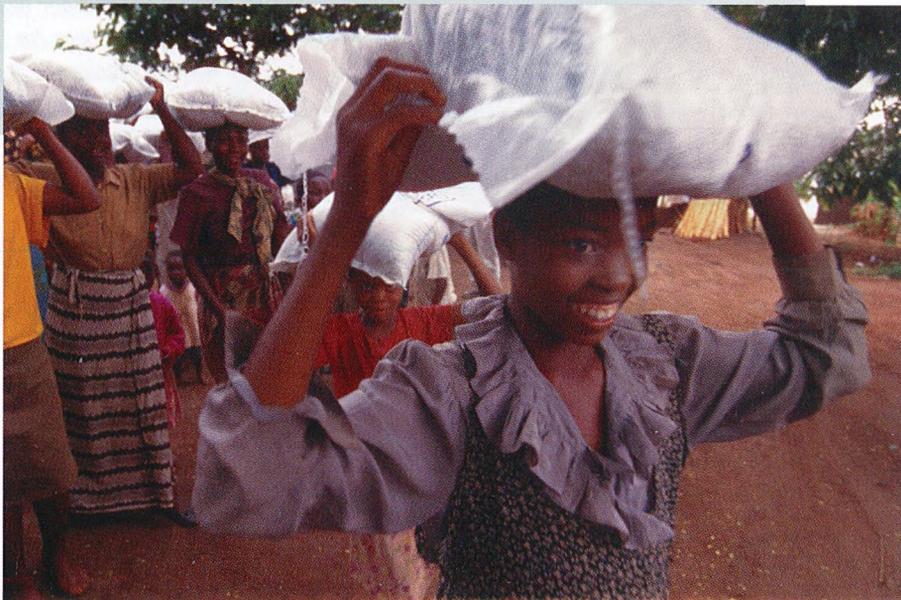
As Baptists distributed food and seed, they also demonstrated God's love as stated in John 3:16.



Referring to the infamous 1984 famine, in which a million Ethiopians starved to death, Ethiopian Prime Minister Meles Zenawi told the BBC last year, "If that was a nightmare, then this will be too ghastly to contemplate." Rep. Frank Wolfe (R-Va.) reported in a Washington Post op-ed (May 11, 2003) that 20 million people could soon be at risk.



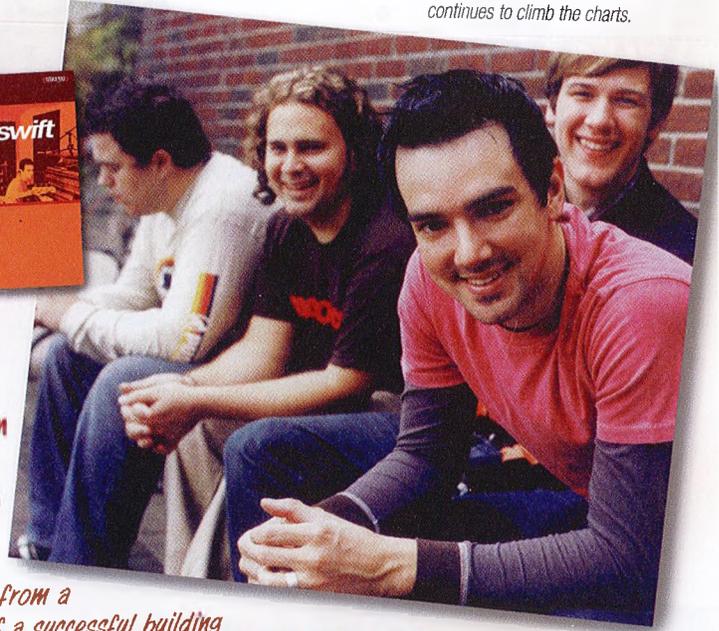
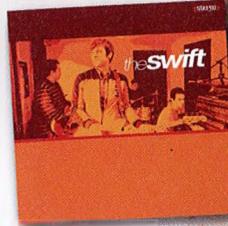
Ottawa Citizen
Caglecartoons.com



Given good rains and hard work, a packet of seed provided by Southern Baptists will feed a family for a year.

Journal author Britt Edwards (foreground) plays the piano and sings with the Christian rock band The Swift (www.the-swift.org). Their self-titled release on Flicker Records continues to climb the charts.

April 17, 2003
Victory Chapel (Cleveland, Ohio)
Dear Journal,



I don't believe I've ever been so humbled. The band and my wife and I stepped out of our new fifteen-passenger van in front of Victory Chapel. This church, no bigger than some choir lofts I've seen, made a bigger impression on me than any of the 3000-seat worship centers we have visited so far on the tour [the Go Tour, with Audio Adrenaline headlining].

It was a long shot from an auditorium, far from a mega-church campus, and certainly not the result of a successful building fund drive. Nonetheless, it ministers daily the love of Jesus in ways that some churches can't even fathom. Lora, our contact at the church, told us the church serves nearly five thousand meals a month with the money they receive from the World Hunger fund. (That's the hunger ministry we've been promoting on tour.)

The church's front door is right off of the sidewalk and opens into a small hallway that has on the left a huge closet full of clothes available for people in need and a classroom where Bible studies are taught in a variety of languages. On the other side of the hall is a room that serves as a pantry. Immediately ahead is where the church holds worship services. An out-of-tune piano and an organ that Lora wasn't even sure worked sat to the right of the pulpit.



Alex lived under a nearby bridge until someone at Victory Chapel invited him in. Today he lives at the church and "takes care of the place." Britt found himself envious of Alex's passion for God.

But elsewhere in the room were things that suggested this room was more than a place to hold worship services. Pushed up against one wall was a serving buffet, with a stack of bread crates holding hot dog buns next to it. Folding chairs and folding tables told me this room easily transformed into a dining center several times a week for the poor in the community.

Alex, a fellow who lives at the church and kind of takes care of the place, told us he lived under a nearby bridge until someone at the church invited him in. I was most impressed with Alex and his unabashed love for the Lord. His prayer for us before we loaded up the van and hit the road was so passionate for God that, to be honest, it made me envious. I'm sure he has struggles that I will probably never have to deal with, but he was so thankful for what God has been doing in his life.

And What About ME? I don't know when the last time was that I said, "Thank You, Lord, for my food" and really meant it...honestly, sincerely meant it with all my heart. Lord, please put a burden on my heart for the poor. How can I leave my brother in need and still say that I love You? Thank You for churches like Victory that take the little given to them and multiply it for Your kingdom!

Most of us have so much that we lack for nothing. And the problem is that we've grown to depend on all the stuff that we've accumulated. Then we think that we are somehow in need if we are missing an ingredient for a recipe necessary to complete the evening's three-course meal. Oh, how backwards! How far can we run from the words of Jesus in Matthew 25? "Depart from me, you cursed,... for I was hungry and you gave me no food; I was thirsty and you gave me no drink."

Oklahoma Program Still Touches Lives Despite Recession

The missing teeth and precious smile of the young Kiowa Indian girl tugged the heartstrings of many readers in 1997. Elsie was seven years old when she was photographed eating fried bread at the Sunday lunch served by her church. Six years later, this vivacious teen is still active in the Fellowship of American Indians Mission and still enjoying the weekly meals that she and about seventy other children receive. This tiny congregation touches literally thousands of lives through their ministry of compassion and grace.

Each week, 160-170 hot meals are served, 200 sack lunches are distributed, and 3-4

families receive groceries. For some, the problem is unemployment. The community of Chickasha, Oklahoma, has experienced the sting of recession like most of the nation. For others, the problem is under-employment. Many work hard, but their jobs are low paying. In some families, additions result in the children receiving inadequate food.

For Elsie and her four siblings, the meals

at church are bright spots in lives that are often defined by need. According to Tiwana Edwards, wife of pastor John Edwards, "For some of the children, the only nutritious meals they get are at the church. The children get in the van and ask what there will be to eat. Often they eat three or four hot dogs or sandwiches each. Every one of them comes back for seconds."

Sadly, the decline in gifts to the World Hunger Fund over the last three years has spelled hardship for this faith ministry. When asked how they have coped with the

decline in funds, Mrs. Edwards replied, "We skimp. We've changed the menu to less expensive things. The meals are not as nutritious as what we used to give them."

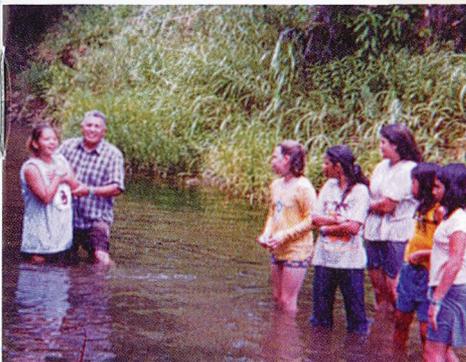
But lives are eternally impacted through this humble ministry that sees an average of three people per week come to faith in Jesus Christ. Two years ago, Elsie received Christ as her Savior and Lord, offering living proof of the power of Christian compassion.



Kiowa Indian Elsie Horse today with a young relative



Elsie Horse in 1997



Pastor John Edwards baptizes new believers in Honey Creek. The Fellowship of American Indians Mission sees an average of three people per week come to faith in Jesus Christ.

NEW LIFE BAPTIST MISSION

New Life Baptist Mission is a Southern Baptist inner-city mission in Hamilton, Ohio, just north of Cincinnati. Our varied ministries include a soup kitchen, food pantry, clothes closet, and furniture and household goods distribution. We also partner with a crisis pregnancy center and offer the opportunity for people to complete court-ordered community service hours. All of these ministries are supported by daily prayer time and worship services. The mission serves about 3000 hot meals and provides groceries for about 600 families each month.

The mission also gives an opportunity for Christians to serve and witness for the

Lord. Each month, local churches and visiting mission teams provide 300-350 volunteers. Serving meals, washing dishes, cleaning, picking up donations, and

By LARRY & LINDA GAINES

bagging groceries all display the love of Christ. Our strongest witness may be the attitudes and actions we display while we work.

One of the mission's biggest impacts has been on people who complete community service hours here. Many volunteer after completing their required hours, saying the Christian atmosphere helps keep them from returning to an old lifestyle.

Daily prayer time is vital here. God answers prayers daily for our physical and spiritual needs. He has provided a new furnace, a van, food, funding, and an ample work force. Our prayer board gives others a place to request His touch. Answered prayers are continual cause for praise and awe at the mission.

Our newest challenge is building a new complex to replace our outdated facility. We will relocate and continue from a smaller building during the construction. Many have volunteered their time and labor. Present tasks and hurdles are that of raising funds, getting permits and approvals, and final plan design and approval.

New Life Baptist Mission is an everyday adventure with God. Please keep us in your prayers.



New Life Mission relies on 300-350 volunteers to help serve 3,000 hot meals each month.

By Tom Atwood

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

The Bible and the Poor

"Why should we give to the poor? After all, Jesus said there would always be poor people, so there's not much we can do about it." You've probably heard that viewpoint. However, no serious Bible student believes that Jesus intended His statement in Matthew 26:11, "The poor you will always have with you, but you will not always have me" to be a prohibition of helping the poor, the hungry, and the homeless. This faulty interpretation is a result of ignoring the context in which Jesus' words were spoken then isolating the passage from others that clearly teach us to give loving care to those in need.

A closer look at the same event in other gospels sheds some needed light. Mark includes some other words from Jesus in reference to the poor: "And you can help them any time you want" (14:7). John's account (12:1-8) plainly sets forth these words as Jesus' response to the carnal, selfish protest of Judas, who had been pilfering money from the money bag and resented the lavish gift of expensive perfume poured on Jesus' feet.

Again and again, the Scriptures instruct us to care for the needs of the poor. In the Old Testament law special provision was made to alleviate poverty. Among other things, in the Sabbath year and the Year of Jubilee debts were forgiven, slaves were freed, and land was restored to the original owners (Lev. 25). The word of the Lord through the Old Testament prophets condemned the oppression of the poor and commended those who were sensitive to their needs. God speaks of the good king Josiah, "He defended the cause of the poor and needy, and so all went well. Is that not what it means to know me?" (Jer. 22:16).

It was commonly believed in Jesus' day that wealth indicated God's

pleasure and poverty God's curse. In that ideological environment Jesus told of a rich man who died and went to torment in hell and a poor man whose death brought an escort of angels to Abraham's side (Luke 16:19-23). Our Lord's correction of this misguided stereotype establishes a much-needed model for all who follow Him. Poverty never diminishes the value of a human created in God's image; thus Jesus fed the hungry and taught that a neighbor is anyone in need.

Evangelicals have at times been afflicted with astigmatism in the matter of caring for human need. Some have drawn a distorted conclusion from the biblical witness and ministered to spiritual needs exclusively. Serving the needs of the poor, the hungry, and the homeless is clearly a part of God's purpose for His servant people.

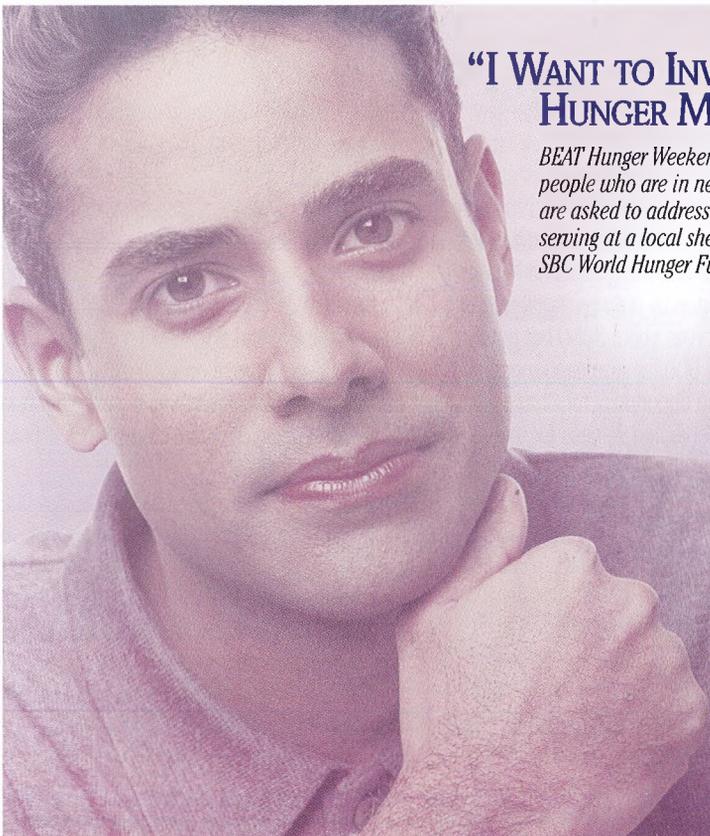
Meeting human need is consistent with our mission.

When the Jerusalem church commissioned Paul to go to the Gentiles, he was specifically instructed to "remember the poor" (Gal. 2:9-10).

Meeting human need is commanded by Scripture. Jesus concluded His teaching on the final separation of the "sheep from the goats" by saying, "Whatever you did not do for one of the least of these, you did not do for me" (Matt. 25:31-46).

Meeting human need is a consequence of saving faith. James is painfully clear: Faith without action is useless (2:14-17).

Meeting human need is the character of love. The love of God in us always moves us to minister to others both spiritually and physically. "Let us not love with words... but with actions and in truth. This then is how we know that we belong to the truth" (1 John 3:18).



"I WANT TO INVOLVE MY CHURCH IN HUNGER MINISTRY. WHERE DO WE START?"

BEAT Hunger Weekend introduces church members to an easy and effective way to help people who are in need. Churches participating in the BEAT Hunger Weekend program are asked to address hunger needs in their town by hosting a canned food drive or serving at a local shelter, and having church members raise money in support of the SBC World Hunger Fund.

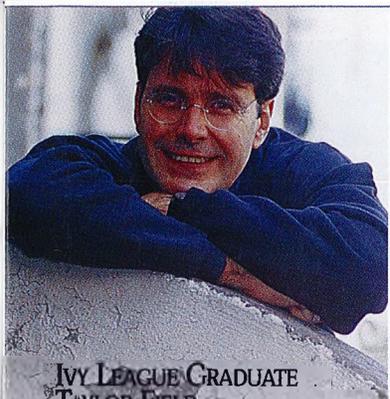
Visit our Web site to learn more about the official BEAT Hunger resource kit, newly redesigned with everything you'll need to hold a BEAT Hunger retreat in your church once a year for 3 years. The kit includes a new and improved leader's manual, an exciting new video, reproducible pages for your students, and more.

www.beathungerweekend.com





MINISTRY RESOURCES



IVY LEAGUE GRADUATE TAYLOR FIELD surprised many when he pursued inner city ministry right out of school. But Field has been ministering in New York's inner city since 1986, and continues to find the work exhilarating, humbling, and definitely eye-opening.

His first book, *A Church Called Graffiti* (Broadman & Holman, 2001) tells the story of his journey to come to terms with the message of Christ in the turbulent and chaotic circumstances of the inner city.

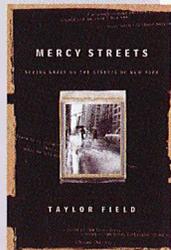
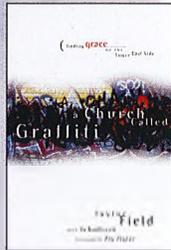
His latest book, *Mercy Streets* (Broadman & Holman, Sept. 2003), focuses on the Ephesians 1:18 concept of "having the eyes of your heart enlightened," and concludes, as Francis Schaeffer did, that people are "magnificent, even in ruin." Field teaches that we all must see with the eyes of Christ as we live to share His hope with others and uses colorful stories of people whose tragedy turns to redemption to prove his point.

Both books are available at:



For more information call the Ethics & Religious Liberty Commission at 1-800-475-9127 or e-mail questions to orders@erlc.com.

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Faith & Family: World Hunger

Often used as a bulletin insert, this undated 4-page piece applies Scripture to real-life scenarios. It also includes statistics, prayer and action points, and steps to becoming a Christian. It can be used on World Hunger Sunday, October 12, and throughout the year when sharing what Christians can do to help the millions who face hunger on a daily basis.



WHBULK03 \$4.95/50

World Hunger Poster

This 11"x 17" poster complements the Faith & Family handout to help raise awareness of the plight of 800 million people worldwide.



WHPOS03 \$1.50 ea.

Hunger Facts

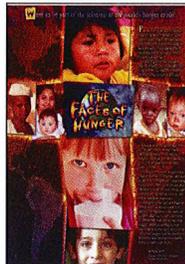
This informative ministry aid contains compelling graphics and startling statistics to quickly inform your congregation regarding the awesome scope of this global problem. Also featured are details of Southern Baptist involvement in hunger ministries.

WHFACU03

\$4.00/10

Faces of Hunger

This 8-page magazine encourages believers to support the Southern Baptist World Hunger Fund. Readers will learn what Southern Baptists are doing around the world and in the U.S. to meet needs of the hungry and hurting. They will also realize they can personally impact the lives of hungry people in their community and around the globe with food for the body and the Good News of Jesus Christ.



WHHUN03

\$12.50/50

Change Canisters

Change canisters serve as a great mission project for youth groups, missions organizations, Sunday School classes, or other church groups. They can be placed in area businesses or even prominent places in the church. Lives are touched as the sponsoring group collects the proceeds for the Southern Baptist World Hunger Fund, which uses 100% for hunger relief.



WHCAN-4 (4 per box)

\$10.00/4

Rice Bowls

Rice bowl banks are a great way for a church to promote awareness and raise funds for the Southern Baptist World Hunger Fund. All ages will enjoy participating as each family places a bowl in their home. One-time use. Shipping paid.



WHBOW (50 per box)

\$24.00/50

Hunger Fund Offering Envelopes

These envelopes feature the Southern Baptist World Hunger Fund logo and are used to encourage support for the World Hunger Fund, where 100% of gifts received are used for hunger ministry.



WHENV (sold in lots of 50 only)

\$3.10/50

Dime-a-Day for Hungry People

These coin folders hold 30 dimes and are designed for children to set aside 10¢ per day for world hunger. At the end of each month, children can cash in their dimes and send \$3.00 to the World Hunger Fund. These reusable cards make wonderful teaching tools.

WHDIM (sold in lots of 10)

\$5.50/10

The Bible Speaks on Hunger

The Bible speaks clearly and frequently of those who are hungry and in need. Pastors, teachers, and other leaders will find this pamphlet a valuable resource in educating and equipping the saints on this vital issue.

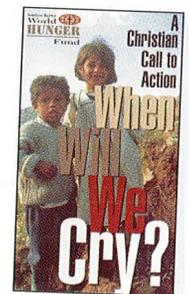


BSHUNU

\$4.60/20

When Will We Cry?

This penetrating video introduces viewers to hunger and relief ministries in the U.S. and around the world. Featuring comments of appreciation from SBC agency executives for systematic giving, the video allows Southern Baptists to see how God is using their hunger fund gifts.



VTWHE (VHS, 28 min.)

\$7.00 ea.

To make a donation toward hunger relief, please send your gift to the Southern Baptist World Hunger Fund in care of your local church, your state Baptist convention office, NAMB, or IMB (see page 2 for more details). If you would like to give on a monthly basis through bank draft, call 1-800-475-9127 for details.

For additional products call 1-800-475-9127 or visit www.familybookstore.net. E-mail questions to: orders@erlc.com.

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Scripture quotation from the *Holman Christian Standard Bible*
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All bulletin inserts are 4" x 7 1/8".

The way to heaven takes a step of faith. *How to find eternal life.*

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 sinners Christ died for us!" (Romans 5:8 HCSB)

Sin earns death, but God gives life.

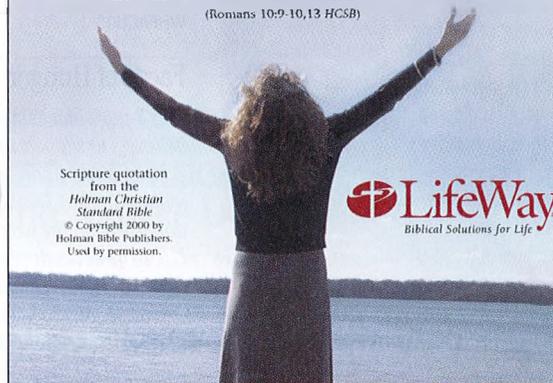
"For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord." (Romans 6:23 HCSB)

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."

(Romans 10:9-10,13 HCSB)

Scripture quotation from the *Holman Christian Standard Bible*
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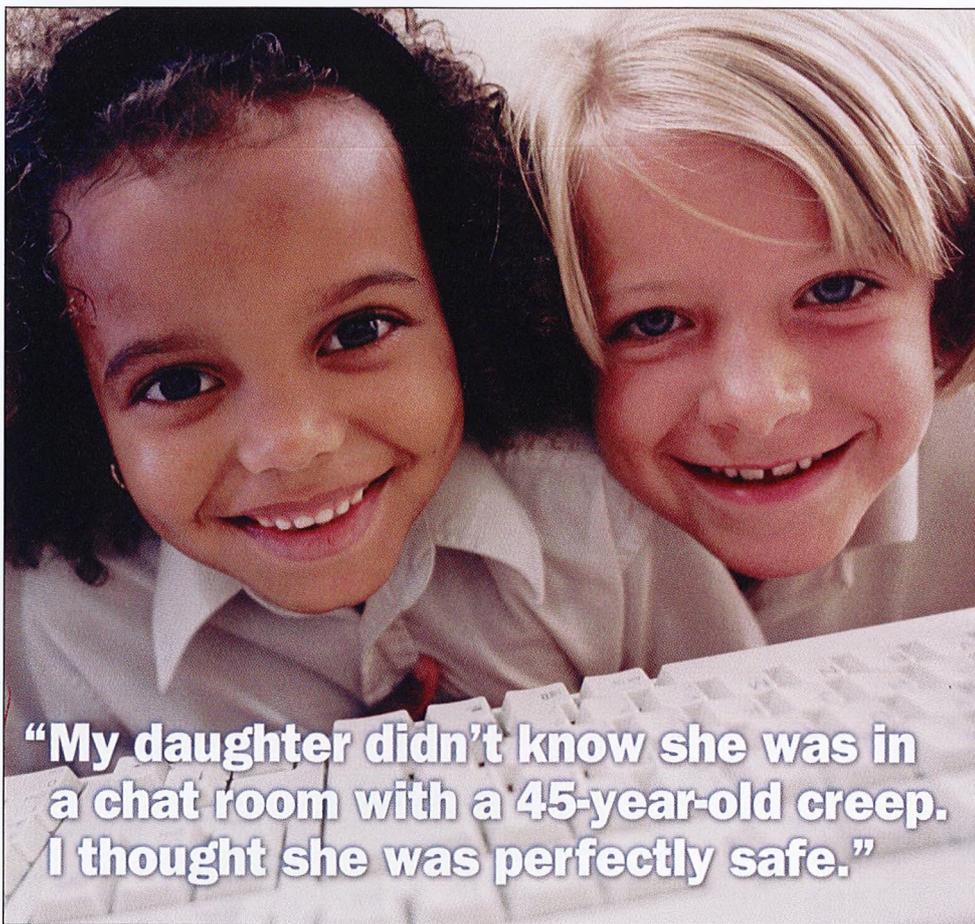
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or **Email: info@lifeway.com**

L8-03



“My daughter didn’t know she was in a chat room with a 45-year-old creep. I thought she was perfectly safe.”

Most families who are concerned about pornography and other objectionable material on the Internet have tried a filtering service. If your experience is like mine, you may have been disappointed at how ineffective the service is—either because it is so porous or so easy to disable. Many parents have given up, allowing their families to be on-line unprotected. While understandable, that decision is very risky.

The good news is that there is now another option in the filtered Internet arena—Bsafe Online. Bsafe Online doesn’t use older, slower proxy servers to filter content but instead has developed its own proprietary technology to effectively and quickly monitor the Web. The filter program on your computer works with their filtering system to reduce verification traffic and increase speed without sending all the Web pages and their contents through their system. Unlike other products, there is no perceptible difference while surfing the Web with their filter. Bsafe Online has very high-speed/high-capacity

servers located on direct network connections to the Internet backbone. Bsafe Online, which can be used with any Internet service provider (ISP), scans the Internet daily using automated tools and manual methods to produce a database of blocked sites. The database is maintained at various regional locations and is accessed by a service component that is downloaded from them and runs on the user’s computer. The service is difficult to detect, requires minimal system resources, and uses a proprietary filtering technology that Bsafe developed to provide maximum filtering with minimum bandwidth.

Bsafe uses filtering criteria to block Web sites featuring such issues as cults, drug use, gambling, hate, pornography, and more. They also offer firewall protection and Web-based protected e-mail, as well filters for corporate settings that can be customized.

I encourage you to visit Bsafe Online today at <http://bsafeonline.com>. I love my family too much to allow them to surf the Internet with on-line predators and smut peddlers. —EDITOR

Bsafe
ONLINE

Protecting the family: It’s what parents do.

The next “call” may be to your family. Will you take a stand?

“When you believe strongly about something, one family can make a difference.”

Getting library cards for their children was not the expected warm and fuzzy experience for Bill and Shannon Royce.

After two years of battles with their public library and even the city council, the Royces finally were able in early July to obtain cards for their sons under conditions they could agree to as concerned Christian parents. By then, some in their community had vilified their efforts.

It seemed a simple, coming-of-age event when Caleb, now eight, came home from kindergarten to announce he could get a library card through his school. His parents discovered, however, the only way he could receive one was if they signed away the right to inquire of the library what materials he had checked out, even in order to find an overdue book that might have been misplaced at home.

The policy of the Falls Church, Va., public library provided for absolute privacy rights for minors, even six-year-olds. The library board found support for its stand in policies of the American Library Association, the same private trade association that challenged in court the authority of Congress to require Internet filters on computers in public libraries that accept federal funds.

The Royces, members of First Baptist Church, Alexandria, Va., appealed to the library board but were rebuffed. The board unanimously affirmed its stance three times.

The battle moved to the city council. Shannon gained more than 180 names on a petition seeking a change in the policy. The *Falls Church News-Press* took a stand against the effort. The city’s Democratic Committee placed an ad in the paper, expressing concern over Shannon’s connection with the SBC’s Ethics & Religious Liberty Commission. (She was the ERLC’s director of government relations at the time and is now a consultant to the agency.)

The Royces and their allies won a partial victory in April when the council voted 4-3 for a resolution permitting parental access to library records for children under fourteen.

On July 1, Bill, Shannon, Caleb, and Nathan, five, went to the library and received the boys’ cards.

“Parents need to sit up and take notice that even a library is not a safe haven,” Shannon said. “Our role as parents is to stand in the gap, have our armor on, and teach our children to do the same. The cost seemed heavy at times, but now my children understand from the heart that when you believe strongly about something, one family can make a difference.” ☺



Unveiling Islam

You need to know what's behind the shroud.

BY DWAYNE HASTINGS

Terrorist acts, the war on terrorism, and combat in Afghanistan and Iraq have brought many Americans face-to-face with a faith they barely knew before September 11, 2001. To hear some media commentators and politicians talk, Islam is all about peace. But some who know the religion intimately are making clear that assertion is not quite accurate.

Facts

- ▲ There are approximately 6 million Muslims currently living in the U.S.
- ▲ There are 1.3 billion Muslims in the world today.
- ▲ There is not a single true democracy among the 55 Muslim nations in the world.
- ▲ Muslim immigrant percentages in the populations of various European nations range from 10-20%.

- ▲ Mohammed engaged in 47 battles, and the Koran includes 109 specific verses about war.
- ▲ The Koran prescribes armed struggle, polygamy, and slavery as normative for Muslims in perpetuity until Islam becomes "victorious over every other religion" (Koran 61:9).
- ▲ "Believers, make war on the infidels who dwell around you" (Koran 9:123).
- ▲ "Believers! Retaliation is decreed for you in bloodshed!" (Koran 2:178).

A peaceful faith?

Today over 300,000 young men are being trained as holy warriors in madrassahs, Ergun Caner said. "These young men, mujahideen, are tactically trained with weapons for the purpose of infiltration into the unholy places and the expulsion of the kafir (infidels) from the land of the Muslim," explained Caner, who authored the book *Unveiling Islam* with his brother Emir Caner. In both the Qur'an and the Hadith, the holy books of Islam, the kafir must be converted or conquered, he says.

Caner insisted that jihad is not personal struggle for piety, as some have alleged since September 11, 2001. "This is the most understated irony in history," he continued, saying Muslims pride themselves on the fact that things have not changed since the days of Mohammed. And he should know. Caner was reared in a strict, devout Islamic home and was a member of the Islamic Youth Jihad in Columbus, Ohio.

"The central core of Mohammed's teaching is militaristic. Everything is based on victory. Jihad is the highest and noblest honor," he stressed, saying news commentators and other so-called experts are seeking to redefine the religion as a peace-loving faith. Caner believes those who plotted and carried out the attacks on American soil, as well as all other terrorist assaults against Western interests, understand the Qur'an well and are following the "teachings of the jihad to the letter."

Islamic "evangelism" terror-filled

While it wasn't his intention, President Bush uttered a half-truth when he said the U.S. is not at war with Islam, suggested Caner, professor of theology and church history at Liberty University in Lynchburg, Va. "A huge portion of Islam is at war with us—not with America the geopolitical superpower, but with America the Christian nation. This is their crusade," he said.

The surge in terrorism against the West and Jews worldwide is not simply an aberrant, extremist expression of Islam, Caner insisted.

"There are huge sections

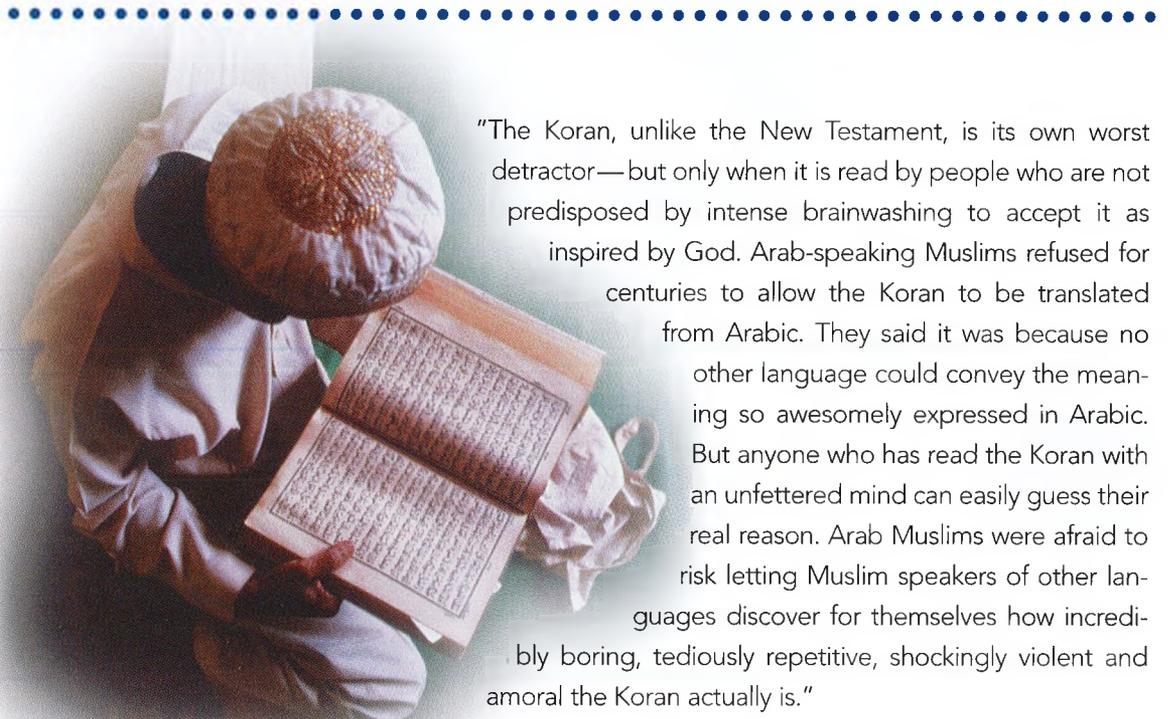
of Islam that are not only in declared holy war against us, they consider themselves the purists," he continued. "The people who call themselves Christians who set up a compound somewhere and seek to pick people off with a gun or blow up a clinic in the name of Jesus do so against Christ's teachings," he explains. "Yet when a Muslim straps bombs to himself, believing it is his task to die for Allah, he does so in adherence to Islamic teachings."

This is the fulfillment of their faith, he says. "Mohammed's final words were, 'Turn the pagans out of the Arabian Peninsula' (Hadith 5:176)," he stated.

Jihad manifests itself in more ways than just terrorism and attacks on non-Muslims, Caner warned. "Muslims do not want Christian missionaries in their countries, yet they are determined to spread Islam across the world. That too is jihad. I call the recent attempts to redefine Islam the 'Purpose-driven Mosque,'" Caner continued, saying it appears that many of these people are using a set of talking points that have been sketched out to make Islam appear "more palatable."

"And oddly enough, 34,000 non-Muslim people have converted to Islam since September 11, 2001, according to pollster George Gallup," Caner said.

Continued on page 12



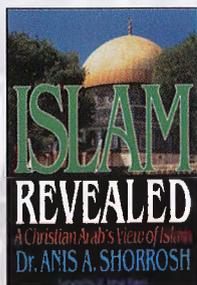
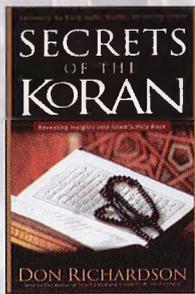
"The Koran, unlike the New Testament, is its own worst detractor—but only when it is read by people who are not predisposed by intense brainwashing to accept it as inspired by God. Arab-speaking Muslims refused for centuries to allow the Koran to be translated from Arabic. They said it was because no other language could convey the meaning so awesomely expressed in Arabic. But anyone who has read the Koran with an unfettered mind can easily guess their real reason. Arab Muslims were afraid to risk letting Muslim speakers of other languages discover for themselves how incredibly boring, tediously repetitive, shockingly violent and amoral the Koran actually is."

Don Richardson, *Secrets of the Koran* (Regal)

Secrets of the Koran: Revealing Insights into Islam's Holy Book

BY DON RICHARDSON

Is the Koran a book of peace or a book of war? Is there really an Islamic strategy for world domination? If you want to know what the Koran is really about, you have to know what it really says. Don Richardson gives you an inside look at the Koran, helping to separate fact from fiction. (Regal)



Islam Revealed: A Christian Arab's View of Islam

BY ANIS A. SHOROSH

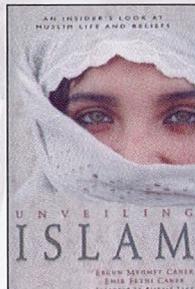
Drawing on his experiences as a Palestinian-born Arab Christian plus years of research, Dr. Shorosh explains the driving force behind the fanatical, moderate, and conservative sects of Islam.

His comparisons of the Islam Koran with the Hebrew-Christian Bible reveal the contradictions and inaccuracies that form the basis for Muslim beliefs. Shorosh also contrasts the turbulent life of Islam's prophet, Muhammad, with the holy, virtuous life of Jesus. (Nelson)

Unveiling Islam: An Insider's Look at Muslim Life and Beliefs

BY ERGÜN MEHMET CANER
AND EMIR FETHI CANER

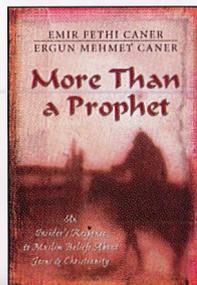
Islam often is obscured by a veil of unfamiliar beliefs, customs, and practices. But what is Islam? Raised as Sunni Muslims by a leader in the mosque, the authors have lived the Muslim life. Now Christians and highly respected theologians, the Caner brothers give an unprecedented insider's look at Islam and present a practical strategy Christians can use to open a productive dialogue with Muslims. (Kregel)



More Than a Prophet: An Insider's Response to Muslim Beliefs About Jesus & Christianity

BY ERGÜN MEHMET CANER
AND EMIR FETHI CANER

To Muslims, Jesus is a prophet, one of many throughout history. For Christians, Jesus is more than a prophet; He is God incarnate, Savior, and Lord. *More Than a Prophet* answers nearly 150 questions about Islamic and Christian faith and is an indispensable handbook for Christians who want to share their faith with sensitivity and intellectual honesty. (Kregel)



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UNVEILING ISLAM—

Continued from page 11

Fundamentals of the faith

According to Caner, faithful Muslims go to the mosque every Friday, practice Ramadan and fast, read the Qur'an, and seek to work out their salvation. "Within Islam there is not atonement for sin, it is weighed by Allah on a balance scale," he said.

Every Muslim believes you can follow the five pillars of Islam (its fundamental beliefs), die, and still go to "hellfire" if you have done more bad than good. "You must be 51 percent righteous to make it into paradise," Caner said, quoting his brother and co-author Emir.

In fact, jihad provides the Muslim the only true eternal security, for Allah promises jihad martyrs "eternal forgiveness," Caner said.

As a teenager, Caner was shocked when a friend asked him to church. "No one had ever invited me to church. I had never been exposed to Christians who were actually loving, and I had never been exposed to the Gospel," he said.

"I went into the church assuming I would experience animosity, that they were going to hate me. As a Muslim youth I was taught that we are at war with one another. Instead, the people in that church loved me to the cross and the pastor unapologetically preached that by repentance and turning your heart to Jesus Christ you would find forgiveness—no scales involved. After hearing the message that the atonement of Christ meant that I didn't have to shed my blood, I ran to the altar that Thursday night," he recalled.

Not surprisingly, Caner's family was not pleased with his decision to embrace Christ. His father told him never to speak of it again. "When someone turns to Christ within a Muslim family, it is not just a dishonorable

act. The Hadith teaches that if anybody abandons his Islamic faith, he is to be killed," he said, noting that it was considered an act of mercy when his family disowned him and his brother instead of having them killed.

on the fact that somebody taught me that Jesus couldn't have been a prophet in Islam because in John chapter 8 Jesus Christ said He was God. If He claims to be God, He can't be a prophet in Islam because a man

Allah: God's name of essential being in Islam.

Muslim: "One who submits to Allah." Follower of Islam.

Qur'an: The collected texts of Allah's revelation, corresponding with an original in Allah's heaven. Also transliterated "Koran."

Surah: A chapter in the Qur'an.

Injil: The New Testament Gospels, as revised in the Qur'an.

Hadith: "Story." Collection of sayings and examples of Muhammad; highest authority after the Qur'an.

Mujahidin: Muslims who fight in the holy wars.

Madrasah: Islamic religious school.

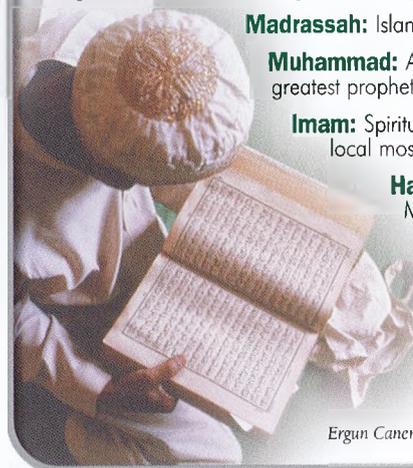
Muhammad: Allah's final and greatest prophet. ﷺ

Imam: Spiritual leader in the local mosque.

Hajj: Pilgrimage to Mecca and one of the 5 pillars (fundamentals) of Islam. Every Muslim must make this journey once.

Kafir: Infidel.

from *Unveiling Islam* by
Ergun Caner and Emir Caner (Kregel)



Who is Jesus?

Soon after September 11, Caner said, one of the biggest churches in the United States brought an imam into their pulpit and gave him full and free reign to speak. His opening line was, "We believe in Jesus. As a matter of fact, we believe in Jesus more than you do." Caner says Muslims are taught that Jesus was one of a myriad of prophets, who as a babe in his cradle said, "I am servant of Allah."

"If you ask a Muslim if they believe in Jesus, they will say absolutely. But ask them if He is Lord and God; that is the cutting point. My salvation hinged

who claims to be God is disqualified as a prophet.

"You can't win a Muslim to Christ using traditional evangelistic methods," Caner said, saying Christians must build bridges to reach a Muslim. "You have to find ways for them to trust you because for a Muslim trust is everything. If they trust you, they may not like what you say; but there will come a time when they will investigate what you are saying. Once they are listening, focus on the atonement as the finished work of Christ and the grace of Jesus to do for us what we cannot do for ourselves," he said. †

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Gambling as a virtue?

BY DWAYNE HASTINGS

William Bennett plays the slots, or at least he used to. The well-known author and public servant was outed by journalists who thought they had discovered inconsistency in Bennett's advocacy of public and private virtues and his serious interest in gambling. A casino insider

GAMBLING IN THE GOLDEN YEARS

Gambling among older Americans has increased dramatically. Between 1975 and 1999, the number of individuals over 65 who had gambled swelled from 35% to 80%. Older gamblers have their own set of serious problems, particularly regarding the percentage of their income they gamble. One study of 49 problem gamblers aged 56 and over showed that age and gender are important factors in gambling behavior.

	MEN	WOMEN
Age First Gambled	21.2	41.7
Age Started Gambling Regularly	33.2	54.8
Years of Gambling Problems	16.0	5.6
Median Amount of Monthly Income Gambled in Past Month	187%	249%

Data: *The Wager*, June 19, 2002

revealed the depth of Bennett's interest in \$500-a-play slot and video machines.

Those opposed to gambling, who believe it is an immoral activity, might take heart in the hue and cry over the former anti-drug czar's reported gambling escapades, until they see that most Americans—a growing number, in fact—feel gambling is not a vice. Is gambling a virtue then?

In reality, most Americans don't see anything inconsistent with Bennett's promotion of "family values" and virtues and his costly infatuation. A recent Gallup poll found that 63 percent of Americans view gambling as a morally acceptable activity.

So is gambling really OK? Is it just a harmless, entertaining diversion for those who have

cash to burn? Or is it a potentially harmful, perhaps addictive, behavior?

Even the gambling industry admits that some people (an estimated 3 to 7 percent of the population) are biologically wired to be pathological gamblers—a danger to themselves, their families, and society. Addiction rates for teenagers are estimated to be as high as 11 percent—a dire fact in light of a growing and very accessible gambling venue, the Internet. Studies show that easy access to a gambling outlet increases the likelihood of addictive behavior.

In 1980, the American Psychiatric Association classified compulsive gambling as a mental disorder. Addicts display low levels of dopamine and serotonin, which control the brain's pleasure center; and because of that, these people seek "artificial stimulation like drugs, alcohol and gambling," reports a story in the Albany, New York's *Times Union* (1/12/03). Once they start gambling, these people can't stop on their own. (In reality, it's tough for anyone to stop once they start wagering—whether they're winning or losing.)

Gambling addiction is often called the "hidden addiction."

IS PURCHASING A LOTTERY TICKET SO BAD?

Any form of gambling violates biblical principles of stewardship, for we are to trust in God as our provider.

Problem gamblers "don't have track marks on their arm, their speech isn't slurred, and they are not staggering down the street," explains Rick Benson, director of Algamus Recovery Center in southwest Florida, in *The Bradenton [Fla.] Herald* (5/2/03). "But on the inside,

the emotional churn going on is equally as great [as in a substance abuser]," he said.

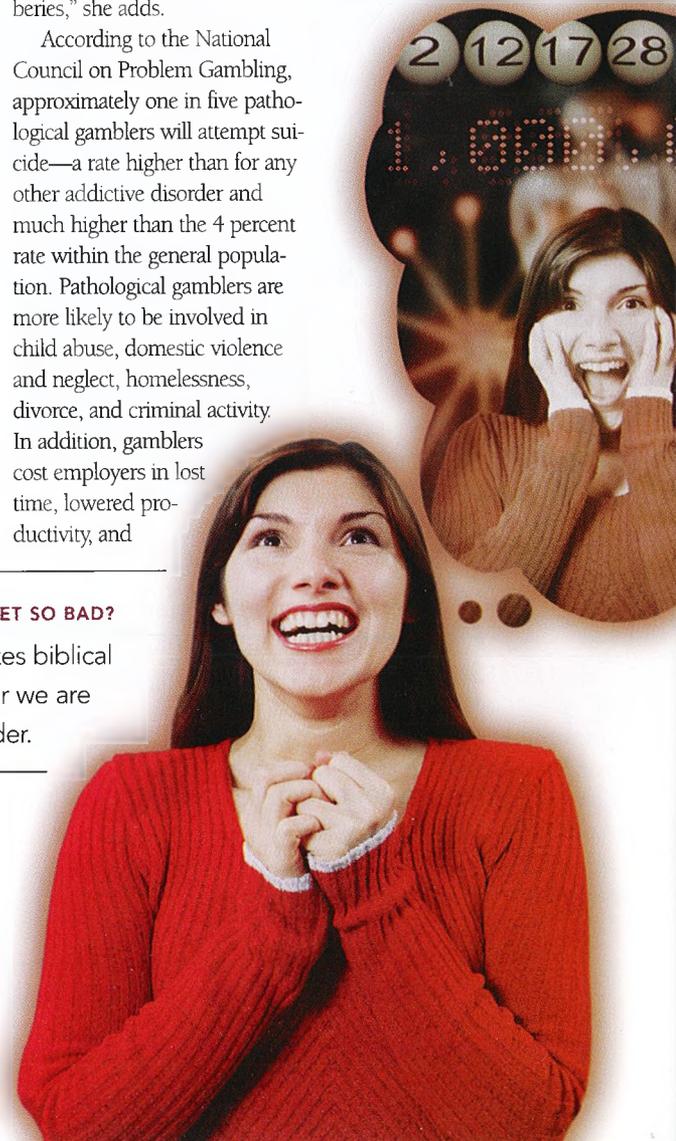
The 1999 National Gambling Impact Study Commission Report claims each new casino relies on problem gamblers for about 30 percent of its take. Rebecca Martel, director of a center for problem gamblers, told the *Times Union*, "We don't see people who just lost \$1,000 on a football game. We see people who say, 'I just lost \$100,000 and I have two mortgages on my house and I maxed out all my credit cards and my wife just found out.' You hear about embezzlements, bank robberies," she adds.

According to the National Council on Problem Gambling, approximately one in five pathological gamblers will attempt suicide—a rate higher than for any other addictive disorder and much higher than the 4 percent rate within the general population. Pathological gamblers are more likely to be involved in child abuse, domestic violence and neglect, homelessness, divorce, and criminal activity. In addition, gamblers cost employers in lost time, lowered productivity, and

increased risk of criminal activity.

But not everyone has a propensity to become addicted to gambling, so does that mean it's a harmless pastime for the rest of us? No, according to the National Coalition Against Legalized Gambling. They say—with evidence—that gambling's costs are more than its benefits. Evidence abounds that when a casino comes into an area, retail businesses and restaurants suffer. And common sense tells us that when people gamble, their family's budget will take a hit.

Gambling targets the poor with its rarely stated—but



The \$61.4 billion lost in legal gambling in 2000 is more than was spent on movie tickets, recorded music, theme parks, spectator sports, and video games combined.

—Christiansen Capital Advisors, www.cca-i.com

nonetheless astronomical—odds against gaining instant wealth. States anxious to plug widening holes in their budgets are betting the bank on those who are least able to pay. Lower income and less-educated people spend, as a percentage of their income, far more on games of chance than do more affluent Americans.

While many argue gambling is a form of recreation, technological advances are giving it an even more frightening face. Internet gambling has been growing since 1995, when the first on-line casino was launched. Today an estimated 1,800 Web sites operating offshore offer on-line gambling. With pop-up

Internet browser windows advertising the sites, young people are prime targets. Dr. Howard J. Shaffer of Harvard Medical School told the National Gambling Impact Study Commission that electronics is to gamblers what crack is to cocaine. The mental and financial risk is greater because virtual gaming is available around the clock every day of the week in the privacy of one's home.

On-line wagering could top \$4 billion this year. Not surprisingly, more than 90 percent of on-line wagers are made on credit. "You can wind up bankrupting your family in an evening," the head of the New York state attorney general's Internet division told the *Times Union*.

These virtual casinos are technically legal. Because they are offshore, they are out of the reach of the U.S. government. They ignore existing laws that prohibit people using a "wire connection facility" to place a

bet across state lines. Congress is working to put a kink in their funding stream by prohibiting the sites from accepting credit cards, electronic fund transfers, and other bank instruments from U.S. gamblers.

We cannot love both God and money (Matt. 6:24). If we are preoccupied with the material gain gambling might bring us, our greed conflicts with what should be our love for God and neighbor. Also, gambling increases the likelihood that a family will go into debt. The National Gambling Impact Study Commission Report found 40 to 60 percent of the money wagered by individuals in casinos was not brought onto the premises. In other words, the gambler secured a cash advance on his credit card or the casino extended credit.

Gambling suggests the key to prosperity rests with Lady Luck, not hard work and commitment to personal improvement. Such

belief contradicts biblical teachings that we are to work to support ourselves and our families. Furthermore, gambling violates the Bible's principle of stewardship: God provides for us, and we are to trust in Him—not the card dealer or the government office that runs the lottery. Scripture makes it clear we are not to worship idols, including scratch-off Lotto cards and slot machines.

There is no question that gambling is far from virtuous behavior. At its worst it can be life threatening and family destroying; at its mildest it is counter to God's will for His creation and far from family-friendly. We should be outraged by the smooth sales job the gambling industry and most state governments have done to convince us that gambling is good for America's families. Unfortunately, their story has been swallowed—hook, line, and sinker—by the culture at large. **f**

Faith & Family

Often used as a bulletin insert, this undated 4-page piece applies Scripture to real-life scenarios and includes statistics, prayer and action points, and steps to becoming a Christian. It can be used anytime throughout the year when sharing stewardship principles as they apply to gambling.

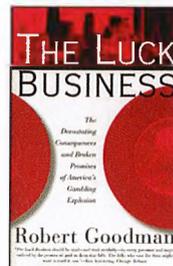
GABULK03 \$4.95/50



The Luck Business

This widely quoted work on the devastating effects of government-promoted gambling draws on the landmark U. S. Gambling Study and features interviews with politicians, industry leaders, and experts. Robert Goodman documents that states promoting gambling enterprises consistently fail to provide new revenue and jobs and cause myriad economic and social problems.

BKLUC (273 pages) \$8.50 ea.



Seducing America: Is Gambling a Good Bet?

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

BKSED (176 pages) \$9.89 ea.



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Developed by Church Initiative, a ministry partner of For Faith & Family

Building a Foundation for Life

Exploring New Frontiers

BY DWAYNE HASTINGS

When I was a boy living in Florida, our family had a good view of the rockets launched from Cape Kennedy. While our house was miles away, we still could see those giant rockets blasting skyward with the astronauts' tiny little capsule perched on top. We would watch on the television as the countdown went to zero and the order was given for "liftoff." Then we would run into our front yard and scan the eastern horizon for the first sight of the rocket. "There it is!" one of us would shout. No matter how many times we saw it, each launch was as exciting as the first.

I imagined what it must have been like for the first pioneers in space. They traveled to places no one had ever gone. They saw the earth and the heavens like no one had ever seen them before. They refused to let the bounds of earth hold them down as they learned more about God's creation.

Men and women with similar dreams and visions founded our country. They risked everything, including their lives, to find a place where they could live freely. They did not know what was beyond the line where the horizon met the sea, yet they wanted freedom and the opportunity to share their faith openly so much that they boarded small wooden ships with billowing sails to look for a New World.

They traveled to places they could only imagine in obedience to their faith in Jesus.

Years earlier, brave men and women risked everything to follow the One they knew was the Son of God. They turned their backs on their pasts to explore a new frontier at the feet of Jesus. They bravely suffered the ridicule of those who did not understand. The disciples knew following Jesus wouldn't be easy, and it wasn't.

God expects us to be pioneers for Him, too—going to places, doing things, and saying things that we can barely imagine because we are



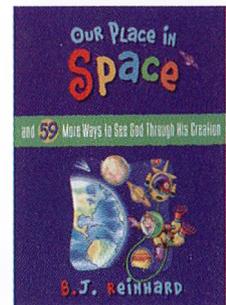
going, doing, and saying it all in His power. Faithful followers of God don't shrink back when He calls us to new frontiers. We should not be content to sit on the sidelines and let others take part in exciting adventures in faith. We need to be on the front lines for God, trusting Him to always be with us.

Bible truth: God expects us to push back frontiers to know Him better and to tell others about Him.

Bible verse: Psalm 139:8-10

RECOMMENDED READING

Our Place in Space (and 59 More Ways to See God Through His Creation) by B. J. Reinhard introduces young readers to the physical sciences while inspiring wonder about God. For homeschoolers, family devotions, or the inquisitive kid who loves science, these sixty readings explore earth's perfect position in space, the formation of clouds and rainbows, the power of thunder and lightning, and more. (Bethony House)



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