

*Silence
Can Be
Sinful*
(Volume 2)

Winford Claiborne

International Gospel Hour
% West Fayetteville Church of Christ
Fayetteville, Tennessee

Silence Can Be Sinful
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Preface

My respect for the author of this book, Winford Claiborne, is both deep and wide. He is very qualified to write the book you hold in your hands. He has spoken on such issues for many years. Anyone who has heard any of these lessons is impressed with the fact that Winford does his homework. He does an enormous amount of reading on a wide variety of topics. This shines through in every sermon he preaches and every article he writes.

My first acquaintance with brother Claiborne came when he was a professor at Freed-Hardeman College (now university) in Henderson, Tennessee. He also served for many years as the director of the annual lectureship at the school. Soon acquaintance grew into admiration and admiration into friendship. I count it all joy every time I have occasion to be in his presence. When our son entered Freed-Hardeman, I insisted that he take every course being taught by brother Claiborne. I credit brother Claiborne with being one of the main factors motivating my son to become a serious student. My son and I are never together very long before brother Claiborne becomes a topic of our discussion. Such is our respect for this great man.

There are two major reasons men do not speak out against evil. (1) Their values are so mixed up they do not recognize evil as evil. Like the people of Isaiah's day, they call evil good and good evil (Isaiah 5:20). Consequently, they engage in evil without ever giving thought to the fact that this makes them evil. (2) Although they recognize evil, they lack the courage it takes to speak out. I once heard the late Gus Nichols tell of being caught behind a truck hauling a load of logs. Instead of becoming frustrated, he began concentrating on the logs. One oak was especially big, straight and strong. He said he began to wish he had a backbone as big as that log. I would readily admit that it is fearful to speak out against evil, but speak out we must.

The writer of this book has the knowledge it takes to deal with the topics of this book. This book is a good companion to *volume one* he published previously. For that we are thankful to him and to the God who gave him such a keen mind. We are also thankful that he has the backbone to put these things into written form for our profit and for the good of the generations to come.

I once had a professor who encouraged us to become writers. He said that one of the greatest things about writing is that if you write the truth on any subject it will always be the truth. He said it will remain the truth even if you later go into error. He said it would be speaking truth long after you are gone.

To be asked by my dear friend to write the preface for this book is an enormous honor as well as a humbling one. It is my prayer that it will enjoy a wide circulation because it speaks truth now, tomorrow, and for all time. In my library is every volume Winford has written so far. I am happy to make room for another. I pray that there will be more to come.

Warren F. Kenney
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February 28, 2010

Introduction

The writings of the late Dr. Francis Shaeffer have inspired me to take an active role in opposing the pro-death movement and other evils in our nation and throughout the world. I have often appealed to his great books, **How Should We Then Live?: The Rise and Decline of Western Thought and Culture** (Old Tappan: Revell, 1976) and **Whatever Happened to the Home Race?: Exposing Our Rapid Yet Subtle Loss of Human Rights** (Old Tappan: Revell, 1979). (Dr. C. Everett Koop was the co-author of this second book.) Several months before he died in 1982, Dr. Shaeffer wrote a book that became an almost instant bestseller: **A Christian Manifesto** (Westchester, IL: Crossway, 1981). In this book, he expressed great concern for the enormous changes that are occurring in the laws of our land. He says,

Christian lawyers should have seen the change taking place and stood on the wall and blown the trumpets loud and clear (p. 47).

Tragically and inexplicably,

The Bible-believing theologians were not very good at blowing the trumpets...Nor did the Christian educators do any better either...None of them blew loud trumpets until we were a long, long way down the road toward a humanistically based culture (p. 50).

Edmund Burke served in Great Britain's parliament from 1765 until his death in 1797. **The World Book Encyclopedia** (Chicago: Field Enterprises, 1966) says, "Burke never hesitated to speak his mind on the major issues of his time" (volume 2, p. 593). Bill Bright and John N. Damoose's book, **Red Sky in the Morning** (Orlando: New Life, 1998) quotes Burke: "The only thing necessary for the triumph of evil is for good men to do nothing" (p. 220). Burke's brilliant

and appropriate observation has provided great inspiration to men and women to change the world for the better. Over and over, Burke's words appear in volumes dealing with a Christian's obligation to oppose all kinds of evil, including gambling, beverage alcohol, sexual immorality and pornography.

Dr. Cornelius Plantinga's book, **Beyond Doubt: Faith-Building on Questions Christians Ask** (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2002), quotes Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.: "I fear the silence of the churches more than the shouts of the angry multitudes." Dr. Plantinga offered the following prayer: "O Lord our God, we confess the cowardice that has so often silenced us in the face of evil" (p. 167). Ken Conner, a civil rights attorney in the Washington D. C. area, and John Revell, Associate Editor *SBS Life*, the official journal of the Southern Baptist Convention Executive Committee, have written a very enlightening book, **Sinful Silence: When Christians Neglect Their Civic Duty** (Nashville: Ginosko Publishing, 2004). Conner and Revel affirm:

The silence of Christians on this issue (abortion) can only be deemed acquiescence of an abhorrent practice that callouses our nation's conscience and costs millions of our children their lives (p. 75).

Rod Parsley's book, **Silent No More: Bringing Moral Clarity to America...When Freedom Rings** (Lake Mary, FL: Charisma House, 2005), quotes Elie Wiesel, the famous holocaust survivor: "I swore never to be silent whenever and wherever human beings endure suffering and humiliation." Parsley also quotes Winston Churchill: "When the eagles are silent, the parrots jabber" (p. xiii). Tom Minnery, vice president of *Focus on the Family*, published an excellent book, **Why You Can't Stay Silent: A Biblical Mandate to Shape Our Culture** (Wheaton: Tyndale, 2001). Minnery has a brief section on the influence of Harriet Beecher Stowe, author of **Uncle Tom's Cabin**. He says concerning her:

She believed that because of her faith, she could not remain silent in the face of wrongdoing, and she resolved to put her talent to work in the cause of godly righteousness.

Minnery tells of Mrs. Stowe's meeting with President Lincoln. Mr. Lincoln extended his hand to her and then asked: "So this is the little lady who made this big war" (p. 167).

Tammy Bruce served as president of the National Organization of Women in Los Angeles. She is currently a talk show host in Los Angeles. Her book, **The New Thought Police: Inside the Left Assault on Free Speech and Free Minds** (New York: Forum, 2001), states what most of us should realize:

If we are silent (on the great issues that confront our nation), they can argue that the state of our culture, its lack of values, simply reflects what the public wants (p. 242).

Vivien Spitz, the youngest court reporter at the Nuremburg trials in Germany, discusses the evil of Nazi doctors. Her book, **Doctors from Hell: The Horrific Account of Nazi Experiments on Humans** (Boulder, CO: Sentient, 2005), is a devastating critique of those who deny that evil exists or that we can know what evil is. In the dedication of her book, Spitz observes: "In genocides there are perpetrators. There are victims. There are silent bystanders." She asks: "What is the culpability of the silent bystander who is indifferent to evil" (p. 6)? She quotes Mr. Justice Jackson of the United States Supreme Court who presided over the trials:

The wrongs which we seek to condemn and punish have been so calculated, so malignant and so devastating, that civilization cannot tolerate their being ignored because it cannot survive their being repeated (p. 293).

Elwood Quaid's book, **Persecuted: Exposing the Growing Intolerance Toward Christianity** (Eugene, OR:

Harvest House, 2003), tells of the terrible persecution professed Christians are suffering in the Sudan. He explains that the Sudan "stands as a primary horror story of the persecution of Christians." Yet, according to McQuaid, "relatively little has been said about it in the media or political circles." He asks:

Why are Christians, and in particular American evangelicals, silent, indifferent, or uninformed regarding this devastating scourge on fellow believers (p. 68)?

McQuaid has an entire chapter devoted to the question, "But Why the Silence?" He wonders:

While the blood of the saints is wetting the earth on so many fronts the world over, why the deafening silence coming from both camps (p. 23)?

By the expression, "both camps," McQuaid means the older generation and the younger generation.

Through the ages, God's enemies have made many attempts to silence God's spokesman. The eighth century B. C. Israelite prophet Amos from Judah delivered the Lord's words about what was about to happen to the nation of Israel, the ten tribes in the north.

The high places of Isaac shall be desolate, and the sanctuaries of Israel shall be laid waste; and I will rise up against the house of Jeroboam with the sword. Then Amaziah the priest of Bethel sent to Jeroboam king of Israel, saying, Amos has conspired against you in the midst of the house of Israel: the land is not able to bear his words. For thus Amos says, Jeroboam shall die by the sword, and Israel shall surely be led away captive out of their own land. Also Amaziah said unto Amos, O you seer, go, flee away into the lands of Judah, and there eat bread, and prophesy there: but prophesy not again any

more at Bethel: for it is the king's chapel, and it is the king's court.

Amos responded to Amaziah:

I was no prophet, neither was a prophet's son; but I was a herdsman, and a gatherer of sycamore fruit: and the Lord took me as I followed the flock, and the Lord said unto me, Go, prophecy unto my people Israel (Amos 7:9-15).

Should not Amos be an example to every person who claims to be a Christian—not just to preachers?

Do preachers or other Christians ever become discouraged and decide to be silent? I suspect it has happened to many people—both under the Mosaic covenant and under the new covenant. The moral and spiritual situation in the days of Jeremiah was very discouraging. The people decided they were not going to walk in the old paths and listen to the great prophets God had sent to warn them (Jer. 6:16-17). The Lord said to Jeremiah:

The prophets prophecy lies in my name: I sent them not, neither have I commanded them, neither spoke unto them: they prophesy a false vision and divination, and a thing of nought, and the deceit in their heart (Jer. 14:14).

Can we now understand why Jeremiah said:

I will not make mention of him, nor speak any more in his name? But his word was in my heart as a burning fire shut up in my bones, and I was weary of forbearing, and I could not stay (Jer. 20:9).

The apostle Paul surely knew about the wickedness of ancient Corinth. He knew his life was constantly in danger. Yet he courageously preached the truth to Jews and to Gentiles in that city. The Lord assured Paul:

Be not afraid, but speak, and hold not your peace. For I am with you, and no man shall set

on you to hurt you: for I have much people in this city (Acts 18:9-10).

The Greek word (*siopao*) translated "hold peace" appears eleven times in the sacred text and is always translated "hold peace" except two times (one time "peace" – Mark 4:39; and one time "dumb" – Luke 1:20). When Christ's disciples were celebrating His triumphal entry into Jerusalem, they were saying,

Blessed be the King who comes in the name of the Lord: peace in heaven, and glory in the highest. And some of Pharisees from among the multitude said unto him, Master, rebuke thy disciples. And he answered and said unto them, I tell you that, if they should hold their peace, the stones would cry out (Luke 19:38-40).

Paul describes the burdens he had to bear for the cause of Christ.

We are troubled on every side, yet not distressed; we are perplexed, but not in despair; persecuted, but not destroyed; always bearing about in the flesh the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our body.

It would have been easy for Paul to give up and remain silent in the face of such opposition. Instead, he told the Corinthians:

We having the same spirit of faith, according as it is written, I believed, and therefore have I spoken; we also believe, and therefore speak (2 Cor. 4:8-10, 13).

Should not every Christian say with Paul: "I believe, therefore I speak?"

Our obligation as Christians is to speak the truth in love (Eph. 4:15). But we have a moral obligation to speak the truth. Would our Lord remain silent on the evils that afflict our nation: adultery, greed, murder (including the

murder of children in their mother's wombs), racism, homosexuality and such like? Would He remain silent when the enemies of the cross were perverting God's word and attempting to change the work and worship of the church? Would He seek to avoid controversy with those who were teaching error? In his book, **Christ the Controversialist** (Downers Grove: IVP, 1970), Dr. John R. W. Stott, a conservative Anglican scholar, says concerning Christ's approach to those who disagreed with him:

The title, **Christ the Controversialist** is intended to indicate not that Jesus Christ was a controversial figure, but that He engaged in controversy. Many of His public discourses were debates with the contemporary Palestinian leaders of religion. They did not agree with Him, and He did not agree with them (p. 7).

Dr. Stott further affirms:

We cannot avoid controversy itself, for we are called to 'the defense and confirmation of the gospel' (p. 18).

My purpose in writing this book (and the first volume by the same title) is to furnish material we can use in responding to the evils of our day. The apostle Paul did not hesitate to speak out against fornication, uncleanness, covetousness, filthiness, foolish talking, jesting and idolatry (Eph. 5:3-6). He demanded: "Have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them" (Eph. 5:11). Christians must know what is occurring in our communities and throughout the world. We must not participate in the evils that are destroying so many of our fellow citizens. But we must go beyond that. We must reprove them. In very simple language, we must expose and oppose all evil.

The International Gospel Hour could not reach around the world through radio stations and on the Internet without the support of generous churches and individual

Christians. Three churches have helped to make this volume possible: The Central Church of Christ in Martinsburg, West Virginia; the Corinth Church of Christ at Portland, Tennessee; and the Williams Chapel Church of Christ in Murray, Kentucky. I thank God for these churches and the support they have given to the Gospel Hour. I am blessed to be able to do the speaking on these programs, but my voice would be silent were it not for these and other faithful churches and individuals.

The Central Church of Christ at Martinsburg, West Virginia, has helped in the publication of some of my other books: **Restoring God's Pattern for the Home** (now in its third printing) and **Preaching Christ Crucified** (in its second printing). In addition, the church sponsors the Gospel Hour on the local station in Martinsburg. The church has scheduled me for gospel meetings every other year until I die or am unable to preach in meetings. At my last meeting, I asked them to help with this book. I started to explain to the elders what the book would cost and how it would benefit the program. One of the elders said: "We don't need to know that. We just need to know how much you need." I told them in my last meeting: "I feel at home at Martinsburg."

My earliest memories are associated with the Corinth Church of Christ at Portland, Tennessee. My father, Marvin Claiborne, served many years as an elder of our home congregation. Our parents always took the Claiborne children to the worship services of the church. I preached my first sermon at Corinth more than 66 years ago. The people there have always been supportive of my work in the Lord. I am grateful for the love they have shown to my family and to me. I thank them for their love and support.

My Molly and I started dating in the fall of 1947. In January of 1948 I became the fulltime preacher for the Williams Chapel Church of Christ (their first fulltime preacher). I preached there during most of the time Molly

and I dated. I was preaching there when we were married. We became family at Williams Chapel. I have preached in thirteen meetings since 1952. That church has helped me in more ways than I can tell. They supported the publication of my book, **Preaching Christ Crucified**. I have told my sons that when I die I want to be carried back to Williams Chapel before I am laid to rest by my Molly about fifteen miles away at Sedalia, Kentucky.

The West Fayetteville Church of Christ continues to be very generous in its support of the Gospel Hour. The church as a congregation has given a large amount of money, but so have individual members. I am grateful for the oversight of Mark Massey and Don Wallace, our faithful elders.

May God bless every one who has financially supported the Gospel Hour and those who have supported the work with their prayers! I feel wonderfully blessed with the opportunity of preaching the gospel to such a vast audience.

I thank my long time friend, Warren Kenney, for his very generous Preface to this book. Brother Kenney has done a great work with the Central Church of Christ in Martinsburg West Virginia. Being associated with him during the meeting is always one of the highlights of my meetings in Martinsburg. May God continue to bless him and his gracious wife Kay!

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Chapter 1

Eye

The human eye has to be one of the most magnificent creations in the universe. The gift of being able to see the face of your beautiful wife, of your handsome husband, of a precious child or grandchild exceeds most of this world's blessings. How can I ever forget how radiantly beautiful my Molly was on our wedding day and how beautiful she continued to be for more than fifty-three years? And how well I remember the first time I gazed at the beautiful boys God sent into our lives! How wonderfully blessed we are to be able to use our eyes to enjoy the fabulous world God created! How almost impossible it would be to completely enjoy the world of nature and the companionship of family members and friends if we did not have eyes to see! We should give thanks to the God who created us for providing eyes to enjoy this life.

The Bible—both the Old Testament and the New—uses the word “eye” literally and figuratively. When the Jews were preparing to enter the promised land, God allowed Moses to see the land of Canaan, but he did not permit him to enter. Moses told the Israelites:

The Lord was angry with me for your sakes, and would not hear me: and the Lord said to me, Let it suffice you; speak no more unto me of this matter. Get up into the top of Pisgah, and lift up your eyes westward, and northward, and southward, and eastward, and behold it with your eyes: for your shall not go over Jordan (Dt. 3:26-27).

God was speaking of the physical eyes of Moses, but the inspired author of Judges used the word “eye” figuratively when he wrote: “In those days there was no king in Israel, but every man did that which was right in his own eyes” (Judges 17:6). And what did David have in mind when

he pled with the Lord: "Keep me as the apple of the eye, hide me under the shadow of thy wings" (Psa. 17:8)?

The Greek word *ophthalmos* is always translated "eye." English words such "ophthalmology," "ophthalmograph" and "ophthalmoscope" are derived from this Greek word. The New Testament almost always uses the word "eye" in a figurative sense. Our Lord said in the Sermon on the Mount:

The light of the body is the eye: if therefore your eye is single, your whole body shall be full of light. But if your eye is evil, your whole body shall be full of darkness. If therefore the light that is in you be darkness, great is that darkness (Mt. 6:22-23).

Even the most devoted literalist would not dare say that Jesus had in mind the physical eyes of man. How can our physical eyes be single or evil? Paul prayed that the eyes of the understanding of the Ephesians would be enlightened (Eph. 1:18). He certainly was not speaking of their physical eyes. Our Lord quoted these words from Isaiah:

He has blinded their eyes, and hardened their hearts; that they should not see with their eyes, nor understand with their heart, and turn, and I should heal them (Mt. 12:40).

Incidentally, the word "heart" in this verse is no more literal than the word "eye." We do not understand with our physical hearts, but with our spiritual hearts—our minds.

The apostle Paul compared the physical body of man to the spiritual body of Christ, the church of the living God.

For the body is not one member, but many. If the foot shall say, Because I am not the hand, I am not of the body; is it not of the body? And if the ear shall say, Because I am not an eye, I am not of the body; is it therefore not of the

body? If the whole body were an eye, where were the hearing? If the whole were hearing, where were the smelling? But now has God set the members every one of them in the body, as it has pleased him. And if they were all one member, where were the body? And now are they many members, but one body. And the eye cannot say unto the hand, I have no need of you; nor again the head to the feet, I have no need of you. Nay, those members of the body, which seem to be less honorable, upon these we bestow more abundant honor; and our uncomely parts have more abundant comeliness. For our comely parts have no need: but God has tempered the body together, having given more abundant honor to that part that lacked: that there should be no schism in the body; but that the members should have the same care for another (1 Cor. 12:14-25).

Surely no one will question the fact that the foot, the hand, the eye and the ear are all parts of our physical bodies, although Paul uses these parts of our bodies to teach powerful lessons. He wanted us to know that each of us is a vital part of the Lord's body. Just because I cannot be an elder or a deacon or a song leader or a preacher does not mean I cannot make some contribution to the cause of Christ. Maybe my contribution involves visiting people in nursing homes, mowing the lawn of some old couple, paying the hospital bill for a sick person, sweeping the floor of the church building or speaking a word of encouragement to some troubled soul. Because I cannot do everything does not mean I cannot do something. Each member of our physical bodies contributes to our overall welfare. So every member of the body of Christ has a very vital function to perform.

Two expressions from 1 Corinthians 12 demand further examination. Paul affirmed:

God has set the members every one of them in the body, as it has pleased him....God has tempered the body together (1 Cor. 12:18, 24).

Instead of the term, "has set," most modern versions render the Greek "has arranged." Dr. Hugo McCord translates the verb, "has placed." The word "tempered" in verse 24 means composed, put together or perfectly adjusted. In his excellent set of books, **Word Pictures in the New Testament** (Nashville: Broadman Press, 1931), Dr. A. T. Robertson comments on the word "tempered." He says the original word meant to mix together. "Plato used the word of the way God compounded the various elements of the body in creating soul and body." Paul "gives a noble picture of the body with its wonderful organs planned to be the temple of God's Spirit (1 Cor. 6:19) in opposition to the Epicurean sensualists in Corinth" (volume 4, p. 173).

My concern today is not what we can see or not see with our eyes—whether physical eyes or spiritual, but with the composition and structure of the physical eye. It is one of the most complicated, sophisticated and inexplicable organs in the universe. From a biblical viewpoint, Christians have no difficulty explaining the eye. God almighty created our bodies from the dust of the earth. Moses explained:

And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness: and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creeps upon the earth. So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them (Gen. 1:26-27).

Moses added:

And the Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul (Gen. 2:7).

When God created human beings, were they equipped with all the organs that enabled men to live, to multiply and to fill the earth, to communicate with one another and with our God? Or did our organs—including our eyes—evolve into their current position in our bodies? There are probably some of my listeners who may be wondering why I would even raise such questions. Surely no reasonable person believes we are a result of a multiplicity of accidents. I asked this question because evolutionists argue that every living creature, including human beings, came from a primitive one-celled animal. The organs in our bodies developed in response to needs and conditions. There was no purpose or plan. It all occurred by chance over millions and millions of years. Anyone who can believe such foolishness exhibits a great amount of gall when he refers to Bible believers as ignorant or obscurantist or uneducated or worse.

Evolution still occupies the spiritual throne in most academic institutions, in the media and in liberal religion. Most colleges and universities vigorously oppose the hiring of creationists, especially in the sciences. They believe such scientists belong in the theology departments—not in science departments. Even if the prospective professors have doctorates from some of America's most prestigious universities, such as, Harvard or Princeton or Vanderbilt, they are not welcome and probably will not be hired in most secular academic institutions. If you think I may be exaggerating the situation, it is because you have not bothered to become familiar with the intensity of the creation-evolution controversy. Creationists in the science and social science departments of Harvard, Princeton, Yale, the University of Tennessee and similar universities are as scarce as proverbial "hen's teeth."

I am sure there are committed creationists in the news media, but I have yet to hear them confess their faith in the Creator of heaven and earth. Tragically, many in the news media actually make fun of people who believe the

world, including human beings, came into existence as a direct result of God's creative acts. Do some of the people in the media believe they would lose their positions if they let it be known they were creationists? Besides, many of the children's programs on television imply or actually state that all creatures, including human beings, rose out of the primitive soup that supposedly has existed from eternity past. **The National Geographic Channel, The Discovery Channel** and other cable channels promote evolution. If they deal at all with creation, it is always in an underhanded manner. They leave the impression that most creationists are either ignorant or stupid or mean.

What about people who occupy the pulpits of our land and the professorships of our seminaries and Bible colleges? Do I need to tell you that many preachers and theologians do not accept the Bible's teaching on the creation of the world, including human beings? They may profess belief in some kind of God, but not the God who created from nothing everything that exists. If you are tempted to think I might be exaggerating the situation, I shall furnish evidence that proves, sadly, I am telling you the truth. Please understand that I am not belittling any of these preachers and theologians or questioning their sincerity, but you need to know what is occurring in the religious world.

Leslie Weatherhead preached at the famous City Temple of London for almost twenty-five years. He was one of England's most famous Methodist preachers. He wrote numerous books, including **Life Begins at Death, The Will of God, Prescription for Anxiety** and many others. In 1965 he wrote a book entitled, **The Christian Agnostic** (Nashville: Abingdon)—one of the most radical and illogical books I have ever read. Dr. Weatherhead made no secret of the fact he believed in evolution. He quotes with approval these words from Sir Julian Huxley:

Man is a product of nearly three billion years of evolution, in whose person the evolutionary

process has at last become conscious of itself and its possibilities. Whether he likes it or not, he is responsible for the whole further evolution of the planet (p. 240).

Dr. Weatherhead speaks freely of "our animal ancestry" (p. 244).

One of the remarkable features of modern creationist literature is the number of scholars outside any field of science who have investigated the so-called "evidences for evolution" and have completely rejected it. A number of lawyers who are specialists in dealing with evidence have vigorously refuted the theory of evolution. Philip Johnson, professor of law at the University of California, Berkeley, has written outstanding books on evolution, including **Darwin on Trial** (Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 1991), **Defeating Darwinism by Opening Minds** (Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 1997) and **Objections Sustained: Subversive Essays on Evolution, Law & Culture** (Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 1998).

Wendell Bird was the very first student to exempt the freshman year at Vanderbilt. He received his law degree from Yale Law School. He argued a major case on evolution before the United States Supreme Court. In the late 1980s he published two powerful volumes with the title, **The Origin of Species Revisited: The Theories of Evolution and of Abrupt Appearance** (New York: Philosophical Library, 1987, 1988, 1989). Bird's two volumes present information on evolution from both sides of the evolutionary controversy. If you can afford only two books on evolution, these are the two you should buy. In two volumes, you can get the arguments evolutionists have advanced and the responses by those who oppose evolution. Incidentally, Wendell Bird's two-volume set has five thousand footnotes – an indication of the thoroughness of his research.

Wendell Bird discusses the human eye "with its complex lens, retina, optical nerve and other parts." He

quotes Charles Darwin as saying that “the eye to this day gives me a cold shudder.” Darwin explained his reason for having cold shudders when he thought about the eye.

To suppose that the eye, with all of its inimitable contrivances for adjusting its focus to different distances, for admitting different amounts of light, and for the correction of its spherical and chromatic aberration, could have been formed by natural selection, seems, I freely confess, absurd in the highest possible degree. Yet reason tells me, that if gradations from a perfect and complex eye to one very imperfect and simple, each grade being useful to its possessor, can be shown to exist; if further, the eye does vary ever so slightly, and the variations are inherited, which is certainly the case; and if any variation or modification in the organ be useful to an animal under changing conditions of life, then the difficulty of believing that a perfect and complex eye could be formed by natural selection, though insuperable to our imagination, can hardly be considered real (volume 1, p. 73).

Is it possible that evolution can explain the origin and development of the eye? Wendell Bird quotes Garrett Hardin, a prominent evolutionist, as affirming:

If even the slightest thing is wrong – if the retina is missing, or the lens opaque, or the dimensions in error – the eye fails to form a recognizable image and is consequently useless. Since it must either be perfect or perfectly useless, how could it have evolved by small, successive, Darwinian steps (volume 1, p. 74)?

But Darwin, Hardin and a host of other evolutionists think the eye did evolve. They have failed and will always fail, however, to explain the enormous amount of information contained in the eye.

Dr. Geoffrey Simmons, at one time a committed evolutionist, has done the world a great favor by writing

one of the most inspiring, faith-building and challenging books I have ever read. His new book has the title, **What Darwin Didn't Know: A Doctor Dissects the Theory of Evolution** (Eugene, OR: Harvest House Publishers, 2004). Before I read some brief excerpts from Dr. Simmons' book, I want to make a few pertinent observations. If evolutionists and those who lean toward evolution would read Dr. Simmons' book with an open mind, they could no longer entertain belief in any kind of evolution. There is no possibility of understanding what Dr. Simmons says about the human body and mind and remain an evolutionist. Intelligent design appears in every illustration he uses in his book. And if there is design in the human body—and surely no serious person can deny that—there has to be a designer. Dr. Simmons quotes these wise words from George Gallup:

I could prove God statistically. Take the human body alone—the chance of all the functions of the individual would just happen is a statistical monstrosity (p. 280).

One of the most intriguing chapters in Dr. Simmons' book deals with vision. Dr. Simmons points out that Darwin was deeply troubled about the human eye. Darwin knew that "the complexity of the eye...challenged his most basic theories" (p. 105). Please listen carefully to these excerpts from Dr. Simmons' book.

Millions of cells lining the interior of each eye function as photochemical receivers that convert light into a myriad of electrical impulses, which are forwarded, at a speed of 200 miles per hour to the brain—and then sorted, organized and analyzed (p. 106).

Our tears "come in three different forms: one geared to lubrication and protection, one associated with sadness, and another associated with happiness" (p. 111).

The retina...acts like a constantly changing role of film and is made up of 7 million cone cells for color assessment, 125 million rod cells for adaptation to darkness, and 1.2 million nerve cells that collect billions of bits of information (p. 114).

God knew all of these facts about the human eye. He inspired David, the great Jewish Psalmist to write:

I will praise thee; for I am fearfully and wonderfully made: marvelous are thy works; and that my soul knows right well (Psa. 139:14).

When we think about and carefully study the wonderful complexity of every system of the human body—the endocrine system, the respiratory system, the gastrointestinal system, the circulatory system, the reproductive system and the musculoskeletal system—we have to be blind not to recognize the hand of God in providing for our earthly welfare. In view of all he has done for us, how can we neglect to love and to obey him?

Chapter 2

Abstinence Education

What should parents, educators and church leaders teach children about sex? Sixty years ago—at least, where I grew up—the question would not have been so controversial or appropriate as it is today. The people of my home community may not have been completely agreed on the topic, but most of them would not have taken the position that many liberal politicians, educators and preachers take today. They may not have taught their children God’s view of human sexuality—although many parents, preachers and teachers did—but they would not have advocated letting children grow up with the moral values of barnyard animals. In addition, most of the parents I knew exemplified the kind of moral values they wanted their children to adopt. Does that mean that all of my associates were always sexually pure? I am convinced that most of them were, but not all of them. But not one member of my high school graduating class had a baby out of wedlock. The vast majority of them have had good marriages and families. Most of them after more than a half-century are still married to their original partners. How many of today’s graduating classes will be able to say that fifty years from now? How many of them will be able to say that five years from now?

You cannot be unaware of the conflict in our nation over teaching sexual abstinence to our young people. Liberal educators, politicians, theologians and the ridiculous American Civil Liberties Union have joined together to oppose the teaching of abstinence. Some of the opponents argue that it is a matter of separation of church and state. Are they affirming that teaching any kind of moral values is a violation of the separation of church and state? But there are some rational voices, even in the media, that oppose teaching abstinence-plus-contraception. Recently

Saritha Prabhu, a Clarksville, Tennessee, columnist for **The Tennessean**, wrote an excellent article with the title, "Abstinence by far and away is the answer" (Monday, December 13, 2004). She asks,

Should we teach our teens to abstain from sexual relations until marriage, or should we teach them abstinence but, presuming that they'll do it anyway, teach them safety measures (p. 11-A)?

There is one aspect of teaching about sex or about any other topic we must not overlook. As I write this transcript, I have on my desk Desmond Morris's book, **The Naked Ape** (New York: Dell Publishing Co., Inc., 1967). When I bought my copy of that book in 1979, it had already gone through nineteen printings. Desmond Morris writes: "I am a zoologist and the naked ape is an animal" (p. 9). **The Saturday Review** wrote of Morris's book: "A startlingly novel idea, brilliantly executed....To read Desmond Morris on the sex habits of the naked ape is disconcerting, to say the least." **The Saturday Review** describes Morris's book as "enlightening, entertaining, disturbing, discomfoting, ego-shrinking" (Back cover). In case you are wondering who the naked ape is: it is every human being, including you and me.

If we are nothing more than naked apes—as Desmond Morris and most other evolutionists believe—what would be the point in discussing teaching sexual abstinence to our young people? I grew up on a farm where we raised hogs, goats, horses and cattle. I do not recall my father's bringing in an expert on animal behavior to conduct sessions on sex among the animals. We know that animals do what comes naturally. It would be silly to try to teach them moral values or sexual techniques. Is that really all we are—just animals? If we are just animals—whether apes or some other—why should we bother about teaching abstinence or any other moral value? In fact, I challenge any evolutionist to give one valid reason for doing anything or refraining

from doing anything. I have read Antony Flew's book, *Evolutionary Ethics* (New York: Macmillan, 1967). Even though Dr. Flew was a prominent philosopher, his book makes absolutely no sense—either logical or moral.

We do not speak of animals committing sin or doing wrong. However, evolutionists cannot refrain from using moral language of human conduct. Do evolutionists believe the Holocaust was immoral? Do they believe it is morally wrong to discriminate on the basis of race or religion or social status? Would they approve of abusing children or others just for fun? If they believe any of these activities are evil, they must have some standard for making that judgment. What is the standard they use? Dr. Will Durant, the distinguished historian of philosophy and a humanist, understood the difficulty of evolutionists' developing ethical values. In the book, *Humanist Ethics* (Buffalo: Prometheus Books, 1980), edited by Dr. Morris Storer of the University of Florida, Dr. Durant made this very wise observation:

We (meaning humanists) shall find it no easy task to mold a natural ethic strong enough to maintain moral restraint and social order without the support of supernatural consolations, hopes, and fears (p. 8).

Humanists will find it impossible to develop a "natural ethic strong enough to maintain moral restraint and social order without the support of supernatural consolations, hopes, and fears."

Do you know what the supporters of teaching abstinence-plus-contraception really believe? They argue that teens are going to engage in sex outside of marriage regardless of what they are taught. So we must make sure they are protected from sexually transmitted diseases and from out-of-wedlock pregnancy. Is that really the kind of children and young people we are rearing in our nation? Can they not be taught the dangers of engaging in sex outside the marriage bond? If they cannot be taught moral values, we are in for some rough sledding in the years

ahead. Let us think for a few minutes on the implications of this situation.

Do you teach your children not to smoke, not to drink beverage alcohol and not to abuse other drugs? Suppose we approach these problems as many liberals want to approach sex education? Should we teach our children: "I prefer that you do not smoke or drink or abuse other drugs. But I know you are going to do anyway. So be careful not to smoke too much, not to drive under the influence of alcohol and not use drugs that will impair your judgment?" Would you think we are wise in leading our children in the right direction if we used that approach to tobacco, alcohol and other drugs?

Most Americans—even secular humanists—believe stealing is wrong, at least, under most circumstances. Why do we not tell our children and young people: "We know you are going to steal, but just make sure you do not get caught?" That would make as much sense as telling young people they should not engage in sex outside marriage, but if they are going to do it any way, they should make sure they are adequately protected. What kind of nation have we become when we fail to give children and young people the information they need to lead fulfilled lives? As parents, preachers and teachers, we are derelict in our duty when we fail to teach and exemplify the principles our young people must know and observe.

Who should teach our young people about sex? Many American schools are intruding on the territory that belongs to parents alone. Schools have no right to provide sex education for children. There are several reasons for making that statement. Tragically, many American educators have espoused situation ethics. They do not believe there are any absolutes. If there are no absolutes, it is not absolutely wrong to tell young people they can engage in sex outside marriage if they are careful and protect themselves. If the public schools in your community are providing sex education, you should investigate to learn

what is being taught. Some modern schoolteachers have the moral values of barnyard animals. Is that the kind of person you want teaching your children about a topic that has such influence in their lives?

Parents should also make sure what is being taught in Sunday school classes. You would think offhand that Bible teachers would actually teach what the Bible does on such a vital topic. There have been cases where churches were actually showing pornographic movies to their young people's classes. You should also make sure of the moral values of the teachers of children's classes. If a man is a known womanizer, he is not the teacher your children need. How can we teach the whole counsel of God without teaching what the Bible says about sex? But it must be done with discretion.

Tragically, what many of our young people learn about sex they learn from popular songs, from television programs and from the movies. Have you noticed how some of the songs actually teach or at least imply that a man is not really a man until he has engaged in sex? One country song says, "This bed of Rose's that I lie on, where I was taught to be a man." Engaging in sex outside the marriage bond does not make a man a real man. It makes him a thief and a reprobate. He is taking what no woman has a moral right to give and he has no moral right to take. It is not unusual for a man to tell a woman: "If you really love me, prove it by having sex with me." I believe it was Dr. James Dobson who said that was comparable to telling a woman to prove her love by sticking her head in a fire.

The Soap Operas on television promote sex outside marriage. I am told (since I never watch Soap Operas) that almost never are husbands and wives shown as being intimate. It is almost always unmarried people and in many cases persons who have met at least fifteen minutes (or is it fifteen seconds?) before they engage in sex. What message are the songs, television programs and movies

sending our children and young people? Will what they learn from those sources prepare them for lasting and happy marriages? The people who own radio and television stations and movie theaters are responsible before God and before good people for the deterioration of morals in America – not that it makes any difference to them so long as they make money. They ought to be ashamed of themselves for corrupting the youth – and adults – of America.

If we ought to teach young people about sex, what should be the message we deliver to them? Churches have been accused of presenting only the negative aspects of sex. Obviously we have to teach all the Bible says about sex, but we must not dwell on the negative side all the time. We must teach that God made us male and female (Gen. 1:26-27). We must also teach that God invented sex for the joy and fulfillment of husbands and wives in the marital relationship. The book of Proverbs stresses the beauty of the sexual relationship in marriage. How can Christians overlook these stirring words?

Drink waters out of your own cistern, and running waters out of your own well. Should your springs be scattered abroad and streams of water in the streets? Let them be only your own, and not a stranger's with you. Let your fountain be blessed; and rejoice with the wife of your youth. Let her be as the loving hind and pleasant roe; let her breasts satisfy you at all times; and be ravished with her love. And why will you, my son, be ravished with a strange woman, and embrace the bosom of a stranger? For the ways of man are before the eyes of the Lord, and he ponders all his goings (Prov. 5:15-21).

Several comments on this passage are in order. Please pay special attention to the divine writers' emphasis on the exclusiveness of the sexual relationship. "Drink waters out of your own fountain, and running waters out of your own well....Let them be only your own, and not a stranger's

with you." God intended for husbands and wives to fully enjoy their intimate time together. "Rejoice with the wife of your youth....Be ravished with her love." The word "ravished" means intoxicated, exhilarated, infatuated or captivated. Husbands and wives should find fulfillment in their married partners. If they cultivate their intimate relationship, they will find joy and satisfaction, as God intended. Is that the message the entertainment media give to our young people? Do they not show how men and women find greater excitement and fulfillment outside the bonds of holy matrimony?

The Bible could not be plainer in its condemnation of sex outside marriage. The New Testament uses the word *pornos* (translated either "fornicator" or "whoremonger") ten times. The word *porne* (translated "harlot" or "whore") appears twelve times in the Greek New Testament. The New Testament uses the word *porneia* (always translated "fornication") twenty-six times and the verb *proneuo* (to commit fornication) eight times. Before we look at some of the times these words appear in the sacred text, it is in order to define the word "fornication." Many preachers define "adultery" as extramarital sex and "fornication" as premarital sex. The scriptures simply do not sustain that approach. The word "fornication" (*porneia* in the Greek) comes from the Greek *pornos* or *porne* meaning a prostitute. The word "fornication" means any and every form of sexual immorality."

In our Lord's discussion of marriage, divorce and remarriage, he used the word "fornication" to describe extramarital sex (Matt. 19:9). The church at Corinth had in its fellowship a man who was guilty of incest. Paul castigated the Corinthian Christians for their indifference toward sin.

It is commonly reported that there is fornication among you, and such fornication as is not so named among the Gentiles, that a man should have his father's wife (1 Cor. 5:1).

Paul used the word "fornication" of premarital sex. Please listen.

Now concerning the things whereof you wrote unto me, it is good for a man not to touch a woman. Nevertheless, to avoid fornication, let every man have his own wife, and let every woman have her own husband (1 Cor. 7:1-2).

Jude employs the word of homosexual sin of the people of Sodom and Gomorrah.

Even as Sodom and Gomorrah, and the cities about them, giving themselves over to fornication, and going after strange flesh, are set forth for an example, suffering the vengeance of eternal fire (Jude 7).

Incidentally, the word "fornication" in this verse is an intensified form of the word "fornication." The New American Standard Bible renders the word "gross immorality. I would translate the Greek "perverted fornication."

Parents and preachers often warn young people about the dangers of sexually transmitted diseases. When we realize that more than twenty-five million of America's young people have genital herpes—an incurable disease—and millions more are afflicted with syphilis, gonorrhea, Chlamydia and other venereal diseases, it is time we inform young people of the physical and emotional dangers of illicit sex. And AIDS is a sure killer. But the Bible generally does not condemn sexual immorality because of the physical or emotional scars it leaves.

We parents and preachers also warn of the dangers of out-of-wedlock pregnancies. That, too, is a legitimate approach to teaching our children about sex. One million girls become pregnant out-of-wedlock every year—one million. Four hundred thousand of those girls abort their babies. Will the girls who abort their babies suffer from emotional scars for the rest of their lives? But again, this

is not the approach to sexual behavior the Bible writers use in warning of the dangers of sex outside the marriage bond.

What do inspired writers of the Bible teach about sex outside the marriage bond? Paul lists fornication among the lusts of the flesh and then says, "They who do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God" (Gal. 5:21). In other words, the unrepentant fornicator is going to hell. Paul warned the Ephesian Christians:

But fornication, and all uncleanness, or covetousness, let it not be once named among you, as becomes saints. For this you know, that no whoremonger, nor unclean person, nor covetous man, who is an idolater, has any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and of God (Eph. 5:3, 5).

Paul demanded of the Corinthians: "Flee fornication" (1 Cor. 6:18). The word "flee" is a present imperative. That means to make a habit of fleeing.

Paul asked the Corinthians, many of whom had been grossly immoral:

What? Do you not know that your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit which is in you, which you have of God, and you are not your own? For you are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's (1 Cor. 6:19-20).

Even if you are not a Christian, these verses ought to make an impression you. You are a creature of God almighty. You should take care of your body and not destroy it and your spirit on sexual immorality. You only have one body to last you to the end of your life. Take care of it and avoid any activity that will shorten your time with your family.

I close with these very troubling words.

But the fearful, and unbelieving, and the abominable, and murderers, and whoremongers,

and sorcerers, and idolaters, and all liars, shall have their part in the lake which burns with fire and brimstone: which is the second death (Rev. 21:8).

Chapter 3

Absolutely Wrong

Americans' attitudes toward right and wrong have probably never been so confused as they are at the beginning of the twenty-first century. Millions of our citizens are not even sure the German holocaust was wrong. Tragically, leaders in our colleges and universities, in the media and even in churches seem not to know if there are any acts that are absolutely wrong. Jim Nelson Black's disturbing book, **Freefall of the American University: How Our Colleges and Universities Are Corrupting the Minds and Morals of the Next Generation** (Nashville: WND Books, 2004), accuses the American university of being involved "in a conspiracy against the historic moral and social values of the American people" (p. 6). Dr. Black insists there has been a "collapse of standards on our campuses." Could that be one of the reasons that "two-thirds of college students today have sexually-transmitted diseases, such as, AIDS, Chlamydia, hepatitis B, gonorrhea, herpes, syphilis and venereal warts" (p. 208)? Tragically, some of these diseases, such as genital herpes, are incurable and some are fatal.

Every one whose eyes are open knows the moral views of the majority of the people in the media. I shall plan to deal with the media at a later day. I want to turn briefly to the views of liberal theologians. Wesley C. Baker was formerly a professor at San Francisco Theological Seminary and the preacher of a Presbyterian Church USA in San Rafael, California. In his book, **The Open End of Christian Morals** (Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1972), Wesley Baker spews out some of the vilest values the perverted heart of man can imagine. Baker says "there is a historic suspicion that Jesus saw society as morally open-ended" (p. 16). Is Baker speaking of the same Jesus revealed in the New Testament? How open-ended are these words:

You have heard it said by them of old time, You shall not commit adultery: but I say unto you, That whosoever looks on a woman to lust after her has committed adultery with her already in his heart (Matt. 5:27-28).

Jesus not only condemned committing adultery; he condemned thinking adultery.

Baker strongly affirms: "There is no such thing as a morally defensible position. That is, to be 'right' in any ethical situation is impossible" (p. 29). If "there no such thing as a morally defensible position," Baker's position is not defensible. If his position is not defensible, why should reasonable people pay any attention to what he says on any topic? And if "to be 'right' in any ethical situation is impossible," he has successfully refuted every word he has written in his book or spoken from the pulpit. Oddly enough, Baker says: "Jesus refused to condemn adultery or prostitution" (p. 30). I wonder if Wesley Baker had ever read these words from the very mouth of the Son of God:

For from within, out of the heart of men, proceed evil thoughts, adulteries, fornications, murders, thefts, covetousness, wickedness, deceit, lasciviousness, an evil eye, blasphemy, pride, foolishness: all these evil things come from within, and defile the man (Mark 7:21-23).

Jesus Christ specifically mentions "adulteries" and "fornications." The word "fornications" is plural and includes all sexual activity outside the marriage bond. Prostitution is sexual immorality and is always wrong—always condemned.

I have one other excerpt from Baker's book I must examine briefly. He asserts: "There are no absolutes, no unbreakable ground rules, no qualifying principles" (p. 59). Would it be possible to make a more foolish and illogical statement than that? If Baker were teaching a college course on logic and stated: "There are no absolutes," some bright

freshman would almost certainly ask, "Are you absolutely sure?" Arguments declaring there no absolutes are self-refuting. If there are no absolutes, his statement is not absolute. If his observation is not absolute, why should we believe anything he says? Baker adopts the situation ethics of Joseph Fletcher when he writes, "It all depends on the circumstances" (p. 113). Is he absolutely sure of that?

Just in case you might be tempted to think that only radical theologians on the west coast could be so out-of-step with common decency and with biblical moral values, let me assure you that is not the case. Former Episcopal Bishop John Shelby Spong has vigorously defended the impossibility of being certain about anything. In his book, *Into The Whirlwind: The Future of the Church* (Minneapolis: The Seabury Press, 1983), Spong insists:

We are thus entering a brand new world where certainty more and more will be seen as a vice rising out of an emotional need, and uncertainty will be seen as a virtue possessing integrity and a willingness to risk security in the quest for truth (p. 26).

If you think that Spong actually believes that we cannot be certain about anything, that is not the case. In fact, nobody could be that unreasonable. He at least believes he can be certain about not being certain. One statement from Spong completely explodes his foolish notion that we cannot be certain. "Since for me God alone can be the author of salvation, Jesus has to be in some sense God for me" (p. 39). Is he certain about that?

My question for you to consider today is very simple: "Is anything absolutely wrong?" Before we examine some modern behaviors to determine if they are absolutely wrong, I must make one clarification. Does the Bible forbid all killing of human beings? In other words, is killing always wrong? We know murder is wrong—always wrong—and will send the murderer to hell. Jesus Christ

himself taught that murderers "shall have their part in the lake that burns with brimstone: which is the second death" (Rev. 21:8). But is killing always murder? The state has a right—more correctly, an obligation—to execute some people. Any person who commits treason should be executed. The government should kill those people who commit first-degree murder. Executing vicious criminals, like Scott Peterson, is not murder. It is just punishment for unmitigated evil. Even if capital punishment does not deter other crimes—as some liberals maintain—it still must be done in a civilized society.

Is it wrong—always wrong—to starve someone to death? A few years ago in the state of Indiana, a woman gave birth to a Down's syndrome baby. In addition to Down's syndrome, the child suffered from a condition known as "esophageal atresia"—a condition that does not allow a baby to swallow food and water. The father, a public school teacher, had been reading about the long-term effects of Down's syndrome. He believed the child would be severely retarded. He chose not to allow doctors to correct the defect of the esophagus. He also chose to allow the baby to starve to death. The baby's doctor asked a nurse to care for the baby until it died. She refused to aid the doctor and the parents in committing infanticide. The doctors asked another nurse who agreed to care for the baby. She said the baby died a horrible death. Just hours before the baby died, it tried to cry, but could not because there was no moisture in the baby's mouth. Blood trickled from the baby's mouth onto the white sheets. The nurse later wrote an article with the title, "Never Again."

Child abuse—sexual, physical or otherwise—exists in virtually every community in the United States. The abusers may be parents, religious leaders, schoolteachers or neighbors. We are always disturbed—at least, I am—when I hear of child abuse, regardless of the source of the abuse. When preachers, priests, rabbis and other religious leaders abuse children, it adversely affects the view of religion

many Americans have. I have dozens and dozens of articles delineating child sexual abuse by religious leaders. You know the question I am going to ask you. Do you believe it is always wrong for anyone to abuse a child? If there are no absolutes—as radicals like Wesley Baker and John Shelby Spong teach—it cannot be absolutely wrong to abuse a child. It might be wrong under some circumstances, especially if it is my child who is abused, but it cannot be wrong all the time everywhere.

What is our Lord's view of abusing children? Christ's disciples asked him,

Who is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven?
And Jesus called a little child to him, and set him in the midst of them. And said, Verily I say unto you, Except you be converted, and become as little children, you shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven. Whosoever therefore shall humble himself as this little child, the same is greatest in the kingdom of heaven. And whoso shall receive one such little child in my name receives me. But who shall offend one of these little ones who believe in me, it were better for him to have a millstone hanged about his neck, and that he were drowned in the depth of sea (Matt. 18:1-6).

The God of heaven looks with disdain and disapproval on child abusers. There really is no more abominable behavior than abusing a child.

Recently there have been a number of reports of women schoolteachers' sexually abusing teenage boys. In the eyes of many people, that may not seem as evil as a man's abusing little girls. And in the long run, guys may be able to overcome the abuse better than little girls, although that may not be the case. But a grown woman's making sexual overtures to boys gives them a warped view of human sexuality. It may make it almost impossible for them to settle down with a wife and make a good home. Is

it always wrong when a 30-year-old woman schoolteacher has sex with a thirteen- or fourteen-year-old boy? Is it always wrong when a male schoolteacher has sex with one of his female or male students? ALWAYS! ALWAYS!

The city of Atlanta has recently been shaken to its very foundation. A 33-year old vicious criminal by the name of Brian Nichols shot and killed four people, including Superior Court Judge Rowland Barnes, court reported Julie Brandau, the Fulton County deputy who was guarding him and Sgt. Hoyt Teasley, another deputy. Was the behavior of Brian Nichols absolutely wrong? Can you imagine a situation where it would be right? Do not the court officers in Fulton County share some of Brian Nichols' guilt since they did not do all they should have done to prevent him from the rampage that killed four people? The sheriff of Fulton County was negligent in his duties. He has done wrong—inexcusable wrong. He should be tried and convicted of malfeasance in office. He should be removed from his office.

School shootings occur much too often and have brought shame on our great nation. The Columbine, Jonesboro and Paducah shootings and other tragedies should have alerted American schools to the dangers some students pose to those schools. A boy who created ghastly drawings, admired Adolf Hitler and called himself "the angel of death" should have told the school authorities in Bemidji, Minnesota, that Jeff Weise, age 17, was extremely dangerous. I am not trying to remove the guilt from Jeff Weise because what he did was absolutely wrong. But the school authorities must share some of the blame for the tragedy.

I seriously doubt that Jeff Weise had ever heard of Wesley Baker and of John Shelby Spong. But had he learned from television and other sources that wrong is in the eye of the beholder? If we keep teaching our children and young people that nothing is absolutely wrong, how are they going to respond? For example, if it is not absolutely

wrong to steal from a store or from a private home, what prevents our young people from becoming thieves? After all, the majority of them would likely escape arrest or if they are arrested, they will be slapped on the hands and released to steal again. Let me tell you in very plain language what is absolutely wrong: failing to teach our children that it is absolutely wrong to commit fornication, to steal, to lie and to kill their classmates and teachers. Parents, preachers and teachers had better take notice of what is occurring in our nation and take steps to remedy the situation. If people who produce television programs, movies and popular music had consciences, they could help change the moral and spiritual atmosphere in America. But if they did that, they might not make as much as money as they currently make.

Leonard Little at one time played football for the University of Tennessee. In recent years, he has played defensive end for the St. Louis Rams. In 1999 Leonard Little drove through a stop sign and killed Susan Gutweiler, a 47-year-old woman of Oakville, Missouri. Little admitted he had been drunk the night he killed the woman. He pleaded guilty to charges of manslaughter. He spent 90 days in jail for killing a woman—90 days—and performed 1,000 hours of community service. Recently Leonard Little has been arrested again for driving under the influence of alcohol. He was driving 78 mph in a 55 mph speed zone at Ladue, Missouri. If Leonard Little had not been a professional football player, he would not have been arrested the second time for drunk driving. He would still be in prison for killing Susan Gutweiler. But, tragically, we treat professional athletes as if they are above the law. They are not and should not be given any slack when they violate the law. What message are we sending to our young people when we imprison a professional athlete for just ninety days for manslaughter? Is driving under the influence of alcohol absolutely wrong—always wrong? If we knowingly endanger the lives and property of others,

how could anyone doubt the evil of such behavior?

Dr. William Bennett served in responsible positions in the Reagan and George Herbert Walker Bush administrations. I have been reading Dr. Bennett's books for years. Incidentally, I was disappointed to learn of his addiction to gambling. But that is not the point I want to make by mentioning Dr. Bennett. In 1998 Dr. Bennett wrote an excellent book with the title, **The Death of Outrage: Bill Clinton and the Assault on American Ideals** (New York: The Free Press). Dr. Bennett reminds his readers of the Bill Clinton's promise that he would have "the most ethical administration in the history of the republic." Instead, "Bill Clinton was a reproach. He has defiled the office of the presidency of the United States" (p. 5).

Surely no moral person in the United States approves of the immoral behavior of former president Clinton. He was sexually involved with an intern at the White House. He lied to the American people, betrayed his wife and daughter and engaged in other sleazy behaviors. As despicable as his behavior was, it was also very troubling to hear the defenses of his behavior. Geraldo Rivera said "he was sure something happened, but even if the president was guilty of lying and being a hypocrite, so what? Get over it." Mary McCrory, one of the Washington press corps' most influential members, calls his conduct "reprehensible" but "not impeachable" (p. 13). Lying to a grand jury and suborning witnesses is not an impeachable offense?

Dr. Bennett quotes these disturbing words from former South Dakota Senator George McGovern:

Even if Bill Clinton has yielded to an occasional attack of lust and is too embarrassed to tell us about it, those sins have done far less damage to the American public and our democracy than is being done by a federal prosecutor rampaging across the land year after year (p. 16).

How did George McGovern arrive at the conclusion, "an

occasional attack of lust?" Incidentally, it would have helped George McGovern to keep from making such inexcusably silly remarks had he remembered that the federal prosecutor was operating under the authority of the Attorney General of the United States. But if politicians, newspaper columnists and Hollywood sleazy characters, such as, Warren Beatty and Barbara Streisand, decide to ignore or to approve of immoral behavior, that is their prerogative. But they need to know that lying, committing adultery, suborning witnesses and betraying one's family are absolutely wrong—always wrong—even when committed by the most powerful man in the world and even if his conduct had the approval of every person the United States. Defending such conduct is absolutely wrong also.

Dr. Bennett has a brief discussion of J. Philip Wogaman, an ethicist and the preacher of the church Bill and Hillary attended in Washington. *The New York Times* interviewed Wogaman about the president's conduct. According to Wogaman, the only absolute is God. He argued that when we make absolutes of "cultural expression" like heterosexuality and sexual fidelity, we are guilty of idolatry (p. 113). With a preacher like Philip Wogaman, it is no wonder that Bill Clinton strayed from fidelity to his wife. Are preachers like Wogaman wrong on such matters—absolutely wrong? Absolutely!

In an appendix to his book, Dr. Bennett has a comparison of the Nixon defense for his unethical and illegal behavior and the defense of Bill Clinton. The press, Hollywood, liberal politicians, academicians and theologians despised Richard Nixon, but they loved Bill Clinton. Dr. Bennett concludes his book with these observations: "Here is my hope." Americans "will declare, with confidence, that a lie is a lie, an oath is an oath, corruption is corruption. And truth matters" (p. 133).

But should we not be tolerant of the conduct of people like Leonard Little and Bill Clinton? Dr. Bennett quotes G. K. Chesterton as saying: tolerance "becomes

the virtue of people who do not believe anything." We absolutely cannot tolerate evil—whether in the White House, in church houses or in private houses.

Chapter 4

Perilous Times

If you are a concerned American, you cannot keep from noticing the tragedies that occur every day in our nation. The news media regularly report school shootings, child abuse, the behavior of crooked politicians, the conduct of immoral religious leaders, corrupt businessmen and the misconduct of professionals, such as, college presidents, physicians and schoolteachers. Did the apostle Paul have our generation in mind when he wrote: "This know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come" (2 Tim. 3:1)? Some premillennialists, such as John Hagee, Jack Van Impe and Hal Lindsey are absolutely sure that the evil of our day is a sign that the end of the age is at hand. They often quote the words I have just read to you from Paul's second letter to Timothy to prove their opinions. I have two questions for you to consider: Are we living in "the last days?" What did Paul mean by "perilous times?"

The first question is very easy to answer. We have been living in the last days since the day of Pentecost. Do you remember what Peter told the Jews on that great day? He quoted these words from the prophet Joel:

It shall come to pass in the last days, says God, I will pour out of my Spirit upon all flesh: and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, and your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams: and on my servants and on my handmaidens will I pour out in those days of my Spirit; and they shall prophesy: and I will show wonders in the heavens above, and signs in the earth beneath; blood, and fire, and vapor of smoke; the sun shall be turned into the darkness, and the moon into blood, before that great and notable day shall come: and it shall come to pass that whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be saved (Acts

2:17-21).

The apostle Peter introduced the quotation from Joel by affirming: "This is that which was spoken by the prophet Joel." Do you have any problem understanding the expression, "This is that?" Oddly enough, one of America's premier evangelical leaders, Dr. Merrill C. Unger, had some difficulty with the phrase. In his book, **New Testament Teaching on Tongues** (Grand Rapids: Kregel Publications, 1971), Dr. Unger says that Peter meant nothing more than "this is (an illustration) of that which was spoken by the prophet Joel" (pp. 24-25). As much as I respect Dr. Unger, that is not what Peter meant. He meant what he said. The events on Pentecost were a fulfillment of that "which was spoken by Joel."

What do you suppose the authors of the following books have in mind: **The Late Great Planet Earth**, **The Terminal Generation**, **The 1980s: Countdown to Armageddon**, **On the Edge of Eternity**, **The Beginning of the End: The Assassination of Yitzak Rabin and the Coming Antichrist**, **Final Dawn over Jerusalem: The World's Future Hangs in the Balance with the Battle for the Holy City**? There is one thing for sure: All of these books are fictional views of Hal Lindsey, Jack Van Impe and John Hagee. They make absolutely no sense. All the dispensational premillennialists desperately need to read Richard Kyle's book, **The Last Days Are Here Again** (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 1988).

One of the absolute proofs, from a dispensational viewpoint, that the Lord's coming is just around the corner is the enormous evil that 2 Timothy 3 and other biblical passages predict. **The Chattanooga Times** (Wednesday, July 4, 2001) printed an advertisement captioned "*Christ Is Coming Very Soon.*" The advertisement said that one scholar had found "167 converging clues (predicting the Lord's imminent coming), just in the last few years of the millennium." The advertisement listed only eight of

the clues. Number 2 was “plummeting morality....Studies show a shocking breakdown just since mid-century” (p. B-9). I have two questions for our dispensational friends. Is the world worse now that it has ever been since the Jesus Christ returned to the Father? Who knows how evil the world will have to become before the Lord says, “Enough?” I hope you can see how utterly foolish it is to predict the time of our Lord’s return. If Christ were to delay his coming for a million years, not one verse of scripture could be shown to be false.

Am I denying that we are living in “perilous times?” Anyone who has heard me preach, either on radio or in the pulpit, knows how concerned I am about the deterioration of moral and spiritual values in America. I cannot agree with Ben Wattenburg’s 1984 book, **The Good News Is That The Bad News Is Wrong** (New York: Simon and Schuster). Wattenburg’s book provides some very encouraging news about the American economy, about the environment, about our standard of living and about other phases of American life. But there are both moral and spiritual problems that are very serious. Some of them so serious they could destroy our economy, our families and our peace of mind.

The word “perilous” comes from the Greek *chalepoi* and means difficult, grievous, distressing or harsh. The word appears only one other time in the New Testament where it is rendered “fierce.” Jesus Christ used the word in speaking of two demon-possessed men. Matthew reports the incident:

And when he came to the other side of the country of the Gergesenes, there met him two men possessed with demons, coming out of the tombs, exceedingly fierce, so that no man might pass by that way (Mt. 8:28).

By divine inspiration, the apostle Paul provides wonderful insight into the perilous times he had in mind.

For men shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy (2 Tim. 3:2).

Has there ever been a time when men and women were more devoted to fulfilling their own dreams, ambitions and wishes than today? I really do not know and have no desire to speculate about the matter. But I know this: During the past thirty or forty years, we have been a people devoted to pleasing ourselves. Educators, psychologists and even theologians have made matters worse by constantly stressing self-esteem, self-worth and self-image. A child can be as ignorant as a stump, but he must feel good about himself. Even when a child gets into trouble with the law, we do not want his self-esteem to suffer. I believe there is a trend away from some of the foolishness the self-esteem advocates have been emphasizing.

The prosperity preachers have encouraged men and women to be lovers of their own selves. Those preachers constantly tell their listeners how to get rich by donating to the various ministries. Joyce Meyer seems more concerned about her riches than about preaching the unsearchable riches of Christ. Have you ever heard her expose the false doctrines that exist in many churches? Have you ever heard her condemn the immorality that so adversely affects so many of our fellow-citizens? Besides, she boasts of her \$10 million dollar jet aircraft, her husband's \$107,000 Mercedes Benz and their \$2 million home. Do her listeners believe that when they contribute to her ministry they will someday enjoy such riches? Is that not the message most of the "health and wealth" evangelists proclaim?

During the last days men will be "covetous." Are many Americans covetous? Are we more covetous than any other generation of Americans? The New Testament uses several different words that are translated "covetous." The word in this passage is *philarguros*, from *philos*, meaning love, and *arguros*, meaning silver. Most of the modern

versions render the Greek "lovers of money." Paul used basically the same word when he warned:

For the love of money is a root of all evil: which while some have coveted after, they have erred from the faith, and pierced themselves through many sorrows (1 Tim. 6:10).

Jesus told his disciples: "You cannot serve God and mammon" (or money) (Mt. 6:25).

And the Pharisees also who were covetous, heard all these things: and they derided (or ridiculed) him (Luke 16:13-14).

I have no idea if our generation is more driven by love of money than any other. But it is very disturbing when one reads in the newspapers about major corporations that have cheated their customers, employees and stockholders and bilked the government of hundreds of billions of dollars. The government fined Hospital Corporation of America \$800,000,000 for double-billing Medicare. As disconcerting as the behavior of some companies is, it is far more troubling for preachers and other religious leaders to rob their supporters. Henry Lyon, president of a black Baptist denomination, took millions of dollars from his own people. How can Jesse Jackson live with his conscience after taking large sums of money from charitable organizations to support his mistress and her child? In 1999 the Fondest Wish Foundation raised \$1.1 million dollars and spent \$7,374 helping children. That means the foundation spend 0.7% of its total income on children. Greed personified!

In the last days, according to Paul, men will be "boasters." Other versions render the Greek "boastful." Is there any more obnoxious attitude than that of being a boaster? The word means empty pretender or arrogant. When we boast of what and how much we have and what we know, we sin grievously against God and against our

fellowmen. When we boast of our accomplishments or of whom we know, we do not love others; we love ourselves. In his great chapter on love, Paul teaches: "Charity (or love) does not vaunt itself, is not puffed up" (1 Cor. 13:4). God punished Babylon's most famous and most powerful king when the king boasted:

Is not this great Babylon, that I have built for the house of my kingdom by the might of my power, and for the honor of my majesty (Dan. 4:30)?

The mighty Babylonian king was literally turned out to pasture and had to eat grass like an ox. God wanted Nebuchadnezzar to know that "the most high rules in the kingdom of men, and gives it to whomsoever he will" (Dan. 4:32).

The words "boasters" and "proud" are closely related. The Greek word translated "proud" signifies "to be above others." The scriptures always use the word in a bad sense. Solomon warned: "Pride goes before destruction, and a haughty spirit before a fall" (Prov. 16:18). The 8th century B. C. prophet Hosea attributes Israel's downfall to a number of sins, including lack of knowledge (Hos. 4:6), instability (Hos. 6:4) and pride.

The pride of Israel testifies to his face; therefore shall Israel and Ephraim fall in their iniquity; Judah shall fall with them (Hos. 5:5).

Even in the church of our Lord, there were men who wanted to be above others. John mentions a man named Diotrophes who "loved to have the preeminence among men" (3 John 9-10).

Paul knew the last days would include men who were "blasphemers." Our English word "blasphemy" is derived from the Greek *blasphemeo*. The word means to speak against—not just against God or Christ or the Holy Spirit—but also against one's fellowmen. The word sometimes appears in contexts where deity is not under consideration. Paul asked the Corinthians:

For if I by grace be a partaker, why am I evil spoken of for that for which I give thanks (1 Cor. 10:30)?

Peter used the same Greek word when he wrote:

Wherein they think it strange that you run not with them to the same excess of riot, speaking evil of you (1 Pet. 4:4).

Do I need to tell you how many modern people in our day blaspheme the God of heaven, his Son Jesus Christ and God's inspired word? Justice Antonin Scalia confessed his faith in the resurrection of Jesus Christ. The editors of some of our newspapers made fun of Justice Scalia. There were some in the media and in academia who argued that Justice Scalia's faith disqualified him from serving on the Supreme Court. And woe to the public figure who endorses creationism! He will not likely be crucified, but he will be criticized, vilified and ostracized. One medical doctor in Nashville called creationists "hayseeds." How sad that blasphemy has become the rule of the day and not the exception!

The last days—the entire Christian era—have witnessed and will continue to witness many cases of "disobedience to their parents." How many generations since Paul wrote 2 Timothy have known thousands and thousands of young people who had no respect for their parents? I do not know, but I know this: Our age has experienced an alarming amount of disobedience to parents. In some cases, the children have murdered their parents. Tragically, some public schools actually foster a spirit of rebellion against parents, as if the schools owned the children. Parents must be very careful about the schools their children attend and even about some churches where the young people worship.

Paul describes some of the people of the last days of being "unthankful." Most modern versions render the Greek "ungrateful." What a tragedy that millions of us never stop to give thanks to God for his grace and mercy!

We may also fail to thank our parents for the sacrifices they made for us, the schoolteachers who challenged us to learn, and the men and women who rule in the affairs of the nation. One cannot read Paul's epistles without being impressed with his expressions of gratitude.

First, I thank God through Jesus Christ for you all, that your faith is spoken of throughout the world (Rom. 1:8).

Even the Son of God felt compelled to give thanks to his heavenly Father (Mt. 11:25).

Paul predicted that some who would live in the last days would be "unholy." Is he arguing that they will more unholy than any other people who have ever lived? There are some preachers and teachers who seem to lean in that direction, but there is no solid scriptural basis for that position. The word translated "unholy" in this text appears just two times in the entire New Testament. The word is a synonym of the word "profane." Unfortunately, many people within American society—including some who are devoutly religious—do not know the difference between the holy and the profane. Some of the Jewish priests during the time Ezekiel lived and prophesied could not make the distinction between the holy and the profane. Please listen to the prophet Ezekiel.

Her priests have violated my law, and have profaned my holy things: they put no difference between the holy and the profane, neither have they shown the difference between the unclean and the clean, and have hidden their eyes from my Sabbaths, and I am profaned among them (Ezek. 22:26).

Obviously, it is not possible in the time I have today to discuss all Paul has to say about the evil that would exist in the last days. But I want to examine a few more words from 2 Timothy 3. Some in the last days will be "without natural affection, trucebreakers, false accusers, incontinent,

fierce, despisers of those who are good" (2 Tim. 3:3). Paul uses the expression, "without natural affection." Although the word "family" is not inherent in the word—there are other kinds of natural affection—there are many who believe Paul specifically had family relationships in mind. Our nation has witnessed some of the most tragic incidents relating to families. The Menendez brothers murdered their parents so they could get quicker access to the older couple's millions. Jeff Weise, age 17, of Bemidji, Minnesota, shot his grandfather to death. Young women across America have babies and then try to kill their babies by throwing them into trashcans or leaving them in public restrooms. One mother in Nashville cut her baby's throat because she thought the presence of a baby might drive her boyfriend away. Susan Smith drowned her beautiful little boys in a lake in South Carolina. Tragically, legislators in Tennessee and in other states have passed laws that allow mothers to abandon their children.

The word "trucebreaker" in our text is very difficult to translate and to define. Some versions translate the Greek either "irreconcilable" or "implacable." In his commentary on *The Letters to Timothy, Titus and Philemon* (Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1975), Dr. William Barclay says the word translated "trucebreakers" can have two applications. It can refer to a person who is so bitter he will never allow himself to come to terms with a person with whom he has quarreled.

Or it can mean that a man is so dishonorable that he breaks the terms of an agreement he has made (p. 188).

How many public officials and even religious leaders have been guilty of such behavior?

I have time to examine one other concept from 2 Timothy 3. In the last days, Paul predicted, there will be "false accusers." Such people have existed in almost every generation since creation. The expression, "false accusers,"

comes from the Greek *diabolo*. It is from this Greek word that we derive our word "devil." In fact, the Greek word is used thirty-four times of Satan. Is it not revealing that the Bible refers to those who make false accusations by using the same word translated "devil?" The Greek can be rendered "malicious gossips" – people who destroy other's reputations by spreading false rumors. The word can also be translated "slanderer."

Paul's description of the "last days" must not be interpreted to refer to the last days of the last days. In other words, there is no solid basis for arguing that the world will get worse and worse just before the Lord returns.

Chapter 5

Polygamy

Are you concerned that polygamy might actually be legalized in our nation? I know it may seem far-fetched, but I assure you it is a real possibility. In fact, there are places in the United States where polygamy is openly practiced. We know the federal government outlawed polygamy, but there are places, especially in states like Utah, Wyoming, Idaho, North and South Dakota where polygamists can still be found. The polygamists attempt to justify their conduct by appealing to various so-called “new revelations,” but there is no justification—absolutely none. The Bible is too plain on the topic for anyone to dispute its teaching.

I shall introduce the lesson today on “Polygamy” with some definitions. There are several words that are related to our topic. The word “polygamy” is a generic word that literally means many marriages. Included under the broad term, “polygamy,” are various forms of multiple marriages, such as, polygyny, polyandry, and communal or group marriages. The word “polygyny” refers to marriages with many wives, the most common form of multiple marriages. “Polyandry” means marriages with several husbands, a form of marriage that has rarely existed in any culture. “Communal marriages” involve several husbands and several wives in the same relationship, sometimes called “group marriages.” Polygamous marriages have never had God’s specific approval—although God permitted it at certain times in the past. He strongly condemns it in the New Testament, although the word “polygamy” is never used in the Bible. In fact, those who engage in such behavior shall not enter the kingdom of God (1 Cor. 6:9-10; Gal. 5:19-21).

More than fifty-five years ago, I purchased and read a novel with the title, *The Peaceable Kingdom*. The book

outlined the difficulties polygamous marriages face. I remember the jealousy that existed among the wives in that polygamous marriage. If the husband bought one wife a new washing machine, he had to buy the other wives new washing machines. If he bought one a new automobile, he had to buy all of them new automobiles. How could a husband condition himself to treat all wives the same and avoid the jealousy that is inevitable in such arrangements? It would be impossible for a husband to be equally in love with all of them. The truth is: Multiple marriages are based on lust and greed. There is no way under heaven such marriages can please God. Nor can polygamous marriages be good for everyone involved—especially for the children.

The book of Deuteronomy has a brief section on polygamy.

If a man have two wives, one beloved, and another hated, and they have borne him children, both the beloved and the hated; and if the firstborn son be hers who was hated; then it shall be, when he makes his sons to inherit that which he has, that he may not make the son of the beloved firstborn before the son of the hated, which is indeed the firstborn: but he shall acknowledge the son of the hated for the firstborn, by giving him a double portion of all that he has: for he is the beginning of his strength; the right of the firstborn is his (Dt. 21:15-17).

Does not this passage show the jealousy and hatred that are bound to arise in all polygamous marriages? The word "hated" in these verses probably would be better translated "unloved" or "loved less?" The English Standard Version renders the Hebrew "unloved." The New Revised Standard Version translates the term, "disliked."

We know what God's original pattern for the home was.

So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them (Gen. 1:27).

And the Lord said, It is not good that man should be alone; I will make him a helper fit for him...Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife: and they shall be one flesh (Gen. 2:18, 24).

Did the Lord say, "wives" (plural) or "wife" (singular)? Incidentally, the Lord Jesus Christ endorsed the Genesis account (Mt. 19:4-5). Paul used the singular of "wife" when he wrote:

Nevertheless let everyone of you in particular love his wife even as himself; and the wife see that she reverence (or respect) her husband (Eph. 5:33).

The Old Testament provides a record of the very first polygamous marriage.

And Lamech took unto him two wives: the name of the one was Adah, and the name of the other was Zillah (Gen. 4:19).

From that time onward during the Jewish covenant, some of the kings and other prominent people married multiple wives. Abraham was certainly one of the most influential men among the ancient Hebrews. He married a beautiful woman named Sarah. She must have been beautiful or the Egyptian pharaoh would not have wanted her in his harem. And remember that she was an old woman when the pharaoh made arrangements for her to be one of his wives. You can read the incident in Genesis 12.

Abraham and Sarah were old people when the Lord promised to give them a son. Sarah could not believe she would have a child in her old age. So she arranged a plan to help the Lord out of a difficult position. N. B. Hardeman, the president of Freed-Hardeman University when I was a student, said that Sarah formed the first Ladies' Aid Society. Sarah suggested that Abraham have intimate sexual relations with Hagar, Sarah's servant (Gen. 16:1-3.). Archaeologists have discovered records which show

that such behavior was common in southern Mesopotamia. A woman who could not bear children would give her servant to her husband. Since the servant belonged to the wife, any children born to the servant would belong to the wife. Both Abraham and Sarah committed a serious blunder—a blunder that still has serious repercussions.

When Sarah saw that Hagar was pregnant, she despised her handmaid. Sarah said to Abraham:

May the wrong done to me be upon you: I have given my maid into your bosom; and when she saw that she had conceived, I was despised in her eyes: the Lord judge between me and you. But Abraham said unto Sarah, Behold, your maid is in your hand; do to her as it pleases you. And when Sarah had dealt severely with her, she fled from her face (Gen. 16:5-6).

This incident occurred almost four thousand years ago, but it is an example for men and women in every country in every generation. Human nature had not changed. Following God's pattern of one man and one woman until death separates human beings will avoid the jealousy and anger Sarah experienced and the haughtiness Hagar used against her mistress.

The Old Testament describes Solomon as a very wise man. I have no doubt he was, most of the time. But as Solomon got older, he behaved very foolishly, about like Liz Taylor and some of the other stars in Hollywood. 1 Kings tells us about the stupid behavior of the king Solomon.

But king Solomon loved many strange women (that is, women outside the nation of Israel), together with the daughter of pharaoh, women of the Moabites, Ammonites, Edomites, Zidonians and Hittites: of the nations concerning which the Lord said unto the children of Israel, You shall not go in unto them, neither shall they come in unto you: for surely they will turn away your heart after their gods: Solomon clung unto these in love.

And he had seven hundred wives, princesses,
and three hundred concubines: and his wives
turned away his heart (1 Kings 11:1-3).

A few observations on this passage are in order. Solomon could never be accused of discrimination. He apparently married just about everyone who was available. We have no way of knowing how many of his wives and concubines were faithful Israelites, but that seems not to have made much difference to Solomon. What an absolute shame that one so wise—one with such great potentiality for good—would destroy his usefulness by his utter stupidity! Did Solomon repent before his face-to-face meeting with the Lord? We do not know, but we do know he is not listed among the great heroes of the faith in Hebrews 11.

Dr. Daniel R. Heimbach, professor of Christian Ethics at Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary, in my judgment, has written one of the best books on sexual ethics I have found. His book has the title, **True Sexual Ethics: Recovering Biblical Standards for a Culture in Crisis** (Wheaton: Crossway Books, 2004). Dr. Heimbach's book has the enthusiastic endorsement of some of the leading evangelicals in America: Dr. Paige Patterson, Fred Barnes, Dr. R. Albert Mohler, Dr. Wayne Grudem and Dr. Richard Land. But I have a problem with Dr. Heimbach's discussion of polygamy. A few brief statements from Dr. Heimbach's book will show one serious flaw in the book. Please listen carefully.

God also opposes polygamy. But while he clearly opposes having more than one wife or husband at a time, he does not ban it for everyone....In the New Testament, polygamy is prohibited for people in church leadership, but again this prohibition is not applied to others (pp. 216-217).

Dr. Heimbach has a brief discussion of Romans 7:1-3, but apparently did not understand the universal application

of the principles involved. I ask you to think with me on this very important passage. I am sure that most of you know the purpose of the book of Romans. The Holy Spirit gave the book to show that we are not under the Mosaic covenant, but under the gospel of Christ. Paul informed the Roman Christians:

For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to everyone who believes; to the Jew first and also to the Greek. For therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith: as it written, The just shall live by faith (Rom. 1:16-17).

It is through the gospel—not through the law of Moses—that we are justified. Paul makes that truth even plainer in these words:

Therefore by the deeds of the law shall no flesh be justified in his sight: for by the law is the knowledge of sin. But now the righteousness of God without the law is manifested, being witnessed by the law and the prophets (Rom. 3:20-21).

One of the ways Paul proved that we are not under the law but under the gospel is by using as an example God's law that binds husbands and wives. Paul asked the Roman Christians:

Do you not know, brethren, (for I speak to them who know the law), how that the law has dominion over a man as long as he lives (Rom. 7:1)?

The "law" Paul had in mind was the law of Moses. As the Romans surely knew, that law was binding on the people of the Jewish covenant as long as they lived. Please listen to the example Paul uses to prove his observation that "the law has dominion over a man as long as he lives."

For the woman who has a husband is bound by the law to her husband so long as he lives;

but if the husband be dead, she is loosed from the law of her husband (Rom. 7:2).

God's law of marriage bound a husband and wife so long as they lived. According to Jesus Christ, a husband and wife become one flesh.

Wherefore they are not more two, but one flesh. What therefore God has joined together, let not man put asunder (Mt. 19:5-6).

The Jews asked about the writing of divorcement that Moses allowed. Jesus responded:

Moses because of the hardness of your hearts suffered you to put away your wives, but from the beginning it was not so (Mt. 19:7-8).

The little prepositional phrase, "from the beginning," demonstrates that Christ was returning to God's original pattern as revealed in Genesis 1 and 2.

If the husband died, the wife was no longer bound to her husband. She was free to marry again. But neither she nor her husband could marry another while they were still bound to each other without committing adultery. I am fully aware how harsh these words may sound in the ears of many modern people. But there is no doubt of Paul's meaning. Please listen to the next verse.

So then if, while her husband lives, she be married to another man, she shall be called an adulteress; but if her husband be dead, she is free from the law; so that she is no adulteress, though she be married to another man (Rom. 7:3).

How could the language in this verse be plainer?

Christ gave a legitimate reason for a woman to divorce her husband or a husband to divorce his wife and to marry another.

And I say unto you, Whosoever shall put away his wife, except if be for fornication, and shall marry another, commits adultery: and whoso

marries her who is put away commits adultery
(Mt. 19:9).

If a woman's spouse commits adultery, she can put him away and marry another without committing adultery. But if she marries another man without having a scriptural right to divorce, she commits adultery.

According to Paul, if a woman marries another man while her husband lives, she shall be called an adulteress. Why would she be called "an adulteress?" Because that is exactly what she is. If her husband dies, she has every right to marry another man. In that case, she is no adulteress, even though she is married to another man. When I was a very young preacher—probably still in my teens—I preached at a country church in central Kentucky. The class was dealing with the qualifications of elders. Elders are to be married and to have only one wife. The King James Version says a bishop or an elder is to be "the husband one wife" (1 Tim. 3:2). The Greek calls him a one-woman man.

One of the members in that class argued that if an elder's wife died and he remarried, that disqualified him from being an elder. He would be a man with two wives. That is the very opposite of Paul's teaching in Romans 7. If a man's wife dies, he is free to marry another woman without being married to two wives. However, if the members of the church have difficulty with a man's remarrying and remaining an elder, it might be better for him to step down as an elder. After all, how can we lead if we do not have the confidence of those who are supposed to follow?

After using the illustration of a husband and wife, Paul advised the Roman Christians:

Wherefore, my brethren, you also are become dead to the law by the body of Christ; that you should be married to another, even to him who is raised from the dead, that we should bring forth fruit unto God (Rom. 7:4).

As I mentioned a while ago, the main thrust of Romans 7:1-4 is the removal of the Mosaic covenant and the establishment of the gospel of Christ. But the example of the husband and wife teaches the truth on polygamy. Polygamy is an attack on marriage as God ordained it. Christians must oppose polygamy and all other aberrant forms of marriage. A polygamist is an adulterer. Do you know what will happen to all adulterers who do not repent?

Paul asked the Corinthians:

Do you not know that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God? Be not deceived; neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, not effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with mankind, nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, shall inherit the kingdom of God (1 Cor. 6:9-10).

Paul told the Ephesians:

For this you know, that no whoremonger, nor unclean person, nor covetous man, who is an idolater, has any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ, and of God (Eph. 5:5).

There is not even the slightest doubt the New Testament unequivocally condemns polygamy and all other forms of sexual immorality. But from a purely practical viewpoint, polygamy makes absolutely no sense. No so-called "revelation" outside the scriptures can overturn what the New Testament so clearly condemns. Any sexual relationship outside a monogamous marriage will bring the curses of God on the heads of those who practice them. But the good news is: We can turn away from all sin—whether sexual or otherwise—and be forgiven, be added to the Lord's church and be on our way to heaven. How do I know that?

As I have already mentioned, the Corinthians had been guilty of all kinds of sin (1 Cor. 6:9-10). But they were washed, sanctified and justified (1 Cor. 6:11). When were

they washed, sanctified and justified? The answer can be found in the great book of conversions. The apostle Paul visited the Jewish synagogue in the city of Corinth. While he was there, he preached that Jesus was the Christ. Please take note of what occurred as a result of his preaching.

And Crispus, the chief ruler of the synagogue, believed on the Lord with all his house; and many of the Corinthians hearing believed, and were baptized (Acts 18:5-6, 8).

If you are not a Christian, will you not this very day confess your faith in Christ, repent of your alien sins and be baptized to wash away your sins (Acts 22:16)? Then devote your life in service to your God and to your fellowmen. God almighty will say to you when you meet him in the judgment: "Well done, good and faithful servant. Enter into the joys of thy Lord." What could possibly be sweeter than that?

Chapter 6

Pesky Bible Verses

When I visit bookstores, I always search for books that will help me in my Bible classes, in my preaching in the pulpit and on radio. I have made it a practice to look for authors with whose writings I am familiar and from which I have learned much. For example, I almost invariably buy books by Os Guinness, John McArthur, Jr., Richard Kyle, Richard Abanes and other well-known and respected scholars. I also examine other people's endorsements of the book. If the book has the endorsement of capable scholars, I often buy the book and read it. If John Hagee or Hal Lindsey or Jack van Impe recommends the book, I gently place the book back on the shelf. There have been exceptions to that rule, but not many.

Mel White's new book, **Religion Gone Bad: The Hidden Dangers of the Christian Right** (New York: J. P. Tarcher/Penguin, 2006), has the enthusiastic endorsement of John Shelby Spong, one of the most radical theologians in the world. When I bought the book, I knew it would be way out in left field, but I bought it anyway because I thought I needed to know what Mel White had to say on "religion gone bad." I need to tell you who Mel White is. He has an earned doctor's degree from Fuller Theological Seminary in California, the largest seminary in the world. He has been a ghostwriter for such prominent evangelicals as Pat Robertson, D. James Kennedy, Jerry Falwell and Billy Graham. After marrying and having a family, he decided he was a homosexual and lives with another man in Lynchburg, Virginia. In the book I have just mentioned, Mel White refers to certain passages from the Bible as "those pesky Bible verses" (p. 24). Later in the book, White refers to the same Bible verses as "those same old clobber passages" (p. 74). I had not read anywhere else the expression, "pesky Bible verses," but I know many people

who think of hundreds and hundreds of Bible passages as being "pesky Bible verses." Today's lesson will be devoted to the theme, "Pesky Bible Verses." I know why Mel White considers some Bible verses "pesky." Any time a biblical passage teaches an idea we do not like and do not intend to honor, many Americans think of that passage as being "pesky."

The very first verse in the Bible has been a pesky one for all secular humanists, evolutionists, atheists, agnostics and liberal theologians, like John Shelby Spong and Mel White. The Holy Spirit directed Moses to write: "In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth" (Gen. 1:1). What is so obnoxious about this simple truth? All evolutionists have problems with the expression, "in the beginning." Most of them apparently do not believe there was a beginning. They believe the earth has always been here, although many prominent scientists are beginning to question that view. All evolutionists disagree that God created the heaven and the earth. They believe, or at least, pretend to believe, that everything in the universe, including human beings, evolved. But there are many serious problems with evolution. One of the most serious problems is that evolution does not explain the origin of anything. It purports to explain development, but not origin. This beautiful verse has been a thorn in the flesh for all evolutionists, especially for those evolutionists who claim to be Christians.

When the Israelites were on the brink of the Babylonian exile, King Zedekiah sent for the prophet Jeremiah to learn if there were any word from the Lord. Neither the king nor the people had paid any attention to the preaching of Jeremiah or to the preaching of any of the other great prophets until they were in grave danger of being conquered (Jer. 37:2). When the king's messengers approached Jeremiah, he told them very plainly:

Thus says the Lord, the God of Israel: Thus shall you say to the king of Judah, that sent you unto

me to inquire of me; Behold, pharaoh's army, that has come forth to help you, shall return to Egypt unto their own land. And the Chaldeans shall come again, and fight against this city, and take it, and burn it with fire. Thus says the Lord; Do not deceive yourselves, saying, The Chaldeans shall surely depart from us: for they shall not depart. For though you had smitten the whole army of the Chaldeans that fight against you, and there remained but wounded men among them, yet should they rise up every man in his tent, and burn this city with fire (Jer. 37:7-10).

One of the messengers whom Zedekiah had sent to inquire of Jeremiah was very angry at the information God's prophet had given. He accused of Jeremiah of falling away to the Chaldeans. In very simple language, he said that Jeremiah was a traitor to the nation. Jeremiah denied that he was a traitor. The men of Judah beat the prophet and imprisoned him. Zedekiah removed Jeremiah from prison and asked, "Is there any word from the Lord?" The fearless prophet responded: "There is: You shall be delivered into the hands of the king of Babylon" (Jer. 38:13-14, 17). Zedekiah does not use either the term, "pesky message" or "pesky messenger," but there is hardly any doubt of Zedekiah's attitude toward both the message and the messenger. Zedekiah did not want to hear the words of the Lord, but Jeremiah had the duty of delivering God's message in God's words to Zedekiah and to the people of Judah.

Amos, an eighth century B.C. prophet, was one of God's most fearless and faithful spokesmen. He lived in Tekoa, a small village in the southern kingdom, but God sent him to prophesy to Israel, the ten tribes in the north. Amos warned the northern tribes of the impending judgment of God against them for their disobedience. He delivered God's warning to the people of Israel:

The high places of Isaac shall be desolate, and the sanctuaries of Israel shall be laid waste; and

I will rise against the house of Jereboam with the sword (Amos 7:9).

Amaziah, the priest from Bethel, was angry because of the preaching of Amos. He told Jereboam:

Amos has conspired against you in the midst of the house of Israel: the land is not able to bear all of his words. For thus Amos says: Jereboam shall die by the sword, and Israel shall be led away captive out of their own land (Amos 7:10-11).

Amaziah does not refer to the preaching of Amos as being "pesky," but what do you suppose he meant when he said to the great prophet:

O you seer, go, flee away into the land of Judah, and there eat bread, and prophesy there: but prophesy not again any more at Bethel: for it is the king's chapel, and it is the king's court?

Every serious student of the Old Testament is familiar with these words of Amos.

I was no prophet, neither was I a prophet's son: but I was a herdsman, and a gatherer of sycamore fruit: and the Lord took me as I followed the flock and the Lord said unto me, Go, prophesy unto my people Israel. Now therefore hear the word of the Lord: You say: Prophecy not against Israel, and drop not your word against the house of Isaac. Therefore thus says the Lord: Your wife shall be a harlot in the city, and your sons and your daughters shall fall by the sword, and your land shall be divided by line; and you shall die in a polluted land: and Israel shall surely go into captivity forth of his land (Amos 7:12-17).

Amos was a pesky fellow with a pesky message.

Robin Meyers, a preacher of the ultraliberal United Church of Christ, has just published a new book with the title, **Why the Christian Right Is Wrong: A Minister's Manifesto for Taking Back Your Faith, Your Flag, Your**

Future (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2006). Meyers' book is one of the most biased books I have read in a long time. He appears to be angry with everyone he calls "the Christian right." Chapter two in his book has the title, "*Missing in Action: The Sermon on the Mount*" (pp. 29-44). I cannot disagree with Meyers that millions of Americans, including many of America's leaders, have little respect for our Lord's great sermon. But tragically, that is also true of most liberal theologians. Are there not some "pesky Bible verses" for Robin Meyers in the Sermon on the Mount? How do you suppose a liberal theologian reacts to these well-known words from Christ's great sermon?

Enter in at the strait gate: for wide is the gate,
and broad is the way, that leads to destruction,
and many there are who go in thereat: because
strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, that
leads to life, and few there are who find it (Mt.
7:13-14).

These verses give a bushel of trouble to liberal theologians like Robin Meyers. They are unquestionably "pesky Bible verses" for all Universalists. Most theological liberals are apparently Universalists.

The Pharisees of Christ's day claimed to have great respect for God's law as revealed in the Old Testament. But in too many cases, they paid more attention to the traditions of the elders than to the Mosaic covenant. On one occasion, the Pharisees sought to tempt Christ by asking him, "Is it lawful for a man to put away his wife for every cause?" Our Lord answered them by asking:

Have you not read, that he who made them
from the beginning made them male and female,
and said, For this cause shall a man leave his
father and mother, and shall cleave unto his
wife (Mt. 19:3-5)?

Many of the Jews in the first century divorced and remarried, divorced and remarried, just like they do in

Hollywood. Any word from the Lord on the permanence of marriage would have been troubling to them. I have no doubt that many of the Pharisees thought of the Old Testament's teaching on marriage, divorce and remarriage as being "pesky."

A few weeks after I became the speaker on the International Gospel Hour, I preached a sermon based on the events that transpired on the day of Pentecost. I emphasized Peter's answer to the Jews' question, "Men, and brethren, what shall we do?" The apostle Peter by divine inspiration replied:

Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit (Acts 2:37-38).

I received a letter from a man who was upset about my emphasis on Acts 2:38. The following are his exact words: "There will be more people in hell because of Acts 2:38 than any other passage in the Bible." I was shocked that anyone—particularly one who claims to love the Bible—should be so disturbed by my reading of what the word of God teaches. Did my correspondent consider Acts 2:38 a "pesky Bible verse?" Do not all Calvinists think of Acts 2:38 as being "pesky?"

Many of our Calvinist friends appeal to the book of Romans in their attempt to sustain their belief in the doctrine of salvation by grace alone through faith alone. Yet they ignore the passages in Romans that teach the necessity of obedience. For example, why do they overlook these words:

Do you not know that to whom you yield yourselves servants to obey his servants you are to whom you obey; whether of sin unto death, or of obedience unto righteousness? But God be thanked, that you were the servants of sins, but you have obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine that was delivered unto you.

Being then made free from sin, you became the servants of righteousness (Rom. 6:16-18)?

Are we the servants of God if we do not obey the righteous will of God? If we are, the language of these verses is misleading. If we must obey, we are not saved by grace alone through faith alone. The apostle also added: "They have not all obeyed the gospel" (Rom. 10:16). These must be very troubling verses to Calvinists. Are they "pesky?" The simple truth is: Any passage that requires obedience is pesky for Calvinists.

As angry as Robin Meyers is with people he calls "the Christian Right," he is correct in his observations about the "health and wealth gospel" of Paula White, Joyce Meyer, Paul Crouch and a host of other television evangelists. He says:

Clicking through the TV wasteland of so-called religious programming is like watching a Saturday Night Live skit as hucksters with big hair peddle prosperity theology as the payoff of faith.

He also comments:

Faith healer Benny Hinn brings his "crusade" to my city and choreographs the illusion of a healing in a fraudulent spectacle that preys on the sick, the desperate, and the lonely (p. 3).

The prosperity people have serious problems with a number of biblical passages. For example, the only perfectly righteous person who ever lived was poverty-stricken. Jesus himself said: "Foxes have holes, and birds of the air have nests; but the Son of man has not where to lay his head" (Luke 9:58). Dedicating his entire life to serving God and his fellowmen did not make Christ rich.

The greatest missionary who ever lived must not have given generously to the cause of Christ or he would not have been so poor at times. He explained to the Philippians:

I know how to be abased, and I know how to abound: everywhere and in all things I am instructed both to be full and to be hungry, both to abound and to suffer want (Phil. 4:12).

Was Paul mistaken when he wrote about Christ:

For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that, though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, that you through his poverty might be rich (2 Cor. 8:9)?

For anyone who promotes the prosperity gospel, these verses have to be very pesky. In fact, they are so pesky, I have never heard any television evangelist mention even one of these verses. Or maybe they do not know about these passages.

Those who believe in the Calvinistic doctrine of eternal security, that is, once in grace, always in grace, encounter many pesky passages in the Bible. In his Parable of the Sower, Jesus spoke of the seed that fell upon a rock. He then told his disciples what that meant:

They on the rock are they, who, when they hear, receive the word with joy; and these have no root, who for a while believe, but in time of temptation fall away (Luke 8:6, 13).

But they could not have been true believers if they fell away, could they? The author of Hebrews expressed deep concern that some of his readers might apostatize, that is, fall away. He warned:

Take heed, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief, in departing from the living God (Heb. 3:12).

The Greek word translated "departing" is *apostenai* from which we derive our English "apostatize."

The churches of Galatia had many serious problems. Their main problem was trying to add certain elements from the Mosaic covenant to the gospel of Christ. Paul asked them:

O foolish Galatians (literally, stupid Galatians), who has bewitched you, that you should not obey the truth, before whose eyes Jesus Christ has been evidently set forth, crucified among you (Gal. 3:1)?

We do not know all the laws from the old covenant they were trying to bind on the Galatian Christians, but one of the laws was circumcision. Paul pled with the Galatians:

Stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ has made us free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage. Behold, I Paul say unto you, that if you be circumcised, Christ shall profit you nothing. For I testify again to every man who is circumcised, that he is a debtor to do the whole law. Christ shall become of no effect unto you, whosoever of you are justified by the law; you are fallen from grace (Gal. 5:1-4).

The Greek word translated "are fallen" means to fall away, to fall out of. Can people be saved when they have fallen away from or out of grace? What a tremendously pesky passage!

As I bring our lesson to a close, I shall list some very pesky passages for those who defy the will of our heavenly Father. Jesus told his contemporaries:

You have heard that it was said, You shall not commit adultery: but I say unto you, That whosoever looks on a woman to lust after her has committed adultery with her already in his heart (Mt. 5:28-29).

Are those verses not pesky for all men and women who are addicted to pornography or who are involved in adultery or who think adultery?

When Americans or others hate those who differ from them in some way, the words of Jesus in the Sermon on the Mount are pesky.

You have heard that it has been said, You shall love your neighbor, and hate your enemy: but I say unto you, Love your enemies, bless them who curse you, do good to them who hate you, and pray for them who despitefully use you, and persecute you (Matt. 5:43-44).

Most White Supremacists, members of the infamous Ku Klux Klan and others who promote hate toward people of a different color or from a different nation or of another religion surely find these words from the very lips of Jesus extremely pesky. And yet most of those groups claim to be following Christ.

The sad truth is that many Bible verses—from Genesis to Revelation—are pesky to some people. But when we respond to those pesky verses, they transform us into radically different people. Just think of the preaching Peter, Paul and Philip did and what occurred as a result of their faithfulness. People on Pentecost obeyed the Lord in baptism and were saved from their sins (Acts 2:38-41). Philip's preaching at Samaria resulted in the obedience of the Samaritans (Acts 8:12). The Corinthians heard Paul's preaching and were baptized into the church of the living God (Acts 18:8; 1 Cor. 12:13). Those pesky Bible verses will lead you to heaven at last.

Chapter 7

Eugenics

No version of the Bible with which I am acquainted uses the word "eugenics," but the Greek word *eugenes* from which we derive the word "eugenics" appears three times in the New Testament. The word is translated either "nobleman" or "noble" in the following passages. In one of his parables, Jesus said: "A certain nobleman went into a far country to receive for himself a kingdom, and to return" (Luke 19:12). Luke affirmed: The Bereans

...were more noble than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the word with all readiness of mind, and searched the scriptures daily, whether those things were so (Acts 17:11).

Paul recognized that some people were so arrogant or so powerful they would not obey the gospel. He wrote concerning such people:

For you see you calling, brethren, how that not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, are called (1 Cor. 1:26).

The Greek word translated "noble" literally means well born or of good birth.

Webster's Third New International Dictionary defines the word "eugenics" as follows:

A science that deals with the improvement of hereditary qualities in a series of generations of race or breed, especially by social control of human mating or reproduction (p. 783).

Sir Francis Galton, a British scientist and a cousin of Charles Darwin, coined the term, "eugenics." He insisted that we can and should improve the human race by a careful selection of parents. He believed it so strongly that he left money to establish the Chair of Eugenics at

London University. If Galton accepted the evolutionary views of his cousin, Charles Darwin, I can understand his support for eugenics. After all, if human beings are only animals—as evolutionists teach—what could be wrong with trying to improve people as we try to improve hogs, cattle, chickens, horses and other animals?

If you grew up on the farm, as I did, or if you know anything about cattle or hogs or horses or chickens, you know that every farmer wants the best cattle and hogs and horses and chickens he can raise. So farmers for generations have sought to develop the very best animals possible. They do this through mating the best females with the strongest males. If they want more bacon from hogs, they strive to develop hogs that will produce more bacon. Does anyone have a moral objection to using scientific methods to improve farm animals? I certainly do not; nor do I know anyone who does. But is it moral if we use the same approach to improving human beings?

Everyone who lived through the abominable Nazi era knows that Hitler and his reprobate colleagues treated human beings like our farmers treat farm animals, that is, they experimented on them in order to “improve” German citizens. Hitler wanted the handsomest and strongest men to mate with the most beautiful German girls. Apparently he was not concerned about their marrying; he just wanted them to produce beautiful and bright Aryan babies. The goal of Hitler’s plan was the development of the “master race.” That meant, among other things, no Jews, nor blacks, and nor any one else Hitler considered subhuman. Incidentally, Hitler borrowed many of his ideas from Friedrich Nietzsche, one of Christianity’s and humanity’s greatest enemies.

Some of the information I shall be providing for you today about eugenics comes from the book, **The Nazi Doctors: Medical Killing and the Psychology of Genocide** (New York: Basic Books, Publishers, Inc., 1986), by Dr. Robert Jay Lifton, a distinguished American psychiatrist. Dr.

Lifton's book is one of the most disturbing and enlightening books you can find on eugenics as practiced by Hitler and his henchmen. I often tell people that Dr. Lifton's book is not the kind of book you want to read just before retiring at night, unless you belong the Neo-Nazi party or to the skinheads. Dr. Lifton quotes Hitler as saying:

The volkisch state must see to it that only the healthy beget children....Here the state must act as the guardian of a millennial future....It must put the most modern medical means in the service of this knowledge. It must declare unfit for propagation all who are in any way visibly sick or who have inherited a disease and can therefore pass it on (p. 22).

Dr. Lifton provides a list of conditions Hitler wanted eliminated: congenital feeblemindedness, manic depressive sanity, epilepsy, Huntington's chorea, inherited blindness, hereditary deafness and grave bodily malformation. He also wanted the people who had these conditions surgically sterilized. He demanded that hundreds of thousands of Germans be sterilized (p. 25). One internationally prominent Swiss born psychiatrist, Dr. Ernst Rudin "extolled Hitler and the Nazi movement for its 'decisive...path-breaking step toward making racial hygiene a fact among the German people...and inhibiting the propagation of the congenitally ill and inferior.'" He praised the Nuremburg Laws for "preventing the further penetration of the German gene pool by Jewish blood" (p. 28).

Did you know that eugenics and other medical experiments were widely practiced in the United States in the early decades of the twentieth century? The following examples may be discouraging and do not all relate directly to eugenics, but they must be made known if we are to avoid the mistakes of the past. Vivien Spitz was the youngest court reporter at the famous Nuremberg Trials. Her book has the title, **Doctors from Hell: The Horrific Account of Nazi Experiments on Humans** (Boulder: Sentient

Publications, 2005). She relates the following incidents from the United States:

Dr. Thomas Hamilton from Georgia placed a slave in a pit oven in order to study heat stroke....Dr. Crawford Long of Georgia conducted a controlled demonstration of anesthesia by amputating two fingers from a slave boy – one with ether and the other without (pp. xvi-xvii of the Foreword).

One of the most notorious cases of sterilization involved an allegedly feeble-minded mother who bore a child. The law in Virginia permitted this unspeakably evil act. One of the most famous Supreme Court justices – Oliver Wendell Holmes – upheld the right of the state to sterilize Carrie Buck. Holmes wrote: “Three generations of imbeciles are enough” (p. xviii of the Foreword).

James H. Jones, associate professor of history at the University of Houston, has written an account of the United States government’s experiments on black citizens at Tuskegee, Alabama. His book has the title, **Bad Blood: The Tuskegee Syphilis Experiment** (New York: The Free Press, 1993). The sad but indisputable fact is that our government conducted an experiment on the effects of untreated syphilis on black men in Macon County, Alabama. The government’s study had nothing to do with treatment. Oddly enough, one of the physicians involved in the study declared: “There is nothing in the experiment that was unethical or unscientific” (p. 8). The case involving the men at Tuskegee never came to trial, but the United States government paid approximately \$10,000,000 in an out-of-court settlement (p. 217). Tragically, our nation is not without guilt in experimenting on human beings without the consent of the people on whom the experiments are conducted.

There are two classifications of eugenics: positive and negative. “Positive eugenics” involves the mating of the physically, intellectually and emotionally fit. That was what Hitler was trying to accomplish when he wanted only

strong Aryans to produce children. Most of us see nothing wrong with that practice if we are speaking of cattle or hogs or horses. But applying that principle to human beings is immoral and arrogant. And besides, who has the wisdom to make those decisions? "Negative eugenics" means the attempt to eliminate the unfit. One example of negative eugenics will have to suffice. Ramesh Ponnuru's book, **The Party of Death** (Washington, DC: Regnery Publishing, Inc., 2006), points out that "the number of children in this country with Down syndrome...has fallen over the last fifteen years." Normally we would expect the opposite. In the United States many women are waiting until they are older to have children. Older women are more likely to give birth to Down syndrome children than younger women. So how can we account for the decrease in the number of such children? Ponnuru correctly says: "We abort children with Down syndrome, or Tay-Sachs disease, or spina bifida, or cystic fibrosis" (p. 165). Ponnuru quotes Dr. Leon Kass, a highly respected ethicist:

We are largely unaware that we have, as a society, already embraced the eugenic principle, "Defectives shall not be born," because our practices are decentralized and because they operate not by coercion but by private choice (p. 167).

A number of misguided people have experimented with improving the human race—not by teaching the truth of the gospel and not by teaching any other system of thought—but by mating humans as we mate cattle, hogs and horses. John Humphrey Noyes of the infamous Oneida community in New York State sought out handsome men and beautiful women in an experiment to breed humans to make their offspring as perfect as possible. The experiment fell apart because of the imperfections of the people who were chosen for the experiment and because of pressures from surrounding communities. The only good to come from the experiment was Oneida silverware.

Several months ago I began a series on this program that I called "*Modern Jezebels*." I have not completed the series, but the first in the series was about a woman named Margaret Sanger. She became famous or infamous, depending on your viewpoint, because of her advocacy of birth control. But no one in this country was more devoted to eugenics—both positive and negative—than Margaret Sanger. George Grant's book, **Grand Illusions: The Legacy of Planned Parenthood** (Nashville: Cumberland House, 2000), provides a great amount of valuable information on this immoral reprobate. Dr. Grant includes this excerpt from Sanger's writings:

The most serious charge that can be brought against modern benevolence is that it encourages the perpetuation of defectives, delinquents, and dependents. These are the most dangerous elements in the world community, the most devastating curse on human progress and expression. Philanthropy is a gesture characteristic of modern business lavishing upon the unfit the profits extorted from the community at large. Looked at impartially, this compensatory generosity is in its final effect probably more dangerous, more dysgenic, more blighting than the initial practice of profiteering" (p. 40).

The word "dysgenic" is the opposite of the word "eugenic." Do you remember what our Lord taught his disciples: "Inasmuch as you have done it unto one of the least of my brethren, you have done it unto me" (Mt. 25:40)? Incidentally, Dr. Grant's book is the most devastating critique of Planned Parenthood ever written. If you want to know the enormous damage this immoral organization has done and is doing to America, you must read Dr. Grant's book.

I should like to quote one paragraph from my book, **Silence Can Be Sinful** (Fayetteville, TN: International Gospel Hour, 2002):

One of the main goals of the eugenic program was the limiting of the spread of inferior races. Incidentally, in this respect Margaret Sanger was thinking on the same plane as Charles Darwin, the popularizer of organic evolution. Like Darwin, Margaret Sanger believed that Blacks were inherently inferior. Dr. George Grant says she targeted what she called "ill-favored" or "dysgenic races," including Blacks, Hispanics, American Indians, Fundamentalists and Catholics (p. 73).

She organized a "Negro Project" which was designed to reduce the number of Blacks being born, particularly in the South. Her aim, according to Dr. Grant, was to enlist a number of Black ministers, preferably from social service backgrounds, and with engaging personalities to encourage Blacks to be more diligent in using birth control. Dr. Grant quotes Sanger as saying:

The most successful educational approach to the Negro is through a religious appeal. We do not want word to get out that we want to exterminate the Negro population and the Minister is the man who can straighten out that idea if it ever occurs to any of the more rebellious members (p. 74).

In view of the information I have given you about Margaret Sanger why would **The Tennessean** (Friday, December 31, 1999) include the name of this infamous woman in the list of the "*Top 12 People of the Century?*" The newspaper listed Mohammed Ali, Franklin Delano Roosevelt, Thomas Edison, Jackie Robinson, Elvis Presley, Marilyn Monroe and Margaret Sanger. As I read the article, I wondered what standard the editorial staff at **The Tennessean** used to name Elvis Presley, a notorious womanizer and drug user, Marilyn Monroe, a well-known purveyor of flesh, and Margaret Sanger, one of the most ungodly women of any century – among the "*Top Twelve People of the Century.*" The

newspaper sought to justify its selection of Margaret Sanger by affirming that modern women are deeply indebted to her for her pioneering work in legalizing birth control in our nation. Is that all the editorial staff at **The Tennessean** knew about this modern Jezebel? Oddly enough, an editorial in the same paper (Thursday, December 30, 1999) urged the Atlanta Braves to "*Send Rocker to the Showers*" (p. 10-A). I am not defending the stupid remarks John Rocker made, but nothing he said compares with the venom spewed out by Margaret Sanger. She was a racist, a socialist, a Theosophist and, in general, an abominable woman. In his book, **Killer Angel: A Biography of Planned Parenthood's Founder, Margaret Sanger** (Franklin, TN: Ars Vitae Press, 1995), Dr. George Grant affirms that Margaret Sanger may have been responsible for the deaths of as many as two and a half billion people (p. 3).

Two years ago I bought and read Christine Rosen's book, **Preaching Eugenics: Religious Leaders and the American Eugenics Movement** (New York: Oxford University Press, 2004). Christine Rosen is a fellow at the Ethics and Public Policy Center in Washington, D. C. and a senior editor of **The New Atlantis: A Journal of Technology & Society**. Until I read Christine Rosen's book, I did not know how involved preachers of various churches were in the eugenics movement in the United States. While there were so-called "clergymen" in the early years of the twentieth century who preached sermons eulogizing eugenics, the movement to improve the human race through mating superior men and women goes back much further than the twentieth century. Plato, the world's most influential philosopher, strongly supported what we call in modern times, "eugenics." In his outstanding book, **The Story of Philosophy** (Garden City, NY: Garden City Publishing Co., Inc., 1927), Dr. Will Durant, America's greatest historian of philosophy, says that Plato advocated "strict eugenic supervision of all reproductive relations." He believed the child should be properly educated and

must be "properly born, of select and healthy ancestry; 'education should begin before birth'" (p. 44). Dr. Durant quotes these words from Plato:

The best of either sex should be united with the best as often as possible, and the inferior with the inferior; and they are to rear the offspring of the one sort but not that of the other; for this is the only way of keeping the flock in prime condition....Our braver and better youth, beside their other honors and rewards, are to be permitted a greater variety of mates; for such fathers ought to have as man sons as possible.

Did you notice Plato's use of the word "flock," as if human beings are no more than animals? And is not that idea also involved in Plato's justification that strong men ought to have as many sons as possible? That certainly is the practice of dairy farmers. Plato argued: "Offspring born of unlicensed matings, or deformed, are to be exposed and left to die" (p. 45).

Charles M. Sheldon from Topeka, Kansas, was one of the most influential preachers in the late 1800s and in the early 1900s. His book, *In His Steps*, has sold over 30,000,000 copies worldwide. Sheldon was responsible for the question, "What would Jesus do?" He was not so much interested in getting men to heaven as preparing them for doing good work on earth. Christine Rosen calls Sheldon a "typical social gospeler in another respect: he embraced science, including evolutionary theory, and encouraged its application in social reform" (p. 26). According to Christine Rosen, Frederick Brotherton Meyer, a Baptist preacher in England, believed it was the duty of "churches to spread the message of heredity in Sunday School classes, in sermons, and individual counseling sessions" (p. 32-33). G. Stanley Hall, one of America's most famous psychologists, "argued that eugenics was 'simply a legitimate new interpretation of Christianity.'" He asked, "Is it not latent in our Scriptures" (p. 38)? Hall had no difficulty of harmonizing "love God and

serve God and man" with eugenic goals. He explained:

We only need to turn a little larger proportion of the love and service we have directed toward God, who does not need it, to man, who does, and we have eugenics (p. 39).

I have time for one more excerpt from Christine Rosen's outstanding book. Walter Taylor Sumner served as dean of the Cathedral of Saints Peter and Paul in Chicago. Sumner was unquestionably one of the most influential leaders in the eugenics movement. Rosen quotes him as saying:

We need to protect the integrity, sanctity and future health of the home by joining in matrimony only those who are fit to propagate a normal race (p. 59).

There is much more in Rosen's book that is very disturbing, but needs to be understood by all Americans. But for the remaining time, I need to read some scriptures dealing with the sacredness of all human life.

The Old Testament teaches that God made man in his own image (Gen. 1:26-27). The apostle Paul asked the Roman Christians: "Is he the God of the Jews only? Is he not also of the Gentiles? Yes, of the Gentiles also" (Rom. 3:29)? I would like to restate this passage and apply to our current topic: "Is he the God of healthy men and women only? Is he not also the God the handicapped, the mentally retarded and other people who may be considered inferior by the rest of humanity? Yes, he is the God and Father of all people—Black and white, healthy and unhealthy, bond and free, mentally capable and mentally disadvantaged. Are not Christians supposed to be compassionate toward all people? Is that not the kind of example Jesus Christ set for the entire human race?"

Chapter 8

Racism

There probably has never been a preacher in the history of the world who has not been criticized for something. Either his sermons are too harsh or too soft, too long or not long enough, too many scriptural references in his sermons or too few, too scholarly or not scholarly enough. Are these criticisms sometimes justified? I am not naïve enough to deny it. I have no doubt that I have profited from some constructive criticisms. But some criticisms are inexplicable. I remember working in a meeting with a preacher in Tampa, Florida. After the meeting was over, he asked me if I wondered why I was not invited back for another meeting. I told him that I had not even thought about it. He informed me that some of the members thought I lectured rather than preached. I have no idea what that means. Another preacher in Indiana asked me if I had wondered why I was not invited back for a second meeting. I told him I had not. The members, he said, thought I was too soft.

Frankly, I am puzzled by a criticism I received from a gracious listener. Through the years she has financially supported the International Gospel Hour, but apparently will not be doing so any more. She accused me of being a racist. I cannot imagine what led her to that conclusion. On this program and elsewhere, I have strongly condemned racism, anti-Semitism and all other kinds of illegitimate discrimination. When I was teaching at Freed-Hardeman University, I had dozens and dozens of Black students in my classes. Some of those students still keep in contact with me. One former Black student and I talk on a regular basis. I did premarital counseling for him and his wife. If they had thought I was a racist, I seriously doubt they would have attended my counseling sessions.

I have preached in gospel meetings in Black churches

in South Carolina and in Atlanta. I have also worked in two meetings with a church in Houma, Louisiana. The church in Houma is probably 40% Black. Three of the five elders, including one of my former students, are black. I visit the Black congregation here in Fayetteville. I have spoken at a number of Black churches in our area. If the members of those churches had even an inkling I was racist, they would not have invited me to preach in gospel meetings and on other occasions. I have had Black Christians to drive more than 400 miles to talk with me about the Bible and about the church. The Freed-Hardeman University Lectureship committee in 2002 asked me to speak on the topic: "Shackled by Racism—Ephesians 2:14."

I shall quote one paragraph from the annual lectureship book, **Exalting Christ in the Church: Unsearchable Riches in Ephesians and Colossians** (Henderson, TN: Freed-Hardeman University, 2002). Please listen.

More than thirty years ago, I conducted a gospel meeting in one of Tennessee's largest cities. I noticed each night as I drove to the meetinghouse that there were many Black families in the neighborhood of the church building. Before the final service of the meeting, the elders, their wives, the preacher and his wife took me out for an evening meal at one of the local cafeterias. The preacher and I were sitting together during the meal. I asked him why there were no black people from the community attending the meeting. His response was discouraging. He said, 'Oh, we are not ready for that.' That was 1971. I asked him when they were going to get ready. To make a long story short, that church never did get ready and it went out of business (p. 39).

I did not grow up in a racist background. My father was a contractor most of his life. He always had a substantial number of Blacks working for him. When he was working within driving distance of our home, he invited those Black employees to eat in our home. This was

more than sixty years ago. We attended gospel meetings in the Black community. I never heard my parents speak disparagingly of a person because he or she was Black. If we children had done so, I am sure my parents would have corrected us.

I am wondering if my critic had in mind my sermon on January 13, 2008 on "Personal Responsibility." I pointed out that many of the leaders in the Black community, such as Jesse Jackson and Al Sharpton, have not encouraged black people to take responsibility for their lives. But guess who the men were that I quoted in that sermon. They included Dr. Shelby Steele, one of the premier Black scholars in America, Juan Williams, the Black author of an outstanding book, **Enough: The Phony Leaders, Dead-End Movements, and Culture of Failure That Are Undermining Black America—And What We Can Do About It** (New York: Three Rivers Press, 2006), Associate Justice Clarence Thomas, Dr. Bill Cosby and Dr. Alvin Poussaint. You may or may not agree with these distinguished authors, but it is doubtful you would accuse them of being racist.

America has a shameful past in dealing with minorities, including Blacks. There is no way under heaven the enslaving of Blacks or of anyone else can be justified. Slavery was unquestionably the darkest period in American history. But it is ridiculous on the very surface for Black leaders to demand reparations for slavery. If the reparations movement catches fire, it will cause untold harm to all Americans. And most Blacks do not support the reparations movement.

I am not arguing—because I do not believe it—that racism in America is dead. There are still millions of Americans who mistreat people of a different color or of different nationalities or of different socio-economic backgrounds. Some of those groups, like the infamous Ku Klux Klan, claim to be Christians. The white supremacists care nothing for the scriptures or for the American Constitution, although they claim to be honoring both.

While the scriptures do not use the word "racism," there is no doubt they strongly oppose it. The book of Romans teaches that the gospel is for all—Jew and Gentile alike. Paul affirmed:

I am debtor both to the Greeks, and to the Barbarians; both to the wise, and to the unwise. So, as much as in me is, I am ready to preach the gospel to you who are in Rome also. For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one who believes; to the Jew first, and also the Greek. For therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith: as it is written, The just shall live by faith (Rom. 1:14-17).

The blessings of the gospel are available to all.

Glory, honor, and peace, to every man who works good, to the Jew first, and also to the Gentile: for there no respect of persons with God (Rom. 2:10-11).

The expression, "respect of persons," literally means that God does not receive the face. God's judgment of men has nothing to do with race or nationality or economic status. I plan to come back to the expression, "respect of persons," in a few minutes, but I urge you to think of other passages from Romans. Paul argues:

Now the righteousness of God without the law is manifested, being witnessed by the law and the prophets; even the righteousness of God which is by faith of Jesus Christ unto all and upon all them who believe: for there is no difference (Rom. 3:21-22).

The Greek word translated "difference" means distinction, as most modern versions render the word.

The Apostle Paul asked the Roman Christians:

Is he the God of the Jews only? Is he not also of the Gentiles? Yes, of the Gentiles also: seeing

it is one God, who shall justify the circumcision by faith, and the uncircumcision through faith (Rom. 3:29-30).

Is it permissible to paraphrase those verses as follows: "Is he the God of white people only? Is he not also the God of Blacks, Hispanics, Arabs, the poor and the disenfranchised?" What did Paul have in mind when he wrote:

For you are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus. For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ. There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: you are all one in Christ Jesus (Gal. 3:26-28)?

If you are a serious Bible student, you cannot be unaware of our Lord's attitude toward those people who were generally treated with disdain. The Jews of Christ's day did not associate with the Samaritans. But Jesus Christ did not share that attitude. The Apostle John records a meeting between Christ and a woman of Samaria. They met at Jacob's well in Sychar, Samaria. Christ startled the woman when he asked her to give him a drink.

Then says the woman of Samaria unto him, How is it that you, being a Jew, ask drink of me, who am a woman of Samaria? For the Jews have no dealings with the Samaritans (John 4:7, 9).

Jesus did not discriminate against the woman even though she was a Samaritan and immoral. She had had five husbands and was living with a man who was not her husband (John 4:18). Christians must emulate the attitude and behavior of our Lord and Savior.

As Jesus was on a journey to the city of Jerusalem,

He passed through the midst of Samaria and Galilee. And as he entered into a certain village, there met him ten lepers, who stood afar off: and lifted up their voices, and said, Master, have mercy on us.

Jesus Christ commanded them to show themselves to the priests. As they went to see the priests, they were all cleansed. Only one of the men turned back and thanked Jesus.

With a loud voice he glorified God, and fell down on his face at his feet, giving him thanks: and he was a Samaritan (Luke 17:11-16).

The Holy Spirit used the hated Samaritan to teach us a great lesson. The Bible teaches explicitly and emphatically that we must not discriminate against people of other races or nationalities.

Millions of Americans know the expression, "the good Samaritan," although the majority probably could not identify the source of the term. But Bible students know it is recorded in the book of Luke. Jesus wanted us to know how wrong it is to judge men by their outward appearance. The Samaritan found a man who had been badly beaten and left for dead. When he saw the man, he had compassion on him, "and bound up his wounds, pouring in oil and wine, and set him on his own beast, and brought him to the inn, and took care of him." He had to leave, but told the innkeeper to take care of the injured man. He assured the innkeeper he would reimburse him for any further expenses (Luke 10:33-35). Was it accidental that Jesus used a Samaritan—and not a Jewish priest or a Levite—as an example of compassion? Please remember what John wrote: "For the Jews have no dealings with the Samaritans" (John 4:9). Jesus Christ was one Jew who did not fit that pattern. He is our great example in dealing with men and women who are different from us.

Let us now return to the expression, "God is no respecter of persons." If you have studied the life of the Apostle Peter, you know he was a staunch Jewish patriot. He had difficulty believing that Gentiles should be a part of the new covenant. The Lord knew it would take a miracle to convince Peter he ought to preach to Gentiles. The Apostle

Peter fell into a trance and saw heaven opened. He saw a "certain vessel descending unto him, as it had been a great sheet knit at the four corners, and let down to the earth." In that great vessel were all kinds of wild beasts, creeping things, and fowls of the air. A voice commanded Peter: "Kill and eat." Peter responded: "Not so, Lord; for I have never eaten anything that is common or unclean." The voice spoke a second time to Peter: "What God has cleansed, that call not common or unclean." This was done three times to convince the Apostle Peter to go among the Gentiles to preach the gospel. I shall not recite all the details of Peter's visit to the house of Cornelius, a Gentile. Please listen to Peter's conclusion.

Of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons: but in every nation he who fears him, and works righteousness, is accepted of him" (Acts 10:9-16, 34-35).

The expression, "respecter of persons," means that God does not regard the face. He does not approve or disapprove a person because his face is white or black or yellow or brown. When Samuel was given the responsibility of selecting the man to follow Saul as king of Israel, he knew the person would come from the family of Jesse. He would normally have chosen the oldest son.

And it came to pass, when they (the sons of Jesse) were come, that he (Samuel) looked on Eliab (the oldest son of Jesse), and said, Surely the Lord's anointed is before him. But the Lord said unto Samuel, Look not on his countenance, or on the height of his stature; because I have refused him: for the Lord sees not as man sees; for man looks on the outward appearance, but the Lord looks on the heart (1 Sam. 16:6-7).

The apostles and other Christians in Judea wanted to know what had happened to the Apostle Peter at Caesarea. When Peter visited Jerusalem, they who were of the circumcision

criticized him. He rehearsed for them the vision he had received.

And as I began to speak, the Holy Spirit fell on them, as on us at the beginning. Then I remembered the word of the Lord, how he said, John indeed baptized with water; but you shall be baptized with the Holy Spirit. Forasmuch then as God gave them the like gift as he did unto us, who believed on the Lord Jesus Christ; who was I, that I could withstand God? When they heard these things, they held their peace, and glorified God, saying, Then has God also to the Gentiles granted repentance unto life (Acts 11:1-2, 15-18).

Please remember that the word "Gentile" meant everyone except the Jews. Did that include Blacks?

The hymnal we use at the West Fayetteville Church of Christ includes the hymn, "*The Gospel Is for All*," by John M. McCaleb. Please listen to the three stanzas of that hymn.

Of one the Lord has made the race, thro' one has come the fall; where sin has gone must go His grace; the gospel is for all. Say not the heathen are at home, beyond we have no call, for why should we be blest alone? The gospel is for all. Received ye freely, freely give, from every land they call; unless they hear they cannot live: The gospel is for all.

There is absolutely no doubt of the truthfulness of this hymn. The gospel really is for all and only those who obey it have the promise of life eternal.

James charged his readers:

My brethren, have not the faith of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Lord of glory, with respect of persons (Jas. 2:1).

Charles Williams renders that verse:

My brothers, stop trying to maintain your faith in our Lord Jesus Christ, the glorious presence of God on earth, along with acts of partiality to certain ones.

James furnishes an example of how some people discriminate. The discrimination is not racial, but social. However, the principles are the same.

For if there come into your assembly a man with a gold ring, in goodly apparel, and there come in also a poor man in vile raiment; and you have respect unto him who wears the gay clothing, and say unto him, Sit here in a good place; and say to the poor, Stand there, or sit here under my footstool: are you not partial in yourselves, and have become judges with evil thoughts? Hearken, my beloved, Has not God chosen the poor in this world, rich in faith, and heirs of the kingdom which he has promised to them who love him? But you have despised the poor. Do not rich men oppress you, and draw you before the judgment seats? Do not they blaspheme that worthy name by which you are called? If you fulfill the royal law according to the scripture, You shall love you neighbor as your self, you do well: but if you have respect of persons, you commit sin, and are convinced of the law as transgressors (Jas. 2:2-9).

Racism and other illegitimate forms of discrimination are not only inappropriate and un-American; they are sinful. As James says, when we are partial toward others, we become "judges with evil thoughts" (Jas. 2:4). He also very plainly says: We "commit sin and are convinced of the law as transgressors (Jas. 2:9). W. E. Vine says the word "transgressor" (*parabatai*) means to step across. "One who stands beside, then, one who oversteps the prescribed limit" (p. 1162). Incidentally, the Old Testament strongly condemned showing respect of persons. Moses warned the judges among the Israelites:

You shall not respect persons in judgment: but you shall hear the small as well as the great; you shall not be afraid of the face of man; for the judgment is God's: and the cause that is too hard for you, bring it unto me (Dt. 1:17).

Would it be a perversion of the sacred text to paraphrase this verse: "You shall not respect persons in judgment: but you shall hear Blacks as well as Whites?"

I close our discussion today with a few verses that have a direct bearing on our topic.

As we have therefore opportunity, let us do good unto all men, especially unto them who of the household of the faith (Gal. 6:10).

Look not every man on his own welfare, but every man also on the welfare of others (Phil. 2:4).

Therefore to him who knows to do good, and does it not, to him it is sin (Jas. 4:17).

Chapter 9

Illegal Immigrants

Have you taken the time to examine the word "illegal," as in the expression, "illegal immigrant?" **The Concise Oxford English Dictionary** (New York: Oxford University Press, 2004) says the word is an adjective and means "contrary to law." In North America the word is used of illegal immigrants (p. 709). **Webster's Third New International Dictionary** (Springfield, MA: G. & C. Merriam Co., Publishers, 1975), edited by Dr. Philip Babcock Gove, provides a more extensive definition of the word "illegal." The word means "contrary to or violating a law or rule or regulation or something else having the force of law" (p. 1126). **The Oxford American Thesaurus of Current English** (New York: Oxford University Press, 1999) lists as synonyms of "illegal": unlawful, lawless, criminal, felonious and forbidden (p. 355). Do you have any difficulty understanding the meaning of the word "illegal?" What part of "illegal" do our national leaders not understand?

Both the Democrats and Republicans have betrayed the trust of the American people by their policies on illegal immigration. According to experts, there are between eleven million and thirteen million illegal immigrants in the United States. The simple fact is that very few, if any, of the people in Washington who are supposed to keep up with immigration have any idea how many illegal immigrants are in this country. All of these illegal immigrants are criminals. That is what the word "illegal" means. In addition, all the people who hire these criminals are themselves criminals. If I aid and abet a thief or a robber, does that not make me a criminal? **Barron's Dictionary of Legal Terms** (New York: Barron's Educational Series, Inc., 1983) by Steven H. Gifis, Associate Professor of Law at Rutgers University School of Law, defines the legal term,

“accessory after the fact”: “A person who harbors or assists a criminal knowing that he or she has committed a felony or is sought in connection with a crime” (p. 5). Are not our national political leaders guilty of being “accessories after the fact?”

Before I discuss with you some of the real dangers of having a country full of illegal immigrants, I must explain to you that our examination of this issue has nothing—absolutely nothing—to do with race or color or ethnicity. Hispanics from Mexico and other places in South America and in Latin America, Blacks from Africa and other parts of the world, people from the Middle East who are not members of the Taliban or al Qaeda and men and women from Asia should be welcomed into this nation, provided they come into America legally. If they are not here legally, they must be sent back to their native countries. They should be able to apply for citizenship in the United States, but only after five to ten years of probation for their criminal activities. Amnesty should be out of the question. It is ridiculous on the very surface.

Dr. Thomas Sowell, a nationally respected Black economist and a senior fellow at the Hoover Institution at Stanford University, is one of America’s great thinkers and writers. *The Tennessean* (Saturday, May 27, 2006) published one of Dr. Sowell’s articles on illegal immigration. His article has the title, “Illegals are a special interest with special treatment.” You should read the entire article. I have time to read two brief paragraphs from Dr. Sowell’s tremendously disturbing article.

Some people are worried that amnesty will give illegal aliens the same rights that American citizens have. In reality, it will give illegals more rights than the average American citizen. Since most illegals are Mexicans, that makes them a minority. Under affirmative action, combined with amnesty, they would have preferences in jobs and other benefits (p. 19-A).

Dr. Sowell gives a number of advantages illegal immigrants have over American citizens. When an immigrant student graduates from high school in California, he can attend the University of California and pay less tuition than an American from the neighboring state of Oregon. When illegals are apprehended by the law, they do not have to pay back taxes. American citizens are not given that break. In fact, Americans can be sent to prison for not paying their taxes. If an American citizen forges a Social Security card, he can be arrested and charged with a felony. Illegal aliens can commit the same crime and get away with it. They can even collect Social Security benefits on their forged cards (p. 19-A).

But just think of all the business people in our country—especially American farmers—who would suffer if all illegal immigration were stopped and the criminals sent home. *The Tennessean* (Sunday, September 17, 2006) published an article with the title, “Georgia town suffers financial, emotional blow after roundup of illegal immigrants.” Russ Bynum of Associated Press wrote the article about the small town of Stillmore, Georgia. According to the article, after federal agents began rounding up illegal immigrants, Stillmore became little more than a ghost town. About 120 illegals were loaded onto buses and taken to immigration courts in Atlanta. David Robinson operated a trailer park where many of the Mexicans lived. After the raid by federal agents, Robinson bought an American flag and posted it upside down in protest. The mayor of Stillmore says the raid by federal agents reminds her of Gestapo treatment of German citizens in Nazi Germany (p. 2-A). If you will pardon my saying so, that is pure balderdash. It ought to be obvious that David Robinson and the mayor of Stillmore care nothing about the laws of the land or about the danger illegal immigrants pose to the citizens of the United States.

Before we make some scriptural observations on the tragedy of illegal immigrants, I shall read a few words from

Tom Blankley's challenging book, *The West's Last Chance: Will We Win the Clash of Civilizations?* (Washington, DC: Regnery Publishing, Inc., 2005). Blankley, a former editorial page editor for the *Washington Times* and a speech writer for President Reagan, pleads with our national leaders: "Secure our borders." He then affirms: "The United States has no plan to secure our borders." He quotes Deputy Secretary of Homeland Security James Loy in his testimony at a senate hearing:

Recent information from ongoing investigations, detentions, and emerging threat streams strongly suggests that al Qaeda has considered using the southwest border to infiltrate the United States. Several al Qaeda leaders believe operatives can pay their way into the country of Mexico and also believe illegal entry is more advantageous than legal entry for operational security reasons (pp. 171-172).

You have heard the talking heads on television and on radio affirm that American is a land of immigrants. All Americans ought to know that and be grateful for it. My father's people came to the United States from Scotland and Ireland. Some of my mother's people came to America from Holland. Only American Indians are native and some of them probably migrated from other places. Immigration is not the issue. Illegal immigration is. Our families, our businesses and our very existence as a law-abiding nation are at stake. We endanger our very way of life when we fail to arrest and to imprison criminals. Trying to be politically correct does not excuse such unmitigated stupidity.

No nation can long endure and prosper when its people trample under foot the laws of that nation. We already have a nation of men and women who commit the most vicious crimes. America's prisons are bulging at the seams. We do not need to import more criminals. Many of the men who come to our nation illegally have committed crimes in their homelands. In fact, Fidel Castro,

Cuba's abominable dictator, sent hundreds of criminals to the United States. The prisons are filling up with Hispanics who are guilty of many crimes, including, robbery, murder, automobile theft, forging Social Security cards and other criminal activities.

O no, I am not saying nor implying that all the Mexicans who come to our nation illegally are going to kill and commit other crimes. But coming to this nation illegally is a crime. They are already criminals when they cross the American-Mexican border without doing so according to law. If we are going to allow Hispanics and other aliens to violate the law, how can we consistently enforce the law on our own citizens? Do you believe our young people are so stupid they do not know what is occurring? If we do not arrest and punish immigrant criminals, how can we arrest and punish native-born criminals?

You cannot be unaware of the Bible's teaching on the responsibility of all citizens to honor the law of the land. In his great letter to the Roman Christians, the apostle Paul demanded:

Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers. For there is no power but of God: the powers that be are ordained of God. Whosoever therefore resists the power, resists the ordinance of God: and they who resist shall receive to themselves damnation. For rulers are not a terror to good works, but to evil. Will you then not be afraid of the power? Do that which is good, and you shall have praise of the same. For he is a minister of God to you for good. But if you do evil, be afraid; for he bears not the sword in vain: for he is a minister of God, an avenger to execute wrath upon him who does evil. Wherefore you ought to be subject, not only for wrath, but also for conscience's sake. For this cause pay tribute also; for they are God's ministers, attending continually upon this very thing. Render therefore to all their dues: tribute to whom tribute is due;

custom to whom custom; fear to whom fear;
honor to whom honor (Rom. 13:1-7).

It is the duty of all citizens to obey the laws of the land, unless those laws subvert the laws of God. Some of the Jewish leaders in the city of Jerusalem forbade Peter and John to preach anymore in the name of Jesus.

Then Peter and the other apostles answered and said, We must obey God rather than men (Acts 5:28-29).

No one from Mexico is being denied his rights. Neither Mexicans nor any other alien has a right to be a citizen of this great country unless this nation grants that right. They must not be allowed to ignore our Constitution and other laws. That seems so simple no reasonable person should have any difficulty understanding it. In modern parlance, it is a no-brainer.

Tragically, there are radicals from various countries who desire to wipe the United States off the map. They despise the freedom this country provides for its citizens. Have we forgotten 9/11? If we do not make our borders secure, it is only a matter of time until there will be more violence, perhaps even greater violence, than what occurred on 9/11. Please understand that I am not trying to be a prophet like some of the charismatics. But when our enemies announce their intention of doing great harm to our country, we ought to have enough good sense to believe them, especially in view of the violence they have already perpetrated against the United States and against other nations. If our leaders do not take these evil people seriously, they are not taking care of their primary responsibility, and that is, to provide for the safety of the American people.

Many of the criminals who hire illegal immigrants argue that they will not be able to harvest their crops unless they can hire illegal immigrants. Such reasoning is seriously flawed. Are they saying that farmers cannot

survive unless they can break the law? Nobody has a right to flaunt the laws of our nation. I have shown from the scriptures that all citizens should honor the laws of the land. Common sense tells us that no nation can endure lawlessness. If farmers and other employers can break one law, why can we not disregard any law we do not like or that interferes with our living or our having a good time?

"But," say some of the lawbreakers, "we hire illegal immigrants to perform tasks that no one else will accept." Since I left the farm many years ago and since farming on a large scale has changed over the years, I am not in a position to offer expert advice on what farmers and others who employ illegal immigrants can do to solve their problems. But I know this—and so do you—we cannot have a law-abiding nation when anyone is allowed to disregard the nation's laws. All illegal immigrants and all people who hire them should be punished to the full extent of the law. Otherwise, the moral values of our nation will continue to plummet.

I love our country and have the welfare of all our citizens at heart. But I am disturbed that our national leaders—both Democrats and Republicans—seem to think more about being elected the next time than safeguarding the nation. The Hispanic vote in this nation will be very important in the foreseeable future. Are our leaders appealing to that vote rather than fulfilling their responsibilities toward all Americans? We absolutely must demand that all our leaders do their duty toward criminals—whether homegrown or imported.

The leaders in Israel during the days of the prophet Jeremiah were derelict in their duties toward God and toward the nation. The prophets, the priests and the princes were all corrupt. Please listen to these disturbing words from Jeremiah.

For both the prophet and the priest are profane;
yea, in my house have I found their wickedness,

says the Lord. Wherefore their way shall be unto them as slippery ways in the darkness: they shall be driven on, and fall therein: for I will bring evil upon them, even the year of their visitation, says the Lord. And I have seen folly in the prophets of Samaria (that is, in the northern kingdom); they prophesied in Baal, and caused my people to err. I have seen also in the prophets of Jerusalem (that is, in the southern kingdom) a horrible thing; they commit adultery, and walk in lies: they strengthen also the hands of evildoers, that none returns from his wickedness: they are all of them unto me as Sodom, and the inhabitants thereof as Gomorrah (Jer. 23:11-14).

I am fully aware that the situation in ancient Israel and the situation in our nation are very different. Israel was a theocracy; the United States is a representative form of government. But can we not learn from Israel's mistakes? Jeremiah accused the leaders in Israel of strengthening the hands of evildoers (Jer. 23:14). Is that not what the President and the Congress are doing when they endorse by their actions the illegal criminals that are already here and those who come by the thousands every month? There is no excuse for the blatant disregard for law and order that prevails in our nation's capitol.

The prophet Ezekiel prophesied just before and during the Babylonian exile. This fearless man of God severely rebuked the shepherds in Israel. He does not identify the shepherds, but they probably were priests, prophets, kings and military leaders. Even if we cannot identify the shepherds, we can know the great damage they did by not fulfilling their duties toward the Israelite people. Ezekiel pronounced woes on the leaders because they fed themselves and did not feed the flock (Ezek. 34:2). Is that not what many of our leaders are doing? They are looking out for their own welfare – not that of the American people. Some of them will do anything to be elected the

next time. If that means betraying their constituents, so be it. The most important thing for many politicians is to stay in power and to keep their party in power.

Ezekiel says the sheep were scattered because they did not have faithful shepherds (Ezek. 34:5). Is our nation suffering because our leaders are more concerned about themselves than about the American people? Tragically, we deserve the kind of leadership we elect. When we vote straight party lines and not for the best men and women for office, we are destroying the greatest nation in the history of the world.

There are other aspects of illegal immigration I must mention before our time expires. The school systems and the health care systems in the states that are flooded by illegal immigrants are nearing bankruptcy. California, Arizona and perhaps other states are struggling to provide medical care for illegal immigrants. And many of our school systems are having difficulty caring for the children of illegal immigrants. This must not be allowed to continue. The American people must demand that over governmental leaders step up and do their duty.

My discussion today has not been motivated by politics or by race or by ethnicity. I am pleading for our leaders to be courageous and to put the welfare of the American people before their own ambitions. They are being immoral and irresponsible when they fail to stop, to the best of their abilities, all criminal activities. Can God bless America when we promote evil and immorality? I close with these words from the Old Testament. "Righteousness exalts a nation; but sin is a reproach to any people" (Prov. 14:34).

Chapter 10

Civility

Have you noticed how politicians, media personnel, and some preachers and theologians talk to each other, or maybe I should say, talk at each other? Many of them show little or no respect to those with whom they disagree. Both liberals and conservatives use language that is offensive and uncivil. You may have witnessed on television how Alec Baldwin talked to his own 12-year-old daughter. He called her a pig and talked to her worse than most of us would talk to a pig. And some of the talking heads on television compare the president of the United States to Adolf Hitler or to Saddam Hussein. I reserve the right to criticize the president or any other leader, but should we not be careful of the language we use of our leaders—political and otherwise? What message are we conveying to our children? How do we expect them to behave toward their leaders?

Have you ever examined the word “civility?” The **Concise Oxford English Dictionary** (New York: Oxford University, 2004) defines the word “civility” to mean: “politeness and courtesy, polite remarks used in formal conversation” (p. 261). The **Oxford American Thesaurus of Current English** (New York: Oxford University, 1999) lists several synonyms of the word “civility”: courtesy, politeness, good manners, refined, polished, pleasant, amiable and cordial (p. 104). In his book, **Civility: Manners, Morals, and the Etiquette of Democracy** (New York: Basic Books, 1998), Stephen L. Carter, professor of law at Yale, explains what he means by civility. “I have in mind an attitude of respect, even love, for our fellow citizens, an attitude, as we shall see, that has important political and social implications” (p. xii of the Preface).

The word “civility” does not appear in any version of the Bible I have in my study. But every Bible student

knows the Christian's responsibility to be civil in our dealings with others, even though the Bible does not use that specific word. Please think of the meaning and application of the following verses.

Let love be without dissimulation (or hypocrisy). Abhor that which is evil; cleave to that which is good. Be kindly affectioned one to another with brotherly love; in honor preferring one another (Rom. 12:9-10).

"Let all that you do be done in love" (1 Cor. 16:14).

Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth, but that which is good to the use of edifying, that it may minister grace to the hearers....Let all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamor, and evil speaking, be put away from you with all malice: and be kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake has forgiven you (Eph. 4:29, 31-32).

Let nothing be done through strife or vainglory; but in lowliness of mind let each esteem others better than themselves. Look not every man on his own welfare, but every man also on the welfare of others (Phil. 2:3-4).

Put on therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, a heart of compassion, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, longsuffering; forbearing one another, and forgiving one another, if any man have a quarrel against any: even as Christ forgave you, so also do you. And above all these things, put on love, which is the bond of perfection (Col. 3:12-14).

"Let brotherly love continue" (Heb. 13:1).

I am fully aware that all of these verses were originally addressed to Christians. But they should also provide

guidance for all people who want to be regarded as kind, civil and considerate people. Whether we are speaking of politicians, business people, educators, media personnel or preachers, we should always manifest an attitude of respect, to quote from Stephen Carter. There is never any excuse for being unkind, ill-mannered and vulgar. We are not living in a Christian nation, but we are supposed to be civilized. Benjamin Franklin urged his readers: "Be civil to all; sociable to many; familiar with few; friend to one; enemy to none."

On April 12, 2007, Don Imus used inexcusably vulgar language of the women's basketball team from Rutgers University. He called those young women prostitutes, although he used a more obscene and coarse word for prostitute. Before I discuss Don Imus and the reactions to his loathsome behavior, I want to urge the basketball players to bring a lawsuit against Don Imus. When we falsely accuse someone of any kind of behavior, we must have sufficient evidence to sustain that accusation. Unless he can prove that those young women are prostitutes, he should be held legally accountable for his statements. Nobody has a right to falsely accuse another without having to suffer the consequences.

The Tennessean (Friday, April 13, 2007) published several letters to the editor about the Imus incident. The paper also published some reactions from the young women from Rutgers. I was impressed with the demeanor of the young women on the basketball team. Essence Carson, a junior, denied being a prostitute. She said: "I'm a woman...I'm somebody's child" (p. 13-A). I am a father, although not the father of a daughter. But if I were the father of a daughter and she were called a prostitute, I would be upset and would seek legal redress. If Don Imus had said the Rutgers team did not play well, very few people would have paid any attention to him. After all, that is a matter of opinion. But to accuse beautiful young women of being prostitutes is insensitive and inexcusably irresponsible.

Yes, I am familiar with the First Amendment to the American Constitution. But does the right of free speech cover vulgar and false accusations against innocent young women? One letter to the editor of *The Tennessean* (Friday, April 13, 2007) argues: "Right to free speech pertains to Imus, too." The author of the letter asks:

Whatever happened to freedom of speech? Who was the patriot who said, 'I may not agree with what you say, but I will defend to the death your right to say it' (p. 13-A)?

Freedom of speech has absolutely nothing to do with the Don Imus case. He downgraded without any justification a group of young ladies who play basketball for Rutgers. If those young women were streetwalkers from some major city, Imus would have been justified in describing them as prostitutes. But they are college kids. Nobody has a right to denigrate those women in the manner Imus did.

Another letter to the editor of *The Tennessean* asserted: "Imus deserves a right to make a living." The writer also appeals to the First Amendment to the Constitution. He asks:

Why can't people lighten up? Why can't all Americans live by the ditty that I was taught as a child: Sticks and stones may hurt my bones, but words will never hurt me (p. 13-A)?

There is a problem with that ditty: It is silly and untrue. Of course, words hurt. In some cases, they hurt worse than sticks and stones. James says concerning the tongue: It is a "little member, and boasts great things. Behold, how great a matter a little fire kindles!...But the tongue no man can tame; it is an unruly evil, and full of deadly poison" (Jas. 3:5, 8). The sad truth is: homes are broken, communities are torn asunder and nations destroyed because of the improper use of the tongue. Either one says too much, or says it to the wrong person, or says it in the wrong way, or does not say enough. The Old Testament affirms:

"Death and life are in the power of the tongue: and they who love it shall eat of the fruit thereof" (Prov. 18:21). Don Imus is a good example of what the inspired author had in mind.

The letter to the editor argues that Don Imus has a right to make a living. Of course, he does and so do other Americans. But the right to earn a living has nothing to do with what he said on his program. He degraded some splendid young women. Neither he nor anyone else has a right to degrade young women. Frankly, I have never listened to Don Imus; nor would I ever do so. But the radio and television networks were right in firing Don Imus. And it makes no sense to say it was a slip of the tongue. If it had not been in his heart, it would not have come out through his mouth. Is that not what Jesus taught? "For out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks" (Matt. 12:34). Jesus also said: "For by your words you shall be justified, and by your words you shall be condemned" (Matt. 12:37).

Don Imus offered an apology to the young women. I applaud Imus for making the apology. I am not questioning the sincerity of his apology. The young women from Rutgers apparently accepted his apology. If they want to be forgiven, they have no option but to accept his apology and to forgive him. But forgiveness does not remove the damage his racist remarks have done. When a man attacks another person and puts him in the hospital, an apology does not alleviate the suffering of the other person. When we hurt someone, the courts have an obligation to punish us for criminal behavior. Don Imus's remarks may not be punishable by law, but they should be.

Another letter to the editor is entitled: "Sharpton and Jackson have crossed the line." The author reminds us that Al Sharpton tried to railroad six white men for allegedly attacking Tawana Brawley, a young woman who was found to be a liar. Jesse Jackson referred to New York City as Hymietown, a derogatory term for

the Jews living in New York or elsewhere. The letter writer concludes:

Al Sharpton and Jesse Jackson are an affront to legitimate debate regarding race relations, free speech, or any other discussion of value in America. Any time there is a chance for shameless self-promotion, race-baiting and the bully pulpit, these two shysters come running (p. 13-A).

The apostle Paul asked: "You then who teach others, do you not teach yourself" (Rom. 2:21)? People who make racist remarks should not criticize others for making such remarks.

While I was preparing this radio message, I decided to visit a bookstore with the specific purpose of purchasing Bernard Goldberg's newest book, **Crazies to the Left of Me, Wimps to the Right: How One Side Lost Its Mind and the Other Lost Its Nerve** (New York: HarperCollinsPublishers, 2007). Goldberg mentions an earlier book he wrote that listed 100 people who are destroying America. After the publication of that book, some people asked: "If you're so concerned about civility, why isn't Ann Coulter in your book" (p. 45)? Goldberg quotes Ann Coulter as saying: "'A baseball bat' is the most effective way to deal with liberals....We need somebody to put rat poison Justice Stevens's crême brulee" (p. 46). In my opinion, Ann Coulter's comments are way over the line, even if she were joking, which I somehow doubt.

While I was in the bookstore, I bought several other books. I wish I could tell you the title of the book I am going to mention, but it would be offensive to many in my audience and might cause me to lose some of our great radio stations. The book has the subtitle, **The Rise and Risks of the New Conservative Hate Culture** (New York: St. Martin's Press) by Gerry Spence, the nationally known defense lawyer. I have read just a few paragraphs, but it is one of the most offensive books I have purchased in more than sixty-three years of buying books. He refers

to some of the national religious leaders and media personnel as “pimps” — “pimps for big business, for the irreligious right, for war, for those who hate the poor and the voiceless” (p. xii of the Preface). Does Jerry Spence believe he is contributing to a civil discussion of serious issues by such uncivil language? Or is he so angry with conservatives that he blasts them for not agreeing with his views? I have other books by Jerry Spence, but this one is by far the raunchiest. Besides, who are the ones who take care of the poor and the voiceless? It has always been the deeply religious. In too many cases, liberals do not want to get their hands dirty. They prefer to let the government take care of the poor and the voiceless.

When Jesus walked among men, how did he deal with those who were preaching and practicing error? On one occasion, some of our Lord’s Jewish countrymen asked him, “Why do your disciples transgress the tradition of the elders? For they do not wash their hands when they eat bread.” Jesus knew the hearts of the Pharisees. He asked them: “Why do you transgress the commandment of God by your traditions?” He concluded his discussion by indicting the Pharisees for hypocrisy.

You hypocrites, well did Isaiah prophesy of you saying, This people draws near unto me with their mouth, and honor me with their lips; but their heart is far from me. But in vain do they worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men (Mt. 15:2-3, 7-9).

In spite of our Lord’s harsh language, is there any doubt in your mind that he loved all people, including the Pharisees? He loved the Pharisees enough to die for them.

Matthew 23 contains some of harshest language to be found in scripture. I shall give you just one example.

Woe unto you, scribes, Pharisees, hypocrites!
Because you build the tombs of the prophets,
and garnish the graves of the righteous, and

say, If we had been in the days of our fathers, we would not have been partakers with them in the blood of the prophets. Wherefore you are witnesses unto yourselves, that you are the children of them who killed the prophets. Fill up then the measure of your fathers. You serpents, you generation of vipers, how can you escape the damnation of hell (Mt. 23:29-33)?

Do you remember how our Lord concluded this strong condemnation of the behavior of the Pharisees?

O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, you who kill the prophets, and stone them who are sent unto you, how often would I have gathered your children together, even as a hen gathers her chickens under her wings, but you would not (Mt. 23:37).

I have a right—in fact, I have a sacred responsibility—to oppose the false teachings and unscriptural practices that are so rampant in our generation. But I do not use the kind of language Jesus used in Matthew 23 and in other passages. The reason is very simple: He knew men's hearts and I do not. The apostle John wrote concerning Christ:

Jesus did not commit himself unto them, because he knew all men. And needed not that any man should testify of man: for he knew what was in man (John 2:24-25).

Jesus could read the hearts of men, but I do not have that power. I try to be kind and considerate to all people, even to those who are teaching error. For example, I strongly oppose Calvinism, but I do not question the sincerity of Calvinist preachers.

The Holy Spirit guided the apostles in their preaching and teaching. On one occasion, Paul "had gone through the isle of Paphos" and "found a certain sorcerer, a false prophet, a Jew, whose name was Bar-Jesus: who was with the deputy of the country, Sergius Paulus, a prudent man; who called for Barnabas and Saul, and desired to hear the

word of God. But Elymas the sorcerer (for so is his name by interpretation) withstood us, seeking to turn away the deputy from the faith. Then Saul, (who also is called Paul,) filled with the holy Spirit, set his eyes on him, and said,

O full of all subtilty, you child of the devil, you enemy of all righteousness, will you not cease to pervert the right ways of the Lord? And now, behold, the hand of the Lord is upon you, and you shall be blind, not seeing the sun for a season. And immediately there fell on him a mist and a darkness; and he went about seeking some to lead him by the hand (Acts 13:6-11).

There were teachers among the Galatian churches who were doing their very best to hang on to parts of the Mosaic covenant. The apostle Paul knew the damage such teaching was doing. He accused the false teachers of perverting the gospel of Christ (Gal. 1:7). He then addressed the Galatian Christians who were being deceived by the false teachers.

O foolish Galatians, who has bewitched you, that you should not obey the truth, before whose eyes Jesus Christ has been evidently set forth, crucified among you (Gal. 3:1)?

The word translated "foolish" means senseless or lack of understanding. One version renders the Greek "stupid." As you can readily discern, that is very harsh language, but it was the Holy Spirit who guided Paul in his writing and preaching.

Since I do not have the supernatural guidance of the Holy Spirit—and neither does anyone else—I do not use the harsh words I have read to you from Christ and from the apostle Paul. I believe in preaching the gospel without compromise, but I strive to be kind and considerate of all people, regardless of their beliefs and practices. I strongly disagree with virtually every position John Shelby Spong promotes, but I do not question the former bishop's honesty

or his commitment to his beliefs. I strive to follow our Lord's instructions to the apostles: "Be wise as serpents, and harmless as doves" (Mt. 10:16). I may miss the mark, but I am determined always to preach the truth in love (Eph. 4:15). My goal, if I know my own heart, is to "do all to the glory of God" (1 Cor. 10:31).

Chapter 11

Human Skin

Dr. Geoffrey Simmons practices medicine in Oregon. In his early adult life, he was an atheist. But his study of the marvels of the human body and other aspects of life convinced him of the existence of God and of the truth of the Bible. His book, **What Darwin Didn't Know: A Doctor Dissects the Theory of Evolution** (Eugene, OR: Harvest House, 2004), has the endorsement of some of the leading intelligent design scholars in the world. On the front cover of the book, there is a brief quotation by Dr. William Demski: "Geoffrey Simmons makes Darwinism's sleight of hand plain to see." Dr. Michael Behe, professor of biochemistry at Lehigh University and author of the book, **Darwin's Black Box: The Biochemical Challenge to Evolution**, commends Dr. Simmons' book.

In *What Darwin Didn't Know*, Dr. Simmons gives a marvelous, entertaining physician's-eye view of the intricate functions of the human body. The relentless detailing of biological elegance and complexity overwhelms facile Darwinian stories as a tidal wave overwhelms a beach.

There are numerous ideas in Dr. Simmons' book I would like to discuss with you, but I shall concentrate on what he has written about human skin. Have you meditated on the marvels of human skin? The skin is the largest organ in the human body. It weighs between six and ten pounds and covers an area of about twenty-two square feet in the average adult. One excerpt from Dr. Simmons' book will introduce today's topic: "Human Skin":

We arrive dressed in a birthday suit far superior to anything one can buy off the shelf. It is waterproof, antibacterial, antiviral, antifungal,

elastic, flexible, self-repairing, toxin-resistant, insulating, self-cleaning, supportive, sexual, sensual, washable, self-replenishing, capable of absorbing some chemicals and rejecting others, porous, self-lubricating, scented, capable of making vitamins, sensitive to painful stimuli, and able to detect changes in temperature, vibration, and pressure (p. 155).

Dr. Paul Brand, the world's leading leprosy specialist, and Philip Yancey, a professional writer, cooperated in writing the book, **Fearfully and Wonderfully Made: A Surgeon Looks at the Human & Spiritual Body** (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1980). These two authors have a fascinating section on human skin. Brand and Yancey challenge us:

Think of the stimuli your skin monitors each day: wind, particles, parasites, changes in pressure, temperature, humidity, light, radiation. Skin is tough enough to withstand the rigorous pounding of jogging on asphalt, yet sensitive enough to have bare toes tickled by a light breeze (p. 124).

Brand and Yancey mention Dr. Ashley Montagu's book, **Touching**. They point out that Dr. Montagu "found close physical contact with a mother animal to be essential to the normal development of young animals" (p. 136). When human babies are not touched, they die (p. 138).

There is much more about human skin that reveals design. And as William Paley pointed out in the 1800s, where there is design, there has to be designer. But the argument from design is not my major concern in this lesson today. I am making a plea for television to show less skin on various programs. Dr. Brand says the skin of a normal adult weighs "a mere nine pounds" (p. 118). Nine pounds translate into 144 ounces. If the skin of our bodies weighs approximately 144 ounces, am I exaggerating to insist that some of our young women on television are exposing about 134 ounces of skin? Some of the young

women who play volleyball may be exposing as much as 140 ounces of skin. That leaves at least four ounces of skin that is not exposed.

I have several questions for you to consider. Do young women like Paris Hilton, Madonna and similar actresses know what effect their nakedness has on the young men and on some who are not so young who see them on television and in the movies? Are the actresses trying to create lustful thoughts in the hearts of the viewers? Or are they so naïve they do not understand what they are doing? It is my considered judgment they are not naïve. They know exactly what they are doing. They simply do not care about the adverse influence they have on their viewers. If they can get rich by baring their skin, what do they care about the boys and men who may be seriously damaged?

Is it possible that some men will be so stimulated by the exposure of feminine bodies that they might go out and rape some vulnerable woman or girl? O I am aware that rape is not usually a sexual act. It is an act of power and violence. But we would be foolish to think that what one sees on the screen—either at home or in the theater—has no effect on the behavior of men, especially on those men who are already troubled about sexual matters. Thousands of our young men are confused about the relation of the sexes. If they see almost naked women on television, might they be convinced that women are just waiting for some man to demand sexual favors?

The apostle Paul warned the Corinthians about the possibility of Satan's taking advantage of Christians: "We are not ignorant of his devices" (2 Cor. 2:11). The same apostle commanded the Ephesians:

Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might. Put on the whole armor of God, that we may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil (Eph. 6:10-11).

The Greek word translated "wiles" (*methodeias*) means methods. Paul was informing the Ephesians that they knew or should have known how the devil operates. So how does he operate?

The apostle John lists three ways the devil leads men and women astray. Please listen to these familiar verses.

Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world. And the world passes away, and the lust thereof: but he who does the will of God abides forever (1 John 2:15-17).

I shall examine only "the lust of the flesh." The expression means lust that is felt by the flesh. For example, King David lusted in his flesh for Bathsheba, the wife of Uriah the Hittite. His lust for her led to adultery and ultimately to murder.

Do you remember what Flip Wilson loved to say: "The devil made me do it?" Flip always got a laugh, but the gospel truth is: The devil does not make anyone do anything. Again I ask: how does the devil operate? James outlines the steps the devil uses to deceive and to lead astray.

Let no man say when he is tempted, I am tempted of God: for God cannot be tempted with evil, neither does he tempt any man. But every man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed. Then when lust has conceived, it brings forth sin: and sin, when it is finished, brings forth death (Jas. 1:13-15).

Let us review briefly the steps that lead to sin and death.

As every perceptive human being knows, the sexual appetite in men, especially in young men, is very powerful.

I am in no way criticizing the way God made us. Were it not for the strength of the sexual appetite, the human race would surely come to a screeching halt. But good common sense demands that we control all of our appetites and desires. That is the reason the Bible constantly emphasizes self-control. We must not allow ourselves to be placed in situations where the temptation to sin is overwhelming. Paul commanded the Corinthians: "Flee fornication" (1 Cor. 6:18). The verb "flee" is in the active voice and in the imperative mood. Paul commanded: "Keep on fleeing sexual immorality."

James encourages Christians not to blame God for the temptations they face. God does not tempt us and no man can tempt God. Satan places temptations before us to turn us away from God. We are tempted when we are drawn away by our own lusts and enticed. When an almost unclothed woman appears—either in person or on the screen—we cannot avoid seeing her. I heard one preacher say: It is not the first look that is sinful, but the second. When we dwell on that person and lust after her, then sin enters the picture. The devil entices men by using immoral women to tempt them and using immoral men to tempt women. The wise man Solomon provides insight into the way harlots or prostitutes lead men to destruction.

For at the window of my house I looked through my casement. And beheld among the simple ones, I discerned among the youths, a young man void of understanding, passing through the street near her corner (that is, near the corner where the prostitute lived); and he went the way to her house. In the twilight, in the evening, in the black and dark night: and behold, there met him a woman with the attire of a harlot, and subtle of heart. (She is loud and stubborn; her feet abide not in her house: now is she without, now in the streets, and lies in wait at every corner.) So she caught him, and

kissed him, and with an impudent face said unto him, I have peace offerings with me; this day have I paid my vows. Therefore came I forth to meet you, diligently to seek your face, and I have found you. I have decked my bed with coverings of tapestry, with carved works, with fine linen of Egypt. I have perfumed my bed with myrrh, aloes and cinnamon. Come, let us take our fill of love until the morning: let us solace ourselves with loves. For the good man is not at home, he is gone on a long journey: he has taken a bag of money with him, and will come home at the day appointed. With her much fair speech she caused him to yield, with the flattering of her lips she forced him. He goes after her straightway, as an ox goes to the slaughter, or as a fool to the correction of the stocks; till a dart strike through his liver; as a bird rushes to the snare, and knows not that it is for his life (Prov. 7:6-23).

Lest someone accuse me of blaming women and girls for the proliferation of sexual immorality in our generation, I must say very plainly: both men and women are responsible before God and before right-thinking people for the ungodly sexual conduct that exists in America. It is true that most prostitutes are women, but there would be no prostitution if men did not buy the services of prostitutes. Satan enters the hearts of women who sell their bodies for money. He also enters the hearts of the men who participate in prostitution. Prostitution is a diabolical, destructive and damnable industry.

Am I saying that the young women who expose their bodies on television, on the movie screens, on the beaches and elsewhere are prostitutes? No, I am not saying that. Did you notice one of the observations in the reading from Proverbs? The King James Version says the woman had "the attire of a harlot." The English Standard Version says she was "dressed as a prostitute." Do not the young

women who expose most of their skin know that godly people perceive them as being immoral? I seriously doubt that it makes any difference to them, but that is a fact. They are pawns in the warfare between Satan and God. Satan uses them to create lust in the hearts of men and boys. To deny that fact is to be ignorant of the scriptures and of human nature.

Satan places temptations before us. When we yield to those temptations, "it brings forth sin: and sin, when it is finished, brings forth death." Sin is very serious business. It may not seem that serious, but God almighty takes it very seriously. Paul informed the Romans:

For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who suppress the truth in unrighteousness (Rom. 1:18).

The same apostle told the same church: "For the wages of sin is death" (Rom. 6:23).

When we contribute to other people's sins, will God hold us accountable? In other words, when we cause another to stumble, will God judge us for such behavior? The New Testament uses the Greek verb *skandalizo* and the noun *scandalon*. The words involve offending someone. The noun means causing someone to stumble or providing an occasion to fall. If we offend a believer, it would be better to have a millstone hung around our neck and be drowned in the depth of the sea (Mt. 18:6). Paul pled with the Roman Christians:

Let us not therefore judge one another any more: but judge this rather, that no man put a stumbling block or an occasion to fall in his brother's way (Rom. 14:13).

Dear friend, if you cause a brother or sister to stumble, would that bother you? Does it matter to you how your friends and neighbors think of your behavior?

Do you have any idea what the word "modesty"

means? The King James Version of the Bible uses the word "modest" only one time. Paul encouraged his young friend Timothy to preach:

I will therefore that men pray everywhere, lifting up holy hands without wrath and doubting. In like manner also, that women adorn themselves in modest apparel, with shamefacedness and sobriety; not with braided hair, or gold, or pearls, or costly array; but (which becomes women professing godliness) with good works (1 Tim. 2:8-10).

What is the meaning of modesty?

Robert R. Taylor, Jr.'s booklet, **Studies in First and Second Timothy** (Shreveport: Lambert Book House, Inc., n.d.), makes the following appropriate remarks about modesty:

Women are to adorn themselves not by daring displays of hairdos, expensive jewelry and extravagant garments but by the wearing of modest apparel and the proper manifestation of shamefacedness and sobriety. Proper attire is decent attire....The Christian woman should not be like the worldly woman who spends all her time and all her money in seeking to dress up the outward person. Quite the contrary the Christian woman does not wish to wear anything that is improper in clothing or in her daily decorum.... That is why shorts, halters, tight fitting garments, see-through clothes and modern swimming attire are not proper for God's woman when she is before the public eye (p. 37).

Paul makes it plain that women are not to dress in such a way as to attract everyone's attention in the worship service. When a woman wears enough jewelry to start a jewelry store, she will likely interfere with others' devoting their attention to the worship of God almighty. When a woman shows too much skin, it is not easy for men—either

young or old—to keep their minds on worshipping God. It is embarrassing to see young women wear too little clothing or too tight fitting clothing.

Like many of you in my audience, I grew up in a home where neither girls nor guys were permitted to wear immodest clothing. My parents would not allow my sisters to show too much skin—either at worship or at school. My sweet Molly would not wear clothing that was suggestive. When she bought new dresses or slacks, she always asked me if her clothes were too suggestive. Molly always looked great. She never wore dresses or slacks that were immodest. She also taught the young women in her Sunday school classes to dress modestly. I believe all of those women would tell you today how Molly influenced them to dress as Christians.

I must ask the fathers and mothers in my audience: Are you concerned about the way your daughters and your sons dress? Tragically, some fathers and mothers seem not to care about the way their children dress. Do they not realize the thoughts that arise in the hearts of some people when they witness too much skin? Is there a mother on earth who does not know what turns men on sexually? Do they want their girls to dress in such a way as to create lust in the hearts of men? Fathers must be concerned about the way their sons and daughters dress when they go to school or to town and elsewhere. Could the unconcern of fathers and mothers be responsible for the enormous increase in out-of-wed babies?

I am fully aware that many preachers—especially conservative preachers—are sometimes accused of being anti-sex. That may be true with some preachers. But no serious Bible student can deny the importance of human sexuality. When I was teaching marriage and family classes at Freed-Hardeman University, I told the young people in my classes: Please feel free to ask any question on your mind. I also told them: If you do not feel comfortable asking publicly about sensitive topics, send me a letter

through campus mail. I tried to impress upon those fine young people the Bible's teaching on sex.

But I also stressed what the Bible says about sexual immorality. Paul told the Thessalonians:

For you know what commandments we gave you by the Lord Jesus. For this is the will of God, even your sanctification, that you should abstain from fornication (1 Thess. 2:2-3).

Incidentally, the word "fornication" means all kinds of sexual immorality—not just premarital sex. It may not be easy in our culture for Christians and for others to remain sexually pure, but it is a command of God. Wearing the proper clothing is no guarantee that we shall refrain from sexual promiscuity, but it is a step in the right direction.

I close with these admonitions: Please encourage your girls and boys to dress in such a way as not to cause another to lust. May God bless you in all your endeavors!

Chapter 12

Vestigial Organs

Charles Darwin sought by every means possible to establish the theory of evolution. He supported two arguments that were supposed to prove evolution – nascent organs and vestigial organs. The term, “nascent organs,” means organs that are in the process of developing. If we evolved from the lower animals, somewhere along the line there would have to be some organs that were being formed. There would have to be an ear or an eye or a nose that we only partially functional. Those organs would have to start somewhere for them to fully develop. Those organs being born were called “nascent organs.” No such organ has been discovered, but they would have had to exist for evolution to take place.

If evolution has occurred, there would also have to be some organs that were no longer useful. Evolutionists call these “vestigial organs.” In an excellent article, “*Evolution Is Religion – not Science*,” published in the journal, **Reason and Revelation** (volume 27, number 11, November 2007), Dr. Michael G. Houts has a section on “Vestigial Organs.” Dr. Houts defines the expression, “vestigial organs,” as follows: It is a “structure that is remnant of an organism’s evolutionary past and has no function.” The term is derived from the Latin word *vestigium* which literally means footprint. Dr. Houts further says:

The idea of vestigial structures was further promoted in 1895 by German anatomist Robert Weidersheim who claimed to have identified 186 vestigial structures in the human body.

Weidersheim did not believe the vestigial organs could be explained by special creation. They could only be explained by evolution (p. 85).

Before I examine with you the idea of vestigial

organs, I must read to you what the apostle Paul wrote concerning the human body. Paul compares the body of Christ to the human body. The body of Christ is one body but has many members. The same is true of the human body. Paul affirmed concerning the human body:

But now has God set the members every one of them in the body, as it has pleased him....For God has tempered the body together, having given more abundant honor to that part which lacked (1 Cor. 12:18, 24).

The English Standard Version translates verse 24: "God has so composed the body, giving greater honor to the part that lacked."

I must also read this well known passage from the Psalms. King David confesses to God:

Thou hast possessed my reins (or mind or heart): thou hast covered me in my mother's womb. I will praise thee; for I am fearfully and wonderfully made: marvelous are thy works; and that my soul knows right well. My substance was not hidden from thee, when I was made in secret, and curiously wrought in the lowest parts of the earth. Thine eyes did see my substance, yet being unperfect; and in thy book all my members were written, which in continuance were fashioned, when as yet there was none of them (Psa. 139:13-16).

This inspired passage and Darwin's theory of evolution are incompatible. It simply is not possible to harmonize them.

Is it possible that secular humanists and other unbelievers choose to believe in nascent organs and vestigial organs to avoid having to believe in special creation? They would have to sacrifice their commitment to unbelief if they were to admit that God created man in his own image. Incidentally, many scientists and philosophers are being forced to admit that the human body seems to be made

for our world. This is called the "anthropic principle." Is it accidental that the world is arranged just for human existence? If our world were just slightly different, human life would be impossible.

Now let us think about some of the structures in the human body that have been identified as "vestigial organs." I can remember, and so can many of you in my audience, when physicians freely removed perfectly healthy appendixes. Did those physicians believe the Darwinian foolishness that the appendix is left over from our animal ancestry? I do not know, but I am convinced that no modern physician would be so foolish as to argue that the appendix is unnecessary and can be removed with no serious thought. We know it can become infected and must be removed. But no informed scientist would call it a "vestigial structure."

Dr. Houts provides some insight into the functions of the appendix.

Recent advances in biology...have identified numerous functions of the vermiform appendix, especially in early childhood. For example, researchers quoted in *New Scientist* note the following: "Although it used to be believed that the appendix had no function and was an evolutionary relic, this is no longer thought to be true. Its greatest importance is the immunological function it provides in the developing embryo, but it continues to function even in the adult."

...The same article notes that during fetal development, endocrine (that is, hormone-producing) cells appear in the appendix. "These cells produce peptide hormones that control various biological mechanisms" (pp. 85-86).

In a book with the title, **Evolution Handbook** (Altamont, TN: Evolution Facts, Inc., 2001), Vance Farrell has provided an enormous amount of information on the theory of evolution. Farrell has one section devoted to the topic, "*Vestiges and Recapitulation.*" The argument based

on vestigial organs was one of the so-called "proofs" of evolution that was presented at the famous Scopes Trial. Farrell quotes Horatio Hackett Newman, a zoologist, as stating on the witness stand:

There are, according to Robert Wiedersheim, no less than 180 vestigial structures in the human body, sufficient to make a man a veritable walking museum of antiquities (p. 718).

I know I am safe in saying: In our day, there is not a medical doctor or any other knowledgeable scientist on earth who would agree with Newman's idea. Am I accusing Newman of being dishonest? No, but I am saying he was ignorant of the functions of many organs in the human body. If he were alive today, he would be embarrassed with his unfounded, unreasonable and unscientific observation.

Charles Darwin believed that wisdom teeth were vestigial organs. Robert Weidersheim, a German follower of Darwin, originally listed 80 vestigial organs, such as, "valves in the veins, the pineal gland, the thymus, bones in third, fourth and fifth toes, (lachrymal) tear glands, and certain female organs" (p. 719). Did you know that high school textbooks as recent as the 1960s listed over 200 useless structures in the human body? That list included the thyroid and pituitary glands. Vance Farrell comments: "Today ALL organs formerly classed as vestigial are known to have a function during the life of the organism" (p. 719).

I never heard a physician in my youth classify the tonsils as vestigial organs, but I am sure some of them believed it. Many doctors freely removed the tonsils from people who were having throat trouble. Incidentally, that includes your speaker. From the earliest time I can remember, I had serious throat problems. My doctor in Nashville insisted that I have my tonsils removed. When I was a college freshman, I followed his advice. Since the fall of 1943, I have had almost no throat trouble. But were all tonsils removed for good reasons or because the doctors believed they were unnecessary?

The Designer of our bodies placed the tonsils at the beginning of the alimentary canal to help to prevent infection. Vance Farrell quotes *Science News* (March 20, 1971) as saying: "Both the tonsils and the appendix are now believed to guard us against Hodgkin's disease" (pp. 720-721). In the late 1980s, Wendell Bird, an Atlanta attorney, published two of the very best books on evolution. The books are entitled, **The Origin of Species Revisited: The Theories of Evolution and of Abrupt Appearance**, volumes 1 and 2 (New York: Philosophical Library, 1987, 1988, 1989). These two books have over a thousand pages and 5,000 footnotes. I believe the books are still available in paperback.

Bird quotes S. R. Scadding, a zoologist of Guelph University in Ontario, Canada, as arguing:

I would suggest that the entire argument that vestigial organs provide evidence for evolution is invalid on two grounds, one practical, the other more theoretical. The practical problem is that of unambiguously identifying vestigial organs, i.e., those that have no function. The analysis of Weidersheim's list of vestigial organs points out the difficulties. As our knowledge has increased the list of vestigial structures has decreased. Weidersheim could list about one hundred in humans; recent authors usually list four or five. Even the current short list of vestigial structures in humans is questionable....Similarly, for other "vestigial organs" there is reasonable ground for supposing that they are functional albeit in a minor way....The other major objection to citing vestigial organs as evidence of evolution is a more theoretical one based on the nature of the argument. The "vestigial organ" argument uses as a premise the assertion that the organ is question has no function. There is no way, however, in which this assertion can be arrived at scientifically....Since it is not possible to unambiguously identify useless structures, and

since the structure of the argument used is not scientifically valid, I conclude that "vestigial organs" provide no special evidence for the theory of evolution (volume 1, pp. 197-198).

Evolutionists have also insisted that the coccygeal vertebra (better known as the coccyx) was a vestigial organ. The coccyx is located at the lower end of the vertebra. It has the appearance of a tail at certain stages of development. Evolutionists have argued that the coccyx is left over from the time when we lived in the trees and used the tail for climbing and balancing. Scientists now know how essential the coccyx is to healthy human beings. Without the coccyx, our pelvic organs would collapse. If we did not have a coccyx, we could not walk or sit upright. Darwin did not know that, but modern scientists do. Evolutionists will have to find some other way to try to prove their theory. They cannot sustain the theory by appealing to so-called "vestigial organs."

Webster's Medical Desk Dictionary (Springfield, MA: Merriam-Webster Inc., Publishers, 1986) provides the following information on the thymus gland. It is a

Glandular structure of largely lymphoid tissue that functions in cell-mediated immunity by being the site where T cells develop, that is present in the young of vertebrates typically in the upper anterior chest or at the base of the neck, that arises from epithelium of one or more embryonic branchial clefts, that tend to disappear or become rudimentary in the adult (p. 717).

To summarize this definition in very simple terms: without the thymus gland, the T cells that protect your body from infection could not develop properly (Farrell, p. 721). Vance Farrell quotes these words from **The Reader's Digest** (November 1966):

For at least 2000 years, doctors have puzzled over the function of the thymus gland. Modern

physicians came to regard it, like the appendix, as a useless vestigial organ, which had lost its original purpose, if indeed it ever had one. In the last few years, however...men have proved that, far from being useless, the thymus is really the master gland that regulates the intricate immune system which protects us from infectious diseases. Recent experiments have led researchers to believe that the appendix, tonsils and adenoids may also figure in the antibody responses (p. 721).

Some evolutionists also believed that the pineal gland was a holdover from our animal ancestry. This small gland is a cone-shaped structure located in the brain. It secretes critically needed hormones, including, for example, melatonin which inhibits secretion of luteinizing hormone (Farrell, p. 721). Some evolutionists have also argued that the thyroid gland is a vestigial organ. I know from experience just how vital the thyroid is to our well being. Several years ago, my family doctor said I was experiencing peripheral neuropathy. My fingers and toes were very sensitive. I had trouble sleeping because just touching the bed sheet made my toes ache. The problem was hypothyroidism, that is, my thyroid gland was not producing enough thyroxin. I now take synthroid—synthetic thyroxin.

Physicians for many years learned that men and women can continue to live even after they had had their thyroid gland removed. They decided on that basis that the thyroid gland was another useless organ. They now know if the thyroid gland produces too much thyroxin, hyperactivity will result. If the thyroid gland produces too little, there will be under-activity in some body organs. If the organ is deficient at birth, a deformity called cretinism will result. The dictionary defines "cretinism" as follows: It is a "congenital abnormal condition marked by stunting and mental deficiency and caused by severe thyroid deficiency" (p. 151).

There is not a physician on earth who has enough sense to practice medicine that would call the thyroid gland

"a vestigial organ." The early evolutionists did not know enough about the human body to understand the functions of the thyroid gland. If they had read their Bibles, they would have known that God did not make any mistakes when he created man. The apostle Paul said in his first letter to the Corinthians,

God has tempered the body together, having given more abundant honor to that part that lacked (1 Cor. 12:24).

It is arrogance on the part of scientists and of philosophers to claim to know what they do not. They should learn from their blunders.

Scientists at one time had not discovered the functions of the pituitary gland. They argued that it was a vestigial organ. **The New Illustrated Medical and Health Encyclopedia** (New York: H. S. Stuttman Co., Inc., Publishers, 1970), edited by the late Dr. Morris Fishbein, calls the pituitary gland "the most important gland of the endocrine system." According to the encyclopedia, the endocrine system regulates many important functions of the body.

These include growth, sexual development, defenses against emergencies and disease, and many metabolic processes.

When the pituitary is removed, the adrenal glands degenerate. Degeneration of the adrenals also causes Addison's disease....Other pituitary substances are associated with the secretion of milk and the activity of the thyroid gland (volume 14, pp. 1840-1841).

There are other so-called "useless" or "vestigial organs" that were supposed to be remnants of our animal ancestry, such as, human hair, wisdom teeth, ear muscles and certain female organs. The more scientists learned about the human body, the fewer so-called "useless" organs were identified. Scientists should be a little less arrogant

in such matters. They should wait until all the evidence is in before they act like deity. I am reminded of Dr. Geoffrey Simmons' great book, **What Darwin Didn't Know: A Doctor Dissects the Theory of Evolution** (Eugene, OR: Harvest House, Publishers, 2004). The simple truth is: There were many ideas Darwin could not know because certain discoveries had not been made. Had he known about the complexities of the cell, for example, might he have come to a different conclusion regarding man's origin? DNA and other intricacies of the human body have convinced Dr. Antony Flew, one of England's most aggressive atheists, that God exists. Might they have done the same for Charles Darwin and for other evolutionists?

I wonder if any of the evolutionists who believe there are useless organs in their bodies would be willing to have those organs removed. If someone were to suggest that the evolutionists have those organs removed, do you not believe they would be singing a different tune?

When arguments for evolution have been refuted, do evolutionists ever consider repudiating this godless theory? Dr. Simmons at one time was an atheist, but became convinced that the theory could not be scientifically sustained. He has embraced the Bible's teaching on the origin of man. His book is one of the most inspiring books on that topic I have read in many years. As Dr. Simmons makes abundantly clear, it is not possible for any evolutionary theory to explain the marvels of the human body. I shall quote again the words of King David: We are "fearfully and wonderfully made" (Psa. 139:14).

Is it possible that some evolutionists have decided on some basis other than science to believe and to promote the theory of evolution? Could they be angry with God? Paul told the Roman Christians:

Because that, when they knew God, they glorified him not as God, neither were thankful; but became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish hearts were darkened. Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools (Rom. 1:21-22).

Later in that same chapter, the apostle provides an explanation why some men reject God.

And even as they did not like to retain God in their knowledge, God gave them up to a reprobate mind, to do those things that are not convenient (Rom. 1:28).

We cannot embrace evolution and Christianity.

Chapter 13

Personal Responsibility

Have you noticed how many television programs leave the impression that some of us are not responsible for our foolish and destructive conduct? When a person is tried in a court of law for driving under the influence of alcohol and killing someone, that person's lawyer will often argue that the man is not responsible because he was drinking. Who made him drink? I believe it was Aristotle who said that a man who commits a crime under the influence of alcohol deserves double punishment: One time for the crime he committed and the other time for getting drunk. I am reminded of old adage: "First the man takes a drink, then the drink takes a drink, then the drink takes the man." When a mother kills her child or children, her attorneys say she was suffering from premenstrual syndrome or post-partum depression. And by the way, have you heard of the "Twinkie defense?"

The King James Version of the Bible never uses either the word "responsible" or the word "responsibility." The New American Standard Bible uses the word "responsible" two times in the book of Genesis. I shall read one of those passages. Judah assured his aged father concerning Benjamin:

Send the lad with me, and we will arise and go, that we may live and not die, we as well as you and our little ones. I myself will be surety for him; you may hold me responsible for him. If I do not bring him back to you and set him before you, then let me bear the blame before you forever (Gen. 43:8-9).

The Revised Standard Version uses the word "responsible" one time. Paul told the Ephesian elders:

Therefore I declare unto you this day that I am not responsible for the blood of any of you (Acts 20:26).

Paul then charged those elders:

Take heed to yourselves, and to all the flock over which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which he has purchased with his own blood (Acts 20:28).

In very simple terms, Paul was demanding that the elders take responsibility for their own lives and for the members of the church of Jesus Christ. Although most translations of the Bible seldom use the word "responsible," there is not the slightest doubt God holds us responsible for our behavior. God appointed the prophet Ezekiel to be "a watchman unto the house of Israel." Ezekiel had the awesome task of warning the Israelites to be faithful to God's law or suffer the consequences. God gave to Ezekiel the message he was to deliver to the Israelite people.

When I say unto the wicked, You shall surely die; and you give him not warning, nor speak to warn the wicked from his wicked way, to save his life; the same wicked man shall die in his iniquity; but his blood will I require at your hand. Yet if you warn the wicked, and he does not turn from his wickedness, nor from his wicked way, he shall die in his iniquity; but you have delivered your soul. Again, when a righteous man turns from his righteousness, and commits iniquity, and I lay a stumbling block before him, he shall die: because you have not given him warning, he shall die in his sin, and his righteousness which he has done shall not be remembered; but his blood will I require at your hand. Nevertheless if you warn the righteous man, that the righteous sin not, and he does not sin, he shall surely live, because he is warned; also you have delivered your soul (Ezek. 3:17-21).

There was a proverb among the Jewish people that affirmed: "The fathers have eaten sour grapes, and the children's

teeth have been set on edges." God told the Israelites:

You shall not have occasion any more to use this proverb in Israel. Behold, all souls are mine; as the soul of the father, so also the soul of the son is mine: the soul that sins, it shall die (Ezek. 18:1-4).

God further revealed to Ezekiel:

The soul that sins, it shall die. The son shall not bear the iniquity of the father, neither shall the father bear the iniquity of the son: the righteousness of the righteous shall be upon him, and the wickedness of the wicked shall be upon him. But if the wicked shall turn from all his sins that he has committed, and keep all my statutes, and do that which is lawful and right, he shall surely live, he shall not die. All the transgressions that he has committed they shall not be mentioned unto him: in his righteousness that he has done he shall live (Ezek. 18:20-22).

You can discern from these passages that all people are responsible to do God's will. It ought to be obvious that God held the prophets responsible for delivering his message to the Jewish people. If the prophets failed to deliver God's word, the people would be lost and God would require their blood at the hands of the prophet. Both the wicked and the righteous were accountable to God for their behavior. The Jews could not play the blame game. The prophet and the people alike were responsible to God for their actions.

The New Testament constantly stresses personal responsibility. Paul does not use the word "responsibility" in the Roman letter, but one cannot read that letter with any understanding and not know that God holds every individual responsible for his conduct. He wrote:

I beseech you, therefore, by the mercies of God,
that you present your bodies a living sacrifice,

holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service. And be no conformed to this world: but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is good and acceptable, and perfect, will of God (Rom. 12:1-2).

Paul next outlines the responsibilities of all the members to use the gifts God had bestowed on them (Rom. 12:3-8). Romans 13:1-7 demands that Christians obey the laws of the land. Paul also wrote:

We then who are strong ought to bear the infirmities of the weak, and not to please ourselves. Let everyone of you please his neighbor for his good to edification (Rom. 15:1-2).

In his second letter to the Corinthians, Paul reminded the Christians at Corinth of their individual duty to do the will of God.

For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that everyone may receive the things done in his body, according to that he has done, whether it be good or bad (2 Cor. 5:10).

Paul told the Galatians:

For every man shall bear his own burden. Let him who is taught in word communicate unto him that teaches in all things. Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatever a man sows, that shall he also reap. For he who sows to the flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he who sows to the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting. And let us not be weary in well doing: for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not. As we have therefore opportunity, let us do good unto all men, especially unto them who are of the household of the faith (Gal. 6:5-10).

There are many other passages I would like to read to you, but let us examine the attitudes and actions of

some of our citizens. Many of the leaders in the black community, men like Jesse Jackson and Al Sharpton, have not urged black people to take responsibility for their lives. Incidentally, you may have noticed that I did not refer to Jesse Jackson or Al Sharpton by the title "reverend." That has absolutely nothing to do with color. I do not call anyone, except God, "reverend." It seems arrogant to me that ordinary men, and all preachers, including your speaker, are ordinary men, would allow themselves to be called by the exalted title "reverend." What I am telling you about leadership, both in the black community and in the white, is that many of those leaders want their followers to depend on the government for a handout. In that way, the leadership can take credit for the support from the government. Too many Americans look to the government, instead of to themselves, for their welfare. In very plain English, many Americans, especially some of the poor, want someone else to provide for them.

Dr. Shelby Steele, a research fellow at the Hoover Institution, Stanford University, is one of the premier black scholars in America. In 2004 President Bush presented Dr. Steele with the National Humanities Medal for his "learned examinations of race relations and cultural issues." Dr. Steele has written several excellent books dealing with race. I shall read brief excerpts from some of his books. In his book, **A Dream Deferred: The Second Betrayal of Black Freedom in America** (New York: HarperCollinsPublishers, 1988), Dr. Steele affirms:

To be human is to be responsible....When welfare or affirmative action robs people of full responsibility, they also impose inferiority (p. 108).

Dr. Steele lists some "timeless American principles" – self-reliance, hard work, moral responsibility, sacrifice, and initiative. He then says:

All (of these) are not stigmatized as demonic principles that 'blame the victim' and cruelly deny the helplessness imposed on them by a heritage of oppression (p. 124).

Dr. Steele's book may be the very best on the evils of affirmative action.

Dr. Steele's second book, **The Content of Our Character: A New Vision of Race in America** (New York: HarperCollinsPublishers, 1990), is based on the statement Dr. Martin Luther King made in his famous "I Have a Dream" speech, in which he said:

I have a dream that my four little children will one day live in a nation where they will not be judged by the color of their skin but by the content of their character.

Dr. Steele insists that "individual initiative" is "the only thing that finally delivers anyone from poverty" (p. 16). He accuses many black Americans of holding "their race to evade individual responsibility" (p. 28). I have shall read one other statement from Dr. Steele. "Personal responsibility is the brick and mortar of power" (p. 33).

Dr. Steele's latest book has title, **White Guilt: How Blacks & Whites Together Destroyed the Promise of the Civil Rights Era** (New York: HarperCollinsPublishers, 2006). Dr. Steele says:

Since the sixties, black leaders have made one overriding argument: that blacks cannot achieve equality without white America taking primary responsibility for it...The best way to make a black leader mad is to say to him that black Americans are capable of being fully responsible for their own advancement (p. 60).

Over and over, Dr. Steele encourages blacks and all others to take "full responsibility" for every phase of their lives (p. 64). He affirms that many blacks "define full black responsibility as an intolerable injustice" (p. 68).

I do not mean to overwhelm you with books dealing with individual responsibility, but I want you to know that many prominent scholars, especially black scholars, believe that one of the main reasons men and women are poor and disenfranchised is because they have not exercised personal responsibility. They want to blame their situation on someone else. Most you have probably seen Juan Williams on the **Fox News Channel** or elsewhere. Juan Williams is a senior correspondent for National Public Radio and a news analyst on **Fox News Channel**. He worked for the *Washington Post* for twenty-one years. If you know anything about National Public Radio and the *Washington Post*, you know Juan Williams is not a conservative. He is not a radical liberal like Alan Colmes, but he is not a conservative.

Juan Williams's book, **Enough: The Phony Leaders, Dead-End Movements, and Culture of Failure That Are Undermining Black America—and What We Can Do About It** (New York: Three Rivers Press, 2006), is filled with extremely valuable information. The book deals principally with the speeches Bill Cosby has made over the past several years. I wish I had counted every time Juan Williams uses the word "responsibility" in his book. I shall take time to read a few examples from his book. Bill Cosby has addressed many of his remarks to the black leaders. He called some of the black leaders "poverty pimps" because they are making money from the poor (p. 92). He challenged parents to take "personal responsibility" to save themselves and their children (p. 94). "Cosby's fire was aimed at negligent black parents." He told parents: "We are letting TV sets raise our children" (p. 97). Cosby is especially critical of young men "who fathered children without taking responsibility" (p. 197). Juan Williams tells of a debate between Michael Dyson, a strong critic of Bill Cosby, and Dr. Shelby Steele. Dyson was critical of Dr. Cosby because of Bill's emphasis on personal and individual responsibility. Dr. Steele responded:

The point remains...you cannot get out of poverty unless you take an enormous amount of personal responsibility for doing so...Being the victim does not spare you from responsibility.... Responsibility is power (p. 209).

Juan Williams' book is very valuable—both for blacks and for whites.

I have a question for you to consider. What are the chances that a poor black child who grew up in Pinpoint, Georgia, could ever amount to anything? You probably have guessed that I am speaking of Clarence Thomas, an associate justice of the United Supreme Court. Justice Thomas's new book, **My Grandfather's Son** (New York: Harper Collins Publisher, 2007), is a very inspiring book. He tells how his grandfather whom he called "daddy" demanded obedience and diligence from his grandson. He would not accept any excuse for failure. He told Clarence: "Old man Can't is dead—I helped bury him" (p. 13). The grandfather warned Clarence and his brother that "if we died, he'd take our bodies to school for three days to make sure we weren't faking, and we figured he meant it" (p. 15). Justice Thomas said his grandfather had been right all along. "The only hope I had of changing the world was to change myself" (p. 60). Is that not the very essence of personal responsibility?

I have a number of other books by black scholars I would like to mention, but time will not allow it. There is one other book, however, I must discuss briefly before our time expires. Dr. Bill Cosby and Dr. Alvin Poussaint, a psychiatrist, have written a very challenging book, **Come On People: On the Path from Victims to Victors** (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 2007). As I prepare this study today, I have read about half of the book, but there is so much in the book that helps us to understand the need for exercising personal responsibility. In the Introduction to the book, Dr. Cosby says:

We can change things we have control over if we accept personal responsibility and embrace self-help (p. xviii of the Introduction).

As our time draws to a close, I want to make some applications of what we have studied with you today. If you are not a Christian, you have the responsibility to turn to God for the forgiveness of sins. Nobody—not God nor anyone else—can believe or repent or confess or be baptized for you. The commandments of the scriptures are addressed to individuals. So all of us individually must take upon ourselves the responsibility of obeying our Lord. Please notice the Great Commission according to Mark.

He who believes and is baptized shall be saved;
but he who does not believe shall be condemned
(Mk. 16:16).

When you have obeyed the gospel, you have the responsibility of serving the Lord. That includes worshipping regularly with God's people.

And let us consider one another to provoke to love and good works: not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another: and so much more as you see the day approaching (Heb. 10:24-25).

We also have the responsibility of giving as the Lord has prospered us (1 Cor. 16:1-2). We must use our time and talent in reaching the lost for Christ. We cannot shift our personal obligations to the elders or to the preacher or to anyone else. God will hold each of us accountable for fulfilling our obligations to him.

If you are a father or a mother, you have sacred responsibilities to your children. Every concerned American knows the difficulties that our young people face. They are tempted to use drugs, to drink alcohol, to engage in sexual promiscuity and to engage in other immoral and dangerous behavior. We parents must do all we can to teach our children right and wrong. If we fail to do that,

many of them will land in prison or in their graves. Juan Williams writes:

Cosby tied the high rate of black inmates to what he described as criminally bad parenting, mothers and fathers failing to spend time with their children, especially men who don't stay around after they get a woman pregnant (p. 108).

If men and women do not intend to take care of their children, they ought not to have any.

Neither Bill Cosby nor any of the other authors whom I have quoted today are seeking to relieve young people of their personal responsibilities. But they are urging parents, teachers and religious leaders to use their influence to improve the moral and spiritual situation in our nation. I plead with everyone in my audience today to be responsible for your own life and for the atmosphere of our country. Are we not supposed to be the salt of the earth and the light of the world (Mt. 5:13-16)?

Chapter 14

Human Experimentation

Those of us who lived through World War II are familiar with the brutal Nazi experiments on human beings. We know that some German citizens, American soldiers and soldiers from other countries were treated like guinea pigs. Thousands and thousands of human beings died horrible deaths because medical doctors and other German scientists conducted all kinds of experiments on them. I was a child during the war and did not know of those cruel experiments until many years after the war. But Nazi Germany is not the only nation that has treated human beings as subjects of experimentation. I think none of us would be surprised to learn that some of the major drug manufacturers have conducted experiments on human beings. But it may come as a shock for some of us to learn that the United States government has been guilty of experimenting on human beings. Our lesson today is: "Human Experimentation."

I shall begin our discussion with what has occurred in our great nation—not in Nazi Germany. In their very enlightening and challenging book, **Come On My People: On the Path from Victims to Victors** (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 2007), Dr. Bill Cosby, the famous comedian, and Dr. Alvin F. Poussaint, a Harvard psychiatrist, report:

In Texas from 1956 to 1962...esteemed white professors at a medical school took black babies who were wards of the state and withheld an essential fatty acid from their baby formula to see what effect it would have on their health.

The babies developed skin lesions and other health problems. Some of the babies died, but their deaths were attributed to other causes. Cosby and Poussaint also report that "involuntary sterilization by tubal ligation or hysterectomy" has been performed on black

women without their knowledge (p. 165).

Cosby and Poussaint mention the infamous experiment on blacks at Tuskegee, Alabama. James H. Jones, associate professor of history at the University of Houston, has written the definitive study of that brutal and ungodly experiment. Dr. Jones' book has the title, **Bad Blood: The Tuskegee Syphilis Experiment** (New York: The Free Press, 1993). On the front of the dust cover are these words:

The modern classic of race and medicine updated with an additional chapter on the Tuskegee Experiment's legacy in the age of AIDS.

Benjamin L. Hooks, Executive Director of the National Association of Colored People, says concerning Dr. Jones' book:

Bad Blood is a shocking and bold report of scientific cruelty and moral idiocy....The moral and ethical questions this book raises come into sharp focus and are compelling.

Dr. Jones learned of the experiment on blacks when Jean Heller of Associated Press broke the story in 1972. For forty years the United Public Health Service had been studying the effects of untreated syphilis on black men in Macon County, Alabama. There were 399 men who were infected with syphilis and 201 who were free from the disease. The latter group of 201 men would serve as controls (p. 1). The Tuskegee study began in 1932, but had nothing to do with treatment. A black public health nurse knew what was transpiring, but did not report it. Oddly enough, one of the physicians involved protested: "There was nothing in the experiment that was unethical or unscientific" (pp. 6, 8).

You probably remember that penicillin was new and untested in the 1940s. But when its effectiveness for treating syphilis was learned, it was not used on the 399 black men in Tuskegee. ABC's Harry Reasoner was absolutely amazed that our government "used human

beings as laboratory animals in a long and inefficient study of how long it takes syphilis to kill someone" (p. 10). The *Atlanta Constitution* called the Tuskegee study "a moral astigmatism that saw these black sufferers simply as 'subjects' in a study, not as human beings" (p. 14). Oddly enough, one of the doctors involved in the study was a black doctor who was eventually nominated for Surgeon General of the United States.

In the mid-1970s Fred Gray, a civil rights attorney and a faithful gospel preacher, "brought a class action suit on behalf of the men in the Tuskegee study." My heart breaks for the families in Macon County, Alabama, that suffered because of the unnecessary loss of a loved one. There is no excuse for such stupid behavior.

Dr. Robert Jay Lifton, distinguished professor of psychiatry and Psychology at John Jay College and The Graduate Center of the City University of New York, has produced one of the most disturbing books ever written on Nazi Germany. Dr. Lifton's book has the title, **The Nazi Doctors: Medical Killing and the Psychology of Genocide** (New York: Basic Books, Inc., Publishers, 1986). It is almost impossible to read Dr. Lifton's book without shedding tears for the way the Nazis treated human beings, including many of their own citizens. In my book, **Books, Books and More Books** (Fayetteville: The International Gospel Hour, 2006), I urge people not to read Dr. Lifton's book just before retiring at night. It almost certainly would keep them awake. Dr. Lifton dedicated his book "to the victims of the Nazis. To those who survived. And to those who continue to struggle against the forces of mass murder and genocide."

Dr. Lifton accused Soviet doctors of "diagnosing dissenters as mentally ill and incarcerating them in mental hospitals." He says that medical doctors in Chile tortured men and women. Some of the Japanese doctors performed vivisection on prisoners during the Second World War. White South African doctors falsified medical records of

blacks who were tortured and killed in prison. Dr. Lifton says a young physician-member of the People's Temple cult in Guyana prepared the poison that killed almost a thousand people (p. xii of the Foreword). Dr. Lifton says that SS dentists supervised the removal of gold fillings from the teeth of the "Jews who were killed in the gas chambers." Dr. Lifton wonders how physicians could participate in the mass murder that occurred in Nazi Germany (p. 3) and so do I.

Dr. Lifton traveled to Germany to interview some of the psychiatrists and psychologists who participated in the medical experiments and in the medical killing. He interviewed twenty-nine men who were prominent in Nazi medicine. Twenty-eight of them were physicians and one was a pharmacist. Five of the men had worked in concentration camps, including three who had worked in Auschwitz. Six were directly involved in the euthanasia program. Some of the German psychiatrists and psychologists were among the world's most influential men in those professions. In fact, some of them were still practicing when Dr. Lifton visited Germany in the 1970s.

I do not have the time in this study to discuss in depth the German euthanasia program, but I do want to say a few words about it. Two distinguished German scholars—Karl Binding, a jurist, and Alfred Hoche, a professor of psychiatry at the University of Leipzig—wrote the book, **The Permission to Destroy Life Unworthy of Life**. Those unworthy of life were the incurably ill, the mentally ill, the feebleminded and retarded and deformed children. They referred to their killing as "purely healing treatment" and a "healing work" (p. 46). Dr. Hoche argued:

A new age will come which, from the standpoint of higher morality, will no longer heed the demands of an inflated concept of humanity and an overestimation of the value of life as such (p. 47).

There were some physicians who opposed the medical killing, but not many. They almost certainly were afraid for their own lives.

Dr. Lifton lists some of the experiments that were conducted under the supervision of German doctors:

Artificially inflicted burns with phosphorous incendiary bombs; experiments on the effects of drinking sea water; experiments with various forms of poison, by ingesting as well as in bullets or arrows, widespread experiments on artificially induced typhus, as well as epidemic hepatitis and with malaria; experiments in cold immersion ('in freezing water') to determine the body's susceptibilities; experiments with mustard gas in order to study the kinds of wounds it could cause, and many others (pp. 301-302).

I must mention one more book about the German experimentation with human subjects before I draw some conclusions from this abominably evil practice. Vivien Spitz was the youngest court reporter at the famous Nuremberg trials of Nazi criminals. Her book has the title, **Doctors from Hell: The Horrific Account of Nazi Experiments on Humans** (Boulder, CO: Sentient Publications, 2005). Vivien Spitz says German "physicians were not permitted to use dogs to increase their surgical skill, but using human beings for such purposes was allowed" (p. 62).

The German hierarchy wanted to know how pilots would be affected by extremely high altitudes without oxygen. They selected two hundred subjects from Russians, Russian prisoners of war, Poles, Jews from various nations and German political prisoners.

These experiments were carried out by locking the victim in an airtight, low-pressure chamber provided by the German Air Force, then stimulating high-pressure atmospheric conditions and pressures up to sixty-eight thousand feet.

These barbaric experiments killed seventy-eight of the two hundred men selected (pp. 65-66). I shall not take the time to list and discuss other brutal experiments the Nazis conducted on human beings, but you should investigate on your own to learn of "man's inhumanity to man."

Lest you misunderstand what I have emphasized today, let me make it as plain as I know how: I do not oppose experiments on my fellow human beings—provided: the subject is adequately informed of the dangers and the possible benefits of the treatment. When my dear Molly was dying of lung cancer, her oncologist came into her hospital room and informed her of an experimental drug that had been approved for treatment. He told her the treatment would be extremely difficult on her. He gave her the choice of accepting or rejecting the treatment. She told him she would take the drug. For three days, she could not say a word. So far as her oncologist was able to discover the drug did no good. But he did not treat her without informing her of the dangers of the drug. The choice was hers and hers alone.

Many advances in medicine have been made because certain individuals gave their consent for experimentation on their bodies. All of us should be grateful for the generosity of those people. But under no circumstances—no circumstances—should physicians and other scientists conduct experiments on human beings without their full knowledge and consent. Human beings are not guinea pigs or other animals. Doctors who experiment on human beings without their consent should be punished to the full extent of the law. The Nazis could have cared less for the consent of the people on whom they experimented, but American scientists must never stoop that low.

The leaders in Nazi Germany were evolutionists. Like Charles Darwin, they believed that all men were descendants from the lower animals. Jews, Blacks and other non-Aryans were lower on the scale of human development than "the master race." If the Germans could learn from

experimentation on non-Aryans, it was legitimate to use them as experimental subjects, like using rats, monkeys and rabbits.

While I am not arguing that all evolutionists have so little respect for their fellow human beings, I am saying that no evolutionist has an absolute basis for not experimenting on other people. In my judgment, most evolutionists would not imitate the Nazis, but they cannot give a valid reason for not doing so—not if their lives depended on it.

Tragically, there have been American scientists who were involved in the eugenics movement. In the Foreword to Vivien Spitz's book, **Doctors from Hell**, Dr. Frederick Abrams summarizes some of the experiments American physicians performed on slaves.

Dr. Thomas Hamilton of Georgia placed a slave in a pit oven in order to study heat stroke. Dr. Walter Jones and several colleagues poured scalding water over sick slaves in an experiment to cure typhoid fever....Dr. Crawford Long of Georgia conducted a controlled demonstration of anesthesia by amputating two fingers from a slave boy—one with ether and one without (pp. xvi-xvii of the Foreword).

One of the United States Supreme Court's most famous associate justices, Oliver Wendell Holmes, approved the involuntary sterilization of a feeble-minded mother. Holmes pretended not to see any difference between a grain of sand and a human being. Dr. Abrams says "the Nazis based much of their master race ideology upon American foundations" (p. xx of the Foreword). Dr. Abrams also reports:

In 1966 *New England Journal of Medicine*, Dr. Henry Beecher cited twenty-two unethical post-Nuremberg experiments in America, conducted in university, Veteran's Administration, military, and private hospitals (p. xxiii of the Foreword).

Did you know that "each belt buckle that German soldiers

wore had embossed upon it Gott Mit Uns (God Is with Us)?

If you believe in the Bible as the word of God, you know how utterly immoral it is to treat human beings as objects. All human life is sacred in God's eyes and should be in the eyes of all who love God and want to live by his will. When God had created the entire universe, including all the animals, he said,

Let us make man in our image, after our likeness: and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creeps upon the earth. And God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them (Gen. 1:26-27).

The apostle Paul asked the Roman Christians:

Is he the God of the Jews only? Is he not the God of the Gentiles also? Yes, of the Gentiles also: seeing it is one God who shall justify the circumcision by faith, and the uncircumcision through faith (Rom. 1:29-30).

May I paraphrase what Paul wrote to the Romans? Is he the God of healthy, intelligent and Aryan people only? Is he not also the God of the sick, the mentally challenged, the physically handicapped, people of color and of all other human beings? Yes, he is the God who cares for all people.

The Psalmist helps us to appreciate the sacredness of all human life, including unborn life.

Thou hast possessed my reins: thou hast covered me in my mother's womb. I will praise thee for I am fearfully and wonderfully made: marvelous are thy works; and that my soul knows right well. My substance was not hidden from thee, when I was made in secret, and curiously wrought in

the lowest parts of the earth. Thine eyes did see my unformed substance; and in thy book all my members were written, when as yet there was none of them (Psa. 139:13-16).

How can there be any doubt in your mind that God loves all people, regardless of color or national origin or physical condition or mental ability?

I urge you to consider some questions. Do you believe Jesus Christ would approve of experimenting on a child because he was the offspring of slaves? Would our Lord endorse using the poor or the disenfranchised or prisoners as experimental subjects? Can you imagine Christ's saying that "three generations of imbeciles are enough," as Justice Oliver Wendell Holmes said in approving the sterilization of Carrie Buck, a feeble-minded woman from Virginia? What criteria do we use in deciding which persons may be used in medical experiments without their informed consent? Could the tragedies in Nazi Germany be repeated in other countries, including the United States of America?

You need to know, if you do not already know, that Holland has already legalized euthanasia (mercy killing). Only recently has Holland officially legalized mercy killing, but it has been practiced for many years. Some patients entering hospitals in Holland wear a sign on their chests that reads: "Do not kill me." How would you like to live in a country where physicians can decide to kill you if they think you may not recover or might not have quality of life if you survive? Have the Dutch forgotten how the Nazis treated them?

The State of Oregon has also legalized euthanasia. In the near future, the State of Washington will be voting on legalizing euthanasia. Do the people of those states know about the German euthanasia program? Most Americans know about the Holocaust, but do they know how many of the German citizens the Nazis killed? They murdered 275,000 of their own old and sick people.

What were the preachers and priests in Germany doing during the Nazi regime? Generally speaking, they were not doing much against Hitler and his henchmen. Martin Niemoller, a leader in the so-called "confessing church," wrote these disturbing words:

In Germany they came first for the Communists, and I didn't speak up because I wasn't a Communist. Then they came for the Jews, and I didn't speak up because I wasn't a Jew. Then they came for the trade unionists, and I didn't speak up because I wasn't a trade unionist. Then they came for the Catholics and I didn't speak up because I was a Protestant. Then they came for me, and by that time, no one was left to speak up.

Do you believe God will hold us accountable for failure to speak up against evil—all evil?

Chapter 15

Cohabitation

Almost every community in our nation has couples who live together without being married. The practice is called cohabitation. When I was in business in Dalton, Georgia, a young man came into my store and told me that he and his wife had divorced. Immediately after the divorce, his ex-wife's sister said to the man: "If you would like, I will live with you." From that day onward, the two of them lived together without being married. I asked him if his conscience ever bothered him. He replied: "My what?" If this were an isolated case, it would be tragic enough, but the practice is rampant in the United States and in many other countries.

USA TODAY (Monday June 9, 2008) published an article with the title, "Living together: No big deal?" The article provides information on how widespread the practice of cohabitation is. In Canada, 18.4% of couples cohabit. The largest percent of cohabiters is in Sweden where more than 28% of the population lives together without being married. In the United States 5.1% cohabited in 1990. The number rose to 7.6% in 2005. The number in the United States has risen to 10% in 2008. Since 1990 there has been an increase in the rate of cohabitation in all of the following countries: Canada, Denmark, France, Germany, Italy, the Netherlands, Sweden, Great Britain and the United States.

The article quotes Dr. David Popenoe, a highly respected sociologist, as saying: "We're still the most marrying of all these countries, but the data are clearly headed in the one common direction. It's headed in the direction of cohabitation as an alternative" to marriage. Dr. Popenoe also says: "Today, celebrities from Hollywood and elsewhere are looked up to. They have become role models. They are far more influential today than ever in

the past." The article reports: "Children of cohabitating couples are more likely to experience emotional problems, alcoholism and drug abuse" (p. 5-D)

In the community where I grew to adulthood, if couples had cohabited, they would have been ostracized or run out of town. It simply would not have been allowed. The people of my home community did not even divorce in the 1930s and 1940s. Before I went away to college in 1943, I knew of only one divorce in our community. It was a shock to our people. It may have been justified, but we could not accept a divorce in the Corinth community. Although I do not know what the situation is today, I strongly suspect there are many cohabitating couples in my home county.

For many years I taught marriage and family courses at Freed-Hardeman University in Henderson, Tennessee. Every year during my tenure at Freed-Hardeman I received marriage and family textbooks from various American publishers. The publishers sent me those books hoping I would adopt them for my classes. One of those textbooks has the title, **Marriage and Family Today** (New York: Random House, 1980), by Dr. Keith Melville. The consulting editor was Dr. Suzanne Keller, a radical feminist. The information I received with the book claimed that the book was the most popular marriage and family textbook in the United States.

Dr. Melville asserts: "Another reason for cohabitation is that it allows sex to be put in its proper perspective" (p. 84). There is a serious problem with that observation: It is inexcusably ridiculous! Marriage allows sex to put in its proper perspective. If a couple is cohabiting and the woman gets pregnant, the man can simply walk away and most of them do exactly that—or they pressure the woman to have an abortion. There is no legally binding obligation for the man to take care of the woman and her child. Besides, sexual adjustment usually requires months or even years. Either the man or the woman can get

dissatisfied and seek another partner. And that is exactly what happens in almost every case.

Dr. Melville finds it hard to understand why parents object to their children's cohabiting. I know why my parents would have objected to such an arrangement. They were concerned for my earthly welfare and for my eternal welfare. They knew it would not be a healthy approach to living. They believed that cohabiting—a term they probably never used—was sinful and would cause me to be lost if I did not repent of the sin. I shall return to this theme in a short time.

Dr. Melville recognized some problems with cohabiting, but apparently believed that "the practice of cohabitation seems to indicate a more realistic preparation for marriage" (p. 87). It is my deep conviction that scholars must examine every side of a question before speaking their minds. Dr. Melville failed to do that. A national survey was conducted among cohabiting women in Sweden. The survey revealed that women who had lived with a man before marriage were 82% more likely to divorce than those women who had not lived with a man before marriage. Did Dr. Melville know that? If he did not, he has not done his homework. If he knew and failed to mention it, he is not honest.

Dr. Melville does mention one problem with cohabitation. He says: "The living-together males reported less respect for their partners" (p. 85). Do you have any difficulty understanding why that would be the case? The man probably believes that his partner would live with some other man if she decided to. If he has any moral values, he almost certainly knows he is doing wrong. From my reading of articles on cohabitation, I am convinced that most of the people involved have guilty consciences. They may not admit it, but deep down in their hearts, they know they are violating the laws of God.

Barbara Defoe Whitehead responded to the media's foolish criticisms of former Vice President Dan Quayle.

Quayle had objected to the publicizing out-of-wedlock pregnancies. Whitehead wrote a major article for **Atlantic Monthly** with the title, "*Dan Quayle was Right.*" Incidentally, President Clinton also said that Dan Quayle was right. So did Candace Bergen. Whitehead has written an outstanding book with the title, **The Divorce Culture: Rethinking Our Commitments to Marriage and Family** (New York: Vintage Books, 1996). Whitehead affirms:

Through her example a dating or cohabiting mother may influence her own daughters' attitude toward sexual behavior (p. 162).

If a girl's mother is a cohabiter, what can the mother expect of her daughter?

Maggie Gallagher, a nationally syndicated columnist, has written an excellent book entitled, **The Abolition of Marriage: How We Destroy Lasting Love** (Washington, D. C.: Regnery Publishing, Inc., 1996). Gallagher's book has the enthusiastic endorsement of Dr. William Bennett, Judge Robert Bork, Dr. William Kristol and the late William F. Buckley, Jr. Two or three statements from Maggie Gallagher's book may be helpful.

Cohabitation is far more threatening to marriage as an institution than mere promiscuity (p. 168).

Cohabitation itself appears to make cohabiters who do marry more likely to divorce (p. 169).

Cohabiting before marriage reduces the happiness of married couples (pp. 169-170).

Kay S. Hymowitz's book, **Marriage and Caste in America: Separate and Unequal Families in a Post-Marital Age** (Chicago: Ivan R. Dee, Publisher, 2006), provides some very valuable information on marriage and family in the 21st century. She does not write from a religious viewpoint. In fact, she claims to be an agnostic (p. 3). She

asks: "What, then, do we make of cohabiting parents?" She answers:

Two cohabiting parents also provide few of the benefits for kids that married couples do. The Urban Institute's Robert Lerman has found that even when cohabiters resemble married couples in terms of education, number of children, and income, they experience more material hardship—things like an empty pantry or no phone or an electricity shutoff—and get less help from extended families when they do.

There is also more poverty among cohabiting couples (p. 27).

With the exception of men and women who identify themselves as secular humanists, most scholars have objections to cohabitation. The book, **Humanist Manifestos I and II** (Buffalo: Prometheus Books, 1973) endorses a ridiculous view of human sexuality. It says:

Short of harming others or compelling them to do likewise, individuals should be free to express their sexual proclivities and pursue their life-styles as they desire (p. 18).

Is it possible that secular humanism in our media, in academia and in some churches has led to cohabitation among many Americans? Do the humanists not care if they destroy individuals and marriages?

Let us now turn to the scriptures—our infallible guide in matters relating to sex—to ascertain what the word of God says about cohabitation, although the word "cohabitation" does not appear in the sacred text. The book of Proverbs has some very wise advice on sexual matters. Please listen to these words.

For the commandment is a lamp; and the law is a light; and reproofs of instruction are the way of life: to keep you from the evil woman, from the flattery of the tongue of a strange woman.

Lust not after her beauty in your heart; neither let her take you with her eyelids. For by means of a whorish woman a man is brought to a piece of bread; and the adulteress will hunt for the precious life. Can a man take fire in his bosom, and his clothes not be burned? Can one go on hot coals, and his feet not be burned? So he who goes in to his neighbor's wife; whosoever touches her shall not be innocent (Prov. 6:23-29).

Does this passage apply to cohabitation? It applies to all sexual activity outside the bonds of holy matrimony.

Since neither the Old Testament nor the New uses the word "cohabitation," how can we know it is wrong – always wrong? We know it is wrong because the Bible defines it as being wrong. Tragically, many preachers misunderstand the word "fornication." They imply, if they do not actually say, that fornication means premarital sex and adultery means extramarital sex. The Greek word *porneia* appears twenty-six times in the New Testament and is always translated "fornication" in the King James Version. The English Standard Version renders the Greek "sexual immorality" and so do most other modern versions.

The ancient city of Corinth was devoted to every kind of sexual immorality one can imagine. One member of the Lord's church was accused of incest. Paul told the Corinthians:

It is reported commonly that there is fornication among you, and such fornication as is not so much as named among the Gentiles, that one should have his father's wife (1 Cor. 5:1).

The word "fornication" in this case means incest. But if we cannot discern right and wrong, as some postmodernists insist, how could Paul condemn the man's behavior? Is incest always wrong or does it depend on the situation? Were the incestuous brother and his father's wife cohabiting?

Paul provides a list of those who are not going to heaven – fornicators, idolaters, adulterers, homosexuals,

thieves, greedy people, drunkards, revilers and exhortioners (1 Cor. 6:9-10). Later in that same chapter Paul asks:

Do you not know that your bodies are members of Christ? Shall I then take the members of Christ, and make them members of a harlot? God forbid. What? Do you not know that he who is joined to a harlot is one body? For two, says he, shall be one flesh. But he who is joined to the Lord is one spirit. Flee fornication. Every sin that a man does is without the body; but he who commits fornication sins against his own body. What? Do you not know that your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit which is in you, which you have of God, and you are not your own? For we are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's (1 Cor. 6:15-20).

I am fully aware that Paul was addressing members of the body of Christ. He demanded: "Flee fornication." The word "flee" is a present tense verb and means keep on fleeing. Charles Williams renders the expression: "Keep on running from sexual immorality." The Apostle Paul recommends marriage if a person cannot control his sexual appetite.

Nevertheless to avoid fornication, let every man have his own wife, and let every woman have her own husband....But if they cannot contain, let them marry: for it is better to marry than to burn (1 Cor. 7:2, 9).

Even though Paul's teachings in these verses were aimed primarily at Christians, there is much that non-Christians can learn. Young people need to know that all sins have both earthly and heavenly consequences. When people are sexually immoral, they run a great number of risks—some risks that may be fatal. There is always the danger of contracting sexually transmitted diseases, including AIDS. Dr. Meg Meeker's outstanding book, **Your**

Kids at Risk: How Teen Sex Threatens Our Sons and Daughters (Washington, DC: Regnery Publishing, Inc., 2007), provides information that every American needs. That includes those people who foolishly choose to cohabit. Dr. Meeker does not specifically address cohabitation, but what she writes certainly applies. This book ought to be in the hands of all parents and of all others who work with children.

Dr. Meeker says there are 19 million new cases of sexually transmitted diseases every year in our nation—19 million (p. xii of the Introduction). 2 million of those cases are teenagers (p. 13). And many of those diseases will be with them as long as they live. “Today more than 40,000,000 Americans are infected” with genital herpes (p. 32). Genital herpes is not usually fatal, but it is not curable. A child born to a mother with herpes may die. Human papilloma virus is widespread in our country. It is the leading cause of cervical cancer. In fact, HPV causes more than 99.7% of all cervical cancers (p. 36). Should not these facts inspire parents to teach their children about the stupidity of engaging in sex outside of a committed monogamous marriage? Should they not also warn cohabiters of the dangers involved in their behavior? A substantial number of the cohabiters have lived with more than one person. Many of them have contracted sexually transmitted diseases from their previous partners. They then pass those diseases on to their current partners. Anyone who doubts those facts is either naïve or ignorant or both.

The city of Ephesus, like ancient Corinth, was a very immoral city. Paul warned the Christians at Ephesus:

But fornication, and all uncleanness, or covetousness, let it not be once named among you as becomes saints....For this you know, that no whoremonger, nor unclean person, nor covetous man, who is an idolater, has any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and of God....And have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them (Eph. 5:3, 5, 11).

Did you know there are churches which do not take a stand against cohabitation? In fact, there are churches that do not take a stand against anything or anyone, except those who take a stand against evil. One preacher was asked if he opposed young people's cohabiting? He said he thought it was wrong, but he did not preach against it because there were too many young people in his congregation who were living together without being married. He did not want to offend those young people.

I am reminded of a story I heard about a young man who moved to Louisville, Kentucky, to preach. The very first Sunday he was in Louisville he preached against people's being addicted to tobacco. One of the elders took him aside and told him that Louisville had a number of companies that produced tobacco products. He urged him not to discuss that topic again. The next Sunday he preached on the sin of drunkenness. The same elder took him aside and told him how much whiskey was made in Louisville. The young preacher asked the elder: "What can I preach?" The elder responded: "You can preach on the witchdoctors in Africa. There are none of them in Louisville." I am sure someone made up that story, but tragically, it is not far off base in some modern American churches.

There are a great number of serious problems with cohabitation. Not only is it morally stupid, but it sets the wrong example for America's fine young people. Suppose that your son or daughter learns that you have cohabited. How are you going to convince them of the foolishness of such conduct? Cohabitation is a direct attack against God's pattern for the home. Those who cohabit endanger their own souls and the souls of others who may imitate them. Their example may destroy the lives of their neighbors and family members.

Paul admonished the Christians at Thessalonica:

For you know what commandments we gave you by the Lord Jesus. For this is the will of God, even your sanctification, that you should abstain from fornication (1 Thess. 4:2-3).

Chapter 16

Do The Right Thing

Mike Huckabee, former governor of the State of Arkansas and former presidential candidate, has written a number of books, some of which I have mentioned on this radio program, such as, *Character Is the Issue*. His latest book has the title, *Do the Right Thing: Inside the Movement That's Bringing Common Sense Back to America* (New York: Sentinel, 2008). Let me say as plainly as I know how: My lesson today is not an endorsement—either implicit or explicit—of Governor's Huckabee's political views. I am simply using the title of his book as the basis of our study on the topic, "Do the Right Thing."

The title to Governor Huckabee's book raises a number of vital questions. Does the governor believe there is a right thing? Does he believe he knows the right thing? Does he believe that other fallible human beings can also know the right thing? From what source or sources can we learn the right thing, if such a thing exists? I shall read just one brief excerpt from Governor Huckabee's book.

Having a moral code that is objective and consistent is necessary for such a system to work. Should each person have the ability to define his or her own "code," order completely falls apart (p. 31).

There are many prominent American leaders—philosophical, educational, and religious—who have doubts if the right thing exists or if anyone can absolutely know the right thing. Some of the leaders in the so-called "Emerging Church movement" think that getting it right may not be of any great significance. For example, in his extremely disturbing book, *A Generous Orthodoxy* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2004), Brian McClaren, the most influential leader within the Emerging Church movement, affirms:

From this viewpoint "getting it right" is beside the point: the point is "being and doing good" as followers of Jesus is our unique time and place, fitting in with the ongoing story of God's saving love for planet earth (p. 192).

How does Brian McClaren or anyone else know what "being and doing good" means if "getting it right is beside the point?" We can know for sure what "being and doing good" means only if we have the divine standard to tell us. That standard is the inspired word of almighty God.

Graham Johnson's book, **Preaching to a Postmodern World** (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2001), tells of a Barna Report which discovered that "Americans no longer believe in objective truth" (p. 8). That means they either do not know what doing the right thing means or they are not concerned about it. Johnson quotes Tim Keller:

We live in an amoral society—one in which "right" and "wrong" are categories with no universal meaning, and everyone "does that which is right in his own eyes" (p. 41).

Dennis McCallum served as the general editor of the book, **The Death of Truth: What's Wrong with Multiculturalism, the Rejection of Reason and the New Postmodernity Diversity** (Minneapolis: Bethany, 1996). Jim Leffel wrote one chapter in the book. Leffel reports on a survey at one of America's large state universities. The young people were asked if there was such a thing as absolute truth. Some of the young people responded: "Truth is whatever you believe."

If there were such a thing as absolute truth, how could we know what it is?...People who believe in absolute truth are dangerous (p. 31).

The sad truth is that people who do not believe in absolute truth are dangerous. I would not want to be involved in any kind of business with people who do not believe in

absolute truth. I would not want to appear before a judge who does not believe in absolute truth.

For many years, Clark Pinnock was considered one of the leading defenders of the inerrancy of scripture. His book, **Biblical Revelation: The Foundation of Christian Theology** (Chicago: Moody, 1971), is an excellent discussion of the inspiration and authority of the Bible. In recent years he has turned to the left. Michael Horton's book, **The Face of God: The Dangers and Delights of Spiritual Intimacy** (Dallas: Word, 1996), quotes Dr. Pinnock: "The issue God cares about is the direction of the heart, not the content of theology" (p. 37). If God does not care about "the content of theology," why do all the New Testament writers emphasize truth? Did not our Lord affirm: "You shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free" (John 8:32)? Why did Paul speak so often of "sound doctrine" or "sound words?"

Dr. Horton says there are "those who suggest it does not matter how we worship God, just so long as we worship the correct God." He says those who make such an argument "seem to forget the second commandment: 'You shall not make for yourself an idol in the form of anything in heaven above or on the earth beneath or in the waters below'" (p. 12). Dr. Horton insists that the story of Nadab and Abihu is particularly relevant (p. 15).

Carlton Pearson was a bishop in the Pentecostal movement until his brethren learned he believed in universalism. He apparently is very angry that he was excommunicated. His book has the title, **The Gospel of Inclusion: Reaching Beyond Religious Fundamentalism to the True Love of God and Self** (New York: Atria, 2006). His book is an attempt to defend the proposition: "The whole world is saved, they just don't know it" (p. 1). Pearson affirms: "Right is a relative term that means different things to different people in different cultures and consciences" (p. 9). I am not questioning Pearson's sincerity, but does he really believe such foolishness? Is it

right in one culture for a man to beat his wife but not in another culture? Would it be alright to practice suttee in India but not in the United States? Suttee is the practice of burning widows on the biers of their dead husbands.

I have one other book I must mention before I discuss with you what doing the right thing means. Rubel Shelly and John York have written a book with the title, **The Jesus Proposal: A Theological Framework for Maintaining the Unity of the Body of Christ** (Siloam Springs, AR: Leafwood, 2003). Shelly and York argue:

They (meaning members of the church of Christ) were taught to seek fixed and objective understandings of the text. Postmoderns have no difficulty with less-than-perfect interpretations, for they value persons above formulas (p. 83).

That observation means that a biblical text can mean whatever the interpreter wants it to mean. There is one thing for sure: Neither Christ nor the apostles held such a view of interpretation. Jesus made an argument based on the tense of a verb (Mt. 22:32). Paul made an argument based on the number of a noun (Gal. 3:16). If we should be satisfied with less-than-perfect interpretations, why spend hours and hours seeking to know what a particular word or verse or passage means? Shelly and York are arguing that right does not exist or it is not really all that important, although it is my considered opinion that neither of them believes it.

I have two questions I must address in the time I have remaining. Can we know what the right thing is? What does doing the right mean? Postmodernists deny that fallible human beings can know anything. Oddly enough, they know that we cannot know. The Bible has a very different view. Was Jesus wrong when he said to some of the Jews who believed on him: "You shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free" (John 8:32)? Paul told a young preacher:

I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day (2 Tim. 1:12).

The tense of the verb "know" means I have come to know and I still know. I have full knowledge. The Apostle John affirms: "Hereby we do know that we know him, if we keep his commandments" (1 John 2:3). Not one Bible writer ever expressed doubt about man's ability to know the truth.

I shall spend the remainder of our time examining what doing right means. Obviously, I can only touch the hem of the garment, but I want to emphasize some of our duties to God and to our fellowmen. A Jewish lawyer approached Jesus Christ with a question: "Which is the great commandment in the law?" Jesus answered:

You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind. This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like unto it, You shall love your neighbor as yourself. On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets (Mt. 22:36-40).

What did Christ have in mind when he said we must love God with all our hearts, souls and minds and our neighbor as ourselves? Loving God with all our heart, soul and mind means obeying his commandments—all of them. Jesus made that truth plain. "If you love me, keep my commandments" (John 14:15). "You are my friends, if do whatsoever I command you" (John 15:14). How can anyone claim to love God and ignore his commandments? The Apostle John explained what loving God means.

By this we know that we love the children of God, when we love God, and keep his commandments. For this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments: and his commandments are not grievous (1 John 5:2-3).

The expression, "love of God," in verse five means our love for God—not his love for us. We demonstrate our love for God when we obey his commandments.

Doing the right thing means honoring the Golden Rule.

Therefore all things whatsoever you would that men should do unto you, do you also to them: for this is the law and the prophets (Mt. 7:12).

Is there any relationship on earth to which this principle does not apply? Can you imagine what would happen in America's marriages if every husband always treated his wife as he wants to be treated and every wife reciprocated? Does that principle also apply to businessmen and their customers, physicians and their clients, teachers and their students, people in the United States House of Representatives and in the Senate?

Doing the right thing means believing in the sacredness of all human life and honoring all human life. King David expresses the very mind of God about the sacredness of all human life. He said to God:

Thou hast formed my inward parts: thou hast covered me in my mother's womb. I will praise thee for I am fearfully and wonderfully made: marvelous are thy works; and that my soul knows right well. My substance was not hidden from thee, when I was made in secret, and curiously wrought in the lowest parts of the earth. Thine eyes did see my substance, being yet unformed; and in thy book all my members were written, which in continuance were fashioned, when as yet there was none of them (Psa. 139:13-16).

Romans 12 provides wonderful insight into what doing the right thing means.

Let love be without dissimulation. Abhor that which is evil; cleave to that which is good. Be kindly affectioned one to another with brotherly love; in honor preferring one another; not

slothful in zeal; fervent in spirit; serving the Lord; rejoicing in hope; patient in tribulation; continuing instant in prayer; distributing to the necessity of the saints; given to hospitality. Bless them who persecute you: bless, and curse not. Rejoice with them who rejoice, and weep with them who weep. Be of the same mind one toward another. Mind not high things, but condescend to men of low estate. Be not wise in your own conceits. Recompense to no man evil for evil. Provide things honest in the sight of all men. If it be possible, as much as lies in you, live peaceably with all men. Dearly beloved, avenge not yourselves, but rather give place to wrath: for it is written, Vengeance is mine; I will repay, says the Lord. Therefore if you enemy hunger, feed him; if he thirst, give him drink: for in so doing you shall heap coals of fire on his head. Be not overcome with evil, but overcome evil with good (Rom. 12:9-21).

Doing the right thing means helping the poor, the sick, widows and orphans. The churches of Christ in the provinces of Macedonia and Achaia serve as wonderful examples of love for the poor. In his second letter to the Corinthians, Paul praised the Macedonians for their generosity in helping the needy.

Moreover, brethren, we want you to know of the grace of God bestowed on the churches of Macedonia; how that in a great trial of affliction the abundance of their joy and deep poverty abounded unto the riches of their liberality. For to their power, I bear record, yea, and beyond their power they were willing of themselves; praying us with much entreaty that we would receive the gift, and take upon us the fellowship of the ministering to the saints. And this they did, not as we hoped, but first gave their own selves to the Lord, and to us by the will of God (2 Cor. 8:1-5).

The Mosaic covenant required God's people to take care of the poor and the needy among the Jews. But it also demanded that the Israelites care for strangers. Moses told the Israelites:

For the Lord your God is God of gods, and Lord of lords, a great God, a mighty, and a terrible, who regards not persons, nor takes rewards: he executes the judgment of the fatherless and widow, and loves the stranger, in giving food and raiment. Love therefore the stranger: for you were strangers in the land of Egypt. You shall fear the Lord your God; him shall you serve, and to him shall you cleave, and swear by his name (Dt. 10:17-20).

Paul commanded the Galatians:

Brethren, if a man be overtaken in a fault, you who are spiritual, restore such a one in the spirit of meekness; considering yourself, let you also be tempted. Bear one another's burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ. For if any man think himself to be something, when he is nothing, he deceives himself. But let every man prove his own work, and then shall he have rejoicing in himself alone, and not in another. For every man shall bear his own burden. Let him who is taught in word communicate to him who teaches in all good things. Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man sows, that shall he also reap. For he who sows to his flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he who sows to the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap live everlasting. But let us not be weary in well doing: for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not. As we have therefore opportunity, let us do good unto all men, especially to them who of the household of the faith (Gal. 6:1-10).

If we follow the Lord's commands in this passage, will we not know that we are doing the right thing?

Doing the right thing from God's viewpoint also means preaching the truth and opposing all error. I am fully aware that postmodernists doubt if we can know the truth even if it exists. King Solomon did not buy into such foolishness. He commanded God's children:

Buy the truth, and sell it not: also wisdom, and instruction, and understanding (Prov. 23:23).

If truth does not exist or if men are incapable of knowing it, Solomon's advice makes no sense. King David agreed with his son. He said: "Thou art near, O Lord; and all thy commandments are truth" (Psa. 119:151).

The Lord Jesus Christ had no doubt his disciples in every age could know the truth and were responsible for preaching it. Jesus assured his immediate disciples that they could know the truth, even when he was not with them. When he was about to return to the Father, he told them:

Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, has come, he will guide you into all truth: for he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak: and he will show you things to come (John 16:13).

Jesus prayed to God almighty for his disciples: "Sanctify them through the truth: thy word is truth" (John 17:17). But preaching the truth is not adequate. We must also refute the error that exists in our world. Paul commanded his son in the gospel:

Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, and exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine. For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears; and they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables (2 Tim. 4:2-4).

The word "reprove" means to convict when there is sufficient evidence of wrongdoing or error. The word "rebuke" involves censure and sharp criticism. Paul said to a sorcerer who was trying to keep Sergius Paulas from hearing the gospel:

O full of all subtlety, and all mischief, you child of the devil, you enemy of all righteousness, will you not cease to pervert the right ways of the Lord (Acts 13:10)?

Paul specifically and emphatically condemned the enemies of the cross of Christ.

For many walk, of whom I have told you often, and now tell you even weeping, that they are enemies of the cross of Christ: whose end is destruction, whose God is their belly, and whose glory is in their shame, who made earthly things (Phil. 3:18-19).

The Lord commended the Ephesians for hating the deeds of the Nicolaitans because he also hated their deeds (Rev. 2:6). He rebuked the church members in Thyatira for not taking action against a woman he called Jezebel (Rev. 2:20). He said the lukewarm Laodiceans made him sick at his stomach, figuratively speaking. He threatened to vomit them out of his mouth if they did not repent (Rev. 3:16, 19).

Error must not be allowed to proliferate. We must always do the right thing.

Chapter 17

Heroes

As you were growing into adulthood, did you have any heroes? Maybe your hero was one of your parents or a favorite schoolteacher or a sports figure or a movie star. Thousands of young men idolized Elvis Presley, Pat Boone, James Dean and John Wayne. Did your hero influence the way you talked or walked or thought about the world? There have been many cases where young people imitated their favorite movie star. If the movie star were a macho type person, young people tried to be just like their hero. In some cases, they even tried to look like their hero. How many hundreds and hundreds of young men have tried to look and talk just like Elvis Presley?

I have tried to review my own childhood to ascertain if I had any heroes. My father was certainly a major influence in my life. So was my older brother William. But I suspect that the preachers who came to my home congregation had a more profound influence on my thinking and behavior than anyone else. I wanted to stand before a congregation and discuss the word of God, just like they did. I began to lead singing at age twelve and to participate in other church activities at a very young age. I probably would consider those preachers and some of my school teachers as my heroes.

Dr. Geroge Roche served for many years as president of Hillsdale College in Hillsdale, Michigan. At one time, Dr. Roche was chairman of the National Council on Educational Research. He has written books on education, history, philosophy and government. In 1987 he wrote a book with the title, **A World Without Heroes: The Modern Tragedy** (Hillsdale, MI: Hillsdale College Press). Russell Kirk, a highly respected conservative author, wrote the Foreword to Dr. Roche's book. Kirk quotes these appropriate words from Nathaniel Hawthorne: "A hero cannot be a hero

unless in an heroic world" (p. vii of the Foreword).

A few brief observations from Dr. Roche's book will introduce our study of "Heroes."

The hero...overcomes the ordinary and attains greatness by serving some great good. His example tells us that we fail, not by aiming too high in life, but by aiming far too low. More, it tells us we are mistaken in supposing that happiness is a right or an end in itself (p. 4).

Real heroism requires courage....Plainly, heroism also has a selfless quality (p. 5).

Dr. Roche quotes Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn, the famous Russian dissident, as asking:

Should one point out that from ancient times decline in courage has been considered the beginning of the end (p. 7)?

Lenny Skutnik is one of Dr. Roche's heroes. He was the man who jumped into the Potomac River "to rescue a survivor of an airplane crash a few years ago. It could be the man in that same crash who gave his life to be sure that rescuers picked up all the other survivors first." It could be the "paperboy who braved an inferno to lead an elderly woman to safety. He survived, but suffered serious burns....Risking or laying down one's life to save another is heroism laid bare" (pp. 19-20). Dr. Roche uses the word "anti-heroism." He believes—and so do I—that many religious leaders are "in the vanguard of anti-heroism, preaching the gospel of materialism. We see such startling anomalies as Protestant clergymen (preachers) funding revolutionary terrorist groups, and Catholics advocating 'liberation theology' and attempting 'dialogues' with Marxism-Leninism" (p. 47). "In the end," Dr. Roche affirms, "the anti-heroes erect Berlin walls around their utopias, pretending to keep out the envious, but in reality keeping in their slaves" (p. 58).

I have already mentioned some of the men who are heroes to millions of American youth and to young people in other countries. It is appropriate for us to think about some of these so-called "heroes" for a few minutes. For example, there is no question that Elvis Presley was one of the most beloved entertainers in the world. Millions of people flocked to his concerts, bought his records and watched his movies. There is no doubt he loved people and was extremely generous with his great wealth. But Elvis Presley was not the kind of man young people should imitate. He was unquestionably a womanizer and a drug abuser. He died an untimely death because of his abuse of drugs—including prescription drugs—and alcohol. Although a very talented singer, he is not the kind of man young men should emulate. When young men (or older men) abuse drugs, including beverage alcohol, and chase women they are in for some troubling days. Graveyards across America are full of people who behaved so foolishly. By divine inspiration, Paul declared: "The wages of sin is death" (Rom. 6:23). He also teaches: "Be not deceived: God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man sows, that shall he also reap" (Gal. 6:7). Elvis Presley sowed to the wind and reaped the whirlwind (Hos. 8:7).

Michael Jackson was one of the cutest and most talented little boys I have ever seen. I remember when the Jackson Five first came on the scene. All of the Jackson boys were talented, but little Michael was a child prodigy. He was always the star of the family. The Jackson Five made millions of dollars on their records and on their concerts. Tragically, fame and fortune destroyed Michael Jackson. He was never allowed to grow up. He was a perpetual adolescent. He almost certainly was a pedophile. The dictionary defines pedophilia as "sexual perversion in which children are the preferred sexual object." I do not know if he actually engaged in sex with children, but it certainly appears that he did. If he did not, why did he pay one family \$20,000,000 to settle a lawsuit charging him with child molestation?

I am sure the Jackson family grieves because of the untimely death of Michael. But it troubles me that the media gave so much attention to the life and accomplishments of Michael Jackson. I must ask every parent in my audience: Would you want your child to be like Michael Jackson? Is he the kind of example you would want your child to follow? His influence was decidedly detrimental to our culture. This nation cannot continue to achieve greatness when people live like Elvis Presley and Michael Jackson. As much as millions of Americans loved them, they were not honorable people.

Just weeks before my preparation for this study, Steve McNair, the once-great quarterback for the Tennessee Titans, was shot to death in the home of his girlfriend. Like all Titan fans, I grieved that such a tragedy could happen to anyone. I especially grieved for his four sons and for his family in the state of Mississippi. There is no doubt Steve McNair was an outstanding football player, but was he an example for young people to imitate? He was arrested earlier for driving under the influence of alcohol. It really bothers me when anyone destroys his influence through drinking and through sexual immorality.

The death of Edward Kennedy filled the news media for several days. If you listened to the people in the media, you may have thought Ted Kennedy was a wonderful model, maybe just a little short of Jesus Christ. He may have been an effective legislator, but he was not a good hero for our young people to imitate. He was not a good man. Good men take full responsibility for their conduct. I understand he has a new book that will be available in a few days. According to news reports, he says he acted foolishly in the death of Mary Jo Kopechne, but that is not good enough. Why did he not apologize for his criminal behavior while he was still living? Why do the media treat him as if he were truly an American hero? The way the media and fellow politicians exalted Ted Kennedy, I have wondered why he did not rise from the dead the third day.

There was a time in American history when people modeled their lives after the great heroes of the Bible. Tragically, millions of American young people cannot even name many of the Bible's great men and women of faith. What would change about our great nation if there were thousands of men and women who had the faith and the courage of Joseph? I encourage you to read the story of Joseph in the book of Genesis. I shall stress only a few aspects of his life. His jealous brothers sold him into Egyptian slavery.

And the Lord was with Joseph, and he was a prosperous man; and he was in the house of his master the Egyptian. And his master saw that the Lord was with him, and he made him overseer over his house, and all that he had he put in his hands (Gen. 39:2-3).

Potiphar's wife became enamored with the young Jewish slave. She asked him to lie with her.

But he refused, and said unto his master's wife, Behold, my master knows not what is with me in the house, and he has committed all that he has into my hand; there is no one greater in this house than I; neither has he kept anything from me but you, because you are his wife: how can I do this great wickedness, and sin against God (Gen. 39:7-9)?

What tremendous faith and courage! Joseph knew what God required of him. He also knew he had no right to engage in sexual activity with anyone, and certainly not with another man's wife. We know the strength of the sexual desires of young men. It was an enormous temptation for Joseph to reject the seductions of the wife of Potiphar, but with the help of God he did it.

The young men and women in our nation would profit greatly by imitating this great hero of the faith. They could avoid the venereal diseases that often accompany sexual promiscuity. They would not have the enormous

responsibility of children born out of wedlock. They could go into marriage without the guilt associated with sexual immorality. This is not the kind of advice one hears on television and from some so-called prominent leaders in our nation. Promoting sexual abstinence before marriage has fallen on hard times among our elite. But there are still unspeakable tragedies for those who are sexually active before marriage.

Hebrews 11 has a long list of heroes of the faith – Abel, Enoch, Noah, Abraham, Moses and others. It does not chronicle the behavior of Joseph, but it does say concerning him:

By faith Joseph, when he died, made mention of the departing of the children of Israel; and gave commandment concerning his bones (Heb. 11:22).

Even though Joseph was in a pagan culture, he remained faithful to God. Would it not be wonderful if we had some Josephs in Washington and in our state capitols?

Four of my ancient heroes lived during the Babylonian exile. Daniel, Shadrach, Meshach and Abed-nego were almost certainly teenagers when they were carried into Babylon. The temptations to compromise their convictions must have been tremendous. They were prepared for service to the king of Babylon. In their training, they were supposed to eat what their Egyptian supervisor brought them.

The king appointed them a daily provision of the king's food, and of the wine which he drank: so nourishing them three years, that at the end thereof they might stand before the king (Dan. 1:5).

But Daniel purposed in his heart that he would not defile himself with the king's food, nor with the wine which he drank: therefore he requested of the prince of the eunuchs that he might not defile himself (Dan. 1:8).

Daniel proposed a trial. He said to the prince of the eunuchs:

Prove your servants, I pray you, for ten days: and let them give us vegetables to eat, and water to drink. Then let our countenance be looked upon before you, and the countenance of the children that eat of the portion of the king's food: and as you see, deal with your servants.

At the end of the trial, the children of Israel "appeared fairer and fatter in flesh than all the children which did eat of the king's food" (Dan. 1:12-15). Daniel and his three companions passed the test with flying colors.

Daniel believed that God would be with him and his companions. He was willing to risk censure and perhaps even death from the Babylonian king rather than to compromise his convictions. How desperately our nation needs young men and women who will always do what they believe is right! Is that not the attitude and the behavior Jesus exhibited? He told some of his fellow Jews:

He who sent me is with me: the Father has not left me alone; for I do always those things that please him (John 8:29).

I shall not take the time to discuss Daniel's being thrown into the lion's den or the other three Hebrew children's being cast into a fiery furnace. But these four Israelites are genuine heroes.

Many Christians probably are very similar with the conduct of the Apostle Peter. He was very weak in many respects. There were times he spoke when he should have been listening. He lied when he was accused of being one of Christ's disciples. A young woman came to the apostle and said:

You also were with Jesus of Galilee. But he denied before them all, saying, I do not know what you are saying (Mt. 26:69-70).

On one occasion, he acted the part of a hypocrite and had to be rebuked by another apostle (Gal. 2:11-14).

But in spite of his weaknesses, he is a hero to millions of people, including your speaker. If that were not the case, why would our Lord choose him to deliver the very first gospel sermon on the day of Pentecost (Acts 2) and the first to Gentiles at the house of Cornelius (Acts 10)? Peter was a staunch defender of the faith and encouraged others to do the same.

But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts: and be ready always to give an answer to every man who asks you a reason of the hope that is in you, with meekness and fear (1 Pet. 3:15).

We ought to learn from Peter's mistakes and imitate him in his faithfulness in serving our Lord.

Most Bible students think that David was Israel's greatest king. He was an outstanding military commander, a wonderful poet, as well as a great king. But David was far from perfect. All serious Bible students know of his affair with Bathsheba and of his putting her husband in grave danger so he would be killed. I am sure you remember how the prophet Nathan approached King David. He convinced the king of his inexcusably evil behavior. David is our example in this respect: He repented of the wrong he had committed and regretted it the rest of his life. He prayed:

Have mercy upon me, O God, according to thy lovingkindness: according unto the multitude of thy tender mercies blot out my transgressions. Wash me thoroughly from my iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin. For I acknowledge my transgressions, and my sin is ever before me (Psa. 51:1-5).

There are other great heroes whom we should study and whose faith and conduct we should copy. The author of Hebrews provides a long list of heroes of the faith and

wanted to mention others, just as I would like to do. He asked:

What shall I more say? For time would fail me to tell of Gideon, and of Barak, and of Samson, and of Jephthah; of David also, and Samuel, and of the prophets (Heb. 11:32).

Is there any doubt in your mind that all of us would be better Christians if we would take the time to examine the lives of these men and women of God and follow them as they followed the Lord?

I close our study today with a brief review of the life of one of Christianity's greatest preachers and missionaries—the Apostle Paul. Paul's early life (when he was known as Saul of Tarsus) was devoted to promoting and to defending Judaism. He was so strongly opposed to Christ and to his church that he actually gave his consent to the murder of a good man—Stephen (Acts 8:1). But Saul was honest in his opposition to Christ and to the church. He told Timothy that he had been a “blasphemer, and a persecutor, and injurious: but I obtained mercy because I did it ignorantly in unbelief” (1 Tim. 1:13).

Paul should be an example to all who are honest and want to know the truth. When Paul learned he was persecuting Christ, he asked the Lord what he had to do. Christ instructed him to go into Damascus and there it would be told him what he had to do. God sent Ananias to tell Saul what to do to be saved. Ananias told this penitent believer: “Arise, and be baptized, and wash away your sins, calling on the name of the Lord” (Acts 22:16). Do you remember what Paul told the Romans about their baptism and his?

Do you not know, that so many of us as were baptized into Christ were baptized into his death? Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of God the Father, even

so we also should walk in newness of life. For if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection: knowing this, that our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin (Rom. 6:3-6).

The same apostle told the Corinthians:

For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free; and have all been made to drink into one Spirit (1 Cor. 12:13).

Would you have your sins remitted and be added to the Lord's church? Confess your faith in Christ, repent of your alien sins and be baptized this very day. Then you are on your way to heaven.

Chapter 18

Racism Alive And Well In America

Do you believe racism is alive and well in America? It would be strange indeed if that were not the case. There are probably individuals in every community who do not want to associate with people from different racial backgrounds. If they are white, they try to avoid blacks. If they are blacks, they may not like to be with whites. I remember an incident that occurred in 1981. I was doing a series of lectures in Malaysia. Two of us were walking down a street in Kuala Lumpur when some young men from India said where we could hear it: "We hate white people." Some of the groups that want to maintain complete separation, such as, the Ku Klux Klan or the Aryan Nation, want nothing to do with blacks or Hispanics or Arabs or any other group that differs from them. While these groups prosper in some parts of our nation, they do not represent the majority of Americans. In spite of such unchristian and un-American attitudes on the part of some Americans, America is not a racial culture. As a nation, we still have a long way to go, but we have made enormous progress since I was a little boy. Our study today will focus on the topic, "Racism Is Alive and Well in America."

Would I be out of order if I were to suggest that former President Jimmy Carter would do us a favor if he kept his bigoted mouth shut? He has made some outlandish and foolish observations about our foreign policy and about other matters. He has demonstrated that he is anti-Semitic or at least anti-Israel. His latest inexcusable statement about Americans who oppose the policies of Barak Obama tops the list of stupid statements. He affirmed that those who have spoken out against President Obama's policies have done so because he is black. Jimmy Carter is pathetic. He needs to return to growing peanuts. He was a washout as governor in Georgia. I know because I was living in

Georgia while he was governor. He was even worse as president.

For many years, Dr. Bill Cosby has been my favorite comedian. I have enjoyed watching some of his programs on television. I was not the least surprised at what Jimmy Carter said. He has made a habit of speaking when he should have been listening. But I was surprised and disappointed when Bill Cosby agreed with Jimmy Carter. Are there Americans who do not like for a black to be president? You know there are. Were there blacks who did not like George W. Bush because he was white? And what conservatives have said about Barak Obama pales into insignificance compared to what Harry Reid and other radical leftists have said about George W. Bush. Harry Reid called President Bush a liar and refused to apologize for it.

I always hesitate to discuss my personal background, but I believe it is important on this topic. My parents were not racists. My father often hired blacks to work on his building projects. When he was working near our home, he invited his workers, including his black employees, to eat in our home. That simply was not done in Middle Tennessee in the 1940s and 1950s. As a family, we attended gospel meetings in the black community. My first contact with blacks in school was when I was a junior at Andrews University, a Seventh-day Adventist seminary, in Berrien Springs, Michigan. One of my friends at Andrews was a young black Seventh-day Adventist preacher. He and I sometimes talked about various issues. We even made a trip to Chicago together.

My Molly and I moved to Valdosta, Georgia, in 1952. The school where I taught had never had any black students. The church where I preached had no black members. I preached at Valdosta against racism. One of the dear old elders was uncomfortable with my preaching on that topic. But we were such dear friends, he did not formally object to my sermons. Today that school has a number

of black students and the church has black members. In recent years I have returned to South Georgia for gospel meetings. South Georgia has made enormous strides in dealing with racial issues. The whole state of Georgia has been a model for other states.

When Molly and I moved to Dalton, Georgia, there was a meeting of doctors, lawyers, preachers and others. The purpose of the meeting was to discuss the integration of the public schools. I made a brief speech at that meeting. I told them that Molly and I would not remain in Dalton if there were any problems with integration. During the time Molly and I lived in Dalton, the schools integrated with no serious objections from anyone. One Dalton policeman grew up in Syracuse, NY. He told me on one occasion that Dalton, Georgia, was the best town anywhere for black people.

When I taught at Freed-Hardeman University in Henderson, Tennessee, I had dozens of black students in my Bible classes. One of my black students recently drove from his home near Nashville to visit with me. My friend, Quille Brooker, another black student, who lives in Orangeburg, SC, calls me on a regular basis. While I was at Freed-Hardeman I had the privilege of counseling with him and his bride-to-be. The church where I work in Fayetteville, Tennessee, has black members. We have also had a black preacher to preach in a gospel meeting. I would not work with a congregation that did not welcome black people. I have preached in meetings in black churches in South Carolina, in Atlanta and in Louisiana.

I tell you this to prove that objections to President Obama's policies have nothing to do with race, at least, on the part of millions of Americans. I opposed much that George H. W. Bush did and what his son did and did not do. It is irresponsible for Jimmy Carter, for Bill Cosby and for anyone else to call people racists if they do not like what Barak Obama does or does not do. As Americans we have the right and the responsibility of speaking out

when our president or our governor or our mayor goes in a direction we cannot endorse. We would be cowards if did not state our opposition to policies with which we disagree. And anyone who interprets what I have said to be partisan political is way out in left field.

President Obama does not believe that objections to his health-care plan are race-based. **The Tennessean** (Saturday, September 19, 2009) published an article with the title, "*Obama: Health-care vitriol not race-based.*" The article came from the Associated Press. But the author of the article had to throw in a little bias. Why does he use the word "vitriol" of objections to the president's health-care plan? Obama told CNN: "Are there people out there who don't like me because of race? I'm sure there are.... That's not the over-riding issue here." According to the article, Jimmy Carter said the vitriol was racially motivated. President Obama said no.

Obama said most people across the country are just trying to follow the debate and figure out how proposed changes would help them (p. 7-A).

I appreciate the president's setting Jimmy Carter and Bill Crosby straight on their bigoted observations about race.

The Declaration of Independence and the American Constitution do not allow for discrimination on the basis of race or of ethnicity or of national origin. We must teach our children the message of the Declaration of Independence and of the Constitution. These two documents have provided more freedom for more people than any other political documents in the history of the world. Please listen to the second paragraph of the Declaration of Independence.

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.

The Constitution begins with these stimulating words:

We the people of the United States, in order to form a more perfect union, establish justice, insure domestic tranquility, promote the general welfare, and secure the blessings of liberty to ourselves and our posterity, do ordain and establish this Constitution of the United States.

Do you see any room in either of these documents for discrimination on the basis of race?

We must now turn to the Bible to learn what it says about illegitimate discrimination. Both the Old Testament and the New condemn prejudice and bias toward people who are different from us. Moses warned the judges among the Israelites:

You shall not respect persons in judgment: but you shall hear the small as well as the great; you shall not be afraid of the face of man; for the judgment is God's; and the cause that is too hard bring to me (Dt. 1:17).

Would it be a perversion of the sacred text to paraphrase this verse: "You shall not respect persons in judgment: but you shall hear blacks as well as whites?"

While the Bible does not use the word "racism," there is no doubt it strongly opposes it. The book of Romans emphatically teaches that the gospel is for all—Jew and Gentile alike. The expression, "Jew and Gentile," means every person in the world. Paul informed the Romans:

I am debtor both to the Greeks and to the Barbarians; both to the wise and to the unwise. So, as much as in me is, I am ready to preach the gospel to you who are in Rome also. For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one who believes; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek. For therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith: as it is written, The just shall live by faith (Rom. 1:14-17).

If you are a serious Bible student, you know that Paul's words express the Lord's desire that all men be saved. But many people in the first century were almost certainly offended by his teaching. How could a man from a Jewish background include Greeks in the gospel plan of salvation? After all, the Jews knew that they were closer to God than any Gentile could possibly be. The Apostle Paul added:

Glory, honor, and peace upon every soul of man who does evil, of the Jew first and also of the Gentile: for there is no respect of persons with God (Rom. 2:10-11).

In their tremendously useful book, **The New Linguistic and Exegetical Key to the Greek New Testament** (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1998), Cleon Rogers, Jr. and Cleon Rogers, III make the following comments on the expression, "respect of persons": It has to do with "the accepting of the appearance of a person." It is "a Hebraic term for partiality. The oriental custom of greeting was to bow one's face to the ground. If the one greeted accepted the person, he was allowed to lift his head again" (p. 319).

Paul argues:

Now the righteousness without the law is manifested by the law and the prophets; even the righteousness of God which is by faith of Jesus Christ unto all and upon all of them who believe: for there is no difference (Rom. 3:21-22).

The word translated "difference" means distinction, as most modern versions translate the Greek. The Apostle Paul asked the Romans:

Is he the God of the Jews only? Is he not also of the Gentiles? Yes, of the Gentiles also: seeing it is one God, who shall justify the circumcision by faith, and the uncircumcision through faith (Rom. 3:21-22).

Is it permissible to paraphrase those verses as follows: "Is

he the God of white people only? Is he not also the God of blacks, Hispanics, Arabs, the poor and the disenfranchised? Yes, he is the God of all these also."

Dr. Merrill C. Tenney, a professor at Wheaton College for many years, calls Galatians "The Charter of Christian Liberty" (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1950). In Galatians, Paul makes it plain that every one is freed from the Mosaic covenant with their obedience to the gospel of Christ. He then argues:

For you are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus. For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ.

When we become members of the body of Christ,

There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for you are all one in Christ Jesus. And if you are Christ's, then are you Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise (Gal. 3:25-29).

During the time when our Lord walked on this earth, there was a great division between Jews and Samaritans. Jesus Christ did not adopt the Jewish attitude toward Samaritans. John 4 records a meeting between a Samaritan woman and Christ. They met at Jacob's well in Sychar, Samaria. Jesus startled the Samaritan woman when he asked her for a drink.

Then says the woman of Samaria unto him, How is it that you being a Jew, ask drink of me, who am a woman of Samaria?

The Apostle John comments: "For the Jews have no dealings with the Samaritans" (John 4:7, 9). Jesus did not discriminate against the woman even though she was a Samaritan and immoral. She had had five husbands and was living with a man who was not her husband (John 4:18). Should not the followers of Christ imitate his wonderful example of loving and honoring all people?

The Apostle Peter was a true blue Jewish patriot. He had doubts that Gentiles should be included in the church of the living God. God prepared the apostle for the privilege and responsibility of preaching the very first sermon to the Gentiles. In the eyes of many Jews, Gentiles were not on the same level morally, spiritually or otherwise. Peter apparently shared those views. God sent a vision to convince Peter that all men—Jew and Gentile—were included in the gospel. Peter explained to Cornelius—the very first Gentile convert:

You know how that it is an unlawful thing for a man who is a Jew to keep company, or come unto one of another nation; but God has shown me that I should not call any man common or unclean (Acts 10:28).

The apostles and other members of the church heard what had occurred at the house of Cornelius. They were upset that Peter had gone among the Gentiles and even eaten with them. Peter told them what had happened to convince him to preach to the Gentiles. He then explained to the apostles and brethren from Judea:

Forasmuch then as God gave them (the Gentiles) the like gift as he did unto us, who believed on the Lord Jesus Christ; what was I, that I could withstand God? When they heard these things, they held their peace, and glorified God, saying, Then has God also to the Gentiles granted repentance unto life (Acts 11:1-2, 17-18).

It took a miracle to convince Peter to preach to the Gentiles. If we accept the Bible as the word of God, we know we cannot discriminate on the basis of race.

Racism and other illegitimate forms of discrimination are not only inappropriate and un-American; they are sinful. James argues that partiality toward others means that we become "judges with evil thoughts" (Jas. 2:4). He also affirms: We "commit sin and are convinced of the law as transgressors" (Jas. 2:9). The word "transgressor"

means one who steps across. W. E. Vine says the word means "one who stands beside, then, one who oversteps the prescribed limit" (p. 1162).

I know this and so do you: God demands that we love and respect all people, including those with whom we disagree. Let us return briefly to the book of Galatians. I have already read to you where Paul told the Galatians:

For you are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus. For as many of you has have baptized into Christ have put on Christ. There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for you are all one in Christ Jesus (Gal. 3:26-28).

Paul further said to the Galatians:

As we therefore have opportunity, let us do good unto all men, especially unto them who are of the household of the faith (Gal. 6:10).

Some liberal theologians have criticized Paul for using the expression, "especially unto them who are of the household of the faith." But there is not a reasonable person on earth who does not understand Paul's reason for thus speaking. When Molly and our sons were at home, my first responsibility was to take care of them. Oddly enough, only Molly could write a check on our bank account. Was I being biased or bigoted? Our first obligation outside of our immediate families is the family of God—the church of the living God. How anyone could object to that arrangement defies reason.

In his beautiful letter to the Philippians, the Apostle Paul admonished his brethren in Christ:

Let nothing be done through strife or vainglory; but in lowliness of mind, let each esteem others better than themselves. Look not every man on his own things, but every man also on the things of others. Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus: who, being in the form of

God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God (Phil. 2:3-6).

The mind of Jesus prohibits his followers from illegitimate discrimination. Jesus said to his immediate disciples:

The Son of man came not to be served, but to serve, and to give his life a ransom for many (Mt. 20:28).

Chapter 19

Beverage Alcohol's Destructive Power

Most of you—well, at least, some of you—are accustomed to hearing preachers read what the Bible says about beverage alcohol. If you have not heard or read the message lately, I shall refresh your memories concerning the Bible's message on strong drink.

Wine is a mocker, strong drink is raging; and whosoever is deceived thereby is not wise (Prov. 20:1).

Hear, my son, and be wise, and direct your mind in the way. Be not among winebibbers, or among gluttonous eaters of meat; for the drunkard and the glutton will come to poverty, and drowsiness will clothe a man in rags (Prov. 23:19-21).

Who has woe? Who has sorrow? Who has contentions? Who has babbling? Who has wounds without cause? Who has redness of eyes? They that tarry long at wine: they who go to seek mixed wine. Look not on the wine when it is red, when it gives his color in the cup, when it moves itself aright. At the last it bites like a serpent, and stings like an adder. Your eyes shall behold strange women, and your heart shall utter perverse things. Yea, you shall be as he who lies down in the midst of the sea, or as one who lies upon the top of the mast. They have stricken me, you shall say, and I was not sick; they have beaten me, and I felt it not: when shall I awake? I will seek it yet again (Prov. 23:29-35).

There are dozens of comments and observations I would like to make on these powerful passages from Proverbs. These statements express God's attitude toward the evils of strong drink. Although such teachings are not

very popular today—not even among church members—they express what God himself wants us to know about the destructiveness of beverage alcohol. Can any person do better than to listen to the wisdom of God's holy book? How much grief could the human race have avoided if all human beings had simply listened to the word of God? I do not for one moment want to minimize the Bible's unambiguous teaching of this very vital topic, but I shall take a little different approach to strong drink in today's lesson.

In case you are tempted to think that only uneducated, narrow-minded and ignorant preachers condemn strong drink, I shall read to you a number of statements from political leaders, scientific authorities, prominent literary figures and others—all of which show the stupidity of drinking beverage alcohol. When I read to you the views of a man like Benjamin Franklin, I am not endorsing Franklin's philosophical and theological views. Franklin rejected the Bible's teaching on the deity of Christ and on other fundamental elements of New Testament Christianity, but Franklin was a very wise man in many respects. He had seen men destroy themselves and deprive their families of life's necessities because those men were devoted to drinking. Please listen to Benjamin Franklin, one the authors of the American Constitution—the greatest political document man ever produced. In *The American Issue* (March-April, 1975), Franklin is quoted as saying:

No man ever drank lard into his tub, or flour into his sack, nor meal into his barrel, nor happiness into his home, nor God into his heart
(Number 2, p. 1).

All of the quotations in our lesson are from *The American Issue* (March-April, 1975) unless otherwise noted.

The only people who ever get rich through alcoholic beverages are the manufacturers, the distributors and the retailers. Those who get rich from strong drink are trading and trafficking with the bodies, minds and souls of their

constituents. They are destroying homes, businesses and professions. Incidentally, if alcoholic beverages are so great for people and so desirable as social lubricants, why do distillers like Jack Daniel at Lynchburg, Tennessee, discourage their employees from drinking whiskey and other alcoholic beverages? What would you think of an automobile manufacturer who urged his employees not to drive his own products? Do you know why Jack Daniel does not want its workers to use alcoholic beverages? They know that drinkers do not make good employees and can be hazards in a manufacturing plant.

How tragic that a man would use the family's resources for purchasing whiskey or beer or wine when his children are inadequately clothed and fed! But sane men would not do that, would they? They almost certainly would not unless they were addicted to drinking and gambling. Do you remember the words of king Solomon:

For the drunkard and the glutton will come to poverty, and drowsiness will clothe a man with rags (Prov. 23:21)?

There are millions of homeless and hungry children whose parents have squandered their money and energy on strong drink. Ask any social worker if you think I have exaggerated. Do Jack Daniel Distillery and Prichard's rum factory have any guilt for selling such destructive beverages? You know they do!

The next three excerpts are from men whose names I know, but who are otherwise unknown to me. **The American Issue** quotes these words from Reginald Smythe: "There's nothing like a hangover to occupy a head that wasn't used the night before." The second quotation is from John B. Gough. "Every moderate drinker could abandon the intoxicating cup if he would; every inebriate drinker would if he could." Finally, John Neale has observed: "Drinking water neither makes a man sick, nor in debt, nor his wife a widow" (volume 2, p. 1). I do not need to

tell you how true these sentiments are. You know drinking gives many people excruciating headaches. You also know that alcoholic beverages are additive—extremely addictive. Solomon asked, “When shall I awake? I will seek it yet again” (Prov. 23:35). Alcohol does make a man sick, leads to foolish financial practices and leaves many widows in its wake. To deny those facts reveals prejudice or ignorance or both.

William Penn, an influential American patriot, made this wise observation: “The smaller the drink the clearer the head, and the cooler the blood” (volume 2, p. 1). Sir Francis Bacon was unquestionably one of the world’s greatest scientists and philosophers. He was also an astute observer of human conduct. His judgment should carry great weight with thinking people. “All the crimes on earth do not destroy so many of the human race, nor alienate so much property, as drunkenness” (p. 1). If you will simply remember that between 150,000 and 200,000 people die every year because of strong drink and billions of dollars worth of property is destroyed every year because of someone’s drinking, you will not be tempted to argue with Sir Francis Bacon.

Giuseppe Garibaldi, an Italian military hero, stated very succinctly: “Bacchus has drowned more men than Neptune” (p. 1). Just in case you have forgotten your mythology, Bacchus was the god of wine in Greek and Roman religion. Neptune was the god of the sea in Roman mythology. Garibaldi was simply asserting that more men have been lost to strong drink than drowned at sea. Incidentally, most boating accidents in American waters are attributable to drunkenness. I remember one particularly tragic accident. Five men and a teenage boy were fishing just below the dam at Gilbertsville, Kentucky, about fifteen or twenty miles from Paducah. All five of the men were drunk. They allowed their boat to get too close to the dam. The water from the dam ripped the boat apart. All five of the men and the boy drowned. Those who witnessed

the accident said the cries of the boy could be heard for great distances. The boy tried to climb the dam, but the force of the water washed him back to his death. Boating and drinking—like driving or flying and drinking—do not mix. They are a deadly combination.

Thomas Jefferson was certainly one of the most intelligent men ever to serve as president of the United States. Even though he was not present when the American Constitution was adopted, he was almost certainly one of the most influential persons in the adoption of the Constitution—the greatest political document ever written. Jefferson could express himself powerfully and yet simply. His words concerning strong drink should be enlightening and challenging: “Of all calamities—intemperance is the greatest” (number 2, p. 1). When Jefferson used the word “intemperance,” he probably had in mind more than the use of strong drink, but there can be no question he was speaking about misusing alcoholic beverages. Former president William Jefferson Clinton said he wanted to pattern his presidency after Thomas Jefferson. Can you imagine his saying: “Of all calamities—intemperance is the greatest?”

You may not be a fan of William Shakespeare’s writings, but you surely know the beauty and power of his plays and of his other literary productions. He was one of the greatest students of human behavior who ever lived. His observations about the destructiveness of strong drink should awaken all of us to its dangers. “O God, that men should put an enemy in their mouths to steal away their brains!” (number 2, p. 1). Was Shakespeare right about alcohol’s stealing away our brains? History is strewn with alcohol’s broken homes, broken hearts and broken lives. Hundreds of thousands of men, women and children have lost their lives because of someone’s drinking. Unquestionably, alcohol steals away men’s—and women’s—brains.

Dr. L. C. Goffin, a physician who has served for

many years on the Board of Education in Los Angeles, made these perceptive comments on drinking:

Since alcohol is a narcotic drug, psychologically habit-forming and resulting in addiction in at least ten percent of moderate drinkers, it is incumbent on the public schools to teach abstinence rather than moderation. When dealing with narcotics, moderation is dangerous doctrine (number 2, p. 3).

Speaking of the addictiveness of beverage alcohol, think for a moment of this little poem. "Men make strong chains of toughest steel, By forging link to link, So too, does liquor addiction grow—drink to drink to drink" (number 2, p. 1).

A few years ago, Preferred Risk Mutual Insurance Company of Des Moines, Iowa, published a little booklet entitled, **Success—If You Don't Drink**. Included in the booklet are the testimonials of a number of successful Americans who do not drink and who oppose its consumption. Marilyn van Derbur, Miss America of 1958, says,

I don't drink. All my life I have been interested in sports and clean living and consequently drinking liquor never interested me. When I entered college, I felt that it was not necessary to drink in order to be accepted (p. 1).

Roy Rogers, who needs no introduction to most Americans, has sought to live a clean life. His words about drinking are very important.

If I were asked the question, 'Roy, why don't you drink?', I would I think the most honest answer I could give would be, 'I don't think it is necessary,' And I don't. My wife, Dale Evans, and I feel we have about as happy life as we can hope for; and we have not found that happiness in cocktail parlors, but rather in everyday activities (p. 3).

For a number of years, Elizabeth Kee served as a member of the U. S. House of Representatives from West Virginia. Congressman Kee offers these views on drinking:

One of the great tragedies of our time is that all too many young men and women think they must drink to be accepted socially today. An invitation or polite urging is often misinterpreted as acceptance or else! A realistic appraisal of the nondrinkers in any young group will often lead to the realization that they are respected and admired for their strength of character, their firmness of belief. The boy or girl who is "different" in these respects possesses cleanness and purpose that will be an invaluable assistance later in life. The road to success is paved with self-denials of those things which are harmful and unnecessary (p. 4).

I wonder how many members of congress have the courage of Representative Elizabeth Kee.

Dick Button, world champion figure skater, insists:

Alcohol and tobacco are not compatible to anyone attempting perfection in sports. That is the reason no athlete striving to reach the top should indulge in either of these habits (which are) harmful to health and success in athletic competition (p. 5).

Along the same line, Bob Richards, Olympic pole-vault champion, says:

From any point of view, religiously, athletically, scientifically, and socially, drinking is utter nonsense. I strongly advise any young person who desires to excel in any realm of life to abstain completely from the use of a substance that mars and ruins human life (p. 7).

The words of Senator Richard Neuberger from Oregon should make an impression on governmental leaders and on others.

I make no bones about my dislike of intoxicating beverages. I don't like the taste of liquor, I don't like the effects of liquor, and I don't like the results of drinking liquor. I have never understood how a brain befogged by alcohol could endure the tensions and strains of government decisions (p. 9).

On Thursday, November 23, 1961, **The Atlanta Journal-Constitution** published an article with the title, "*Alcohol to Blame for Half of Cases at San Quentin, Says Prison Psychiatrist.*" Dr. David Schmidt, San Quentin psychiatrist, says alcohol is a factor in approximately half of the arrivals at the big state prison on the shore of San Francisco Bay. He insists that alcohol is not only a national problem but an international problem as well. Dr. Schmidt gives these facts about alcohol which Americans need to consider.

From 10 to 20 percent of the patients in state hospitals suffer from alcoholic conditions; five to fifty percent of the traffic accidents are caused by alcohol in some degree; there are thousands of admissions at Bellevue (the famous psychiatric hospital in New York) and thousands here in San Francisco each year from alcoholism and 50 percent of the poisoning deaths are due to alcohol.

There are other disturbing facts in Dr. Schmidt's article, but these should suffice to warn of the dangers of drinking beverage alcohol.

20th Century Christian, a journal published in Nashville, Tennessee, printed little article entitled, "*My Account with Alcohol.*" I believe it is worth reading to you. "A thick-set, ugly-looking fellow was seated on a bench in the public park, and seemed to be reading some writing on a sheet of paper which he held in his hand. "You seem to be reading something," I said. "Yes, I've been figuring my account with old Alcohol to see how we stand.' 'And he comes out ahead,' I suppose. 'Every time, and he has

lied like sixty.' 'How did you come to have dealings with him in the first place?' 'That's what I've been writing. You see, he promised to make a man of me; but he has made me a beast. Then he said he would brace me up; but he made me go staggering around, and then threw me in the ditch. He said he would steady my nerves; but instead he gave me delirium tremens. He said he would give me strength; but he has made me helpless.' 'To be sure,' I said. 'He promised me courage.' 'Then what followed?' 'Then he made me a coward; for I beat my sick wife, and kicked my little child. He said he would brighten my wits, but instead he made me a tramp.'" If you think this brief article has overdrawn the situation, you should do some research on the effects of drinking beverage alcohol.

One young woman was accused of being radical on the effects of strong drink. She was motivated to write the following poem.

Go, feel what I have felt, Go, bear what I have borne;
Sink 'neath a blow a father dealt,
And the cold, world's scorn.
Thus struggle on from year to year,
Thy soul relief the scalding tear.

Go, weep as I have wept o'er a loved father's fall
See every cherished promise swept,
Youth's sweetness turned to gall.
Hope's faded flowers strewn all the way
that led me up to women's day.

Go, kneel as I have knelt; Implore, beseech and pray,
Strive the besotted heart to melt,
The downward course to stay;
Be cast with bitter curses aside—
Thy prayers burlesqued, thy tears defied.

Go, stand where I have stood, And see the strong man bow;
With gnashing teeth, lips bathed in blood,
And cold and livid brow.

Go, catch his wondering glance, and see,
There mirrored his soul's Misery.

Go, hear what I have heard—The sobs of sad despair,
As memory's feeling fount has stirred, And its revealing there
Have told him what he might have been,
Had he the drunkard's fate foreseen.

Go to thy mother's side, And her crushed spirit cheer;
Thine own deep anguish hide, Wipe from her cheek the tear;
Mark her dimmed eye, her furrowed brow,
The gray hair that streaks her dark hair now.

The toil-worn frame, the trembling limb,
And trace the ruin back to him
Whose plighted faith, in early youth,
Promised eternal love and truth,
But who, foresworn, hath yielded up,
This promise in the deadly cup.

And let her down from love and light,
From all that made her pathway Bright
And chained her there mid want and strife,
That lowly thing—a drunkard's wife!
And stamped on childhood's brow, so mild,
That withering blight—a drunkard's child.

Go, hear and feel and know,
All that my soul has felt and known,
Then look within the wine cup's glow; See if the brightness
can atone; Think of its flavor you would try,
If all proclaimed—'tis drink or die!

Tell me I hate the bowl—Hate is a feeble word;
I loathe, I abhor, my very soul, By strong disgust is stirred
When'er I see or hear or tell, Of the dark beverage of hell!

Through the years I have collected a great amount of information about strong drink. I have no idea about the sources of some of this material. The excerpt I am about to read is a case in point. The brief article has the

title, *Alcohol's False Claims*," and was printed by **Christian Publishing Society**. I know nothing about the organization or the author, but the ideas are valid—whatever their source. Please listen carefully to *Alcohol's False Claims*. "Alcohol gives strength." "If so, why do athletes abstain while training for a contest which requires strength to win?" "Alcohol gives endurance." "If so, why do employers always require absolute abstinence from those who are engaged in difficult work?" "Alcohol steadies the nerves." "If so, why do marksmen, surgeons and men whose living depends upon a keen eye and a steady hand let alcohol severely alone?" "Alcohol lengthens life." "If so, why do so many insurance companies charge a lower premium to abstainers?" "Alcohol brightens life." "If so, why are the darkest and dirtiest places always those in which drink shops are the most numerous? And why are the worst crimes, the most brutal assaults, and the most terrible murders always mixed with drinking?" "The fact is: alcohol is a mocker—promising one thing and giving another—and whosoever is deceived by it is not wise."

There are a few more brief excerpts I will read to you before our time expires. Stanley N. Barnes of the Criminal Court of Los Angeles County affirms:

In 80% of the cases coming before my court, liquor is involved in the crime. In nine times out of ten, alcohol is involved in a person's getting into trouble the second time (*20th Century Christian*, January, 1953, p. 7).

Surely no one would accuse George Bernard Shaw of being a champion of conventional morality. But Shaw knew the damage drinking beverage alcohol does to human beings. He expressed these sentiments:

Alcohol knocks off the last inch of efficiency which in all really fine works makes the difference between first-rate and second-rate work (Jim Hefley, *Why Drink?* Wheaton: Victor Books, 1974, p. 26).

President John F. Kennedy called Thomas Jefferson the greatest mind ever to occupy the White House. That may be a legitimate assessment of Jefferson's mind. Jefferson apparently despised beverage alcohol, as the following excerpt shows.

The habit of using ardent spirits by men in office has occasioned more injury to the public and more trouble to me than all other causes. Were I to commence my administration again, the first question I would ask respecting a candidate for office would be, 'Does he use ardent spirits?'

Thomas Alva Edison was unquestionably America's greatest inventor. He explained his reason for not using beverage alcohol: "I have better use for my brain than to poison it with alcohol. To put alcohol in the human brain is like putting sand in the bearing of an engine."

R. Daniel Watkins' book, **An Encyclopedia of Compelling Quotations** (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson Publishers, 2001), includes four brief excerpts on "Alcohol." Nancy Astor was very specific about her opposition to drinking. "One reason I don't drink is that I want to know when I am having a good time." Watkins quotes the following Jewish proverb: "The innkeeper loves the drunkard, but not for a son-in-law." Publius Syrus in his **Moral Sayings** affirms: "To dispute with a drunkard is to debate with an empty house." Seneca, a Stoic philosopher and the tutor of Nero, called drunkenness "nothing else but voluntary madness" (p. 26).

My purpose today has not been to elevate the views of men above the word of God. But I wanted you to know that devout religious people are not the only ones who know the horrors and tragedies associated with strong drink. Every nation and civilization on earth has had to combat the evils of strong drink. You would think that modern Americans with their superior knowledge of what alcohol does to the mind and to the rest of the human body would avoid strong drink like the plague. In our nation where

alertness is so very vital to our driving, to our working in industrial plants, and in many other situations, we should leave alcohol alone. Lives would be saved, homes would be happier and the nation's highways would be safer.

For the welfare of our nation and our eternal souls, let us not only leave alcohol alone, but let us oppose it with all our might.

Chapter 20

Infanticide

There have been very few periods in history when the killing of babies was not widely practiced. Do you remember what occurred in ancient Egypt while the Israelites were still in the land? The Egyptian pharaoh was afraid of the great growth of the Israelite nation.

The king of Egypt spoke to the Hebrew midwives, of which the name of one was Shiphrah, and the name of the other Puah: and he said, When you do the office of a midwife to the Hebrew women, and see them upon their stools; and if it be a son, then you shall kill him: but if it be a daughter, then she shall live. But the midwives feared God, and did not as the king of Egypt commanded them, but saved the children alive. And the king of Egypt called for the midwives, and said unto them, Why have you done this thing, and have saved the men children alive? And the midwives said unto Pharaoh, Because the Hebrew women are not as the Egyptian women; for they are lively, and are delivered before the midwives come to them. Therefore God dealt well with the midwives; and the people multiplied, and waxed very mightily. And it came to pass, because the midwives feared God, that he made them houses. And Pharaoh charged all his people, saying, Every son that is born you shall cast into the river, and every daughter you shall save alive (Ex. 1:15-22).

The New Revised Standard Version renders verses 22: "Every boy that is born to the Hebrews you shall throw into the Nile, but you shall let every girl live." When our nation kills 1,500,000 babies every year, are we all that different from the pagans in Egypt?

Some of the Israelite kings had the same moral values

as the Egyptian Pharaoh. When Ahaz was just twenty years old, he began his reign as king in Jerusalem. He did not do that which was right in the sight of the Lord.

But he walked in the ways of the kings of Israel, yea, and made his son to pass through the fire, according to the abominations of the heathen, whom the Lord had cast out from before the children of Israel (2 Kings 16:2-3).

When Hezekiah died, his son Manasseh reigned in his stead. "He did that which was evil in the sight of the Lord."

He built altars for the host of heaven in the two courts of the house of the Lord. And he made his son pass through the fire, and observed times and enchantments, and dealt with familiar spirits and wizards: he wrought much wickedness in the sight of the Lord, to provoke him to anger (2 Kings 21:2, 5-6).

The prophet Jeremiah discussed the same heathen practice.

They have built also the high places of Baal, to burn their sons with fire for burnt offerings unto Baal, which I commanded them not, nor spoke of it, neither did it come into my mind (Jer. 19:5).

Before we judge Ahaz and Manasseh too harshly, maybe we had better take a closer look at our own nation. The wicked Israelite kings probably burned dozens or even hundreds of children in worship to pagan gods. The American people with the endorsement of the highest court in the land have killed millions—many millions. Incidentally, many of these children have also been burned. Doctors have used saline solution to kill the babies in their mothers' wombs. The babies killed by saline solution have been burned to death. How dare we call these ancient people wicked heathen when we do the same or worse!

When Jesus Christ was born into the world, King

Herod "was troubled, and all Jerusalem with him." Herod just knew the child would become king and he would no longer be king. Kings do not like to have competition. God warned Joseph in a dream:

Arise, and take the young child and his mother, and flee into Egypt, and remain there until I bring you word: for Herod will seek the young child to destroy him....Then Herod, when he saw that he was mocked of the wise men, was very angry, and sent forth, and slew all the children that were in Bethlehem, and in all the coasts thereof, from two years old and under, according to the time he had diligently inquired of the wise men (Mt. 2:3, 13, 16).

Herod was an abominable king and so are those who destroy children because the children are unwanted or might be born handicapped. Are not many Americans sacrificing their children to the god of convenience? For example, one woman had an abortion because she wanted to accompany her husband to Europe on a business trip.

When the United States handed down the two abortion decisions—*Roe v. Wade* and *Doe v. Georgia*, I have asked many audiences: Will the abortion decisions lead to infanticide, euthanasia and suicide? Now I ask the questions somewhat differently. Have the abortion decisions led to infanticide, euthanasia and suicide? We might not be able to prove conclusively that those decisions alone have led to infanticide, euthanasia and suicide, but there can hardly be any doubt they have contributed to the current tragedy. For example, if the government can kill babies who are unwanted, would that not lead to the deaths of old people who are no longer wanted? If physicians can abort babies just weeks or days before they are born, what would be wrong with killing them weeks or days after they are born?

James Manney, senior editor at **Servant Books** in Ann Arbor, Michigan, and John C. Blattner, executive

director of the Center for Pastoral Renewal and editor of the monthly journal, **Pastor Renewal**, have written a very disturbing book with the title, **Death in the Nursery: The Secret Crime of Infanticide** (Ann Arbor: Servant Books, 1984). On the back cover of this book are these troubling statistics:

An infant is starved to death in Johns Hopkins Hospital because it has Down syndrome. A prominent pediatrician reveals that 14 percent of the infant deaths at Yale-New Haven Hospital were caused deliberately. Seventeen of twenty eminent bioethicists say in a medical journal article that killing a handicapped child is sometimes acceptable. Nearly three-quarters of pediatric surgeons answering a survey say they would not act to save a mentally impaired child's life. "Infant Doe" starved to death in Bloomington, Indiana. "Baby Jane Doe" is denied surgery in New York. Physicians in Oklahoma explain how they chose twenty-four spina bifida babies for early death.

I plan to return to Manney and Blattner's book in a short time.

Did you know that President Reagan, Dr. C. Everett Koop and Malcolm Muggeridge wrote a book with the title, **Abortion and the Conscience of the Nation** (Nashville: Nelson, 1984). You probably remember that President Reagan was strongly pro-life. He did not just simply oppose abortion; he spoke out against the brutal practice. He insisted: "We cannot diminish the value of one category of human life—the unborn—without diminishing the value of all human life" (p. 18). He believed that "the issue of infanticide flows inevitably from permissive abortion as another step in the denial of the inviolability of innocent human life" (p. 31).

Dr. C. Everett Koop, a pediatric surgeon, calls his chapter in the book, "*The Slide to Auschwitz*." Dr. Koop argued that the aborting of "somewhere between a million

and two million unborn babies a year would lead to such cheapening of human life that infanticide would not be far behind" (p. 45). Dr. Koop says:

"American opinion is moving rapidly toward the position where parents who have an abnormal child may be considered irresponsible." This is the observation of Dr. James Sorenson, Associate Professor of Socio-Medical Sciences at Boston University, who spoke at a symposium, "Prenatal Diagnosis and Its Impact on Society" (p. 47).

Dr. Koop quotes these disturbing sentiments from Millard Everett's book, **Ideas of Life**:

No child (should) be admitted into the society of the living who would be certain to suffer social handicap—for example, any physical or mental defect that would prevent marriage or would make others tolerate his company only from the sense of mercy (p. 48).

Some of the older people in my audience may remember the furor over the death of Infant Doe in Bloomington, Indiana. A school teacher and his wife gave birth to a child with Down syndrome. They apparently believed the life of that child would not be worth living. They elected to allow the child to die. They did not give him a powerful drug to put him to sleep; they let him starve to death. Manney and Blattner report: The child "died miserably six days later of starvation and dehydration in a hospital room, his body shrunken, blood running from a mouth too dry to close" (p. 3). These authors quote **The Washington Post**:

This Indiana baby died, not because he couldn't sustain life without a million dollars worth of medical machinery, but because no one fed him (p. 4).

George Will, the highly respected newspaper columnist, is the father of a Down syndrome child. President Reagan

says George Will's little boy "underwent surgery six times during the nine weeks before he was born" (p. 22). George Will commented on Baby Doe: "The baby was killed because he was retarded." George Will insists that his child does not "suffer from Down syndrome. He is the best whiffle-ball hitter in Southern Maryland and suffers only from anxiety about the Baltimore Orioles' lousy start." George Will says concerning his son Jonathan:

He is doing nicely, thank you. But he is bound to have problems dealing with society — receiving rights, let alone empathy. He can do without people like Infant Doe's parents and courts like Indiana's asserting that people like him are less than human. On the evidence, Down's syndrome citizens have little to learn about being human from people responsible for the death of Infant Doe (pp. 14-15).

Baby Doe was not only born with Down syndrome; he also was born with esophageal atresia with tracheoesophageal fistula. If the child were fed normally, the food would have been vomited and flowed into his lungs. The baby would have died of pneumonia. The doctor wanted to perform surgery. The child had a ninety percent chance of doing well. The parents would not allow the surgery. They elected to allow the child to starve to death. The doctor involved sought legal help to prevent the child's dying. The hospital authorities asked one nurse to take care of the baby until it died. She responded: "Who do they think they are — asking me to commit infanticide?" When the story leaked to the press, there were ten couples who sought to adopt the baby and have the surgery performed. The federal government tried to intervene on the baby's behalf, but it was too late. The little boy died a horrible death.

He cried almost continuously as he starved. Toward the end, however, he grew silent. He developed pneumonia. His tiny body shrank

pitifully as he grew dehydrated. Blood oozed from his dry, cracked mouth, discoloring the clean hospital sheet under his head (pp. 4-13).

And did you know that Baby Doe's parents had him baptized before he died? Was Dr. Francis Schaeffer right when he said that America is a schizophrenic society?

Before I continue my discussion of the Baby Doe case, I need to make a confession. At my house I have a little black long-haired Dachshund. She goes with me almost everywhere I go. She sleeps with me every night. I love to feed Missy. I cannot imagine starving that little dog. If I did, and if the authorities learned of it, I could be prosecuted and should be. But parents can starve their children who are born severely handicapped or they kill them in the mother's womb—not necessarily because they would be handicapped, but because they are not wanted.

Manney and Blattner quote Stephen Chapman of the **Chicago Tribune**:

In at least one state it is now permissible to do to a retarded, deformed infant what would be illegal if done to a dog or a cat.

They also quote what Joseph Sobran said on CBS radio:

I used to think my fellow abortion foes were a little hysterical for predicting that this sort of thing was just around the corner. We now have concrete evidence that they were right: civilization is on a slippery slope, and barbarisms that were once universally condemned are now gaining acceptance as normal behavior (p. 14).

In 1983 Baby Boy McKay was born in Harvey, Illinois. He was the son of a veterinarian. The child was born with a "cleft palate and a clinched-fish—two visible deformities that are nonetheless correctable." The father was so distraught he grabbed the child from his crib, hurled him against the floor and killed him. The father was arrested, tried, and

then released. The judge explained that there was no law in Illinois to cover such an ordeal. Dr. McKay's neighbors testified at his trial that he was a caring man. He would often stay up all night to care for a sick pet (pp. 17-18). But he killed his own son. And, incidentally, we have a law in Tennessee that would imprison Dr. McKay or anyone else who brutally murders his child.

In 1983 Jeff Lane Hensley edited a book with the title, **The Zero People: Essays on Life** (Ann Arbor: Servant Books). There are chapters by some of the leading evangelical scholars in the world. The book reveals a tragic situation at Yale-New Haven Hospital in Massachusetts. Two eminent pediatricians, Raymond Duff and A. G. M. Campbell, teach at Yale University School of Medicine and practice at the Yale-New Haven Hospital. These physicians allowed forty-three babies to die in their hospital because they decided that those babies could not have quality life. The doctors argued that if they were in violation of the law, the law should be changed (p. 19). That is the very essence of arrogance. In the words of Dr. Paul Maier, a psychiatrist from Dallas, the initials M. D. attached to a doctor's name do not mean medical deity.

Diane Brozek said concerning Drs. Duff and Campbell:

At the intensive care nursery at Yale-New Haven Hospital, sometimes life-saving medicine or surgery is withheld. Other infants are allowed to starve to death. And in some cases, doctors at Yale-New Haven Hospital have helped parents give their defective infants lethal drug overdose (p. 21).

Is it possible the day will come when the government requires doctors and hospitals to let severely handicapped children die because those children would be too expensive for our health care system? Are there really people in our government, in medicine and in academia who would endorse such cruelty? If you think it could not happen,

please listen carefully to the debate on our health care system.

In November 1973, Drs. Duff and Campbell wrote an article for *Newsweek*, "*Shall This Child Die?*" They affirmed in the article that children who were killed or allowed to die were "vegetables." Sondra Diamond, a professional counselor now in private practice, responded to the *Newsweek* article as follows:

I'll wager my entire root system and as much fertilizer as it would take to fill Yale University that you have never received a letter from a vegetable before this one, but, much as I resent the term, I must confess that I fit the description of a 'vegetable' as defined in the article, '*Shall This Child Die?*'

Due to severe brain damage incurred at birth, I am unable to dress myself, toilet myself, or write; my secretary is typing this letter. Many thousands of dollars have been spent on my rehabilitation and my education in order for me to reach my present status as a Counseling Psychologist. My parents were told, 35 years ago, that there was "little hope" of achieving meaningful humanhood for their daughter. Have I achieved "humanhood?" Compared to doctors Duff and Campbell I believe I have surpassed it.

Instead of passing laws to make it legal to weed out us "vegetables," let us change the laws so that we may receive quality medical care, education, and freedom to live as full and productive lives as our potentials allow (pp. 226-230).

If you think people like Sondra Diamond just live in far away places, let me assure you that is not the case. There are children in every community in the nation who

live under similar circumstances. Recently I preached in a meeting where I met a beautiful young woman. Her body has been decimated by spina bifida. She is in a wheelchair all the time. But she brightens the lives of all who know her. She has also earned a Master's Degree. Is it possible that children like this young woman will be eliminated because of the enormous expense of providing for them? Tragically, it happens every day somewhere in this great nation.

A few months ago, a child weighing 2 lbs. and 4 oz. was born approximately three months premature. Her loving parents had to leave her in the hospital for three months until they could take care of her. The hospital during those three months spent more than \$350,000 on her. Will the government be willing to spend that kind of money on premature babies if the government takes over our healthcare system? There are people on the political and religious left who would vote to let such babies die. Even if the parents were willing to pay all of the expenses out of their own pockets, there are people would object to using our resources to keep such babies alive. I saw her this morning and she is beautiful. People who would kill such children are cruel monsters. They are unquestionably imitating Hitler and the Nazis.

Whatever arguments can be offered for abortion can also be offered (with perhaps a few exceptions) for infanticide and euthanasia. One of the arguments pro-death people offer for abortion is the cost of rearing babies. If a couple already has three children, they may argue that they cannot afford a fourth. My parents had twelve and loved every one of us and took care of our welfare. They would not have been able to understand either abortion or infanticide. Did we always have what we wanted? No, but we always had what we needed. Six of the twelve went to college.

In many cases, women become pregnant without planning to do so. That is particularly true of unmarried

women. They decide they do not want the child. A child might keep them from completing their education, from finding a suitable partner for marriage and from leading the good life. It does not take a genius to know how to avoid this unpleasant situation. I know how unpopular teaching about sexual abstinence is with the liberal crowd, but it is a sure way to avoid pregnancy and its accompanying heartaches.

I have already mentioned some inherited diseases, such as, Down syndrome, Huntingdon's chorea, spina bifida and others. If a woman is justified in aborting a baby because it would be born with Down syndrome, what would be wrong with killing such a baby? Through my many years of preaching, I have been blessed by getting to know several people who were Down syndrome. My observation is that they are pleasant and loving.

Did you know that the Bible uses the same Greek word for a child in his mother's womb as for a child who is already born? Luke records a visit Mary made to the hill country to visit Elizabeth, the mother of John the Baptist.

And it came to pass, that, when Elizabeth heard the salutation of Mary, the baby leaped in her womb; and Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit: and spoke out with a loud voice, and said, Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb. And whence is this to me, that the mother of my Lord should come to me? For, lo, as soon as the voice of your salutation sounded in my ears, the baby leaped in my womb for joy (Luke 1:41-44).

The child in Elizabeth's womb was not just a blob of protoplasm, but a baby—a real live, but unborn baby. That unborn baby became one of the most dynamic preachers who ever lived.

An angel of the Lord came to some shepherds with this fantastic announcement:

Fear not: for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all the people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, which is Christ the Lord. And this shall be a sign unto you; you shall find the baby wrapped in swaddling clothes, lying in manger....And they came with haste, and found Mary, and Joseph, and the baby lying in a manger (Luke 2:10-12, 16).

The baby in Elizabeth's womb was a *brephos*. The baby lying in a manger was also a *brephos*. If we are justified in killing the baby in its mother's womb, why are we not justified in killing the baby who is no longer in its mother's womb? It ought to be obvious that some Americans are not really all that different from King Ahaz and King Manasseh.

The value of human beings must be determined by what God thinks of us—the value he places on us. Louis Gifford Parkhurst, Jr. has written an excellent biography of the late Dr. Francis Schaeffer: **Francis Schaeffer: The man and his Message** (Wheaton: Tyndale House, 1985). Parkhurst, a close friend of Dr. Schaeffer, summarizes some of Dr. Schaeffer's beliefs about the value of human beings. I shall take time to read a few excerpts from Parkhurst's book.

We must show them that God made man in his image, and this means God made a significant man in a significant history. Man is not a zero. Man is not determined.

In the thinking of pantheists, every person is a god, but the fishes, birds and the rocks are also gods. In some eastern religions, man is simply an illusion.

One Eastern guru is reported to have suggested that murder is okay, because in a murder you are only destroying an illusion (pp. 151-152).

The deists believed that God made the world and then allowed it to run without any intervention from him.

Parkhurst summarized Dr. Schaeffer's view of modern men's attitudes toward human life.

Man is just a mechanical piece in a clock, a part of the cosmic machine....Man has no free will, no responsibility, and is not accountable for his actions....We are only mechanical men (p. 153).

The scriptures speak clearly and emphatically regarding God's image in man—all men. That includes babies in their mothers' wombs. It also includes babies who are born with some defect.

And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness: and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over all the cattle, and over every creeping thing that creeps upon the earth. So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him, male and female created he them (Gen. 1:26-27).

The great Psalmist David asked God:

When I consider thy heavens, the work of thy fingers, the moon and the stars, which thou hast ordained; what is man, that thou art mindful of him? And the son of man, that thou visitest him? For thou hast made him a little lower than the angels, and hast crowned him with glory and honor (Psa. 8:3-5).

The late Dr. Abraham Joshua Heschel, a highly respected Jewish rabbi, wrote a number of very valuable books, although some of them are somewhat liberal. One of his books, **The Insecurity of Freedom** (New York: Schocken books, 1959), makes some brilliant observations of God's view of man.

Man is man not because of what he has in common with the earth, but because of what he has in common with God (p. 152).

The commandment "Love your neighbor as yourself" calls upon us to love not only the virtuous and the wise but also the vicious and the stupid man. The rabbis, indeed, interpreted the commandment to imply that even a criminal remains our neighbor (p. 153).

Would that also apply to unborn babies as well as born babies?

Chapter 21

Suicide

There are few, if any, topics that are more distasteful for me to study and to discuss than suicide. Although I have read extensively and have spoken occasionally on the subject, it is never pleasant for me to do. But if I am committed to preaching the whole counsel of God, I must discuss the topic. Although the word does not appear in any version of the Bible with which I am acquainted, it is a Bible topic. After Judas Iscariot had betrayed the Son of God, he said to the chief priests and elders:

I have sinned in that I have betrayed innocent blood. And they said, What is that to us? And he cast down the pieces of silver in the temple, and departed, and went and hanged himself (Mt. 27:4-5).

My personal acquaintance with suicide has been very limited. I remember as a child that one of our neighbors went into his tobacco barn and hanged himself on one of the rafters. More than fifty years ago Molly and I were working with a congregation in the state of Florida. One of the elders and his wife had invited us to enjoy a Sunday meal with them. That elder and I were sitting on the porch after the meal. He told me that his father and his older brother had both taken their lives. Then he said very casually: "I might do that." About a year later, I received a call that he had indeed taken his own life. One of my former employees shot his wife apparently because he thought she was being unfaithful to him. He then shot himself.

A church in West Tennessee asked me to present a series of lectures on bioethical issues. That includes such topics as abortion, euthanasia, infanticide, genetic engineering, and suicide. After my lecture on suicide, the

local preacher asked me why I had chosen to speak on that topic. He wanted to know if someone had requested that I speak on the topic. I explained to him that no one has asked me to discuss suicide, but that it was simply a part of the broad field of bioethics. He told me that he had preached for that congregation on two separate occasions. During his first tenure of five years, he said he had preached funerals for thirteen people who had taken their own lives. He had been back in the same community for five or six years. During that time he had preached so many funerals for suicide victims he had lost count. I have been preaching for almost sixty-six years and have preached the funeral of just one suicide victim.

Tragically, there are thousands and thousands of young people and older people at this very moment who are contemplating taking their own lives. Some of these may be your closet friends or even family members. You should be attuned to people who are hurting and might be tempted to commit suicide. You may be the only person who could prevent such a tragedy. That person may need professional counseling to deal with his or her problems.

We should think of suicide as "voluntary euthanasia." The word "euthanasia" literally means good death. But in our nation the word is used as a synonym of mercy killing. I shall give you just one example. In Miami, Florida, a 75-year-old man by the name of Gilbert shot his wife to death because she was suffering from Alzheimer's disease. He was arrested and convicted of murder. He was sentenced to twenty-five years, but served only five. Bob Graham, the governor of Florida at the time, said that Mr. Gilbert's murder of his wife was an act of love.

Euthanasia (or mercy killing) is widely accepted in certain segments of our culture. In his book, *The Christian Agnostic* (Nashville: Abingdon, 1965), Dr. Leslie Weatherhead, one of England's most famous Methodist preachers, confesses:

I am a convinced member of the Voluntary Euthanasia Legalization Society....But I sincerely believe that those who come after us will wonder why on earth we kept a human being alive against his own will, when all the dignity, beauty and meaning of life had vanished; when any gain to anyone was clearly impossible, and when we should have been punished by the state if we kept an animal alive in similar physical conditions (pp. 266-267).

Incidentally, I do not know of any state that would punish a person for keeping an animal alive. There may be one, but I have not heard of it.

There is also a movement in America to glorify suicide. I know that may sound ridiculous—and it is—but it is also true. In 1984 Phyllis Schlafly, a pro-life lawyer from Illinois, edited a book with the title, **Child Abuse in the Classroom** (Alton, IL: Pere Marquette Press). She reports on a number of schools that present suicide as a legitimate option for human beings. Mrs. Schlafly gives several examples. One student reported:

We had an English course in the 7th grade junior high school, whose title was 'Death Education.' In the manual, 73 out of 80 stories had to do with death, dying, killing, murder, suicide, and what you want written on your tombstone. One of the girls, a 9th grader, blew her brains out after having written a note on her front door that said what she wanted on her tombstone. Her young friend, also in the 9th grade, found her in that condition (p. 262).

A school superintendent or principal who will allow such courses ought to be prosecuted for malfeasance.

Phyllis Schlafly also reported: A passage from an 8th grade English textbook reads:

I am finally going to do it. Unemployment drives me crazy. Inflation makes me angry. The cost

of living turns my stomach. Big business raises the cost of candy and gum. Teachers expect too much. School takes away my freedom. I can't communicate with my parents. My parents don't understand me. I have said my goodbyes. I fought a good fight, but I have met defeat (p. 308).

A health teacher asked her students many personal questions, including, "What reasons would motivate you to commit suicide?" The teacher gave five reasons and the students were expected to choose (p. 371). No sane teacher would participate in such absolute stupidity and no school system should allow it.

How serious is the suicide problem in the United States? I shall provide a number of resources for determining the seriousness of suicide in our nation. Frank Minirth is a practicing psychiatrist in Dallas, Texas. Dr. Minirth has written an excellent book, *Christian Psychiatry* (Old Tappan: Fleming, 1977), in which he gives some statistics on the prevalence of suicide in America. In 1977, according to Dr. Minirth, suicide was,

The tenth leading cause of death in the United States and accounts for 24,000 deaths annually. (The numbers at the present time are probably closer to 30,000). It occurs once very twenty minutes, and there are ten unsuccessful attempts to every fatal one. In the world as a whole, the suicide rate seems to be increasing, with 500,000 cases being reported annually (p. 130).

Dr. Minirth says:

Suicide is higher among the divorced, widowed, and the higher socioeconomic groups. Suicide attempts occur five times more frequently among women than men. Suicide also occurs more often in Protestant than in other religious groups. In the college-age student, it (suicide) ranks second only to accidents as a cause of death (p. 150).

Bill Blackburn's book, **What You Should Know about Suicide** (Waco: Word, 1982), gives very similar statistics to those I have read to you from Dr. Frank Minirth's book. Blackburn reports:

Today suicide is the third leading cause of death among adolescents in the United States. Among American college students, it is the second most common cause of death. Every year about 40,000 Americans take their lives. It is estimated that there are 400,000 suicide attempts annually (p. 9).

I need to mention one facet of this problem that we often overlook. Some of the people who die in automobile or in other kinds of accidents are really suicides. The numbers would be impossible to calculate, but most experts on suicide recognize that fact.

Mary Giffin, a psychiatrist, is Medical Director of the Irene Josselyn Clinic of the North Shore Medical Health Association in Northfield, Illinois. Many prominent magazines have written about Dr. Giffin and her investigation into the causes of teenage suicide. Dr. Giffin's book, **A Cry for Help: Exploring and Exploding the Myths about Teenage Suicide—A Guide to All Parents of Teenagers** (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1983), provides great insight into the reasons why preteens and teens take their own lives. Dr. Giffin says her

book rose from the ashes of a string of adolescent suicides that struck affluent North Shore suburbs of Chicago—an area that *Time* magazine promptly dubbed "the suicide belt" in recognition of a teen suicide rate three times the already burgeoning national average (p. xi of the Introduction).

Incidentally, the North Shore suburb is one of the wealthiest communities in the United States.

"Every day," according to Dr. Giffin, "an average of 18 young Americans kill themselves—6,500 every year.

Every hour 57 children and adolescents in the United States attempt to destroy themselves—well over 1,000 attempts every day.”

At a Chicago area suicide hotline, the phone rings every twenty seconds. Dr. Michael Peck, one of the country's leading suicidologists, estimates that each year in the United States 'somewhere in the neighborhood of a million or more children move in and out of suicidal crises' (p. 5).

I plan to return to Dr. Giffin's book in a short time.

Jerry Johnston has worked with children and teenagers for years. His book, **Why Suicide?** (Nashville: Oliver-Nelson Books, 1987), reports the following information:

In Jefferson County, Colorado, eighteen teenagers killed themselves between January, 1985 and June, 1986—eighteen deaths in eighteen months....In Plano, Texas, eleven teenage deaths in sixteen months stunned the city (p. 37).

From 1950 to 1980, there was a 178 percent increase in teen suicides (p. 36).

Dr. John Baucom is a clinical psychologist who lives in Chattanooga, Tennessee. His book, **Fatal Choice: The Teenage Suicide Crisis** (Chicago: Moody, 1986), tells of a teenage suicide epidemic in Chattanooga.

In Chattanooga there were nine reported suicides within a four-month period....Two of those suicides came from the same high school (p. 6).

The civic and religious leaders called on Dr. Baucom to help with the problem of teenage suicide. His help was effective. The number of suicides decreased greatly.

Truman Dollar, a fundamentalist Baptist preacher from Kansas City, and Dr. Grace Ketterman, a psychiatrist, wrote an excellent book with the title, **Teenage Rebellion** (Old Tappan: Fleming H. Revell, n. d.), that summarizes the questions they asked one hundred teenagers. Please listen

to the following questions relating to teenage suicide. "Have you ever seriously considered suicide?" 34% said yes. That is one-third of the teenagers. The teenagers were asked: "At what age did you first seriously consider suicide?" The average age was 13.6 years. They were asked: "Did you make specific plans to take your life?" 34% said yes. "Have you actually attempted suicide?" 14% said they had. They were also asked: "How many times have you attempted suicide? Three of the four who had actually attempted suicide had attempted it more than once" (p. 194). There is no date in the book, but it must have been written in the late 1980s. The situation has deteriorated since Dollar and Ketterman wrote their book.

Dr. Giffin gives a list of children and teenagers who tried to kill themselves. These examples are tremendously troubling.

Time (magazine) reported that an eight-year old tried to hang himself, but failed because he could not tie a strong enough knot. A nine-year-old attempted suicide twice....Dr. Mohammad Shafti, a professor of psychiatry at the University of Louisville, lamented: "In the clinic we have seen five or six-year-olds who have attempted suicide by hanging or jumping out of a window"Four-year-old David wrapped himself in a blanket and set it on fire. When asked why, he answered: "Because David is a bad boy; there will be no more David"....After his parents divorced, two and one-half year old Benji stopped eating, tried to jump in front of moving automobiles and bit himself until he bled. Psychiatrist Perihan Rosenthal asked, "Why is the little boy hurting himself?" He replied: "He is a bad boy. Nobody loves him" (p. 10).

During a seventeen-month period ending in the summer of 1980, twenty-eight teenagers killed themselves—eighteen died by gunshot, eight by hanging, and two by lying down in front of trains (p. 13).

Dr. Giffin tells of one young woman who attempted suicide. Her attempt was not fatal. When asked why she did it, she explained that both of her parents were successful professionally and they cared nothing for her. She explained that she was a nothing "and killing a nothing is not such a big deal" (p. 163). Did you know that people who have a suicide in their families are nine times more likely to kill themselves than those who do not (p. 170)?

Before I examine with you some of the causes of suicide, I want to tell you of a tragedy that is taking place among our servicemen who are returning from Iraq and from Afghanistan. Most of you probably know the name Dick Morris, a Fox News contributor. Dick and Eileen McGann have written some extremely valuable books, including, **Outrage, Condi vs. Hillary, Because He Could and Fleeced**. Their latest book has the title, **Catastrophe: How Obama, Congress, and the Special Interests Are Transforming....A Slump into a Crash, Freedom into Socialism, and a Disaster into a CATSTROPHE and How to Fight Back** (New York: Harper, 2009). This book will wake you up to what is occurring in our nation. One chapter has the title, "*The Silent Catastrophe: Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder in Our Military.*"

Morris and McGann provide some startling statistics about suicide among our military personnel. I shall briefly summarize some of the information they discuss.

In January 2009, more American soldiers killed themselves than were slain by enemy combatants....Twenty-four soldiers committed suicide in January 2009. That is six times the total in the previous January....CNN reported that the military suicide total for 2008 was "the highest level of suicides among soldiers since the Pentagon began tracking the rate 28 years ago"....One hundred twenty-eight soldiers are confirmed to have committed suicide in 2008; another fifteen died from suspected suicides.

Marine suicides rose from twenty-five in 2006 to thirty-three in 2007 to forty-one in 2008 (pp. 298-299).

Morris and McGann tell of the heartaches of a marine corporal whose name is Sean Huze. Corporal Huze does not suffer from post-traumatic stress disorder, "but says that every one who saw combat suffers from at least some combat stress." He says the unrelenting insurgent threat in Iraq gives no opportunity to relax, and combat numbs the senses and the emotions. "There is no front," Huze says.

"You go back to the rear, at the army base in Mosul, and you go to get your chow, and the chow hall blows up." Huze, thirty, says the horror isn't felt until later. "I saw a dead child, probably three or four years old, lying on a road in Nasiriyah," he says. "It moved me less than if I saw a dead dog at the time. I didn't care. Then you come back, if you are fortunate enough, and hold your own child, and you think of the dead child you didn't care about....You think about how little you cared at the time, and that hurts." Smells bring back the horror. "A barbecue pit—throw a steak on the grill, and it smells a lot like searing flesh," he says. "You go to get your car worked on, and if anyone is welding, the smell of the burning metal is not different than burning caused by rounds fired at it. It takes you back there instantly" (pp. 298-302).

What are some of the basic causes of teenage suicide? It would take several lessons to explore all the reasons children and teenagers kill themselves. But from what I have read to you from psychiatrists and psychologists, it ought to be obvious that lack of love in the home has to be a leading cause of teenage suicide. Dr. Giffin affirms: "They die because they believe they are not loved" (p. 14). Dr. Giffin includes in her book a letter a youngster wrote to Ann Landers. The young person told Ann Landers:

I'm sixteen years old and tried to kill myself three weeks ago by jumping in front of a car. I didn't want to die. I just wanted someone to pay attention to me. God was with me. The car stopped in time and my only injury was a broken shoulder and some cuts and bruises. My attempt at suicide was a cry for help. Nobody would listen when I said I was going crazy. I had to show them. Some "screwy" people aren't looking for death, Ann. They are looking for love (p. 14).

Dr. Giffin argues that the causes of suicide "are internal and external." Young people can usually handle the problems of society; they cannot "handle their personal problems, feeling hopeless, neglected, utterly alone. Most of them cannot handle that their parents' love is conditional—and that they must perform, beat out the competition, if they hope to win their (parents') love" (p. 92).

Dr. Giffin does not deal at length with guilt as a cause of suicide, but there is hardly any doubt it is a contributing factor in some cases. That probably is more true of older people who take their lives than of younger people. But if a person has been involved in criminal activities or in gross immorality, he or she may decide they can get rid of the guilt only by killing themselves. Is there any doubt guilt was the major factor in the suicide of Judas Iscariot? He confessed to the chief priests and elders: "I have sinned in that I have betrayed innocent blood" (Mt. 27:4).

The single best book I have found on euthanasia, abortion and suicide has the title, **Suicide: A Christian Response: Crucial Considerations for Choosing Life** (Grand Rapids: Kregel, 1998), edited by Timothy J. Deny and Gary P. Stewart. The book has chapters by some of the leading evangelical scholars in the world. One chapter, "*The Morality of Suicide*," was written by Dr. J. P. Moreland, professor of philosophy at Talbot School of Theology, Biola University, in La Mirada, California. Dr. Moreland summarizes the views of Dr. Stanley Hauerwas of Notre

Dame University. Dr. Hauerwas makes three points on the morality of suicide.

Suicide is wrong because life is a gift bestowed by a gracious Creator....Because life is a gift, man is obligated to his Creator to live.

One should not commit suicide because of one's duty to the community.

Suicide is inconsistent with the very nature of medicine, especially the authority of medicine (pp. 189-190).

This book contains the very best information I have found on the evils of physician-assisted suicide. Because as a nation we are leaning toward physician-assisted suicide, the Lord willing, I shall have more to say on that topic in the near future.

Anytime we discuss suicide or when a suicide occurs in our community, there are always questions about whether the person who commits suicide can be sane. I have heard many people say: "A person in his right mind would never take his life." There is simply no evidence that such is the case. I shall give you an example from my own background. A devout Christian woman was experiencing serious pain. Her doctor told her she had inoperable cancer. She drove home from the doctor's office, cleaned her house from top to bottom, cooked her sons a meal, and then took her own life. There is no evidence that she was irrational. Her actions showed conclusively that she knew exactly what she was doing.

The men who flew those airliners into the Twin Towers in New York city committed suicide. They were trained to believe that suicide is permissible, even honorable, if a person kills infidels when he commits suicide. There are thousands, perhaps even hundreds of thousands, of people in places like Iraq and Afghanistan who are willing to kill themselves with bombs strapped to their bodies if at the

same time they can kill Christians, Jews and idolaters. One prominent Islamic leader said: "Americans love Pepsi Cola; Muslims love death." The suicide bombers are murdering thugs, but they are not irrational. They are deceived by an evil religion, but they know exactly what they are doing. Incidentally, the Afghanis probably will not quit fighting until they are all dead.

Let us return briefly to the teaching of scripture. The people in Israel were dissatisfied with God's arrangement for their government. They demanded of Samuel that the nation be given a king. Samuel approached the Lord about the people's demand. The Lord warned the people about the kind of men who would become their kings. But the people still wanted a king. Saul was the first man to serve as king of Israel. He apparently was a very capable man, but he was a little man spiritually and morally. He made a number of grievous blunders.

Samuel describes a battle between Israel and the Philistines. During the battle, the Philistines killed Jonathan, Abinadab, and Malchishua, all sons of King Saul.

The battle went sore against Saul, and the archers hit him; and he was sore wounded of the archers. Then Saul said to his armor bearer, Draw your sword, and thrust me through therewith; lest these uncircumcised come and thrust me through, and abuse me. But his armor bearer would not; for he was sore afraid. Therefore Saul took his sword, and fell upon it. And when his armor-bearer saw that Saul was dead, he fell likewise upon his sword, and died with him. So Saul, and his three sons, and his armor bearer, and all his men, that same day together (1 Sam. 31:1-7).

I close our study today with a few Bible passages that emphasize the sacredness of all human life—ALL human life. Moses tells us that God man in his own image (Gen. 1:26-27). How can we destroy God's image in man just because he is not yet born or is born with severe

disabilities or is critically ill? King David provides God's view of human beings.

I will praise thee; for I am fearfully and wonderfully made: marvelous are thy works; and that my soul knows right well. My substance was not hidden from thee when I was made in the lowest parts of the earth. Thine eyes did see my substance, being yet imperfect; and in thy book all my members were written, when in continuance were fashioned, when as yet there was none of them (Psa. 139:14-16).

The inspired Psalmist asked God:

What is man, that thou art mindful of him, and the son of man that thou visitest him? For thou hast made him a little lower than the angels, and hast crowned him with glory and honor (Psa. 8:4-5).

The patriarch Job suffered in ways that we can hardly imagine. If ever a man had been justified in taking his own life, it surely would have been Job. The faithful follower of God declared:

Naked came I out of my mother's womb, and naked shall I return thither; the Lord gave, and the Lord has taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord. And in all this Job sinned not, nor charged God foolishly (Job 1:21-22).

God told the Israelites:

I call heaven and earth to record this day against you, that I have set before you life and death, blessing and cursing; therefore choose life, that both you and your seed may live (Deut. 30:19).

Chapter 22

Euthanasia

Millions of Americans who oppose the government's takeover of our healthcare system believe – whether correctly or incorrectly – that it will lead to euthanasia. What does that mean? The word “euthanasia” literally means “good death.” When the Greeks developed that word, they had in mind the death of a person who has lived a useful life and dies at peace with God and with man. But in America and in other parts of the world, the word means mercy killing. For example, think about an eighty-five year old man who develops a brain tumor. Rather than spending thousands or even hundreds of thousands of dollars to keep that man live, give him a drug that will put him to sleep permanently. Such treatment will save the family or the government a great amount of money and prevent the man from experiencing unnecessary suffering.

There is no doubt that euthanasia has occurred among some uncivilized people. There have been cultures where very old and critically ill people were isolated from the community and allowed to die. Those primitive people did not have modern medicines that can prolong life and prevent unbearable suffering. Eskimos in some northern areas have placed their old and dying people on ice floes and allowed them to drift out into the ocean to die. They did not have trained physicians, effective medicines, modern hospitals and hospices. I am not trying to justify these barbaric practices, but their situation was entirely different from our own. Many of these people did not know better.

But surely such cruel behavior could not happen in the United States or could it? The truth of the matter is it is already occurring. There are doctors and hospitals in this nation that either allow people to die or actually put them to death. I need discuss with you some of the reasons the

practices will be widespread, unless some radical changes take place. I am not speaking of the modern healthcare proposals. I have in mind the results of the millions of people who have been killed by abortion. Our government has killed 45,000,000—45,000,000—potential wage earners.

When our government first began to send Social Security checks to those who had invested in the program, there were thirty-five people working for every person who received a monthly check. That means, very simply, that the program was not a burden to American workers. The situation today is tragically different. Today there are just five people working for every senior citizen who receives monthly checks from Social Security. By the year 2030 or perhaps sooner, there will be just two persons working to provide Social Security benefits for old people. It does not take a trained economist to figure out what will happen. The working people in 2030 and beyond will not be able to provide for their own families and pay heavy taxes into the Social Security system. Old people will not receive the money they have earned during their working years. In addition, Medicare will be as dead as a dodo bird. Why do not our political leaders have enough common sense to understand that? Or do they believe they can just eliminate the old people by euthanasia?

The situation could have been avoided if greedy politicians had not robbed the Social Security Trust Fund. American political leaders in both parties and in no party have stolen money from the Social Security Trust Fund to finance whatever pet projects their constituents had in mind. Have you heard of such projects as the “bridge to nowhere” or providing \$200,000 for tattoo removal in a clinic in California or \$1,791,000 for swine odor management in Iowa or \$2,192,000 for Grape Genetics in Geneva, NY? Trillions and trillions of dollars should be available for Social Security benefits and for Medicare, if the money had not been stolen by politicians. But Social Security, Medicare and Medicaid are bankrupt. Still the

president and Congress are spending money like there is no tomorrow.

So will the cruelty of killing 45,000,000 potential wage earners and in grossly mismanaging the Social Security Trust Fund lead to euthanasia or to the rationing of health care for old people and for the severely handicapped? While I make no pretense of having special insight into the future of our country or of the human race, I cannot see how euthanasia, infanticide and physician-assisted suicide can be avoided. Besides, there are academics, politicians and even theologians who see nothing wrong with killing severely handicapped children and terminally ill old people. But I wonder how those people will react when it comes their time to be euthanized. Will they believe in exceptions?

Am I exaggerating when I affirm that some people in this nation believe in euthanasia and suicide? I have before me as I prepare this lesson a little booklet, **Humanist Manifestos I & II** (Buffalo: Prometheus Books, 1973) written by Dr. Paul Kurtz and endorsed by some of the leading humanists in the world, such as, Dr. Brand Blanchard of Yale University, Paul Blanchard, a prominent American author, Francis Crick, one of the co-discoverers of the double helix in DNA, Paul Edwards of Brooklyn College, Lester Kirkendall of Oregon State University, B. F. Skinner of Harvard and Joseph Fletcher, the infamous situation ethicist. These men have endorsed the following cruel statement: In a democratic society, individuals should have the "right to die with dignity, euthanasia, and the right to suicide" (p. 19).

Euthanasia is usually discussed under four headings: Active euthanasia, passive euthanasia, voluntary euthanasia and involuntary euthanasia. "Active euthanasia" usually involves the administration of drugs to relieve suffering. The doses of drugs are increased until the patient dies. "Passive euthanasia" means the withdrawal of life-sustaining equipment or the refusal to initiate such treatment. "Voluntary euthanasia" really means suicide—whether

physician-assisted or otherwise. Prior to a person's becoming ill, he may make a "living will" which guarantees him the right to die with dignity. "Involuntary euthanasia" refers to the person's death being brought on by a physician or by others without the consent of the patient. Involuntary euthanasia has been practiced in Holland for years, even though it was illegal. It is now legal. That is the reason some people who enter Dutch hospitals have a sign on their chests saying: "Please do not kill me." Did you not think Holland was a civilized country?

You may remember the case involving Karen Quinlan. Her parents went to court to obtain permission to remove all life-sustaining equipment and to allow her to die. If one's parents or children or spouse becomes so ill there is no possibility for his or her recovery, the one in charge of that person's welfare can elect to give that person a lethal dose of morphine or some other deadly drug. If you think this could be true only of uneducated persons, may I assure you that is not the case? In fact, it is often the highly educated persons who believe in euthanasia, infanticide and suicide. If you have the slightest doubt, please listen carefully to what I shall read to you.

The humanists published a book, **Beneficent Euthanasia** (Buffalo: Prometheus, 1977), edited by Marvin Kohl. In his introduction to the volume, Dr. Kohl foolishly affirms:

Even if acts of beneficent euthanasia are morally wrong, this in itself does not constitute a sufficient reason for keeping the practice illegal (p. xvi of the Introduction).

Daniel C. Maguire, a Roman Catholic scholar, contributed a chapter with the title, "*A Catholic View of Mercy Killing.*" He argues:

My position is this: In any medical context, it may be moral and should be legal to accelerate the death process by taking direct action, such as overdosing with morphine or injecting potassium (p. 36).

In my judgment, this is the view of one Catholic scholar, not the official position of the Roman Catholic Church.

Joseph Fletcher, the inventor of situation ethics, wrote a chapter entitled, "*The 'Right' to Live and the 'Right to Die.'*" Fletcher asserts:

Being a person is of more value than simply being alive....The logic of what I am saying is that we should drop the classical sanctify-of-life ethic and embrace a quality-of-life ethic instead (p. 46).

Please think of the implications of that kind of reasoning. A person with an IQ of fifteen or twenty cannot lead a full life—a quality life. Should we kill all people who have an IQ under forty or fifty? Who decides the quality of life for another person? What might be acceptable to one person might not be acceptable to another person. What if some humanist philosopher were to decide that people who hold Christian beliefs could not lead quality lives? Maybe Blacks and Jews and the poor cannot have quality of life. History is full of examples of people who were murdered because they were not very highly valued as human beings. You have not forgotten Nazi Germany, have you?

Fletcher not only believed in euthanasia; he also believed in abortion. He says very plainly:

To speak of living and dying, therefore, and of human or medical initiative and stewardship, encompasses the abortion issue along with the euthanasia issue. They are ethically inseparable (p. 52).

I shall repeat that last statement for emphasis. From an ethical viewpoint, abortion and euthanasia "are ethically inseparable." I have been arguing that position for years, but most pro-death people are not usually as honest as Fletcher. Or else they do not understand the implications of their beliefs. If we can kill babies because they have Down syndrome or spina bifida or Huntingdon's chorea,

why can we not kill old people who are non-productive and expensive to keep alive?

Marvin Kohl's article, "*Voluntary Beneficent Euthanasia*," lists two arguments for voluntary beneficent euthanasia: kindness treatment and the argument from justice. The argument from kindness says: Since we have an obligation to treat people kindly, "beneficent euthanasia is a *prima facie* (literally, on the face) obligation. This means that in certain circumstances we have an actual moral obligation to induce death" (p. 135). That is a ridiculous moral position. There have been thousands of people who were in great pain and wanted to die. But with proper treatment, they will be able to live for many years. I have a dear friend who served for many years as an elder of the church where I have preached in many gospel meetings. He was critically ill and in great pain. He wanted his family to let him die. In fact, he became angry and would not speak to his wife because she would not let him die. That was several years ago. He is doing very well. Would it have been kind to let him die or to induce death, as Marvin Kohl so foolishly says?

The argument from justice has two prongs. If a person is physically and mentally free to choose, his consent is necessary. Infants and permanently comatose patients have a right to euthanasia even if they cannot give consent. Kohl insists: "For no person should suffer merely because he cannot express consent" (p. 136). The sad truth is that many old and critically ill people in Holland and in other countries do not necessarily have to give their consent. If the authorities believe they are too expensive to treat, they are allowed to die or are actually killed.

Marvin Kohl quotes Mohandas K. Gandhi, the famous Indian mahatma, the father of twentieth century pacifism:

I see there is an instinctive horror of killing living beings under any circumstances whatever....But should my child be attacked by rabies and there

was no helpful remedy to relieve his agony, I should consider it my duty to take his life....(For) one of the remedies and the final one to relieve agony of a tortured child is to take his life (p. 141).

Marvin Kohl and Paul Kurtz, both well known secular humanists, wrote an article, "*A Plea for Beneficent Euthanasia.*" They argue:

We deplore moral insensitivity and legal restrictions that impede or oppose consideration of the ethical case for euthanasia....No rational morality can categorically forbid the termination of life if it has been blighted by some horrible malady for which all known remedial measures are unavailing....It is beneficent euthanasia if, and only if, it results in a painless and quick death, and if the act as a whole is beneficial to the recipient....For ethical humanists, euthanasia should be no problem (pp. 234-235).

If we were to grant that this is valid moral reasoning – and I certainly do not – where would it end?

Dr. Morris Storer, a former professor of philosophy at the University of Florida, edited a book with the title, **Humanist Ethics** (Buffalo: Prometheus, 1980). Marvin Zimmerman wrote one chapter for the book, "*How Humanistic Are Humanists?*" Zimmerman was professor of philosophy at State University of New York at Buffalo. Zimmerman observes:

The call for mercy killing by many humanists and other liberal enthusiasts, requires so many precautions against an error by relatives, doctors, and government, that it raises serious doubt whether the danger of euthanasia outweighs any advantages....Ironically, humanists are more sympathetic to mercy killing than to other kinds of killing....Humanists are indistinguishable from the Fundamentalists in their support of a ban of distasteful ideas (p. 266).

Some humanists are strongly opposed to capital punishment, but support abortion, euthanasia and infanticide.

Before continuing out discussion of euthanasia, I must make some general observations about death. Every intelligent person in the world understands that death is inevitable. No one escapes this world alive, unless he or she happens to be living when the Lord returns at the end of the age. When Adam and Eve sinned in the Garden of Eden, they brought death into the world.

Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned (Rom. 5:12).

The inspired author of Hebrews explains:

For it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment (Heb. 9:27).

The Bible teaches that fear of death is almost universal.

Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of the same; that through death he might destroy him who had the power of death, that is, the devil; and deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage (Heb. 2:14-15).

The closer one walks with the Lord the less the fear of death keeps him in bondage. Faithful Christians have nothing to fear about death.

Jesus Christ is the key to death. He told the readers of the book of Revelation:

I am he who lives, and was dead; and, behold, I am alive forevermore, Amen; and have the keys of hell and of death (Rev. 1:18).

The good news of the gospel is that Jesus Christ, unlike the founders of all other religions, is alive. His resurrection takes the sting out of death and the victory away from

the grave (1 Cor. 15:55). Thanks be to God almighty who gives us the victory over death, hell and the grave through our Lord Jesus Christ (1 Cor. 15:57).

Most of the older people in my audience probably remember Dr. Christiaan Barnard, a transplant surgeon from South Africa. Dr. Barnard wrote a book on euthanasia and suicide. His book, **Good Life Good Death** (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, 1980), seeks to justify killing by affirming that the main role and the primary goal of medicine is to relieve suffering. Dr. Barnard made the following observations: "Of death or what may lie beyond I have nothing to say" (p. vi of the Introduction). The sad truth is: No one has anything meaningful to say about death or what lies beyond unless he knows and believes what Jesus Christ teaches in the Bible. Jesus alone came down from heaven to reveal the truth about God and about how to get to heaven when we die. He also is "the way, the truth and the life; no man comes to the Father" but by Jesus Christ our Lord and Savior (John 14:6).

Dr. Barnard's parents were Dutch missionaries to South Africa. He did not accept their beliefs about God and about eternal life. However, he argues that people who have religious convictions can handle crises better than those who have no faith. He writes:

I saw that people who had faith in a higher power, those who believed in afterlife, had it much easier than those who had no religious beliefs to support them in the face of death (p. 13).

That fact should not come as a surprise to anyone. If we believe that God is and that he graciously rewards those who seek to follow him, we should be able to handle crises better than those who do not have such faith. Incidentally, Dr. David Nelson, a Washington, DC physician discovered the same truth. Dr. Nelson was an atheist, but as he observed the deaths of believers, he became a follower of Christ. In his book, **The Cause and Cure of Infidelity**

(New York: American Tract Society, n. d.). Dr. Nelson discusses the impression the deaths of Christians made on him. That led to his turning away from infidelity to the Lord Jesus Christ.

For a number of years, Dr. C. Everett Koop served as the Surgeon General of the United States. I do not know about his denominational affiliation, but he worked closely on a number of projects with Dr. Francis Shaeffer, a devout Presbyterian. The two of them wrote an outstanding book, **How Should We Then Live?: The Rise and Decline of Western Thought and Culture** (Old Tappan: Fleming H. Revell, 1976). Their book was made into a film with Franky Shaeffer as director. Dr. Koop wrote an excellent book, **The Right to Live; the Right to Die** (Wheaton: Tyndale, 1980). The Introduction to this book was written by Senator Jesse Helms from North Carolina. Dr. Koop quotes Senator Helms as saying:

Unless the abortion decision is reversed by an amendment to the Constitution, the future of America is in grave doubt, for no nation can remain free or exercise moral leadership when it has embraced the doctrine of death (p. 10).

Abortion, euthanasia and suicide are all involved in the "doctrine of death."

For the remainder of our time today I shall briefly examine the arguments for and the arguments against euthanasia. The most common argument for euthanasia is the so-called "quality of life argument." In the book Marvin Kohl edited, **Beneficent Euthanasia**, Robert Hoffman has an article, "Death and Dignity." Hoffman quotes Morris Cohen as saying that,

...possibly...no contemporary superstition is so stupid and pernicious as the indiscriminate adoration of the word life, used without any definite meaning but effectively hiding the fact that life includes the most loathsome forms of disease and degradation. Sanity and wisdom

consist not in the pursuit life but in the pursuit of the good life (p. 73).

What is the "good life?" Many years ago I met a man who had been severely handicapped because of a fall from a horse. He could not walk or even turn over in his bed. The last time his mother tried to turn him in bed, he screamed so loudly the neighbors could hear. He made her promise she would never turn him again. His friends brought him to the service every night during a gospel meeting. He would raise his head on his hand and listen to every word. He was baptized in his bed. Some of his friends took him in his bed in a pickup truck to the place where he was baptized. Then four men lifted him from the truck and baptized him bed and all. Was that "the good life?" Do we think we have the wisdom of God to decide what is the good life and what is not?

Dr. Christiaan Barnard insists:

Where there is no more joy in living, no further hope of joy, and no wish to continue, there is little problem in arriving at a decision (p. 98).

Dr. Koop asked:

If the Mongoloid (child with Down syndrome) is chosen first to be deprived of his right to live, what about the blind and the deaf? If the hopeless cripple consigned to a wheelchair and considered a burden to society is chosen first, what about the frail, the retarded, and the senile (p. 122)?

Marvin Kohl's book, **Beneficent Euthanasia**, includes an article by Arthur Dyck of the Harvard Divinity School. Dyck has recommended euthanasia for the following reasons: Relief of pain, relief of suffering, "a patient's right to refuse treatment" and "universal health care" (pp. 125-126). Tragically, euthanasia becomes a real possibility when the costs of treatment are exorbitant. Some humanists are reluctant to use this argument, but there is no doubt many

of them believe it is a legitimate argument. A nation that rations medical treatment will eventually use the money argument.

Very briefly, let us consider arguments against euthanasia. Pro-life people must be concerned about what is commonly called the "wedge argument" or the "slippery slope argument" or the "domino argument." Briefly stated, this argument says: "Give the humanists an inch and they will take a mile." If we are going to abort babies because they are Down syndrome children or because they have spina bifida, would that not lead to the killing of hopelessly senile and comatose persons? If a child is severely retarded or a Down syndrome baby and we are justified to take his life, why not kill a child who is blind or deaf or the child with one arm or no arms?

Marvin Kohl seeks to dissociate himself "from any view that would advocate euthanasia for economic reasons" (p. 120). "Kohl's point" is that "it is morally justifiable and obligatory to practice beneficent euthanasia in some cases where the person to be killed does not choose death, is not dying, and is not in pain" (p. 120). According to Kohl, "a child born without limbs, sight, hearing, or a functioning cerebral cortex, while not in pain and not dying" is lacking in dignity and "will be treated with dignity if painlessly put to death" (p. 121). Think of the implications of Kohl's position. If a child who is born blind or deaf should be put to death, what about a person who becomes blind or deaf? Just think of the thousands of dollars families would save if they put their mentally defective and physically handicapped children to death. Dr. Koop appropriately comments:

Once the human value ethic becomes weakened or tarnished, it doesn't take long for inhuman experimentation on human bodies to take place. Auschwitz could be in the offing (p. 145).

In 1969 Great Britain proposed a bill legalizing voluntary euthanasia. Marvin Kohl's book, **Beneficent**

Euthanasia, quotes Lady Edith Summerskill, an English physician: "In my medical life never once have I been requested by a seriously ill patient to give him an overdose" (p. 205). She says:

The majority, with a strong instinct to survive, will suffer intensely from the knowledge that they could, if they wished, relieve their relations of the burden (p. 207).

I am fully aware of the secular humanist view of the Bible. They could care less about the teaching of scripture. But do you remember what Job said in the long ago?

Naked came I out of my mother's womb, and naked shall I return thither: the Lord gave, and the Lord takes away; blessed be the name of the Lord (Job 1:21).

Only God—not the government and nor physicians—has the wisdom to deal with these serious matters.

Chapter 23

Satan's Seat

Belief in Satan as an actual being has fallen on hard times in our world. Millions of Americans believe they are too educated and too sophisticated to accept the Bible's teaching about Satan. They may not deny the existence of evil, but seem to believe there is no connection between a mythical being called "Satan" and evil. No true Bible believer can accept that position. The Son of God himself definitely accepted the reality of Satan. Jesus told the seventy who had returned from their mission: "I beheld Satan as lightening fall from heaven" (Luke 10:18). If the Son of God accepted the reality of Satan, how can those who call themselves Christians deny his reality?

Please listen to what our Lord taught about Satan in his letters to the seven churches of Asia Minor. Christ told the Christians at Smyrna:

I know your works, and tribulation, and poverty, (but you are rich) and I know the blasphemy of those who say they are Jews, and are not, but are the synagogue of Satan (Rev. 2:9).

Jesus said to the church at Pergamos:

I know your works, and where you dwell, even where Satan's seat is: and you hold fast my name, and have not denied my faith, even in those days wherein Antipas was my faithful martyr, who was slain among you, where Satan dwells (Rev. 2:13).

Christ assured the church at Thyatira:

But unto you I say, and unto the rest in Thyatira, as many as have not this doctrine, and which have not known the depths of Satan, as they speak; I will put upon you no other burden (Rev. 2:24).

The Lord said to the dead church at Sardis:

Behold, I will make them of the synagogue of Satan, who say they are Jews, but are not, but do lie: behold, I will make them to come and worship before your feet, and to know that I have loved you (Rev. 3:9).

Did you notice in my reading the expression, "Satan's seat" (Rev. 2:13)? The Greek word translated "seat" is *thronos* from which we derive our English word "throne." The Greek word appears sixty-one times in the New Testament and is almost always translated "throne." In fact, the King James Version is the only version with which I am acquainted that uses the word "seat." The New King James Version transliterates the word "throne." My lesson today will be based on the topic, "Satan's Seat" or "Satan's Throne."

More than sixty year ago I purchased a little booklet with the title, **Hell over Hollywood: The Truth about the Movies** (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1942), by Dan Gilbert, Chairman of the Christian Newspaper Men's Committee to Investigate the Motion Picture Industry. A few brief excerpts from Dan Gilbert's small book will set the tone for our study today. He affirms:

This alien influence which the movies have enthroned over America has perverted the character of our people; it has dried up the sources of spiritual strength; it has plagued us with the pagan spirit of materialism and sexuality (p. 13).

But Hollywood at work—or, perhaps we should say, the devil at work through Hollywood—presents a deliberate design to corrupt the morals of American youth (p. 22).

One final excerpt will have to suffice for today.

Hollywood debases, debauches, and defiles the characters and lives of those who are brought within reach of its contaminating power and propaganda (p. 47).

These are very serious indictments of the movie industry. Do you think they were exaggerations of the moral and spiritual atmosphere in the 1940s? Dan Gilbert wrote his booklet more than sixty years ago. Is anyone so naïve or blind that he thinks the situation has improved in the years that have intervened since the book was published? I do not know if Dan Gilbert is still alive, but if he were writing today, he might call his book, **Hell IN Hollywood** rather than **Hell over Hollywood**. I am insisting that Hollywood is where Satan's seat is. O no, I am not inferring that Hollywood is the only place where Satan dwells. There are many other cities and countries where Satan dwells and rules. In fact, there are many human hearts where Satan reigns. Do you remember what the apostle Peter said to Ananias, the husband of Sapphira: "Why has Satan filled your heart to lie to the Holy Spirit, and to keep back part of the price of the land" (Acts 5:3)?

Gene Wolfenbarger's book, **When Hollywood Says Yes, How Can America Say No?** (Green Forest, AR: New Leaf Press, 1997), quotes Dr. Tom Eliff, preacher for the First Southern Baptist Church of Del City, OK as saying,

It is no secret that Hollywood, more than any other city in our nation, is Satan's epicenter of moral debasement, constantly shaking and attempting to destroy the spiritual foundations upon which this nation was built (p. 13).

Wolfenbarger also quotes the famous filmmaker, George Lucas:

It's important that the people who make films have ethics classes, philosophy classes, and history classes. Otherwise, we're witch doctors (p. 14).

It needs to be said in passing that some ethics, philosophy and history classes might not make any substantial difference in what occurs in Hollywood. It would depend on who taught the classes and the philosophical foundations of those classes.

Frank Capra, one of the Hollywood's greatest movie directors, became disgusted with the moral trash being produced by the movie industry. At the age of sixty-four, he walked away because he could no longer support such blatant immorality. Wolfenbarger quotes Frank Capra as saying:

The hedonists...the hemophilic bleeding hearts, the God-haters, the quick-buck artists who substituted shock for talent, all cried: 'Shake 'em! Rattle 'em! God is dead' (p. 36).

Frank Capra believed in emphasizing the positive qualities of his fellow human beings. You may remember that his movies included *It's a Wonderful Life*, *Mr. Smith Goes to Washington* and *It Happened One Night*.

Most Americans, especially our young people, tend to be hero worshippers. Our girls and boys choose sports figures or entertainment people for their heroes. What high school or college basketball player has not dreamed of becoming the next Michael Jordan or the next Larry Bird? Many of our girls want to look like Madonna or some other Hollywood actress. Are the Hollywood actors and actresses good role models for our young people? Do we want our children and young people to practice barnyard morality? Living together in Hollywood without being married is as common as breathing. When some of them marry, they pay little or no attention to their vows. They marry, divorce, remarry, divorce, remarry and divorce. Liz Taylor has been married eight times, not quite so many times as King Solomon, but she is headed in that direction.

When the handsome guys and beautiful girls lie around a swimming pool, they are about as naked as they can be without being arrested for indecent exposure. One preacher upset some people in a congregation when he said that some of our young women do not have on enough clothes to wad a shotgun. The church members accused

the preacher of exaggerating. Maybe he was exaggerating if he were speaking of a .410 gauge shotgun, but not if he had in mind a 12-gauge shotgun. Of this we can be absolutely certain: the young men and women could never be accused of being modest.

In addition to their lewd dress, most of them are shown in the movies with a glass of strong drink in their hands. I wonder how many of our fine young people have begun to drink or have become alcoholics because they saw their heroes and heroines drinking in movies or on television. Those beautiful people seem to be having such a wonderful time. They appear to be the very epitome of success and happiness. Many of our young people may reason: If they can handle their drink, surely there must not be much wrong with drinking. Tragically, many of the Hollywood people destroy their abilities and even their lives with alcohol. And have you noticed how awful those entertainers look when the police arrest them for driving under the influence of alcohol? They may look beautiful on the screen or on the stage, but they look like losers in the police photographs. Glenn Campbell had the appearance of a down-and-out wino and so did some of the other popular entertainers and sports figures.

You probably have seen Michael Medved on television or heard him on his national talk show. He has appeared as a movie critic on *"Nightline," "The Oprah Winfrey Show," "Good Morning America," "The Tonight Show," "Late Night with David Letterman"* and Fox News Channel's program, *"Hannity and Colmes."* He is a devout Orthodox Jew. His book, **Hollywood vs. America: Popular Culture and the War on Traditional Values** (New York: HarperCollinsPublishers, 1996), is the most devastating critique of Hollywood I have ever read. Michael Medved's book asks:

Why does our popular culture seem so consistently hostile to the values that most Americans hold dear? Why does the entertainment industry attack religion, glorify brutality, undermine the

family, and deride patriotism? (Inside of the dust cover)

I shall use the points in last question as an outline for our study today.

Does the entertainment industry, that is, movies and television, popular music, including some country music, actually attack religion? One would have had to have been asleep longer than Rip Van Winkle not to know that. I do not go to movies, but I enjoy watching movies in my den. Molly and I bought a number of musicals which we enjoyed watching together. I decided recently to go see the movie about Johnny Cash. I walked out about half through the movie. But I read about movies in books like the one Michael Medved wrote.

One chapter in Michael Medved's book has the title, "*Comic Book Clergy*" (pp. 50-69). Medved says Hollywood seems to go out its way to "affront the sensibilities of ordinary Americans." He expresses regret that there are no more "biblical blockbusters" like *The Ten Commandments*, *The Robe* and *Ben Hur*. Why do you suppose the movie industry does not produce more films like these? All of them were tremendously successful in the years of their release and the years that followed (pp. 50-51). Medved tells of Hollywood's advertising of the film, *The Vision*—a film about some conspiring Christians who develop a plot to take over the world.

THE THREAT: Right-wing evangelists with an arsenal of riches and a hunger for power. THE CONSPIRACY: To reach across Europe via satellite with the word of God. THE MISSION: To control your mind. WHEN THIS NETWORK GOES ON THE AIR, START PRAYING (p. 56).

Many of the movies present religious leaders as if they are money-hungry, sexually promiscuous and living in the 18th century or earlier. Tragically, some of the television evangelists have furnished a solid basis for such

portrayals. It would be difficult for Hollywood or any other entity to find preachers who are poorer models of what they ought to be than Jimmy Swaggart, Jim Bakker and Peter Popoff. But to use these three men as if they represent the thousands and thousands of preachers, priests or rabbis in our nation is dishonest. But the moguls in Hollywood would not intentionally misrepresent men who are religious leaders or would they? They not only would do so; they have deliberately done so for the past several years. There is hardly any doubt they get some kind of morbid satisfaction for portraying religious leaders as if they were Hollywood residents.

Do you have the slightest doubt that Hollywood glorifies brutality, as Michael Medved charges? Is it possible that Hollywood's addiction to brutality has a detrimental effect on the behavior of some of America's children and teenagers? Michael Medved quotes Daniel Linz, Professor of Psychology at the University of California, Santa Barbara:

The consensus among social scientists is that very definitely there's a causal connection between exposure to violence in the media and violent behavior (p. 183).

Two psychologists at the University of Illinois, Dr. Rowell Huesman and Dr. Leonard Eron,

Found that those kids who watched significant amounts of TV violence at age eight were consistently more likely to commit violent crimes or engage in child or spouse abuse at age thirty. When publishing their findings in 1984, they wrote: "We believe that heavy exposure to televised violence is one of the causes of aggressive behavior, crime and violence in society. Television violence affects youngsters of all ages, of both genders, at all socioeconomic levels and all levels of intelligence....It cannot be denied or explained away" (p. 184).

Michael Medved says that *Rambo III* involved body counts of 264 and 106 killings (p. 185). The tragedy is that people who see violent movies or sexually promiscuous movies seem to demand more violent and more sordid movies. If they watch a movie with 100 killings, they lust for one that kills 200 or 300 people and kills them in more bizarre ways. According to Medved, Rob Bottin, the evil mind behind *Total Recall* and *Robocop* movies, told *Entertainment Weekly*:

Anything I make has to be something moviegoers haven't seen before. That means new tricks, which means more money, which means the audience is getting their—what is it now?—seven dollars worth. That's the thinking behind bigger and bigger and bigger. The question we always ask, 'How do we top ourselves' (p. 187)?

The programs on MTV are often violent and sexually explicit. Michael Medved reports:

The National Coalition on Television Violence found that 68% of them (the programs on MTV) contained at least one of the following elements: explicit violence, suggestions of violence, sexually suggestive themes, profanity, smoking and/or alcohol consumption (p. 193).

Some of the police shows like *Walker, Texas Ranger* kill more people in one hour than all the cops in the United States kill in a month or perhaps in a year. And besides, *Walker, Texas Ranger* leans too much in the direction of the New Age movement.

Many movies not only are anti-Christian and pro-violence, they are also anti-family. Again I have not seen more than two or three movies in the past forty years. But I keep up with what is occurring by reading newspapers, books and other material about modern movies. Is there any doubt in your mind that Hollywood has been a negative influence on marriage and the family? How many movies

and television programs actually support strong families? Do you believe the family is stronger today than it was before television came on the scene? Anyone who believes that television has strengthened marriage is either naïve or blind or both.

Arnold Schwarzenegger appeared in the movie, *Total Recall*. He becomes disenchanted with his wife, played by Sharon Stone. She begs him to think of the sacred bond they had formed in their marriage. He says to his wife, "Consider that a divorce," and calmly shoots her through the forehead. Have you noticed on television that the couples who seem to have the best relationships are single people? Married people are seldom shown in a favorable light. But the facts are the exact opposite. Research has shown that married people have better intimate relationships than single people. **Redbook** magazine, a dedicated feminist publication, conducted a survey among 100,000 of its subscribers. The survey asked very personal questions. To the surprise of the editors of the magazine, they discovered that the more devoutly religious women were the better their sex lives were. To put it mildly, that was a shock to the publishers of **Redbook**.

There is so much more about Hollywood I would like to discuss with you if time permitted. But I want to close by referring to Kenneth Lloyd Billingsley's book, **Hollywood Party: How Communism Seduced the American Film Industry in the 1930s and 1940s** (Rocklin, CA: Forum, 1998). I can remember when Hollywood actors, directors and producers accused the United States government of conducting a witch hunt when many Hollywood people were accused of being Communists or Communist sympathizers. The sad fact is: It was not a witch hunt. Some of Hollywood's most influential people were Communists or Communist sympathizers. Billingsley quotes Paul Jarrico as saying, "There were Communists in Hollywood, and I was one of them" (p. 8). Billingsley describes some of the modern actors who are Communists.

Jane Fonda championed the North Vietnamese regime, Hollywood luminaries feted Nicaraguan Marxist Daniel Ortega, and actor Ed Asner openly raised money for Salvadoran Communist guerrillas, all without the slightest peril to their careers (p. 282).

I have a question to close our study: Is there any doubt in your mind that Hollywood is "Satan's Seat" or at least, one of Satan's seats?

Chapter 24

Sacredness Of All Human Life

Have you ever wondered why the Old Testament specifically authorized capital punishment? Was it because the God of the Bible is a vengeful monster, as some of the Bible's enemies contend? Was it because he hated unbelievers and apostates? Fortunately, we are not left to wonder. The book of Genesis specifically teaches:

Whoso sheds man's blood, by man shall his blood be shed: for in the image of God made he man (Gen. 9:6).

Every human being on earth—born and unborn—bears the image of our Maker. When a person sheds innocent blood, his blood shall be shed. Do you remember the words of King Solomon:

These six things does the Lord hate: yea, seven are an abomination unto him: a proud look, a lying tongue, and hands that shed innocent blood, a heart that devises wicked imaginations, feet that are swift in running to mischief, a false witness that speaks lies, and he who sows discord among brethren (Prov. 6:16-19)?

Human beings are not sacred in God's eyes because of their intelligence, or of their family connections, or of their national origin, or of their skin color or of their political affiliation. Every human being is sacred because every one of us is made in the image of God, as I have just read to you from Genesis 9:6. In the very first chapter of God's holy word, that fact is made too clear for any reasonable person to deny it.

And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness: and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth,

and over every creeping thing that creeps upon the earth. So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them (Gen. 1:26-27).

The Psalmist tells us very plainly that all people "are fearfully and wonderfully made." Please listen.

If I say, Surely the darkness shall cover me; even the night shall be light about me. Yea the darkness does not hide from thee; but the night shines as the day: the darkness and the light are both alike unto thee. For thou hast possessed my inward parts: thou hast covered me in my mother's womb. I will praise thee for I am fearfully and wonderfully made: marvelous are thy works; and that my soul knows right well. My substance was not hidden from thee when I was made in secret, and curiously wrought in the lowest parts of the earth. Thine eyes did see my unformed substance; yet being imperfect; and in thy book all my members were written, when as yet there was none of them. How precious also are thy thoughts to me, O God! How great is the sum of them (Psa. 139:11-17)!

Our study today will be devoted to the theme: "The Sacredness of All Human Life."

For many years, Dr. Paul Brand served as a medical missionary to India. He was probably the world's leading specialist in treating leprosy. After leaving India, he became Chief of Rehabilitation Branch of U. S. Public Health Service Hospital at Carville, Louisiana, as well as Clinical Professor of Surgery and Professor of Orthopedic Surgery at Louisiana State University Medical School. In the 1980s Dr. Brand teamed up with Philip Yancey to produce a number of great books, including **Fearfully and Wonderfully Made: A Surgeon Looks at the Human & Spiritual Body** (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1980) and **In His Image** (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1984). These are powerful faith-building books.

In his book, **Fearfully and Wonderfully Made**, Dr. Brand quotes these words from the 4th century theologian, Augustine:

Men go abroad to wonder at the height of mountains, at the huge waves of the sea, at the long courses of the rivers, at the circular motion of the stars; and they pass by themselves without wondering (p. 4).

The second book, **In His Image**, quotes these words from Sophocles, the 5th century B. C. Greek writer: "Numberless are the world's wonders—none more wondrous than the body of man" (p. 13). Dr. Brand also quotes these words from Shakespeare:

What a piece of work is man! How noble in reason! How infinite in faculties! In form and moving how express and admirable! In action, how like an angel, in apprehension how like a god (p. 16).

These two books, along with his book, **Pain: The Gift Nobody Wants** (New York: HarperCollins, 1994), should prove intelligent design to any open-minded person. It is impossible that man could have developed accidentally. Only God is responsible for the human race.

And because he is our Creator and Sustainer, we must recognize the sacredness of all human life. If the theory of evolution were true, there would be no way under the sun anyone could sensibly argue that all human life is sacred. Evolutionists might express their opinion that all human life is sacred, but they would not be able to prove their opinion. After all, does not Darwin's theory rest on the survival of the fittest? If a baby is born severely handicapped or an old person is no longer productive, would it not make sense from an evolutionary viewpoint to allow such people to die or put them to death?

There are many examples from our culture that show how little respect some Americans have for members of the

human family. A few years ago, a Mr. Gilbert in Miami, Florida, walked into the living room of the home he and his wife had shared for a number of years. His wife was suffering from Alzheimer's disease. He shot her three times with a 9mm German Luger. He was arrested and tried for murder. The court gave him twenty-five years in prison. He was released in five years. Here is what is particularly troubling to me: Governor Bob Graham described Mr. Gilbert's behavior in killing his wife as "an act of love." Does that mean Bob Graham does not believe in the sacredness of all human life, including people who are afflicted with Alzheimer's disease?

The United States Supreme Court has demonstrated on more than one occasion its lack of respect for some human beings. The Dred Scott case was an absolute disaster. There is not a person on earth—even those with an elementary education—who can find the basis of this decision in the Constitution of the United States. The Supreme Court upheld a Virginia law requiring the sterilization of a young mother who had given birth to an allegedly feeble-minded child. The child had scored at a mental age of nine on the Stanford-Binet Intelligence test. The child's mother had tested at the mental age of seven. Justice Oliver Wendell Holmes wrote the Court's decision in *Buck v. Bell*.

We have seen more than once that the public welfare may call upon the best citizens for their lives. It should be strange if it could not call upon those who already sap the strength of the state for these lesser sacrifices....Three generations of imbeciles are enough.

In his book, *The Stealing of America* (Westchester, IL: Crossway, 1983), John Whitehead quotes these words from Oliver Wendell Holmes:

I see no reason for attributing to a man a significance different in kind from that which belongs to a baboon or a grain of sand (p. 48).

Can you now understand why Holmes believed that "three generations of imbeciles are enough?" Tragically, many American judges speak of Oliver Wendell Holmes almost in tones of reverence. He was unquestionably a brilliant justice, but had no respect for the sacredness of all human life.

In his outstanding book, **The Second American Revolution** (Elgin, IL: David C. Cook, 1982), John Whitehead quotes Dr. Francis Shaeffer:

The concept (of man's dignity) is gone. We are in a post-Christian world. Man is junk, and can be treated as junk....If the old person is in the way, ditch him. If you're in the way...and that's what lies before us (p. 140).

If you know what is happening in our nation, you would be foolish to disagree with Dr. Shaeffer.

The first obligation of physicians is to "do no harm." Tragically, there are doctors who have little regard for human life. In her book, **Change Agents in the Schools** (Upland, CA: The Barbara Morris Report, 1979), Barbara Morris reported that one British doctor proposed a "death pill" for old people. He expressed the opinion that it might be available and perhaps even obligatory by the end of the century. He predicted it would be necessary for the survival of the fittest (p. 178). Is it possible there are America politicians and academicians who would endorse such utter stupidity? How could evolutionists object to it?

In the book, **Humanistic Perspectives in Medical Ethics** (Buffalo: Prometheus Books, 1972), edited by Maurice B. Visscher, there is a chapter, "The Right to Die," by Dr. Walter C. Alvarez. Dr. Alvarez believes that soon "a law will be passed that will leave the decision of when to pull the tubes in the hands of a physician. The law would save the nation billions of dollars" (pp. 64-65). The late Thomas Eaves edited a book with the title, **Moral Issues**

Confronting the Kingdom (Knoxville: East Tennessee School of Preaching and Missions, 1978). John Waddey wrote an article for the book. His article has the title, *"Euthanasia, The New Barbarians."* Waddey quotes Dr. Alvarez:

It will probably be many years before we (physicians) in America can bring ourselves to chloroform an idiotic infant or permit a slowly dying patient to take an overdose of medicine. What we will first have to train ourselves to do will be to leave by the patient's bed a lethal drug, which he can take some night if he so desires (pp. 84-85).

Would it surprise you that some preachers and theologians take the same position on the sacredness of all human life as Dr. Alvarez? Joseph Fletcher, the infamous situation ethicist, wrote a number of books explaining his almost total disregard for handicapped babies and seriously ill old people. In his book, **Humanhood: Essays in Biomedical Ethics** (Buffalo: Prometheus Books, 1979), Fletcher agrees with Ashley Montagu's observation that "babies are not born with human nature, but only with more or less capacity to become human" (p. 10). What standards should we use to determine the "truly human status?" Joseph Fletcher provides a list of the following criteria for human hood: "Minimum intelligence." Fletcher arbitrarily assigns an I. Q. of 20 on the Stanford-Binet intelligence test. He says that people have to be wise before they can truly be human. He says people are not really human unless they have "self-awareness." Very young children do not have self-awareness; neither do a great number of old people. We must have a "sense of time" to be fully human. We must also have a sense of the future, a "sense of the past" and a "capacity to relate to others" (pp. 12-14). Fletcher is arguing very simply: If people do not have these minimum requirements for personhood, they have no right to live.

Can we charge churches with "guilty silence," to

use John R. W. Stott's expression? How many preachers among churches of Christ and in the religious world in general have spoken out on bioethical issues? In this area and in all other areas, we must be the salt of the earth and the light of the world (Mt. 5:13-16). We may be tempted to blame the humanists in the world—and they deserve much of the blame—but Whitehead insists that “it is not the non-Christian who is most to blame for the cruelty we see today. It is the silent church” (p. 146).

The courts of our land have often failed to distinguish between the “inalienable rights” guaranteed by our Constitution and those granted by humanist philosophers. The humanists believe they have the knowledge and the wisdom to determine the rights that should be given to our citizens. “Hitler,” according to John Whitehead “simply defined the Jews as less than fully human, and his critics were anesthetized. If the Jews were not fully human, then they did not have human rights” (p. 118).

Who has the wisdom to determine which human life is sacred? Should it be the medical profession? Adolf Hitler decided that certain persons were “useless eaters” and marked them for extinction. Dr. Frederic Wertham's book, **The German Euthanasia Program** (Cincinnati: Hayes Publishing, 1966), quotes these words from Hitler to Dr. Karl Brandt, Hitler's personal physician, and to Philipp Bouhler, chief of Hitler's Chancellery: “Reichleader Bouhler and Dr. Medical Brandt are responsibly commissioned to extend the authority of the physicians, to be designated by name, so that a mercy death may be granted to patients who according to human judgment are incurably ill according to the most critical evaluation of the state of their disease” (pp. 37-38). Dr. Wertham points out that this note from Hitler does not give “the order to kill, but the power” to kill” (p. 38). Dr. Hans Hefelmann, an agronomist who was a highly placed bureaucrat in the “euthanasia” program, in a war crimes trial in Limburg, Germany, testified: “No doctor was ever ordered to participate in the euthanasia

program; they came of their own volition" (p. 39). Dr. Wertham, an American psychiatrist of German descent, affirms that what many of the psychiatrists did "made even members of the Nazi party weep" (p. 39).

Maybe biologists, zoologists, embryologists and other scientists should decide who should live and who should die. Are these men and women equipped to make the decisions on the life and death of our fellow human beings? Many, if not most, of these scientists are evolutionists. Do you really want an evolutionist deciding your earthly fate? Like Desmond Morris, they view man as **The Naked Ape** (New York: Dell, 1967). Morris stated very simply and frighteningly: "I am a zoologist and the naked ape is an animal" (p. 9). You and I, according to Morris, are the naked apes.

Many of America's best known scientists have no hesitation about experimenting on human beings just as they do with the animals. There are more governmental controls regulating animal experimentation than there are governing the way fetuses are handled. Are these the kind of men and women you want deciding whether you or your loved ones live or die?

If anyone should decide the earthy fate of our fellowmen, should it not be preachers and theologians? Theologians should be men with great respect for God, for his word, and for his creatures—men. Tragically, that is not always the case. Leslie Weatherhead was the preacher for the famous City Temple of London for twenty-five years and a Methodist preacher for forty years. In his book, **The Christian Agnostic** (Nashville: Abingdon, 1965), Weatherhead confesses to being a "convinced member of the Voluntary Euthanasia Society" (p. 267). Weatherhead supported suicide as being justified in some cases (p. 268).

Maybe parents should decide who lives and who dies. Did you know that some parents allow a handicapped baby to die since supporting such a child would be time

consuming and very expensive? The parents of a Down's syndrome child at Bloomington, Indiana, chose to let their Down's syndrome child die rather than have corrective surgery. Besides, they would not allow the child to be adopted. One of the columnists for the **Chicago Tribune** commented: "They wanted that child dead."

Dr. Francis Shaeffer and Dr. C. Everett Koop wrote a great book entitled, **Whatever Happened to the Human Race?** (Old Tappan: Fleming H. Revell, 1979). They quote these words from Woody Allen, a secular humanist: Man has no future except "alienation, loneliness (and) emptiness verging on madness." In his film, *Annie Hall*, Allen pronounces this woe on the human race: "Life is divided into the horrible and the miserable" (p. 123). Paul Gauguin, a famous French post-impressionistic painter, asked three questions: "Whence come we? What are we? Whither do we go?" The only answers he could give were: Nowhere, nothing, nowhere" (p. 123). Can you understand why Gauguin committed suicide?

Several years ago, I delivered a series of lectures at the Annual Bible Lectureship at Freed-Hardeman University. I raised these questions about racial discrimination. "Is he the God of the Jews only? Is he not also of the Gentiles? Yes, of the Gentiles also" (Rom. 3:29). Would I be doing an injustice to the sacred text if I were to paraphrase this verse as follows: "Is he the God of the able-bodied, highly intelligent, rich, and beautiful people only? Is he not the God of the sick, the mentally handicapped, the old and all others? Yes he is the God of all people."

The inspired Psalmist wrote:

When I consider thy heavens, the work of thy fingers, the moon and the stars which thou hast ordained, what is man that thou art mindful of him, and the son of man that thou visitest him? For thou hast made him a little lower than the angels, and hast crowned him with glory and honor (Psa. 8:4-5).

The God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ loves all men—believer, unbeliever and apostate. Is that not the reason God sent Jesus Christ into the world to redeem us from our sins and give us the promise of eternal life?

Chapter 25

A Bishop From Sodom

Did you know—and all careful Bible students do know—that the words “bishop” and “elder” are used interchangeably in the New Testament? If a man is a bishop, he is also an elder. If he is an elder, he is also a bishop. Acts 20 tells us that Paul was on his way from Europe to Jerusalem. He had plans to be in Jerusalem for the day of Pentecost. He did not have time to go inland to the city of Ephesus and meet with elders at Ephesus. So on his way to Jerusalem, he arranged to meet with the elders at the seacoast town of Miletus in Asia Minor. From Miletus, Paul sent to Ephesus and called the elders of the church. When they met with him, he reminded them of his preaching and his conduct among them (Acts 20:18-27). He then commanded those elders or shepherds:

Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which he has purchased with his own blood (Acts 20:28).

The King James Version translates the Greek *episkopous* by the English word “overseers” —an excellent translation. In fact, the New American Standard Version, the English Standard Version, the Revised Standard Version, the New Revised Standard Version, Charles Williams and Dr. Hugo McCord all render the Greek “overseers.” So in the passage under consideration, the words “elders” and “bishops” (or overseers) are used interchangeably.

Paul urged Titus to appoint elders in every city. He then provided the qualifications of bishops (Tit. 1:5-9). In his first letter to Timothy, Paul used the word “bishop” and gave the same qualifications of bishops as he did of elders (1 Tim. 3:1-7). We cannot miss the point Paul made

in these two books. The elders and the bishops are the same people. I do not know one reputable scholar who would dispute that conclusion. In his outstanding set of books, **Word Pictures in the New Testament** (Nashville: Broadman Press, 1931), Dr. A. T. Robertson, one of the world's greatest Greek scholars, argues that bishop is the same office as an elder. He quotes B. Weiss as saying: "Elder is the office, oversight is the function" (volume 4, p. 599).

The word *episkopos* appears just five times in the New Testament. Peter calls the Lord Jesus Christ "the Shepherd and Bishop of our souls" (1 Pet. 2:25). The other four appearances of the Greek *episkopos* refer to elders or overseers of the church. Paul addressed the Philippian letter to the "saints in Christ Jesus who are at Philippi, with the bishops and deacons" (Phil. 1:1). Every appearance of the word in the New Testament shows that bishops and elders are the same. There is no justification for making a distinction between the two words. Any distinction between elders and bishops is a man-made distinction.

Let us suppose, just for the sake of argument, that your church is searching for a bishop. What qualifications must he possess? 1 Timothy 3 and Titus 1 list a number of qualifications that a bishop must have. I shall not attempt to discuss all the qualifications Paul gave in the two chapters mentioned, but I do want to examine some of them. Both 1 Timothy 3:2 and Titus 1:6 demand that a bishop or an elder must be blameless. In 1 Timothy Paul uses the word "must" (*dei* in the Greek) in reference to a man's being blameless. That word means it is necessary; it is essential. No man should be selected as a bishop or an elder who is not blameless. But what does blameless mean? If it means flawless or perfect, there will never be an elder or a bishop since there are no sinless people. W. E. Vine's very useful book, **An Expository Dictionary of Biblical Words** (Nashville: Thomas Nelson Publishers, 1984), defines the Greek as follows: "not open to censure,

irreproachable" (p. 123). Some modern versions render the Greek "above reproach."

Please think of the following questions relating to the word "blameless." If a man is involved in an adulterous relationship, is he blameless before God and before good men? Paul told the Thessalonians:

For you know what commandments we gave you by the Lord Jesus. For this is the will of God, even your sanctification, that you should abstain from sexual immorality (1 Thess. 4:2-3).

Our Lord himself taught:

You have heard that it was said by them of old time, You shall not commit adultery: but I say unto you, That whosoever looks on a woman to lust after her has committed adultery with her already in his heart (Matt. 5:27-28).

According to Jesus, it not only is wrong to commit adultery; it is wrong to think adultery.

Does it make sense to appoint as a bishop a man who engages in what the Old Testament calls an "abomination" (Lev. 18:22) and the New Testament characterizes as "vile affections" and "against nature" (Rom. 1:26-27)? Homosexual apologists can twist the scriptures anyway they choose, but they cannot remove God's overt disapproval of homosexual conduct. God has specifically condemned all sex outside the marriage bond as being immoral – always immoral. How can a man claim to lead people into paths of righteousness when he engages in some of the most damnable and destructive practices known to the human family? Paul calls homosexuality "unrighteous" and says that those who engage in it shall not inherit the kingdom of God (1 Cor. 6:9-11). Should a man who calls himself a bishop be concerned about his eternal welfare and the welfare of those he is supposed to lead in their service to God?

When a man leaves his wife and children and lives in a sexual relationship with another man, does it make

sense to select him to serve as a bishop? Generally speaking, even pagans are not so morally corrupt. Besides, the bishop wittingly or unwittingly will cause hundreds or perhaps thousands of young men and women to die. AIDS is passed in this country primarily through homosexual contact. When an Episcopalian bishop openly endorses homosexual behavior by his own words and by his conduct, many young men who are confused about their sexual identify will be led into homosexuality. They may reason as follows: If it is all right for a bishop to engage in homosexual conduct, why is wrong for me? So those young men are in danger of becoming HIV positive and eventually developing full-blown AIDS. The bishop will have the blood of those young men on his conscience, although he probably could care less. After all, he is already devoting himself to immoral behavior. He will also have some responsibility for leading many to eternal hell. That is not a very pretty picture, but no one can doubt its validity, that is, if you believe what the Bible teaches.

In both 1 Timothy 3:1 and Titus 1:6, Paul listed "husband of one wife" as an essential qualification of a bishop. The reason for that qualification of a bishop or an elder ought to be obvious to all honest students of scripture and of human conduct. It has been my experience that many families in the church need good examples for them to emulate. They often need counseling for marital conflicts. An elder or a bishop with a good family would know firsthand and by his study of the scriptures how to deal with families. A man who has left his wife for another sexual partner — whether male or female — has shown by his behavior that he has disqualified himself for the office and responsibilities of a bishop. In fact, if he will not repent of his sin, he should be excluded from fellowship. Paul demanded that the church at Corinth withdraw from a fornicator in the church.

In the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, when you are gathered together, and my spirit, with the

power of our Lord Jesus Christ, to deliver such an one unto Satan for the destruction of the flesh, that the spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus (1 Cor. 5:4-5).

How in the name of common sense can a church appoint a man to the position of a bishop when the church ought to withdraw from such a person? If that were my view alone, it would not be worth considering. But that is God's view as revealed in scripture. Please listen again to the apostle Paul.

But now I have written unto you not to keep company, if any man that is called a brother be a fornicator, or covetous, or an idolater, or a railer, or a drunkard, or an extortioner; with such an one no not to eat. For what have I to do to judge them who are without? Do not you judge them who are within? But them who are without God judges. Therefore put away from yourselves that wicked person (1 Cor. 5:11-13).

Tragically and inexplicably, the Episcopal Church has not put away from its fellowship that wicked person; it has made him a bishop. But does homosexuality really make one a wicked person? If you have any respect for scripture, you know the answer to my question. But just in case you are unfamiliar with the teaching of the Bible on the immorality of homosexuality, please listen carefully to Jude, the Lord's brother.

Even as Sodom and Gomorrah, and the cities about them in like manner, giving themselves over to fornication, and going after strange flesh, are set forth for an example, suffering the vengeance of eternal fire (Jude 7).

Two expressions in that verse demand further examination and explanation. The two expressions are: "fornication" and "strange flesh."

The Greek word *porneuo* is the word normally

translated "commit fornication." For example, Paul urged his brothers and sisters at Corinth: "Neither let us commit fornication, as some of them committed, and fell in one day three and twenty thousand" (1 Cor. 10:8). But the word translated "fornication" in Jude 7 is *ekporneuo*, an intensified form of the word usually translated "fornication." Charles Williams renders the Greek "grossest immorality." The distinguished Lutheran scholar, Dr. R. C. H. Lenski, in his commentary on **Jude** (Minneapolis: Augsburg Publishing House, 1966) says the word means "committed exceeding fornication" (p. 623). Michael Green, former bishop of the Anglican Church, and a well-known conservative scholar, thinks the term means against the course of nature (**The Second Epistle of Peter and the Epistle of Jude**. Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1973, p. 166). The apostle Peter does not use the same language about Sodom that Jude does, but he does mention the sinfulness and destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah.

And turning the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah into ashes condemned them with an overthrow, making them an example unto those that after should live ungodly; and delivered righteous Lot, vexed with the filthy conversation of the wicked: (for that righteous man dwelling among them, in seeing and hearing, vexed his righteous soul from day to day with their unlawful deeds). The Lord knows how to deliver the godly out of temptations, and to reserve the unjust unto the day of judgment to be punished (2 Pet. 2:6-9).

The second term from Jude 7 that must be examined in greater depth is the expression, "strange flesh." Oddly enough, there are homosexual defenders who say that the expression referred to the angels mentioned in Jude 6 who committed fornication with human beings. That is a vain attempt to rule out Jude's condemnation of homosexuality and is ridiculous on the very surface. The Revised Standard Version renders the Greek "unnatural lust." The English

Standard Version translates the term "pursued unnatural desire." "Strange flesh" refers to men's having sexual relations with other men.

And likewise also the men, leaving the natural use of the woman, burned in their lust one toward another; men with men working that which is unseemly, and receiving in themselves that recompense of their error which was meet (Rom. 1:27).

How is it possible for a bishop to commit more shameless acts and then get into the pulpit and condemn ungodliness?

Jude affirms that the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah "are set forth for an example, suffering the vengeance of eternal fire." How can the American Episcopal Church ignore what Jude and other biblical writers teach about the exceeding sinfulness of homosexuality? Do the leaders in the Episcopal Church have no respect for the scriptures? If they are going to trample under foot the teaching of the Bible on this topic, why pretend to be a church at all? Why do they not do, as Paul suggested of those who deny the Lord's resurrection, just say: "Let us eat and drink; for tomorrow we die" (1 Cor. 15:32)? All who supported the selection of a homosexual bishop just need to move to San Francisco and join the homosexual community, modern Sodom.

Paul mentions two other qualifications of bishops I would like to consider briefly: "of good behavior" and having a "good report of them who are without" (1 Tim. 3:2, 7). Is it even remotely possible for a man to be of good behavior when he engages in conduct which the Bible calls an "abomination," "unnatural desire" and "exceeding fornication?" And how can a man have a good report of those who are outside any church when most of them believe homosexuality is sinful? When I say, "most of those outside any church," I am not speaking of places like New Orleans or Atlanta or San Francisco. I

am speaking of ordinary people like you and me—people whose moral values have been formed on the basis of scripture, even though many of those people never attend any worship services, with the possible exception of Easter and Christmas. It seems to me that all people instinctively know that homosexuality is perverse and sinful. The very nature of males and females makes that truth too obvious for any reasonable person to deny.

Now that we have examined some of the qualifications a bishop must meet, I shall return to the suggestion I mentioned in the beginning of this lesson: Let us suppose that your church is searching for a bishop. We know what qualifications he must possess for the Lord to recognize him as a bishop. Where are you going to find such a man? I have a question I hope will challenge your thinking on the selection of a bishop. What about going to Sodom to find a bishop? Oh, I am fully aware that nobody knows the location of that ancient city. God almighty was so disgusted with the conduct of the Sodomites that he “rained upon Sodom and Gomorrah brimstone and fire out of heaven: and overthrew those cities, and all the plain, and all the inhabitants of the cities, and that which grew upon the ground” (Gen. 19:15-16). There is no possibility of returning to Sodom or Gomorrah or the other cities of the plains to locate a bishop for the American Episcopal Church. God wiped those cities off the very face of the earth. So where does a church find a bishop that would have worked well in Sodom and would be a perfect fit in the Episcopal Church in our country? They will have to locate him in spiritual Sodom, that is, in the homosexual lifestyle.

Just in case you have forgotten or never knew the events surrounding the destruction of Sodom, Gomorrah and the other cities of the plain, I shall briefly summarize what happened about four thousand years ago in those places. The herdsmen of Abraham and his nephew Lot had some serious conflicts. Abraham suggested to Lot:

Let there be no strife, I pray you, between me and you, and between my herdsmen and your herdsmen; for we are brothers (Gen. 13:8).

Abraham gave Lot a choice of taking his family and his herds to the well watered plain of Jordan or settling in the hill country.

Then Lot chose him all the plain of Jordan; and Lot journeyed east: and separated themselves one from the other. Abraham dwelled in the land of Canaan, and Lot dwelled in the cities of the plain, and pitched his tent toward Sodom (Gen. 13:11-12).

Lot made a bad choice when he "pitched his tent toward Sodom." The sacred record says: "But the men of Sodom were wicked and sinners before the Lord exceedingly" (Gen. 13:13).

Genesis 18 records a meeting between Abraham and a messenger from the Lord. The messenger appeared to Abraham to inform him of the coming destruction of the wicked cities of the plains, including Sodom where his nephew and his family lived. Abraham pleaded with the Lord not to destroy the cities. He asked the Lord if he would spare the cities if ten righteous men could be found. The Lord assured him he would. But ten righteous men could not be found. According to Genesis 19, God sent two angels to Sodom to warn Lot and his family of the imminent destruction of the cities of the plains. When the angels appeared at the gate of Sodom, Lot invited them to spend the night with him. Before Lot and his visitors could lay down for a night's sleep, the men of Sodom—both old and young—surrounded Lot's house and asked Lot, "Where are the men who came to you this night?" The men of Sodom demanded of Lot: "Bring those men out that we may know them" (Gen. 19:1-5).

What did the men of Sodom mean by their use of the term, "that we may know them?" Did they mean they just

wanted to say "howdy" to them, as homosexual defenders contend? The New American Standard Bible renders the Hebrew: "Bring them out that we may have relations with them." Some liberal theologians and others who endorse the homosexual lifestyle deny that the word "know" means to have sexual relations with the heavenly visitors. If the men of Sodom just wanted to get acquainted with the two angels, why did Lot say to them: "I beg you, brethren, do not act so wickedly" (Gen. 19:7)? What is wicked about wanting to be hospitable to the visitors to the city? The men of Sodom were homosexuals and wanted to engage in sexual relations with the angels. You do not have to be a Hebrew scholar to understand that fact.

Lot knew what the men of Sodom meant. He sought to appease them by offering his two virgin daughters to them to satisfy their homosexual lusts. Please listen.

Behold now, I have two daughters who have not known man; let me, I pray you, bring them out unto you, and do to them as it is good in your eyes: only unto these men do nothing; for therefore came they under my roof (Gen. 19:8).

Did you take note of the language Lot used of his daughters? He said they have not known man, that is, they have never engaged in sexual relations. The same Hebrew word is used of the word "know" (*yadah*) in reference to the Sodomite's lustful intentions and of the daughters of Lot who were virgins. It ought to be obvious to any student of the word that the men of Sodom were homosexuals. Their purpose in demanding that Lot provide the heavenly visitors to them was for the satisfaction of their perverted lusts through homosexual relations.

When the men of Sodom surrounded Lot's house, they demanded sexual access to the angels. The Sodomites said to Lot:

Stand back. And they said again, This fellow came into sojourn, and already he is acting like

a judge. Now we will deal worse with you, than with them. And they pressed hard upon Lot and came near to break the door (Gen. 19:10).

If the men of Sodom just wanted to get acquainted with the heavenly visitors, why did they threaten Lot by saying, "If you do not bring these men out to us, we will deal worse with you than with them?" The men of Sodom had no interest in just getting acquainted with the visitors. They wanted to have sex with them. Any dispassionate reader of the text will find it impossible to reach any other conclusion. Only homosexual defenders will twist the sacred text to make it teach otherwise. And it is only in recent years that people have abused the scriptures in such an abominable way.

God was so angry with the men of Sodom that he struck them with blindness.

And the men (angels) put forth their hand, and pulled Lot into the house with them, and shut the door. And they smote the men that were at the door with blindness, both small and great: so that they wearied themselves to find the door (Gen. 19:10-11).

By the expression, "men who were small and great," does the inspired writer want us to believe that the political leaders and prominent men in Sodom were involved along with ordinary men in their lustful adventures? Surely that could not be the case, could it? How could leaders of any community or nation be so wicked? Tragically, in our day a religious leader — a bishop in the Episcopal Church — belongs in the category of wicked men.

The angels of the Lord warned Lot and his family to flee from Sodom before the Lord destroyed the cities of the plains. The angels led Lot and his family out of Sodom to the city of Zoar.

The sun was risen upon the earth when Lot entered Zoar. Then the Lord rained upon Sodom and upon Gomorrah brimstone and fire from

the Lord out of heaven; and he overthrew those cities, and all the plain, and all the inhabitants of the cities, and that which grew upon the ground (Gen. 19:22-25).

I have one final question for you to consider: How did the Episcopal Church ever reach the point where it could give its endorsement for an openly homosexual man to become a bishop? It could not and did not happen over night. Changes had to be made in the attitude of the Episcopal Church's thinking about the Bible. The leaders in that church had to reach the conclusion that the Bible is not authoritative in all its teaching. This certainly is the view of millions of people worldwide.

The *Chattanooga Times Free Press* (Monday, August 11, 2003) printed an editorial with the title, "Incompatible with Scripture." A few excerpts from that very perceptive article should be enlightening. Please listen carefully.

One of the great blessings of our American freedom is our right as individuals and organizations to choose values, standards and convictions in which we believe, so long as we do not deny others equal freedom.

In 1998, in considering issues involving homosexual practices and the teaching of the Bible, Episcopal Church leaders came to the correct conclusion that such practices are 'incompatible with Scripture.'

Scripture has not changed since then. But the standards of the Episcopal leaders have.

The Episcopal Church's General Convention voted 62 to 45 last week to approve as bishop a priest who is divorced from his wife and is openly living in a homosexual relationship with a male partner.

The case involves Bishop V. Gene Robinson, who is bishop of the Diocese of New Hampshire.

The Episcopal Church has the right to choose

this position on this issue, but in approving for church leadership one who is engaging in homosexual practices, it has disappointed many of its church members and defied the fact that it is clearly "incompatible with Scripture."

That attitude unfortunately is in concert with a highly organized destructive campaign under way in our country to abandon the Bible's clear teaching in this respect, and to force through practice and law a general acceptance and even approval of conduct that long has been considered immoral (p. B-7).

There is more in this excellent article, but I shall have to wait for a later time to review it.

What a sad day for American religion when a church sanctions behavior so evil that the Bible calls it an abomination and that destroyed ancient cities because they practiced that evil!

Chapter 26

A School For Thieves

According to news reports, the city of New York plans to spend three million two hundred thousand dollars to provide a school for homosexual boys—three million two hundred thousand dollars just for homosexual boys! No city—with the possible exception of Sodom and Gomorrah—has ever engaged in an enterprise more un-American, more unreasonable and more ridiculous than that. The actions of the city of New York remind me of what happened in New Jersey. That state passed a law giving homosexual partnerships basically the same rights as married partners. Dr. Laura Schlessinger commented on the law in New Jersey: “They are doing some stupid things in New Jersey these days.” I have not heard Dr. Laura’s comments about New York, but it is appropriate to say: “They are doing some stupid things in the city of New York these days.”

The school authorities in New York try to justify their illogical and immoral behavior by saying that homosexual boys are often the object of prejudice and even violence. Such violent behavior is inexcusable and should be prosecuted to the full extent of the law. Most of the people in my audience today probably oppose all homosexual conduct, but to call them prejudiced is not legitimate. Christians have no choice about condemning homosexual behavior. They know or should know that our Lord condemns it in no uncertain terms. If the Bible is God’s word—as it claims to be and as most Americans believe it is—there can be no question of the Lord’s attitude toward all homosexual conduct. But none of this justifies violence against homosexuals. We cannot attack and kill people just because we disagree with their religious, philosophical and ethical beliefs and practices. Not only does the American Constitution forbid it; so does the word of God.

Leonard Pitts writes regularly for *The Tennessean*. His articles show plainly that he leans to the left—morally, religiously and politically. I have read many of his articles and disagree with virtually everything he writes. On Monday, August 18, 2003, Mr. Pitts published an article in *The Tennessean* with the title, “Don’t segregate gay kids; teach the rest tolerance” (p. 9-A). Before I read from Mr. Pitts’ column, I must comment on the word “gay.” I absolutely refuse to use that word of homosexuals, except when I am quoting from a magazine or from a book. Homosexuals have no right to steal a perfectly good word and apply to their sleazy behavior. The homosexual lifestyle is not gay in the ordinary sense of that word. If the Bible calls homosexuality an “abomination” (Lev. 18:22), and affirms that it is “against nature” (Rom. 1:26), what right has anyone to describe it as being “gay?” Those who refer to homosexuality as being “gay” are doing so in direct defiance of God’s law and of good common sense. They are treading on dangerous ground. The sad truth is that many of those New York high school students will die from AIDS—a disease that is rampant among American homosexuals. And throwing hundreds of homosexuals together in that environment will increase the number of AIDS cases and will lead to premature deaths for many of those young people.

A few sentences from Leonard Pitts’ silly article should be enlightening and disturbing.

New York City school administrators begin filtering back to work next week. Students will return next month. And Harvey Milk will become a reality.

That’s Harvey Milk as in the openly gay San Francisco politician who was famously murdered in 1978. Milk High, you see, is the nation’s first public school for gay students.

The school, which is actually an expansion of a program started two decades ago by a

gay rights group, will cost \$3.2 million. It is supposed to provide gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgendered teenagers a place to study without facing the experiences they often do in the public schools (p. 9-A).

In other words, the homosexual high school will furnish a haven for hundreds of kids who engage in some of the most destructive and ungodly behavior known to man. The school authorities in New York City must hate their children or they would not subject them to such dangers.

I cannot overemphasize the sinfulness of homosexuality. The scriptures do not speak ambiguously on the topic. In his profound letter to the saints in Rome, the apostle Paul addressed a people who were very familiar with homosexuality. In ancient Rome, many of the men and a substantial number of the women practiced homosexuality. Julius Caesar had a lawful wife, a mistress and a homosexual partner. Nero, one of the most violent and corrupt men who ever lived, married a guy and had a wedding march through the streets of Rome with his homosexual partner dressed in a bride's attire. When Nero died, the emperor who succeeded him married Nero's homosexual partner.

Many of you, especially the preachers in my audience, are familiar with the "The Daily Study Bible Series" written by Dr. William Barclay, a very liberal Scottish theologian, but an excellent Greek scholar. Dr. Barclay's commentary on **The Letters to the Corinthians** (Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1975) contains a rather lengthy discussion of homosexuality. Please listen.

We have left the most unnatural sin to the end—there were homosexuals. This sin had swept like a cancer through Greek life and from Greece, invaded Rome. We can scarcely realize how riddled the ancient world was with it. Even so great a man as Socrates practiced it; Plato's dialogue *Symposium* is always said to be one of the greatest works on love in the world, but

its subject is not natural but unnatural love. Fourteen of the fifteen Roman emperors practiced this unnatural vice. At this very time Nero was emperor. He had taken a boy called Sporus and had him sexually mutilated. He then married him with a full marriage ceremony and took him home in procession to his palace and lived with him as wife. With incredible viciousness, Nero had himself married a man called Pythagoras and called him his husband. When Nero was eliminated and Otho came to the throne, one of the first things he did was to take possession of Sporus (Nero's sexual partner). Much later the Emperor Hadrian's name was associated with a Bithynian youth called Antinous. He lived with him inseparably, and, when he died, he deified him and covered the world with statutes and immortalized his sin by calling a star after him. In this particular vice, in the time of the early Church, the world was lost to shame; and there can be no doubt that this was one of the main causes of its degeneracy and the final collapse of its civilization (pp. 53-54).

Theologians—whether liberal or conservative—have almost universally accepted until recently Dr. Barclay's view of homosexuality. The Bible has not changed on this topic. The changes in attitudes have occurred because the homosexual community has applied enormous pressure to the media, to academia and to religious organizations to encourage them to accept homosexuality as within the scriptural norm and as being a natural kind of behavior. But in God's sight and in the eyes of right-thinking men and women, homosexuality is sinful, degrading and shameful. It always has been; it is today; it always will be.

The members of the Lord's church at Rome knew about the homosexuality in their society. Paul wanted the members of the church to know how exceedingly sinful it was. So he wrote to the church of our Lord in Rome as follows:

Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools, and changed the glory of the uncorruptible God into an image made like to corruptible man, and to birds, and to four footed beasts, and creeping things. Wherefore God gave them up to uncleanness through the lusts of their own hearts, to dishonor their own bodies between themselves: who changed the truth of God into a lie, and worshipped and served the creature more than the Creator, who is blessed forever. For this cause God gave them up unto vile affections: for even their women did change the natural use into that which is against nature: and likewise the men, leaving the natural use of the woman, burned in their lust one toward another, men with men working that which is unseemly, and receiving in themselves that recompense of their error which was meet (or appropriate) (Rom. 1:22-27).

Anyone who fails to understand the thrust of Paul's argument is biased against God's word and in favor of the homosexual lifestyle, even though he himself may not be a homosexual.

Many prominent Greek philosophers, scientists and other scholars endorsed and practiced homosexuality. Some of them did not want homosexuality to be legalized, but they thought of it as the highest form of sexual expression. As we have seen from Romans 1, Paul taught that homosexuality is contrary to nature, that is, contrary to the way God made us. When he wrote his letter to the church at Corinth, he reminded them of their conduct before they became Christians. Paul asked the Corinthians:

Do you not know the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God? Be not deceived: neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with mankind, nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, shall inherit the kingdom of God (1 Cor. 6:9-10).

Two expressions from these verses demand further examination. Those expressions are “effeminate” and “abusers of themselves with mankind.”

The word “effeminate” (*malakos* in the Greek) refers to a man who allows himself to be used in a sexual relationship as a woman. He is the passive partner in a homosexual relationship. The technical term is catamite. If you think I may have misunderstood the word, please listen to how the various translations render the word. The Revised Standard Version translates both the terms—effeminate and abusers of themselves with mankind—by the term “sexual perverts.” The New Revised Standard Version renders the Greek “male prostitutes.” Dr. Hugo McCord uses the term “homosexuals.”

The term, “abusers of themselves with mankind,” means a male bedfellow. It refers to a man who goes to bed with another man for sexual purposes. He is the active partner in a homosexual relationship. The technical term is “sodomite”—named after the infamous city that God destroyed because of its promotion of homosexual conduct (Genesis 19). Jude, the Lord’s brother, wrote concerning Sodom and Gomorrah:

Even as Sodom and Gomorrah, and the cities about them in like manner, giving themselves over to fornication, and going after strange flesh, are set forth for an example, suffering the vengeance of eternal fire (Jude 7).

Peter taught that the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah were turned into ashes and condemned with an overthrow, “making them an example unto those who after should live ungodly” (2 Pet. 2:6).

If you listened carefully to my reading of 1 Corinthians 6:9-10, you surely took note of the various sins that will cause one to miss heaven: Fornication, idolatry, adultery, homosexuality, theft, covetousness, drunkenness, reviling and extortion. The New York Board of Education just chose one of these abominable practices—homosexuality—and is

spending \$3.2 million for boys in a school that glorifies one of the most sinful and destructive practices known to man. The school will be a modern Sodom. Are not the New York school board members being bigoted when they single out that perversion for approval and discriminate against theft, drunkenness and extortion? Why do they not have a school for thieves, and one for teaching boys how to drink and how to be greedy? After all, Paul lists these sins in one paragraph and says that those who practice them are not going to heaven. May I repeat? They are not going to inherit the kingdom of God.

Leonard Pitts says that high schools kids are often teased because they wear glasses or have bad skin or are fat. "But school is," he insists, "a different order of hell for gay kids" (p. 9-A). Why should it be all that different for homosexual young people? If homosexual boys and girls would keep their mouths shut about their perverted desires and practices, other kids would have no reason to tease them or abuse them in other ways. But many homosexuals are determined to let everyone know of their preferences in their sexual objects. In many cases, they bring on themselves the discrimination they experience.

Please understand that I am not condoning the mistreatment of homosexual boys and girls. There is never a reason for young people to abuse and misuse others. What young people who oppose homosexuality should do is to talk with homosexual young people and to show them how wrong their behavior is. But if homosexuals learn of the sinfulness and destructiveness of their conduct, they could not do anything about changing, could they? Many psychiatrists, psychologists and homosexual apologists answer that question in the negative. They maintain that the homosexuals are born that way and cannot change their sexual orientation. There is a very serious problem with that view: It is false. Paul listed homosexuality as one of the sins that exclude men and women from heaven and then commented:

And such were some of you: but you are washed, but you are sanctified, but you are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God (1 Cor. 6:11).

Would it be easy for young people or older ones to change their homosexual practices? I do not know anyone who would say that. Incidentally, that is one of the real dangers of homosexuality. Once a person is involved in that lifestyle, it is almost impossible to leave it. But God did not make anyone a homosexual. If God made some men and women homosexuals, how can his word condemn that kind of behavior? Their homosexual conduct in many cases becomes their identity. They seem to believe if they change, they will lose that identity. An illustration may help us to understand. I know a counselor who has worked through the years with dozens or perhaps hundreds of homosexuals. I asked him on one occasion what percentage of homosexuals he had helped to leave their sinful practices. He said he had helped about 66% of the people who came to him for counseling.

The same counselor told of having a young lesbian who came to him. He met with her four or five times and thought she was making excellent progress toward changing her immoral practices. After those four or five sessions, she told him she would not be coming back. He asked her to explain. This is what she told him. "All of my life I have been identified as a lesbian. Every phase of my life has been tied to my lesbianism. I feel that I am changing and I do not know how to handle it." She apparently believed she would become a "nobody" if she altered her behavior as a lesbian. So far as I know, she never returned for further counseling.

Are the school board members in New York familiar with what I have just outlined? Are they not creating an atmosphere where young men will always identify themselves as sexual perverts and probably devote their entire lives to sexual perversion? If the homosexual males

were allowed to attend regular high school and witness how heterosexuals handle their lives, maybe it would have a beneficial influence on them, especially if the school made maximum effort to prevent abuse against the homosexuals. Maybe they would turn from their dangerous lifestyle and live like God ordained they should. But whatever the case, the New York school board members are contributing to the physical death of hundreds of young men and to their eternal damnation. Do the board members feel any responsibility for these great tragedies?

I would like to insert here a fact that many of you may not know. Long before the AIDS epidemic came along, homosexual males were dying at a much higher rate than heterosexual males. There were two primary factors: suicide and sexually transmitted diseases, especially syphilis. Suicide apparently has always been higher among homosexual males than in the population in general. I have absolutely no doubt that some homosexuals suffer from guilty consciences. That is one of the reasons—although probably not the only one—for the higher incidence of suicide among homosexuals. What a tragedy that men allow their perverted lusts to destroy their lives and condemn their souls to eternal damnation!

The AIDS epidemic has killed hundreds of thousands of American male homosexuals. But doctors in major American cities, such as, San Francisco and Atlanta, knew that male homosexuals were dying at alarming rate before the advent of AIDS. It is true that some drugs can cure most sexually transmitted diseases. But if syphilis is not caught in its early stages—and many times it is not—the person afflicted with syphilis can and likely will die. Do the New York school board members know about these possibilities? Do they care about our young people or is it simply politically correct to listen to the rantings and ravings of sexual perverts? Could any of this relate to the fact that millions of Americans deny the existence of absolute standards? If there are no absolute standards, what

difference does it make what children and young people do? Alcohol and other drugs may kill the young men quicker than homosexual conduct, but not more certainly. Homosexual behavior is a killer—not only of the body but of the soul also.

I am aware that the members of the New York City Board of Education cannot use the scriptures to discourage homosexual activity among the students in that city. Our Constitution forbids the school board members, the school administrators and the public school teachers from teaching the Lord's view of human sexuality. But they do not have to appeal to the scriptures to know that homosexuality is contrary to the nature of human beings. The design of the human body should convince anyone who wants to be convinced that homosexuality is ridiculous and dangerous. Besides, there is no doubt that it is addictive. And all of us know how difficult it is to overcome any addiction, whether to alcohol or to gambling or to other evils.

One of the most troubling features of modern society—and not just its attitude toward homosexuality, but toward many evils—is the indifference of many churches and their unwillingness to speak out against of the evils of our day. Those churches have made and are making many compromises on the morals of society. And for a church as influential as the American Episcopal Church to elevate a homosexual priest to be a bishop defies good sense! Such teaching and practice are offensive to God almighty and to good men and women. Episcopalians who believe homosexuality is sinful must speak out against this abominable evil. They should realize, should they not, that silence can be sinful? In the words of Oliver Goldsmith: "Silence gives consent."

Will God hold churches and individuals accountable for their failure to take a stand for righteousness and against evil? There are many examples—both in the Old Testament and in the New—of men and women of God who would not and could not allow evil to flourish and

not speak out against it. I think of dozens of great prophets and preachers who put their lives on the line for the cause of our Lord. What should modern preachers learn from the great prophets of the Old Testament and the outstanding preachers of the New? If time permitted, I would like to discuss the preaching of Nathan, of Micaiah, of Elijah and of other courageous prophets in ancient Israel. But I shall devote a brief time to John the Baptist.

The apostle Matthew records the message John the Baptist preached to the Jewish people. He demanded:

Repent: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand....
And there went out to him Jerusalem, and all Judea, and all the region round about Jordan, and were baptized of him in Jordan, confessing their sins. But when he saw the Pharisees and Sadducees come to his baptism, he said unto them, O generation of vipers, who has warned you to flee from the wrath to come? Bring forth therefore fruits worthy of repentance: and think not to say within yourselves, We have Abraham to our father: for I say unto you, that God is able of these stones to raise up children to Abraham. And now also the axe is laid unto root of the trees: therefore every tree which does not bring forth fruit is hewn down, and cast into the fire (Matt. 3:2, 5-10).

Did John's message fall on deaf ears? What preacher's words do not occasionally fall on deaf ears? But when people will not listen and make changes in their behavior, should we cease preaching or compromise the message of salvation?

Our Lord's immediate disciples made a trip to hear John the Baptist. When they returned, Jesus Christ asked them:

What did you go out into the wilderness to see?
A reed shaken by the wind? But what did you go out to see? A man dressed in soft raiment?
Behold, they who wear soft clothing are in

king's houses. But what did you go out to see? A prophet? Yea, I say unto you, and more than a prophet. For this is he of whom it is written, Behold, I send my messenger before thy face, which shall prepare thy way before thee. Verily I say unto you, Among them who are born of women there has not risen a greater than John the Baptist: notwithstanding he that is least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than John (Matt. 11:7-11).

Do you believe preachers like the prophets of the Old Testament and the apostles of the New would make a difference in the moral and spiritual values of our nation? My preacher friends, even if other preachers will not take a stand on such matters as gambling, beverage alcohol, homosexuality and adultery, will you at least have the courage to teach what the Bible says on these topics? If you are not a preacher or a leader in some religious organization, will you please put pressure on your preacher or priest or rabbi to speak out against evil—all evil? Do you believe our country can continue to be free or even to survive when we allow the grossest kinds of immorality to flourish in the United States of America? Just because you are not a preacher or a religious leader does not exempt you from the obligation of opposing immorality and religious error.

If churches were as concerned about the moral and spiritual conditions in our nation as some of them seem to be about entertaining their members and visitors, it would make a difference in the moral atmosphere of the United States. As I near the end of my life and my preaching work, I want imitate the example of Jesus Christ and of the other preachers of the New Testament. Two verses from the Corinthian correspondence express my obligation and that of every man who calls himself a preacher.

For though I preach the gospel, I have nothing to glory of: for necessity is laid upon me; yea,

woe is unto me if I preach not the gospel
(1 Cor. 9:16).

We have the same spirit of faith, according as
it is written, I believed, and therefore I have
spoken; we also believe and therefore speak;
knowing that he who has raised up the Lord
Jesus shall raise us up also by Jesus, and shall
present us with you (2 Cor. 4:13-14).

May God help all of us to believe his word and to preach
it faithfully and vigorously to others!

Chapter 27

Corruption In Government

Michele Malkin, whom many of you have no doubt seen on television, has written a new book, **The Culture of Corruption: Obama and His Team of Tax Cheats, Crooks, and Cronies** (Washington, DC: Regnery, 2009). The book has the explicit endorsement of Mark Levin, author of two great books, **Liberty and Tyranny** and **Men in Black**, and also Mark Steyn, author of the book, **America Alone**. Malkin introduces her book with two quotations: one from George Washington and one from Bess Myerson. Washington urged:

Associate with men of good quality if you esteem your own reputation; for it is better to be alone than in bad company.

Bess Myerson observed: "The accomplice to the crime of corruption is frequently our own indifference." The Apostle Paul warned the Corinthians: "Be not deceived: evil companionships corrupt good morals" (1 Cor. 15:33). The Old Testament also warns:

You shall not follow a multitude to do evil; neither shall you speak in a cause to decline after many to pervert justice (Ex. 23:2).

Our study today will be devoted to the theme: "Corruption in Government."

One of the most destructive decisions a governor or a president can make is to choose the wrong people as his counselors and allies or to ignore the advice of good counselors. I shall give you two examples from the Old Testament, both from the book of 1 Kings. When King Solomon died, his son Rehoboam became the king of Israel. The Israelites pled with Rehoboam to remove the burdens his father had placed on them. Rehoboam told them to depart for three days and then to return to him.

The new king "consulted with the old men, that stood before Solomon his father while he yet lived, and said, How do you advise that I may answer this people?" The old men pled with him:

If you will be a servant unto this people this day, and will serve them, and answer them, and speak good words to them, then they will be your servants forever. But he forsook the counsel of the old men, which they had given him, and consulted with the young men who had grown up with him, and which stood before him: and he said unto them, What counsel do you give that we may answer this people, who have spoken to me, saying, Make the yoke which your father put upon us lighter? And the young men who had grown up with him spoke unto him, saying, Thus shall you speak unto this people that spoke unto you, saying, Your father made our yoke heavy, but make it lighter for us; thus shall you say unto them, My little finger shall be thicker than my father's loins. And now whereas my father did lay on you a heavy yoke: I will add to your yoke: my father chastised you with whips, but I shall chastise you with scorpions (1 Kings 12:3-11).

Because of Rehoboam's stupidity in ignoring the advice of the older and wiser men in Israel, the nation was tragically divided. Ten of the twelve tribes chose to follow Jereboam, a truly abominable character. The nation never fully recovered from Rehoboam's foolish choice of counselors.

One of the most spineless and wicked kings to rule in Israel was a man named Ahab. During the reign of Ahab, he planned to recapture Ramoth-Gilead which had been captured by Syria. Jehoshaphat paid a visit to the king of Israel. Ahab asked his servants:

Do you not know that Ramoth in Gilead is ours, and we keep quiet and do not take it out of the hand of the king of Syria?

He asked Jehoshaphat, king of Judah, the southern kingdom:

Will you go with me to battle to Ramoth-Gilead? And Jehoshaphat said to the king of Israel, I am as you are, my people as your people, my horses as your horses. And Jehoshaphat said unto the king of Israel, Inquire, I pray you, at the word of the Lord today (1 Kings 22:1-5).

Jehoshaphat wanted to know if the plan to recapture Ramoth-Gilead was within the will of God.

Then the king of Israel gathered the prophets together, about four hundred men, and said unto them, Shall I go against Ramoth-Gilead, or shall I forbear? And they said, Go up; for the Lord shall deliver it into the hand of the king.

For some reason, Jehoshaphat had some doubt about the four hundred court prophets. He asked Ahab: "Is there not here a prophet of the Lord beside, that we might inquire of him?" Ahab responded:

There is yet one man, Micaiah the son of Imlah, by whom we may inquire of the Lord: but I hate him; for he does not prophesy good concerning me, but evil. And Jehoshaphat said: Let not the king say so (1 Kings 22:6-9).

To make a long story short, I shall tell you what Micaiah said to Ahab.

As the Lord lives, what the Lord says unto me, that will I speak. So he came to the king. And the king said unto him, shall we go against Ramoth-Gilead to battle, or shall we forbear? And he answered him, Go, and prosper: for the Lord shall deliver it into the hand of the king. And the king said unto him, How many times shall I ask you that you tell me nothing but that which is true in the name of the Lord? And he (Micaiah) said: I saw all Israel scattered upon

the hills, as sheep that have no shepherd: and the Lord said, These have no master: let them return every man to his house in peace. And the king of Israel said unto Jehoshaphat, Did I not tell you that he would prophesy no good concerning me, but evil (1 Kings 22:14-18)?

Because Ahab did not listen to the prophet of God, he foolishly charged into battle and was killed. Please listen to what happened.

And a certain man drew a bow at random, and smote the king of Israel between the joints of the scale armor and the breastplate: and he said unto the driver of his chariot, Turn your hand, and carry me out of the battle; for I am wounded (1 Kings 22:34).

There is not a man on earth who has the wisdom and the experience to govern a state or a nation on his own. If he does not have wise and conscientious counselors, he will fall flat of his face. The pages of history are filled with examples of leaders who thought they were wiser than they were. Many of them lost their nations. Are we in similar danger in the United States?

The nation of Israel was not a democracy or a republic; it was a theocracy. That means that the kings, prophets and priests were directly under God's control. The nation was governed by the Law of Moses. Those leaders were often as crooked and unscrupulous as many of our state and national leaders. God told the prophet Jeremiah:

I have seen folly in the prophets of Samaria (that is, in the northern kingdom); they have prophesied in Baal, and caused my people to err. I have seen also in the prophets of Jerusalem a horrible thing: they commit adultery, and walk in lies: they strengthen also the hands of evildoers, that none returns from his wickedness: they are all of them unto me as Sodom, and the inhabitants thereof as Gomorrah (Jer. 23:13-14).

What God said to Jeremiah reminds me of what has occurred in our nation in the past several years. In his excellent book, **A Question of Character: A Life of John F. Kennedy** (Rocklin, CA: Prima, 1992), Dr. Thomas C. Reeves, professor of history at the University of Wisconsin-Parkside, tells of Kennedy's affair with "a beautiful young California woman, Judith Campbell Exner. She had been secretly admitted to the White House on many occasions for more than a year to carry on a romance with the president." Incidentally, the same woman had close ties with two Mafia figures—Sam Giancana and John Roselli." "Exner reluctantly admitted the facts of an affair with the president" (p. 7). Both **Time** and **Newsweek** published well-researched articles "linking the president romantically with several well-known actresses and scores of young women, including two youthful staff members code-named 'Fiddle' and 'Faddle' by the secret service." Dr. Reeves quotes one man as saying, "It was a revolving door over there. A woman had to fight to get in line" (p. 7). Dr. Reeves' book is full of disturbing information about the immoral behavior of John Kennedy. Bobby Kennedy and Ted Kennedy were chips of the same old block. Their father was a whoremonger.

In recent months, we have learned of the adultery of John Edwards, former senator from North Carolina. He lied about it for months, which I guess is normal for people who commit adultery. Like Jesse Jackson, John Edwards has a so-called "love child." Why do the media use the word "love" in such situations? Should they not use the word "lust?" Besides, John Edwards' wife was suffering from cancer. Did he not have enough sense to know what revelations of his extramarital affair would have on his sick wife? And how absolutely stupid was the behavior of William Jefferson Clinton!

But Democratic presidents and senators have no monopoly on stupid behavior. Mark Sanford, governor of South Carolina, was a bright and shining star among

conservative Republicans. There was even talk of his running for the highest office in the land. And then it was learned he had been traveling to Argentina to see a woman he called his "soul mate." To be completely honest with you, such talk makes me sick at my stomach. "Soul mate" indeed! The Bible calls such people "whoremongers." For example,

For this you know, that no whoremonger, nor unclean person, nor covetous man who is an idolater, has any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and of God (Eph. 5:5).

What is the difference between these men and barnyard animals?

Jeremiah accused the leaders in Israel of walking in lies. Do any of the leaders in our nation "walk in lies?" If you have doubts about it, you simply are not keeping up with what is occurring or you lack the power of discernment. I have a number of books with the word "lie" in their titles. For example, Christopher Horner, a senior fellow at the Competitive Enterprise Institute, recently published a book with the title, **Red Hot Lies: How Global Warming Alarmists Use Threats, Fraud, and Deception to Keep You Misinformed** (Washington, DC: Regnery, 2008). Horner quotes Al Gore: "I believe it is appropriate to have an over-representation of factual presentations on how dangerous it (global warming) is" (p. 1). Do you know what "over-representation" means? Horner also quotes Dr. Richard Lindzen, professor of meteorology at Massachusetts Institute of Technology: "There is a clear attempt to establish truth not by scientific methods but by perpetual repetition" (p. 4).

Please listen to this revealing fact in Christopher Horner's book. You probably have heard stories about the polar bear. According to some alarmists, the polar bear population is threatened. The fact is, the polar "bear is thriving and will in all likelihood continue to do so"

(p. 14). Horner quotes **Weather Channel** founder John Coleman as saying:

Dastardly scientists with environmental and political motives manipulated long term scientific data to create an illusion of rapid global warming (p. 41).

Very simply, that means they lied.

It has now been demonstrated beyond doubt that many of Al Gore's so-called "facts about global warming" were inflated. Pointing that out has not made Gore overly happy. No one likes to be accused of deliberately perverting the truth. "Gore asserts that those who disagree with him also believe the moon landings were faked and belong to the flat earth society" (p. 60). I shall give you one other observation from Horner's book. Across the United States, there are 1,221 official surface stations to keep track of the temperature. At Tahoe City in California, one of those stations is located near a tennis court and parking lot. Another of the stations in Hopkinsville, Kentucky, joins a brick building and a chimney. "The station overhangs not only a black asphalt pad but an air conditioning fan blowing hot air. The Weber barbeque grill right below, however, is the ultimate touch" (p. 268). But surely no one in the scientific community or in politics would actually lie, would they?

Another book with the word "lie" in it is Michael Medved's, **The Ten Lies about America: Combating Destructive Distortions about Our Nation** (New York: Crown, 2008). Medved is host of a very popular talk-radio program. My first acquaintance with Medved was reading his book, **Hollywood vs. America: Popular Culture and the War on Traditional Values** (New York: Harper, 1992)—the number one best book on the evils of Hollywood. In his book, **The Ten Lies about America**, Medved corrects many of the lies the liberal establishment in this country is promoting. One of the lies Michael Medved refutes is:

"The Founders Intended a Secular, not a Christian, Nation." Incidentally, Michael Medved is an orthodox Jew. Medved points out: "Of the original thirteen colonies, ten mentioned religious purposes in their founding documents" (p. 78). "Dr. Benjamin Rush (one of the founders) wrote of Samuel Adams (another of the founders): 'He considered happiness and the public patronage of religion as inseparably connected; and so great was his regard for public worship, as the means of supporting religion, that he constantly attended divine service in the German church in Yorktown while the Congress sat there...although he was ignorant of the German language'" (p. 79). There is no doubt that many in the liberal community spew lies like the Old Faithful Geyser spews hot water.

You probably know that Al Gore made the movie, *An Inconvenient Truth*. In his book, **The REALLY Inconvenient Truths: Seven Environmental Catastrophes Liberals Don't Want You to Know about—Because they Helped Cause Them** (Washington, DC: Regnery, 2008), Ian Murray sets the record straight on some of Al Gore's deliberate misrepresentations. Murray says,

Marlo Lewis spent several months fact-checking Al Gore's Oscar-winning film, *An Inconvenient Truth*....Marlo identified almost fifty clear examples where, *An Inconvenient Truth*, in its presentation of the evidence, was one-sided, misleading, exaggerated, speculative, or just plain wrong (p. 6).

A court in Great Britain found numerous serious flaws in the film (pp. 7-11). Murray calls Al Gore "a Class A hypocrite." He gives this example.

The average household in America consumes 10,656 kilowatt-hours per year, according the Department of Energy. Gore devoured nearly 221,000 kilowatt-hours—more than twenty times the national average. Last August alone he burned through 22,619 kilowatt-hours—guzzling more

than twice the electricity in one month than an average American family uses in an entire year (p. 15).

Besides, he flies on one of the least efficient private jets in America. "Private jets emit about sixteen times more CO2 (carbon dioxide) per passenger than a Boeing 777" (p. 18). Have we improved all that much from the time the prophet Jeremiah accused the leaders in Israel of walking in lies (Jer. 23:14)?

Let us return briefly to Michele Malkin's book, **Culture of Corruption**. Barack Obama chose Joe Biden to be his running mate. Did not Obama know that Joe Biden had been guilty of plagiarism? Plagiarism means to pass other people's ideas off as one's own. To be very blunt: Plagiarism means stealing. Biden also lies. *The Wilmington News Journal* of Wilmington, Delaware, says concerning Biden:

He tells tales with such wonderful conviction and sincerity—and they are all lies—he just makes things up and seems to really believe what he makes up. That seems borderline delusional to me....It's not just that he lies, it's that he lies SO well that you think he really believes the stuff he makes up (p. 75).

Eric Holder, the Attorney General of the United States, has a checkered past. Malkin accuses him of repeatedly putting "politics above the national interest." He "played an active role in changing the position of the Justice Department to facilitate President Clinton's commutations of sixteen violent terrorists from the group (FALN)....Holder forged ahead with his meddling on behalf of the president against the protests of the FBI, NYPD, federal prosecutors, and victims....The evidence clearly shows that Holder and (Jack) Quinn violated department protocols and colluded to keep the Justice Department out of the pardon deal," that is, the pardon of Marc Rich, a man who cheated the government out of \$50 million in taxes (p. 125). I wish I

had time to give you other examples of fraudulent behavior in the current administration, but I shall have to wait for another time.

It ought to be obvious from what I have reported to you today that our nation desperately needs watchdogs to keep us informed about the rampant corruption in our nation, although I have serious doubts that our national leaders would pay any attention to such people. There are a number of people and organizations that provide some information on the corruption that exists in our nation's capital. I have time to mention two such people—Martin L. Gross and Dick Morris. Martin Gross has written eleven books on such topics as, *The Government Racket*, *The Tax Racket*, *The Political Racket*, *The Conspiracy of Ignorance*, *The End of Sanity* and others. His latest book, *National Suicide: How Washington Is Destroying the American Dream from A to Z* (New York: Berkley, 2009), will make you sick to read it.

It would take weeks for me to review the vast amount of information in the book, *National Suicide*, but I shall give you some examples from this very disturbing book. In one chapter entitled, *"Baby Citizens,"* Gross discusses the damage illegal immigrants are causing our nation. He says there are 20,000,000 illegal immigrants in America. "They use our schools, our hospitals, and in many cases our welfare and social services, all at enormous costs" (p. 61).

In the cities of Los Angeles and San Diego, and in hospitals along the Texas and Arizona border, pregnant Hispanic women who come into the country illegally use our medical facilities to give birth at no cost to them....At Parkland Hospital in Dallas, a patient survey showed that 70% of the women who gave birth in the first 3 months of 2006 were illegal immigrants, at a cost of \$4,000 per child, paid for by state/federal Medicaid, Dallas County taxpayers, and the federal

government....Parkland has even been forced to hire extra Spanish-speaking help to translate for their indigent illegal patients....A report in the *Journal of American Physicians and Surgeons* notes that illegal aliens coming into the United States are forcing the closure of many hospitals. One Mexican woman gave birth to her fourth child, born premature. It cost the San Joaquin Hospital \$300,000 for treatment....The family now receives over \$1,000 in cash from various government welfare programs (pp. 62-64).

Another chapter in Gross's book has the title, "Corruption." Gross quotes Mark Twain as saying: "It could probably be shown by facts and figures that there is no distinctly native criminal class—except Congress" (p. 101). Gross provides a partial list of senators and representatives who have been convicted of corruption. Harrison Williams from New Jersey was "convicted of bribery and conspiracy...to use his office to aid business ventures and become rich in the process" (p. 102). William Jefferson from Louisiana "was paid \$400,000 in the name of a company owned by his wife and children." The FBI raided Jefferson's home and found "\$90,000 of the cash in his freezer" (pp. 103-104). Representative Randy "Cunningham pleaded guilty to tax evasion and conspiracy to commit bribery, mail fraud, and wire fraud in federal court in San Diego" (pp. 106-107). "Representative Patrick L. Swindall of Georgia was convicted of nine counts of perjury in lying to a grand jury about trying to negotiate a loan from a drug money launderer and was sentenced to a year in jail and disbarred....Dan Rostenkowski, a powerful representative from Chicago....dipped into the public trough to the tune of hundreds of thousands of dollars" (pp. 108-109). Chicago is notorious for its corrupt politicians. Gross summarizes the situation: "The number of possibly corrupt officials comes to approximately 2,600 a year, a sad reflection on the body politic. Since 1987, when the figures started to be compiled, the total tally is

over 50,000 politicians" (p. 113). That is an average of a thousand per state.

Another of Gross's chapters, "*Duplication*," tells of the waste in federal programs. There are "70 different programs in 13 agencies" that deal with drug abuse. "There are 160 job-training programs, at a cost of \$20 billion a year" (p. 128). There are 342 "economic development programs doing much the same thing." There are 50 federal drug control agencies. "There are 72 different programs in 8 different cabinet departments and agencies" working on checking out our water quality" (pp. 131-132). And the beat goes on and on and no one seems to care about it.

When Barack Obama was running for the presidency, he promised he would put an end to earmarks or pork. Anyone who believed his promise will likely believe about anything. Gross asked: "How about \$107,000 to study the sex life of the Japanese quail" (p. 135)? "In the \$410 Billion Omnibus Appropriations Bill voted on in March 2009, covering only six months of partial spending, there were 8,500 earmarks, totaling some \$7.7 billion—just for that short period." Here is a partial list of the earmarks: "\$3.1 millions to convert a ferry boat into a crab restaurant in Baltimore. \$43 million for Streamtrain, USA in Scranton, Pennsylvania, to recreate a railroad yard of old. \$6.4 million for a Barvarian ski resort in Idaho. \$150,000 to study the Hatfield-McCoy feud. \$320,000 to purchase President McKinley's mother-in-law's house. \$84,000 to study how people fall in love" (p. 136). The Omnibus Bill included these absolutely essential elements for our nation: "\$200,000 for tattoo removal; \$1.7 million for a honeybee laboratory; \$162,000 for control of rodents in Hawaii; \$40 million additional funds for three presidential libraries; \$208,000 to control the cogongrass weed, and of course, \$1.8 to study pig odor" (p. 140).

Would it be out of order to speak briefly of the corruption in some religious organizations? Did you know that one well known evangelist, Tony Alamo, will serve a

long jail sentence because he used his position to prey on children as young as eight? Jim Bakker mishandled money that was donated to PTL and served five years in a federal prison. Jimmy Swaggart was involved with prostitutes.

I have a series of questions I must ask you before our time expires. Can our nation survive and prosper when many of our state and national leaders are as unscrupulous as Ahab? Are we going to use our influence to send some of the crooks in Washington and in our state capitals back to their regular jobs? How can our national leaders justify not convicting Bill Clinton for lying and perjury? How can we expect our children and young people to be honorable and honest when so many of our leaders are as crooked as a barrel of snakes? How are we going to put a stop to the reckless spending in Washington?

Dick Morris and Eileen McGann have written a number of very helpful books, including *Fleeced, Outrage*, and others. Their most recent book, *Catastrophe: How Obama, Congress, and the Special Interests are Transforming... A Slump into a Crash, Freedom into Socialism, and a Disaster into a Catastrophe* (New York: Harper, 2009). I have time for one brief statement from this book. "Obama is reversing our long-term commitment to Israel—and instead is giving almost a billion dollars to Hamas" (p. xii of the Introduction).

What can we do in the current chaotic situation? Pray, teach our children, and vote our convictions.

Chapter 28

Corruption In The Media

One of my major goals as a preacher and as a Christian is to keep up with what is occurring in our world and to apply the word of God to the current situation. For example, I am deeply distressed at the lack of respect for the sacredness of all human life. I have dedicated my life to speaking out for life. I listen every morning and evening to the news on television. I try to read at least one newspaper everyday. I buy books by the dozens to keep up with what is happening—not only in my state and in the United States—but worldwide. How can I know how to help others if I do not know what is going on in the world?

Tragically, much of the information on television, in the newspapers and in magazines is seriously skewed. We must take what we hear and what we see with a grain of salt or, in some cases, with a barrel of salt. I hesitate to call some of the people in the media dishonest, but there is an abundance of evidence that some of them are. Many of them are graduates of the liberal schools of journalism and have an agenda they must follow, even if it means ignoring some facts and polishing others. I know these are serious charges, but I shall establish them beyond question. Our study today will be devoted to the topic, "Corruption in the Media."

In the popular media, there is little or no attempt to balance what is written or broadcast. Media representatives usually give only one side of a controversial issue. There probably is no better example than the current debate over global warming. The media spokesmen act as if only ignorant, uneducated boobs could possibly question the views of highly educated scientists. What many journalists do not know or choose not to know is that there are literally

thousands of highly qualified scientists who question the data of Al Gore and of his collaborators.

Christopher Horner, a senior fellow at the Competitive Enterprise Institute, is an acknowledged expert on global warming legislation and regulation. Horner's new book, **Red Hot Lies: How Global Warming Alarmists Use Threats, Fraud, and Deception to Keep You Misinformed** (Washington, DC: Regnery, 2008), provides the information every American needs to understand what is transpiring. Horner accuses today's press of breathlessly touting "any occurrence—no matter how tenuously connected to the weather—as the result of man-made global warming." He says "a strange thing happened recently: a shark ate a kangaroo. Here's the odd part: the media didn't blame 'global warming'" (p. 1).

Horner quotes Dr. Thomas Sowell, one of America's most brilliant economists and a syndicated columnist:

The next time somebody in the media denies that there is media bias, ask how they explain the fact that there at least a hundred stories about the shrinking arctic ice cap for every one about the expanding Antarctic ice cap, which has now grown to record size (p. 10).

I can explain the puzzle Dr. Sowell describes. The media cannot fit the facts into their scheme of reporting on global warming. If they were to report the facts about the Antarctic ice cap, it might cause some people to wonder about their reliability as journalists. Horner explains:

Despite the radio silence in the face of inconvenient research, the Arctic gets disproportionate attention from the media given that it contains less than 3 percent of the world's ice compared to the cooling Antarctic whose growing ice mass represents 90 percent (p. 13).

The founder of the **Weather Channel**, John Coleman, "wrote scathingly of how a handful of 'dastardly scientists

with environmental and political motives manipulated long term scientific data to create the illusion of rapid global warming.” The people who now operate the Weather Channel have tried to separate themselves from his views. They explain:

The Weather Channel is an advocate for environmental efforts and has adopted a broader initiative called Forecast Earth, which focuses on educating the public about climate change and empowering people to make a difference (p. 42).

Many in the media have strongly supported Al Gore’s movie, *An Inconvenient Truth*. Horner quotes Seth Borenstein of Associated Press: “The nation’s top scientists are giving *An Inconvenient Truth*, Al Gore’s documentary on global warming, five stars for accuracy” (p. 49). The sad fact is: The movie is not a documentary; it is an op-ed piece. Meteorologist Carl Spring of station KBJR-TV said he “would not pay a dime to see (the movie) because the pre-release publicity made clear to the expert’s eye that Gore ‘takes facts and extrapolates them to such extremes’ so that they don’t make any sense but to project ‘a doomsday scenario’” (p. 50). Marlo Lewis of the Competitive Enterprise Institute “found hundreds of misstatements, distortions, half-truths and outright falsehoods” in Al Gore’s propaganda movie (p. 51). “University of Pennsylvania Professor Robert Giegengack “pulls no punches or detail when discrediting Gore’s claims and lack of understanding about the principles and specifics underlying his own claims” (p. 52).

Horner quotes Robert F. Kennedy, Jr., whom he calls a “hyper-alarmist.” Kennedy said on ABC’s **Good Morning America**:

The National Academy of Sciences did a study of an inventory three years ago, of all the scientific documents that had—the peer-reviews, refereed scientific documents that had been published

in the previous decade, over 10,000 documents, 10,000 scientific studies. All of them agreed on the basics: that global warming exists; that human beings are causing it; that it's upon us now; and that its impacts are going to be catastrophic. In the scientific community, there was literally zero dissent (pp. 156-157).

There is not even the slightest doubt that Robert Kennedy, Jr. was lying and knew he was lying. That is very troubling, but what is equally troubling is the indifference the media have shown to such lies. If the media had been doing their job, they would have shown the absolute foolishness of Kennedy's statements.

There is much more good information in Christopher Horner's book, but I want to turn to another book on **The Really Inconvenient Truths: Seven Environmental Catastrophes Liberals Don't Want You to Know about—Because They Helped Cause Them** (Washington, DC: Regnery, 2008), by Ian Murray, a senior fellow at the Competitive Enterprise Institute. The first section of the book has the title, "Al Gore Is Bad for the Planet" (pp. 1-80). Murray states: "Al Gore's crusade is based on misrepresentation of fact. It exposes his desire for others to do what he is unwilling to do himself" (p. 3). Murray calls Al Gore a "Class A hypocrite" (p. 15) and he is absolutely right about it. Gore devours more electricity than twenty times the national average. He travels in a jet aircraft that is very inefficient. And yet the media treat him as if he had the knowledge and the foresight of the great prophets of God.

Before I continue with an in-depth examination of the media, I have a question for you to consider: Is there an ethics code for journalism? In other words, are there professional standards they must honor to belong to the journalistic fraternity? If such standards exist, very few, if any, journalists pay any attention to them. So for the next few minutes, let me suggest some guidelines every profession and occupation should follow.

Should not journalists always tell the truth? Dr. Lynne Cheney, former vice president Dick Cheney's wife, has written an outstanding book, **Telling the Truth: Why Our Culture and Our Country Have Stopped Making Sense—and What We Can Do about It** (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1995). Dr. Cheney quotes George Orwell: "Any attack on intellectual history, and on the concept of objective truth, threatens in the long run every department of thought" (p. 11). Dr. Cheney defines what is meant by objective truth: "Truths that pass beyond time and circumstance; truths that, transcending accidents of class, race, and gender," truths that "speak to all of us" (p. 14). Dr. Cheney discusses the Anita Hill-Clarence Thomas hearings. One commentator advised: "Anita Hill must be believed not because she was personally speaking the truth, but because her affective language is symptomatic of the collective 'sexual condition' of working women" (p. 18). Dr. Cheney accuses the media of having disdain for objectivity (p. 17).

Many of you remember the misconduct of Bill Clinton. Dr. Cheney says the "members of the press crossed over the line into advocacy. In August, before the general election, Evan Thomas of *Newsweek* magazine declared: 'The Republicans are going to whack away at the press for the next couple of months as being pro-Clinton, and you know what? They're right. The press is pro-Clinton'" (p. 178). Does it bother you that some people in the media have no respect for truth? Some of them have actually invented the stories they published in newspapers, magazines and books?

Am I inferring that some journalists would actually lie? Bob Kohn, an attorney and a seasoned executive with experience in both the entertainment and high-tech industries, calls his book, **Journalistic Fraud: How The New York Times Distorts the News and Why It Can No Longer Be Trusted** (Nashville: WND Books, 2003). Kohn says that Jayson Blair, a staff reporter for the New York

Times, “engaged in fabrications and plagiarism that may have polluted hundreds of the paper’s news articles” (p. 2). The **Times** said concerning Jayson Blair:

He fabricated statements. He concocted scenes. He stole material from other newspapers and wire services. He selected details from photographs to create the impression he had been somewhere or seen someone, when he had not (p. 89).

Tragically, Jayson Blair is not the only one who has been guilty of such dishonesty.

Richard Minter is a veteran investigative reporter and the author of three bestselling books, **Losing bin Laden, The Shadow War and Disinformation: 22 Media Myths That Undermine the War on Terrorism** (Washington, DC: Regnery, 2005). In his third book, Minter quotes the former New York senator, Daniel Patrick Moynihan: “You’re entitled to your own opinion, but not your own facts” (p. 1).

But not only should journalists always tell the truth; they ought also to treat all people fairly. I am sure many of the reporters probably never read what the Bible says about discrimination, but they need to learn that lesson. The Apostle Peter explained to Cornelius and to his household:

Of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons; but in every nation he who fears him, and works righteousness, is accepted with him (Acts 10:34-35).

Paul emphasizes the same truth. “For there is no respect of persons with God” (Rom. 3:11). Should not every person—whether a journalist or a teacher or a doctor or plumber—strive to imitate God in not showing favoritism?

If I remember correctly, the Declaration of Independence says we all created equal. Based on the passages I have read from the Bible and from the Declaration of Independence, I have some questions all of us need to examine. Should

not conservative blacks, like Clarence Thomas and Dr. Condoleezza Rice, be treated with the same respect as their white counterparts? Should not a conservative white woman, like Sarah Palin, be given the same consideration as a liberal white woman, like Hillary Clinton? Do we have double standards for conservatives and for liberals? I shall return to Sarah Palin in a few minutes.

Bernard Goldberg has given the liberal media a fit. He has written three books that expose the bias of the media. In fact, his first book has the title, **Bias: A CBS Insider Exposes How the Media Distort the News** (Washington, DC: Regnery, 2002). On the inside of the back dust cover, the following information about Goldberg is given: He "is the winner of seven Emmy Awards and was once rated by TV Guide as one of the ten most interesting people on television. Having served as a reporter and producer of CBS News, he now reports for the critically acclaimed HBO program **Real Sports**, hosted by Bryan Gumbel. He has written for the *New York Times* and the *Wall Street Journal*."

A few brief excerpts from Goldberg's book will have to suffice for today. "A reporter can find an expert to say anything the reporter wants—anything" (p. 20). Goldberg asks: "Why do we give so much time on the evening news to liberal feminist organizations, like NOW (National Organization for Women), and almost none to conservative women who oppose abortion" (p. 22)? "I could have shot a Christian Fundamentalist at an anti-abortion rally in Times Square at high noon, and they would have been more sympathetic than they were now that I had written about bias in the media" (p. 36). "USA TODAY columnist Julianne Malveaux says of Clarence Thomas: 'I hope his wife feeds him a lot of eggs and butter and he dies early like many black men do, of heart disease.'" Goldberg asks what would happen if Robert Novak said: "I hope Jesse Jackson's wife feeds him a lot of eggs and butter and he dies early like many black men do, of heart disease" (p.

184)? There is more in Goldberg's book, but let me turn to his second book, **Arrogance: Rescuing America from the Media Elite** (New York: Warner Books, 2003).

Goldberg introduces this book with a quotation from the late CBS News analyst Eric Sevareid.

We are simply, I'm afraid, disliked by far too many—perceived by them as not only smug but arrogant and as critics of everybody but ourselves.

Goldberg mentions Maureen Dowd, one of the most obnoxious people from whom I have read. Goldberg says she twists "the facts almost beyond recognition." She is a columnist, not a reporter. But does "the fact that she is a columnist and not a reporter give her license to distort what the President of the United States (George W. Bush) is saying about a subject as vitally important as terrorism" (p. 55)? Goldberg comments:

It's a pretty good bet that every female reporter at the *New York Times* was a fervent careerist who believed Gloria Steinem was a secular saint and that women who stayed home with their kids were brain-dead cretins and born-again losers (p. 64).

I plan to return to Bernie Goldberg before our study ends.

Journalists are supposed to present the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth when they write articles. For example, during the last presidential election, journalists like the rest of us had a right to support whichever candidate they thought would be best for America. But they should have been completely honest and non-partisan in their writing and speaking. Is that what happened? Incidentally, I expected bigoted people like Bill Maher, Maureen Dowd, Chris Matthews, Rachel Maddow, Keith Olbermann and similar journalists to give only their side of an issue. So far as I can tell, these people made

no attempt to be non-partisan. Their biases have shown through in every one of their articles or programs.

Bernard Goldberg has written one of the best books on slanting the news I have read. The book has the title, **A Slobbering Love Affair, Starring Barack Obama**. The subtitle of the book is: *The True (and Pathetic) Story of the Torrid Romance between Barack Obama and the Mainstream Media* (Washington, DC: Regnery, 2009). Please understand that I am not promoting my view of politics in discussing Goldberg's book. My purpose is to show how the mainstream media made no attempt to be fair in its discussion of Barack Obama or of John McCain.

Goldberg says that Chris Matthews is "truly a one-of-kind journalistic embarrassment in his total inability to understand just how embarrassing he is. He is, in a word, clueless" (p. 23). Matthews made an appearance on the **Tonight Show**. He told Jay Leno:

If you're actually in a room when (Obama) gives one of his speeches and you don't cry, you're not an American.

Mathews also told Leno that night that Barack and Michelle Obama are "cool people." They are really cool. They're Jack and Jackie Kennedy when you see them together. They are cool. And they're great looking and they're cool.... Everything seems to be great. I know I'm selling him now. I'm not supposed to sell (pp. 24-25).

After Obama made his speech at Invesco Field, Keith Olbermann said to Chris Matthews: "For forty-two minutes not a sour note, and spellbinding throughout in a way usually reserved for the creation of fiction." He also told Chris Matthews he would love to say something to criticize the speech. He then asked Matthews: "You got anything" (p. 31)?

Many of you have probably heard Charles Krauthammer on **Fox News**. He is a psychiatrist. He discussed the bias in the media.

Should you bring up Obama's real associations—twenty years with Jeremiah Wright, working on two foundations with William Ayers, citing the raving Michael Pflieger as one who keeps him on moral compass and the long-standing relationship with left-wing vote-fraud ACORN—you have crossed the line into illegitimate guilt by association. Moreover it is tinged with racism (p. 40).

Do you remember what Jimmy Carter said about those who oppose Obama's policies? He said they are racists.

Goldberg has one chapter entitled: PDS—Palin Derangement Syndrome. Please listen to what some so-called "journalists" said about Sarah Palin. Maureen Dowd of the *New York Times* referred to Governor Palin as "our new Napoleon in bunny boots." "*US Weekly* ran a cover story on Palin entitled, 'Baby, Lies & Scandal.... Wendy Doniger a professor at the University of Chicago, wrote on the *Washington Post's* website that Palin's greatest hypocrisy is her pretence that she is a woman.... Juan Cole, a professor at the University of Michigan, wrote a piece for *Salon*, the online magazine. 'What is the difference between Palin and a Muslim fundamentalist?'" He stupidly responded: "Lipstick" (p. 47). Goldberg affirms:

What makes these liberals foam at the mouth is that this "white trash," pro-gun, pro-life, church-going woman, who didn't go to Harvard or Yale or Princeton, but who flitted from one second-rate school to another before she wound up...at the University of Idaho, became the most prominent woman in America.

And besides, what kind of real woman has five kids?....And while we are on the subject, what woman in her right mind has a baby with Down Syndrome (p. 49)?

I have one other brief excerpt from Bernard Goldberg's book.

The real problem is worse because, instead of emanating from some central source, the bias is ingrained in the mainstream media, from top to bottom. It's worse because it is institutional bias. The problem, in a word, is groupthink (p. 106).

I am now in my eighties. I have witnessed many presidential campaigns. I have never been through one where the presidential candidate or the vice presidential candidate was treated with more vitriol and anger and prejudice than Sarah Palin. From the way the mainstream media treated her, you would know she is a twin sister to the devil or maybe his mother. The media were critical of the way she dressed, the way she spoke, her family, the fact that she could shoot and dress a moose, her religious affiliation, and especially her decision to give birth to a child with Down Syndrome.

Matthew Continetti has written a very revealing book, **The Persecution of Sarah Palin: How the Elite Media Tried to Bring Down a Rising Star** (New York: Sentinel, 2009). Continetti is an associate editor of the **Weekly Standard** and is contributing editor to *National Affairs*. The book has the endorsement of some of the nation's most respected journalists. Brit Hume has written concerning Continetti's book: "A compelling account of journalistic malpractice on a grand scale. Those called out in this book should not be allowed to forget what they did."

Continetti introduces his book with these words from Irving Kristol, one of America's great statesmen:

What the new journalism seeks is what once upon a time was called "sensationalism," though no one in today's media would permit that term to be used. It wants scandal, it wants heated controversy, it wants excitement, it wants titillation, above all it lusts for human sacrifices and the destruction of reputations.

If you keep up with the mainstream media, you know Irving Kristol has not exaggerated the situation.

Continetti accuses feminists of denying Sarah Palin her "womanhood because she did not share their politics." He says Sarah "Palin was routinely insulted and described in the crudest language." She was called a "freak show," a "firebreather," a "disgrace to women," "cocky wacko," a "bimbo," "dangerous," "racist," a "librarian in a porn film" and the list goes on and on. (pp. 2-3). Continetti says the "media treated Obama as the second coming" (p. 14).

Many of the reporters criticized Sarah Palin for her lack of experience. CNN anchor John Roberts said: "She's only been in office for a couple of years now, which really raises the experience issue." "MSNBC ranter Keith Olberman called Palin "the least experienced vice presidential candidate probably in American history" (p. 57). Keith Olberman's ignorance shows through. Continetti affirms: "Palin had about the same amount of experience as Calvin Coolidge and Theodore Roosevelt did when they were nominated to the vice presidency" (p. 58). And speaking of experience.... Did you know that Bill Clinton called Obama's career a "fairy tale?" Joe Biden did not believe Obama was ready for the presidency (p. 59).

Did you know that the filthy rag called the *National Enquirer* accused Sarah Palin of having an affair with her husband's business partner (p. 91)? A blogger on the *Daily Kos* website wrote: "Well, Sarah, I'm calling you a liar. And not even a good one. Trig Paxson Van Palin is not your son. He is your grandson. The sooner you come forward with this revelation to the public, the better" (p. 92). Bill Maher said he was not convinced that Trig was Sarah Palin's baby (p. 96). Obviously I have never had a baby, but I would think offhand that a woman would know if she had a baby. Nobody with any sense at all believes such absolute foolishness.

I know what I am about to say may sound radical. But we should not stop having national elections? The

national journalists and university professors believe they know in every case exactly what ought to be done in our nation. Why not just let these people decide who should be president or vice president or governor? They give the impression of knowing all there is to know about every topic in the world. The sad truth is: We have allowed some of these people to influence our economy, our international relations and every other aspect of our culture. We are in a sad condition – financially, morally and politically – because we have acted as if these people know more than they do. If you will pardon the technical language: Most of them are as ignorant as a stump.

If we wish to continue to be a great nation, we must honor the great moral values that made the United States the greatest nation in the history of the world. Listening to the wrong advice can bring about our destruction.

Chapter 29

Inmates Are Running The Asylum

Have you heard some of the pundits on television say, "The inmates are running the asylum?" Webster's New Collegiate Dictionary (Springfield, MA: Merriam-Webster, 1979) defines the word "asylum" to mean "an institution for the relief or care of the destitute or afflicted and especially the insane" (p. 69). Are those television commentators arguing that there is something fundamentally crazy about the decisions and actions of some of America's leaders? They are saying that our nation is making stupid political, economic, educational and moral blunders. Are they exaggerating the situation in America? Our lesson today has the title, "The Inmates Are Running the Asylum."

Please understand that I am not belittling people who are mentally challenged. In fact, I have great sympathy—not only for those who have serious mental problems—but for the family members who have the responsibility of caring for their loved ones who have mental deficiencies. There are many people in our nation who deserve our respect because of the tremendous sacrifices they make to care for the unfortunate. But, tragically, there are people in high places in our nation who make absolutely crazy decisions—decisions that adversely affect our entire nation. Those are the people I have in mind when I speak of the inmates running the asylum.

Our political and economic leaders have brought about the serious economic problems our nation is facing. Government officials pressured the banks and other lending institutions into making loans to people who could not possibly repay those loans. Their reasoning seemed to be: Every person deserves to own his own home. I am fully aware of the importance of owning a home. I love owning my own home. But the government's pressure to lend money to people who could not possibly repay the loans

has done untold harm to poor people. How much good does it do to pressure the banks into giving loans to people who could not repay the money when the leaders in the nation should have known it would harm those people when they had to leave their homes? It did not help the credit of those who have been forced out of their homes. In addition, it puts our country in a very serious financial predicament. The Bible demands that leaders be honest and fair with the citizens. Our leaders have betrayed the American people.

In a very short time, our new president has made some destructive decisions. He has made you and me responsible financially for stem cell research. In other words, he has made it possible for various scientific institutions in our nation to develop embryos for research so scientists can find a possible cure for spinal cord injuries and other health problems. This is strong evidence that the president has absolutely no respect for the sacredness of all human life. He claims to be a Christian. Has he ever read these powerful words in the scriptures? By divine inspiration, the Psalmist David wrote:

For you formed my inward parts; you knitted me together in my mother's womb. I will praise you, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made. Wonderful are your works; and that my soul knows it very well. My frame was not hidden from you when I was being made in secret, intricately woven in the depths of the earth. Your eyes saw my unformed substance; in your book were written, every one of them, the days that were formed for me, when as yet there was none of them (RSV, Psa. 139:13-16).

Did you take note of the personal pronouns David used in this passage? "You formed my inward parts....You knitted me in my mother's womb...For I am fearfully and wonderfully made." David was not speaking of a clump of cells or of a mass of protoplasm. He was describing

a living human being—a person with a soul. I heard Bill Clinton express concern about what would happen when the embryo was fertilized. The embryo is already fertilized. We would not be called an “embryo” if it were not fertilized. It would simply be an egg.

The new president plans to change the “don’t ask, don’t tell” policy on homosexuality in the military. We know what the Bible teaches about homosexuality, but that is not the main concern of many of our military leaders and soldiers. Living in close quarters, as our soldiers must do in many situations, presents real problems for some soldiers. They do not want to be propositioned by a homosexual in the same bunk. From the surveys that have been done, most of the military leaders and most of our soldiers do not want homosexuals in their outfits. But liberal politicians, radical theologians and other anti-American leaders could care less about the preferences of the American people. They think they know best and the rest of us are nincompoops.

There is no reasonable person on earth who does not know the danger of allowing just anyone to migrate to any country. This nation’s leaders had enough sense to prevent it from happening during World War I and World War II. There were German and Japanese spies who would have infiltrated our military and other groups within our nation. Tragically, the leaders in Washington either do not know or do not care about the possible dangers we face from men who cross the Mexican or Canadian borders to do great damage to our country. Al Qaeda and other radical groups are already in this nation. More of them are coming. They are not here to enjoy the protection of the United States or to enjoy the opportunities this nation provides. They are here and they are coming to kill as many Americans as possible and to destroy our economic and political system.

President George W. Bush made an egregious blunder and one that will have serious repercussions for years to

come when the told the America people that Islam is a great and peaceful religion. It is great only in the sense that it has over a billion adherents. But Islam is not peaceful. It never has been and never will be so long as Muslims believe and obey the Koran. The Koran not only permits violence against unbelievers—and that includes Christians and Jews—it actually encourages violence against those people who will not covert to Islam or who will not pay the oppressive tax Islam levies on unbelievers. If our leaders do not know this, they are inexcusably ignorant.

We must also remember that all illegal immigrants are criminals. No, I do not mean they are bank robbers or murderers—although a substantial number of them are—but they are criminals because they are here illegally. All people who engage in illegal activities are criminals. We have probably as many as 12,000,000 criminals walking the streets of America. If there were that many thieves or pickpockets or rapists walking our streets, we would be up in arms to have the government enforce the law. How can Americans respect the law when our governmental officials endorse or do not oppose illegal immigrants? I certainly do not pretend to predict the future, but it seems to be we are just waiting for some great disaster like the destruction of the Twin Towers in New York City. When that happens—not if it happens—will the leaders in Washington and elsewhere accept the responsibility for their dereliction of duty?

Do you ever wonder if the lawmakers in Washington and in some of our states have any idea about the meaning of the American Constitution? I am not and I do not claim to be a constitutional scholar, although I can read pretty well. Do you remember the words of the First Amendment to the Constitution of the United States? Just in case you have not read those words or to not remember them, please listen carefully.

Congress shall make no law respecting the establishment of religion, or prohibiting the

free exercise thereof; or abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press; or the right of the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the government for redress of grievances.

It would probably take a long freight train to carry all the articles and books that have been devoted to these few words. I want to mention only one of the expressions in this great amendment. "Congress shall make no law... prohibiting the free exercise thereof," that is, of religion. There are lawmakers in our states and in the Washington who have no respect for that clause in the Constitution. Many lawmakers want to curtail the freedom of religion. To deny that fact is to be ignorant or just plain stupid.

I shall give you one of the latest examples. Legislators in the State of Connecticut tried to pass a law that was designed to regulate the activities of the Roman Catholic Church. Those lawmakers wanted to tell the Catholic Church that the members of that church should have right to nominate and elect the bishops and the parish priests.

I do not agree with the hierarchy of the Roman Catholic Church. There is no scriptural authority for having a Pope, a College of Cardinals, Archbishops, Bishops and parish priests. I strongly disagree with the Catholic Church's teaching on the virgin marry, on purgatory, on the Lord's Supper which they call "the Eucharist" and on many other topics. But if a government—either local or state or national—can tell the Roman Catholic Church how to conduct its affairs, it can also tell the Baptist Church, the Methodist Church, the Presbyterian Church and all other religious organizations what they can teach and practice.

For the time being, that law in Connecticut has been shelved—not defeated—just shelved. What if that piece of legislation becomes the law in Connecticut or in any other state? How would the United Supreme Court rule on that legislation? I would hope and pray that the justices would have enough good sense and respect for the Constitution

to overturn such a stupid law. Am I sure they would do it? What if the new president appoints a few more liberal justices like Justice Ginsberg, could we be sure how they would rule on any law? After all, the United States Supreme Court found abortion and homosexuality in the Constitution. If they can do that, they find whatever they want in the greatest governmental document the human race has ever known—the United States Constitution.

I want to mention one other feature of the First Amendment before I look at some other topics. The Constitution guarantees Americans freedom of speech. There is a concerted effort by some members of Congress to reenact the so-called “fairness doctrine.” Let me tell you just how absolutely foolish such regulations would be. I often speak on the exclusivity of the gospel, that is, that we can be saved in Christ and only in Christ. Anyone who would like has the prerogative of challenging what I believe and preach on that topic. But if the so-called “fairness doctrine” were reinstated, that would mean atheists, agnostics, secular humanists, Hindus, Buddhists, Muslims, Zoroastrians, Confucians, Sikhs, New Agers, and all other religions and philosophies could challenge every position anyone of us could take. The radio stations would have to grant equal time for every other view in the world.

I remember contacting one radio station more than twenty years ago. I told the station manager that I sometimes speak on controversial issues, such as, radical feminism, homosexuality and abortion. I asked what would happen if the feminists, for example, demanded equal time. He said they could have equal time if they paid for it. And that is exactly what ought to be the rule both on radio and on television. If any person or group wants to challenge what I preach, they should have the freedom to do so. But the radio stations could not survive without pay from those who would challenge my messages.

Incidentally, the members of Congress who want to

reinstate the fairness doctrine do not necessarily want to curb religious views. They want to stop conservative talk shows like Rush Limbaugh, Sean Hannity, Laura Ingraham, Mark Levin and Michael Medved. But would not the same law apply to religious broadcasting? The sad fact is: Many of our legislators do not want views that are different from theirs to be broadcast on radio. Are we not still the land of the free and the home of the brave? Does not our Constitution still guarantee freedom of speech?

This nation is in the midst of great turmoil regarding our economy. But, in my opinion, we have a far greater problem than the economy. There is a lack of confidence in our national leaders. Nobody in Washington seems to know what is transpiring. In my long life, I have not seen greater confusion among our national leaders. Have you noticed how many of them seem not to be able to tell the truth? Chris Dodd, one of the United States senators from Connecticut, has just flat out lied. At first he said he did not know about the bonuses AIG was planning to pay some of the executives in the company. He then said he did know, but was not responsible for what happened. He claimed that the administration pressured him into incorporating into the language of the bailout bill the right of some employees of AIG to get bonuses. Senator Dodd is one of the most influential leaders in the United State Senate.

Tim Geithner, secretary of the treasury, is supposed to be one of the brightest minds in our country. He has not handled the truth very well. Besides, he does not seem to know how to fix our financial situation. Barney Franks has misled the American people. Several months ago, he claimed that Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac were basically sound. He was either ignorant of the situation or he did not care whether he told the truth.

When my Molly and I lived in Dalton, Georgia, I was approached by the head of one of the political parties that asked me to run for the Georgia House of

Representatives. I consulted the Dalton Superintendent of schools and others about the possibility of a run for the office. The superintendent urged me to run. He said I could be helpful to the public schools in Georgia. But the woman who shared my life discouraged me from getting into politics. She thought it would hinder my work as a gospel preacher. I valued her judgment more than that of any other person on earth. I decided to stay out of politics.

In modern times I could not be involved in politics in any way. There are two reasons: I do not go around lying and I always pay my taxes. Have you ever known of so many people who have not paid their taxes? And now we learn that many of the corporations that have received billions of dollars in bail out money owe the federal government hundreds of millions of dollars in back taxes. If the government had been more diligent in collecting taxes from the rich and famous and from major corporations, we might not be in financial situation this nation faces. Of this you can be absolutely sure: If you as an individual owed the Internal Revenue Service a hundred dollars, they would be after you night and day until you paid it.

The Bible leaves no doubt about the responsibility of all people to pay taxes. The Apostle Paul commanded the Roman Christians:

For this cause you pay tribute also: for they are God's ministers, attending continually upon this very thing. Render therefore to all their dues: tribute to whom tribute is due; custom to whom custom; fear to whom fear; honor to whom honor (Rom. 13:6-7).

The English Standard Version renders verse 7:

Pay to all what is owed them: taxes to whom taxes are owed, revenue to whom revenue is owed, respect to whom respect is owed, honor to whom honor is owed.

In his commentary on **The Epistle to the Romans** (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1965), John Murray, a Scottish theologian, affirms that the "dues" in verse 7,

...are not merely those pertaining to taxes, but as the remaining part of the verse indicates, include the debts of veneration and honor....The "tribute" corresponds to our term "tax," levied on persons and property, "custom" refers to the tax levied on goods and corresponds to customs payments (volume 2, pp. 155-156).

Our Lord Jesus Christ approved of paying taxes to government, even an evil government like Rome. The chief priests and the scribes asked Christ:

Master, we know that you say and teach rightly, neither accept the person of anyone, but teach the way of God truly: Is it lawful for us to give tribute to Caesar, or no?

The Jews absolutely despised the oppressive Roman Empire. Christ perceived the craftiness of the Jews. He asked them, "Why do you tempt me?" He then commanded: "Show me a penny (literally, a denarius)." He asked the Jews:

Whose image and superscription has it? They answered, Caesar's. And he said unto them, Render therefore unto Caesar the things which are Caesar's, and unto God the things which are God's (Luke 20:21-25).

If Jesus had thought paying taxes to an oppressive government was wrong, there is no doubt he would have told the Jews not to pay taxes.

Matthew records a very revealing account regarding taxes.

And when they (the disciples) had come to Capernaum, they who received tribute money came to Peter, and said, Does not your master pay tribute? He says, yes. And when he had come into the house, Jesus prevented him, saying, What

do you think, Simon? Of whom do the kings of the earth take custom or tribute? Of their own children, or of strangers? Peter says unto him, Of strangers. Jesus says unto him, Then are the children free. Notwithstanding, lest we should offend them, go to the sea, cast a hook, and take up the fish that comes up; and when you have opened his mouth, you shall take a piece of money: that take, and give unto them (the tax collectors) for me and you (Mt. 17:24-27).

If the Son of God had an obligation to pay taxes, should we not also honor that obligation?

It is my deep conviction that governmental officials who misuse taxes will have to give an account to God almighty for their malfeasance. The sad truth is that many public officials have made life extremely difficult for some of our citizens. They have wasted the taxpayers' money and made it almost impossible for poor people to support their families. Governmental leaders who misappropriate the people's money are thieves. Why does the federal government waste our taxes on highways in West Virginia and bridges in Alaska that are going nowhere? Those who waste tax dollars on worthless projects, such as, providing money for people to remove tattoos from their bodies, ought to be prosecuted. Would it be appropriate at this point in our study to ask, "Are the inmates running the asylum?"

John Bartlett's great book, **Familiar Quotations** (Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1955), includes this quotation from former President Grover Cleveland:

When more of the people's sustenance (or money) is exacted through the form of taxation than is necessary to meet the just obligations of Government and expenses of its economical administration, such exaction becomes ruthless extortion and a violation of the fundamental principles of a free Government (p. 689).

Do we not need men and women in office who understand that principle? Grover Cleveland also said:

However plenty silver dollars may become, they will not be distributed as gifts among the people (p. 689).

Grover Cleveland would be appalled at what is transpiring in our nation today. We are giving away our security, our prosperity and our principles. While I do not pretend to be able to predict the future, we all know deep down in our hearts that there will come a day of reckoning. I conclude this section of our discussion with these wise words from Jean Baptiste Colbert:

The art of taxation is so plucking the goose as to obtain the largest possible amount of feathers with the smallest possible amount of hissing (R. Randall Watkins. **An Encyclopedia of Compelling Quotations** (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 2001, p. 697).

Is there anything we can do about the tragic situation in America? I sincerely believe every American can make a difference in our world, if we are truly concerned about the moral and spiritual atmosphere in our nation. If time allowed, I could give you names of people who changed the course of history because they used their voices, votes and prayers to make a difference. Do you remember the story of Esther in the Bible? Her people were on the brink of extinction, but she turned the tide against the enemies of God and of the Jews. She knew the danger she faced, but she had the courage to do what had to be done. These words from Queen Esther ought to be an inspiration to all who face danger in carrying out their duty: "If I perish, I perish" (Est. 4:16).

I was privileged to be one of the founders of Middle Tennessee Christian School in Murfreesboro. Recently the president of the school asked me to speak at a fundraising banquet at the school. I chose as my topic, *"The Difference*

One Person Can Make." I outlined some of the problems our nation faces and then asked, "What difference can one person make?" I spoke about Queen Esther, King Josiah and others who have made a difference in the lives of their fellow citizens. I especially dwelt on the contribution of William Wilberforce, a member of the English parliament.

Kevin Belmonte's book, **William Wilberforce: A Hero of Humanity** (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2007), provides a great amount of information about Wilberforce. He was a very wealthy member of the House of Commons. "Throughout his life," Belmonte says,

...he championed some seventy philanthropic initiatives. He was an advocate of child labor laws and ardently supported the education of the blind and the deaf. He funded hospitals and schools with his own money (p. 17).

One of the main concerns of his life was the abolition of the slave trade in England. He wrote in his diary:

God has placed before me two great objects, the suppression of the slave trade and the reformation of manners (or morals) (p. 97).

He fought regularly in the House of Commons to eradicate slavery from the face of the earth. After twenty years of bitter battles with his fellow legislators, the House of Commons voted 283 to 16 to abolish the slave trade.

Wilberforce influenced William Lloyd Garrison, one of America's most influential abolitionists. When the House of Commons outlawed slavery, Wilberforce responded:

Thank God that I should have lived to witness a day in which England was willing to give 20,000,000 pounds for the Abolition of Slavery (p. 332).

You may be tempted to say: "But I am not a queen like Esther or a member of the House of Commons like William Wilberforce. What can an ordinary person like me

do?" I am reminded of the words of Martin Niemoeller, a German Lutheran preacher. Niemoeller knew just how evil Hitler and the Nazis were, but failed to speak out against their wickedness. Please listen to Niemoeller.

First they (the Nazis) came for the Communists, and I did not speak up because I was not a Communist. Then they came for the Jews, and I did not speak up because I was not a Jew. Next they came for the trade unionists, and I did not speak up because I was not a trade unionist. Then they came for the Catholics, and I did not speak up because I was a Protestant. And when they came for me, there was no one left to speak up.

Personally, I do not want to be in that situation, do you?

Chapter 30

When Does Life Begin?

When I was teaching in the Bible Department at Freed-Hardeman University at Henderson, Tennessee, I engaged in a running battle of words with the editorial writers of *The Jackson Sun* of Jackson, Tennessee. I will say this about the editorial writers of the newspaper: They were fair enough to print my responses to their liberal moral views. For example, in one of their editorials, they asked: "Who killed the ERA?", that is, the Equal Rights Amendment. I responded to their question by arguing that it was the American people who killed the ERA. My article was rather lengthy, but they printed every word of it. Even though we were almost always on different sides of moral issues, they always treated me with respect. When I retired from teaching at Freed-Hardeman, the editors of the paper wrote a brief article commending the work I had tried to do in West Tennessee.

Recently I was in a meeting in West Tennessee at the Westport Church of Christ. During that meeting I purchased a copy of *The Jackson Sun*. In that edition of the paper (Wednesday, March 25, 2009) there was a guest editorial by Dr. Gene Davenport, a former professor and Chair of the Department of Religion and Philosophy at Lambuth University in Jackson. Dr. Davenport's article has the title, "*We can't know when life begins.*" He wrote the article in response to President Obama's order regarding stem cell research. He concludes his article with these tremendously disturbing words:

The fact is that neither science, (nor) medicine, nor religion gives us a verifiable answer to when a cell or a collection of cells becomes a human being. Consequently, governmental orders will continue to be issued according to the viewpoint of those, who, at the moment, hold political power (p. 5-A).

Recently I heard a discussion on stem cell research. Former President Bill Clinton said the problem arises when the embryo is fertilized. Bill Clinton should have known that an embryo is fertilized. It would not be called an embryo if it had not been fertilized. It would simply be an egg. A cell does not become a human being until it has been fertilized and becomes a zygote. When the egg and the sperm unite, the result is a human being. All that remains is growth. The DNA at the time of the uniting of egg and sperm is all there is of that being and all there ever will be.

I need to make a broad statement regarding Dr. Davenport's observation. There are probably many scientists who do not know when life begins. That may be true of geologists, anthropologists, archaeologists, sociologists and physicists. It almost certainly is not true of biologists, physiologists, anatomists, and similar specialists. Every physician on earth knows when life begins. There are obviously physicians who do not care when life begins. They make their living aborting babies. If they really cared when life begins, they could not bring themselves to destroy babies in their mother's wombs. But they know and you know when life begins. It begins when the sperm fertilizes the egg.

Tragically there are scholars, like Peter Singer at Princeton University, who support infanticide, that is, killing handicapped babies after they are born. In fact, Dr. Singer, the Chair of the Department of Ethics at Princeton, thinks a newborn pig is superior to a handicapped newborn baby. A newborn pig can take care of himself and a handicapped newborn baby cannot. Joseph Fletcher, the infamous situation ethicist, believes babies should not be declared human until at least three days after they are born. If children have severe mental or physical handicaps, they can be killed because they were not declared to be human. I seriously doubt that Dr. Davenport would support the rantings and ravings of men like Peter Singer and Joseph Fletcher.

Dr. Davenport mentions three different academic disciplines – science, medicine and religion. I shall discuss these disciplines in the reverse order. I shall first deal with some of the Bible’s teaching on when life begin. I urge you to listen carefully as I read to you these inspired words from the Psalms. I shall read these verses from the King James Version. The Psalmist David praised God almighty for his wondrous grace in creating him.

For thou hast possessed my reins (that is, my inward parts): thou hast covered me in my mother’s womb. I will praise thee for I am fearfully and wonderfully made: marvelous are thy works; and that my soul knows right well. My substance was not hidden from thee, when I was made in secret, and curiously wrought in the lowest parts of the earth. Thine eyes did see my substance, yet being unperfect (or unformed); and in thy book all my members were written, which in continuance were fashioned, when as yet there was none of them (Psa. 139:13-16).

Dr. Davenport completely ignored this passage. The passage raises a number of questions concerning the beginning of human life. Did you notice in the reading from Psalm 139 that King David applied personal pronouns to him while he was in his mother’s womb? King David said to God almighty:

Thou hast possessed *my* reins (or inward parts). Thou hast covered *me* in my mother’s womb....*I* will praise thee; for *I* am fearfully and wonderfully made: marvelous are thy works; and that *my* soul knows right well. *My* substance was not hidden from thee, when *I* was made in secret, and curiously wrought in the lowest parts of the earth. Thine eyes did see *my* substance, yet being unperfect (or unformed); and in thy book all *my* members were written, which in continuance were fashioned, when as yet there was none of them.

Let us agree just for the sake of argument that Dr. Davenport is right that we cannot know when life begins. Is that a risk thoughtful people are willing to take? What if life begins at fertilization, do human beings have a right to take the life of the child or to conduct experiments on the child? Maybe life begins at the first month or at the second month. Where along the continuum of the child development do we have the right to say, "This creature is not really a human being? We can abort the child or we can use it for stem cell research." I am aware of some people's objection to the slippery slope argument, but how can we avoid it in cases like this? Those who support so-called "partial birth abortion" must believe that life does not begin until the child has exited its mother's body. Is that the position Dr. Davenport is willing to support? Peter Singer and Joseph Fletcher may believe that life begins at conception or somewhere along the line between conception and birth, but they are not sure the child who is already born is always worth saving. They explicitly deny the sacredness of all human life.

In his excellent book, **When Choice Becomes God** (Eugene, OR: Harvest House, 1990), F. LaGard Smith, a former professor of law at Pepperdine University School of Law in Malibu, California, appeals to the earthquake in San Francisco to show what a slippery slope the abortion industry promotes.

For several days following the disastrous San Francisco earthquake in 1989, an entire nation sat glued to its television sets, hope against hope that survivors would be found in the pancaked remains of the Nimitz Freeway. Among the dedicated rescue workers, no one was prepared to say, "We don't really know that anyone is still alive in the rubble, so we're going to go ahead and demolish the whole thing. After all, the people trapped in their cars are probably dead by now." What could have been more

unthinkable? Until they knew for certain that no one else was alive, they risked their own lives in order to make sure (p. 124).

Since men like Dr. Davenport say we cannot know when life begins, should we not take every precaution to make sure we do not kill a human being?

F. LaGard Smith quotes these words from Dr. Thomas Elkins, a neonatal physician:

We don't treat the fetus as a potential person. We have been approaching the fetus as a patient for a long time, especially in the third trimester when it is still a fetus. We can do a lot of things for that fetus that basically elevate it in every way and every sense of personhood. We operate for the benefit of the fetus—we do it every day. We monitor the fetus—we do it every day. We intervene when it appears ill and rush to save its life. And I mean we rush. It's a two-minute dash to the C-section room to get out a fetus who has collapsed its cord. It's a dash for a life we feel is very, very personal. So, to say that the fetus is only potential life is to miss some of the quality that we have already placed on it (pp. 126-127).

In 1965 *Life* magazine published Lennart Nilsson's photo essay entitled "*Drama of Life before Birth.*" According to F. LaGard Smith, Nilsson wrote passionately about the embryo.

The birth of a human being really occurs at the moment the mother's egg cell is fertilized by one of the father's sperm cells.

Nilsson showed a 3 ½-week-old embryo. Please listen to his description of the 3 ½-week-old embryo.

This embryo is so tiny—about a tenth of an inch long—that the mother may not even know she is pregnant. Yet there is already impressive internal development, though not visible here.

This embryo has the beginnings of eyes, spinal cord, nervous system, thyroid gland, lungs, stomach, kidney, and intestines. Its primitive heart, which began beating on the 18th day, is now pumping more confidently. On the bulge of the chest, the tiny buds of arms—not yet visible—are forming (p. 128).

Would Dr. Davenport deny that life has already begun?
At 6 ½ weeks,

Though the embryo weighs only 1/30 of an ounce, it has all its internal organs of the adult in various stages of development. It already has a little mouth with lips, an early tongue and buds for 20 milk teeth. Its sex and reproductive organs have begun to sprout (p. 128).

These facts are beyond dispute. So that when a woman recognizes that she is pregnant, she has every right to say: "I am with child."

Randy Alcorn has written extensively on matters pertaining to abortion and human sexuality. His book, **Pro Life Answers to Pro Choice Arguments** (Portland, OR: Multnomah, 1992), has the explicit endorsement of some of the most influential leaders in the pro-life movement. On the back cover of the book, there is a powerful testimony of a medical doctor, Paul Rockwell.

While giving an anesthetic for a ruptured ectopic pregnancy....I was handed what I believe was the smallest living human being ever seen.... This tiny human being was perfectly developed, with long, tapering fingers, feet and toes....The baby was extremely alive and swam about the (amniotic) sac approximately one time per second, with a natural swimmer's stroke.

Incidentally, an ectopic pregnancy is one that occurs outside the womb, for example, in the fallopian tubes.

Randy Alcorn quotes from pro-choice people: "No

one can really know that human life begins before birth." He then provides six groups of people who know that life begins before birth. I shall briefly examine each of these groups. Even children know when life begins. Randy Alcorn heard a report about some children who found some fetuses in a dumpster. They ran home and told their parents they had found some dead babies.

Jean Garton tells the moving story of her three-year old who wandered into her room late at night and inadvertently saw a photo of a ten-week abortion. The mother describes his (the child's) reaction. His small voice was filled with great sadness as he asked, 'Who broke the baby?' How could this small, innocent child see what so many adults cannot see? How could he know instinctively that this which many people carelessly dismiss as tissue or a blob was one in being with him, was like him (p. 70)?

Incidentally, Jean Garton wrote an excellent book with the title, **Who Broke the Baby?: A Brilliant Disclosure of What the Abortion Slogans Really Mean** (Minneapolis: Bethany, 1979). Dr. C. Everett Koop says: "This book gets to the heart of the matter."

Randy Alcorn insists: "Pregnant women know that human life begins before birth." No woman ever said: "A blob of protoplasm in my body just kicked me." She knows it was her baby who kicked her. Randy Alcorn tells of a visit he and his wife made to an abortion clinic. They watched three women come out of the clinic. They had all been crying. Alcorn's wife said to him:

You don't grieve like that when you've just had a lump of tissue removed. You grieve like that when you've lost your baby (p. 70).

Why should any intelligent person have difficulty deciding when life begins?

I have already stated but I would like to repeat: Every physician on earth knows that human life begins before

birth. All doctors realize they are treating two patients when a pregnant woman comes into their offices. Randy Alcorn reports:

After a life-saving surgery on an unborn child, the surgeon stated that such surgeries "make it clear that the fetus is a patient."....A pro-choice editorial in (the journal) *California Medicine* recognized that the position that human life does not begin at conception is politically and socially expedient for the pro-choice movement, but "everyone" knows it is simply untrue: "Since the old ethic has not been fully displaced it has been necessary to separate the idea of abortion from the idea of killing, which continues to be socially abhorrent. The result has been a curious avoidance of the scientific fact, which everyone really knows, that human life begins at conception and is continuous whether intra- or extra-uterine until death" (pp. 70-71).

Randy Alcorn affirms: "Society knows that human life begins before birth." *The Oregonian* (a prominent Oregon newspaper) reported: "Judge sends mother to jail to protect unborn child." One of the strangest phenomena is our schizophrenic culture is this: It is illegal to harm an unborn child, such as, by imbibing cocaine or heroin or other dangerous drugs while the mother is pregnant. But the law protects the woman who kills her child by abortion. Alcorn tells of a man who "stabbed a woman in the abdomen, thereby killing the 'fetus' within her. Though the woman lived, the man was convicted of taking a human life, and his conviction was upheld in a higher court" (p. 72).

Randy Alcorn says: "The media know that human life begins before birth." He quotes an article from *Time* magazine.

Courts will never be able to ensure real protection to an unborn child. That will have to come from

mothers who take responsibility for the lives they carry within them.

Chrysler Corporation published a two-page ad which read:

Susan Reed was on her way to work when a drunk driver crashed into Susan's 1990 Dodge Spirit. Both cars were totally destroyed. But Mrs. Reed was wearing her lap/shoulder belt, and the Dodge Spirit was equipped with a driver's air bag. It saved her life. And it saved another life. Her baby's (p. 73).

Can we refer to the living being inside the mother as a baby only if the mother wants to keep the baby?

Finally, even "pro-choice advocates know that human life begins before birth." Randy Alcorn saw a pro-abortion woman on television. She was defending abortion. She said: "I always carried my babies low." Randy visited a pro-choice rally. One person was carrying a sign which read: "My body, my baby, my business."

An editorial in the *New Republic* concedes the humanity of the unborn and admits that there is no essential difference between born and unborn. It draws a conclusion refreshingly candid but chilling in its implications: "There is no logical or moral distinction between a fetus and a young baby; free availability of abortion cannot be reasonably distinguished from euthanasia. Nevertheless we are for it. It is too facile to say that human life is always sacred; obviously it is not." Psychologist and pro-choice advocate Magda Denes wrote: "I do think abortion is murder—of a very special and necessary sort. And no physician ever involved with the procedure ever kids himself about that" (pp. 73-74).

You may remember from the Bill Clinton's fiasco that Dr. John Whitehead defended Paula Jones against the president. Whitehead is the founder of the Rutherford

Institute in Manassas, Virginia, and a prolific writer on social issues. In 1985 he edited a book with the title, **Arresting Abortion: Practical Ways to Save Unborn Children** (Westchester, IL: Crossway). One of the chapters, "*Myths and Realities*," was written by the late Dr. D. James Kennedy. Dr. Kennedy tells of a meeting of sixty prominent physicians who met in Cambridge, Massachusetts. Those physicians met to present

A declaration which said that the biological facts are absolutely conclusive that the unborn child is a living being. These doctors included Drs. Hofmeister and Schmidt, past presidents of the American College of Obstetrics and Gynecology, and also Dr. Joseph Faley, past president of the American Academy of Neurology. Also included was Dr. Bernard Nathanson, formerly one of the leading abortionists in America. These doctors said: "The developing fetus is not a sub-human species with a different genetic composition. As clearly demonstrated by in vitro (dish) fertilization, so also in vivo (womb) the embryo is alive, human, and unique in the special environmental support required for that stage of human development" (pp. 20-21).

Dr. R. C. Sproul is one of America's most influential evangelical authors. One of his books has the title, **Abortion: A Rational Look at an Emotional Issue** (Colorado Springs: Navpress, 1990). Dr. Sproul wisely observes:

If we grant that merely five minutes, or even five seconds, before birth the fetus is a living person, then the line of birth cannot be the demarcation to determine when life begins (p. 62).

Dr. Sproul quotes Sandra Day O'Connor, former U. S. Supreme Court Justice:

The difficulty with this analysis is clear: Potential life is no less potential in the first weeks of pregnancy than it is at viability or afterwards....

The choice of viability as the point at which the state interest in potential life become compelling is no less arbitrary than choosing any point before viability or any point afterward. Accordingly, I believe that the state's interest in protecting potential life exists throughout the pregnancy (p. 63).

Tragically, Sandra Day O'Connor uses unscientific and unreasonable language. Life in the mother's womb is not "potential." It is as real as your life and mine. It is simply not developed. But neither is the life of a newborn baby.

Dr. Paul Fowler is a Presbyterian preacher and a professor of New Testament at Columbia Graduate School of Bible and Missions in Columbia, South Carolina. His book, **Abortion: Toward an Evangelical Consensus** (Portland, OR: Multnomah, 1987), provides a great amount of valuable information on abortion. He quotes John Frame, a distinguished evangelical author:

There is nothing in scripture that even remotely suggests that the unborn child is anything less than a human person from the moment of conception (p. 147).

He also quotes Dr. John R. W. Stott, a conservative Anglican scholar:

The fetus is not a growth in the mother's body (which can be removed as readily as her tonsils or appendix), nor even a potential human being, but a human life, who though not yet mature, has the potentiality to grow into fullness of the humanity it already possesses (p. 149).

As we conclude our study of the topic, "When Does Life Begin?", I must take note of some other passages from God's inspired word. Isaiah engaged in his prophetic ministry about 750 years before Christ. Please listen to these inspiring words.

Listen, O isles, unto me; and hearken, you people from afar; the Lord has called me from

the womb; from the bowels of my mother has he made mention of my name. And he has made my mouth like a sharp sword, in the shadow of his hand has he hidden me, and made me a polished shaft; in his quiver he has hidden me; and said unto me, You are my servant, O Israel, in whom I will be glorified. Then I said, I have labored in vain, I have spent my strength for nothing, and in vain: yet surely my judgment is with the Lord, and my work with my God.

The prophet asked:

Can a woman forget her nursing child, that she should not have compassion on the son of her womb? Yes, they may forget, but I will not forget you (Isa. 49:1-4, 15).

Most Bible students are familiar with God's call to Jeremiah.

The word of the Lord came unto me, saying, Before I formed you in the belly I knew you; and before you came out of the womb I sanctified you, and I ordained you a prophet unto the nations (Jer. 1:4-5).

Was Jeremiah a real person before he was born? If he were not, why did God use personal pronouns of him while he was still in his mother's body? Five times in verse 5 God referred to Jeremiah as a person. Dr. Davenport thinks God was speaking in metaphors.

The passage means simply that God had intended Jeremiah's function long before Jeremiah was conceived or born (p. 5-A).

But was not Jeremiah a human being while he was in his mother's womb? God said he knew Jeremiah before he came out of the womb and sanctified him. When this verse is taken in connection with other verses, it shows conclusively that life begins before birth.

We need to examine a Greek word that will settle this

question. The Greek word *brephos* appears eight times in the New Testament. The word is used of children in their mother's wombs and of children who have been born. Luke tells of Mary's visit to her cousin Elizabeth. When she came to the home of Zachariah, she saluted Elizabeth, the mother of John the Baptist.

And it came to pass, that, when Elizabeth heard the salutation of Mary, the babe leaped in her womb; and Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit: and she spoke out with a loud voice, and said, Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of you womb. And whence is this to me, that the mother of my Lord should come to me? For, lo, as soon as the voice of your salutation sounded in my ears, the babe leaped in my womb for joy (Luke 1:39-44).

Was it a baby that leaped in Elizabeth's womb or was it merely a blob of protoplasm that would become a baby when it was born? Was Dr. Davenport familiar with this passage? He never mentioned it in his article.

The angel of God said to the shepherds:

Fear not: for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord. And this shall be a sign unto you, You shall find the babe wrapped in swaddling clothes, lying in a manger....And they came with haste, and found Mary, and Joseph, and the babe lying in a manger (Luke 2:10-12, 16).

John the Baptist was a baby when he was still in his mother's body. Jesus was a baby when he was born. The Bible makes no distinction between the baby who is still in the womb and the child who has exited his mother's womb. So how in the world can Dr. Davenport overlook these biblical passages?

I close with these words from Dr. Paul Fowler.

Abortion is a denial that God is involved in the development process; abortion is a denial that life is a gift; abortion is a denial that God cares for the unborn; abortion is a denial that God has a purpose for the unborn; abortion is a denial that the unborn child is a person (p. 152).

Chapter 31

Choose Death

The Right-to-Life committee here in the State of Tennessee applied to the State Licensing Commission to allow people to have on their license plates, "Choose Life." The state agreed to the arrangement, but the American Civil Liberties Union objected. Surprise! Surprise! The ACLU brought a lawsuit against the state. That unreasonable and un-American organization argued that having "Choose Life" on license plates would amount to the establishment of religion. The Tennessee Supreme Court had the good sense to deny the ACLU's stupid arguments. Tennesseans will now be permitted to support the sacredness of all human life, including unborn babies, handicapped children and nonproductive old people. If the ACLU does not like the expression, "Choose Life," they do not have to have it on their license plates. Why do not the members of that ridiculous organization express their true views by having "Choose Death" on their license plates? Is that not what they truly believe? Our lesson today will be entitled, "Choose Death."

The expression, "choose life," comes from the book of Deuteronomy. God had delivered the Jews from Egyptian bondage and had brought them to threshold of the land of promise. As they prepared to enter Canaan, God said to them:

See, I have set before you this day life and good, and death and evil; in that I command you this day to love the Lord your God, to walk in his ways, and to keep his commandments, and his statutes and his judgments, that you may live and multiply; and the Lord your God shall bless you in the land that you go to possess. But if your heart turn away, so that you will not hear, but shall be drawn away, and worship other

gods, and serve them; I declare to you this day, that you shall surely perish, and you shall not prolong your days upon the land, where you go over Jordan to possess it. I call heaven and earth to witness this day against you, that I have set before you life and death, blessing and cursing: therefore choose life, that both you and your children may live: that you may love the Lord your God, and that you may obey his voice, and that you may cleave unto him: for he is your life, and the length of your days: that you may dwell in the land which the Lord swore unto your fathers, to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob, to give to them (Dt. 30:15-20).

You can discern from this Old Testament passage that the Jews' stay in Canaan was contingent on their obedience to the laws God had given them. God commanded the Jews to "walk in his ways, and to keep his commandments and his statutes and his judgments" (Deut. 30:16). If the Jews turned away from hearing the words of the Lord and worshipped idols, they could not remain in the land of Canaan. I have two questions for you to consider. Did choosing life mean keeping God's commandments? May we choose life and not keep the commandments of the Lord? The apostle John answers my second question in words that we should have no difficulty understanding.

And hereby we know that we know him, if we keep his commandments. He who says, I know him, and does not keep his commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him. But whoso keeps his word, in him verily is the love of God perfected: hereby we know that we are in him (1 John 2:3-5).

When we take the tenses of the verbs into consideration, verse three reads as follows: "Hereby we continue to know that we keep on knowing him, if we keep on keeping his commandments."

It may sound strange to people who are unfamiliar with American society, but there are many individuals in our culture who choose death, sometimes for themselves, but especially for others. For example, Dr. Jack Kevorkian, sometimes called "Dr. Death," has assisted a number of people in taking their lives. Some of those people were not terminally ill. They just wanted to die. The truth is Jack Kevorkian is a monster who has no respect for human life. We do not know whether he will choose death for himself, but he has chosen it for others. So far as the word of God is concerned, Jack Kevorkian is guilty of murder.

Have you ever heard of the Hemlock Society? Derek Humphry and his wife Ann Wickett co-founded the Hemlock Society. On the back cover of their book, **The Right to Die: Understanding Euthanasia** (New York: Harper & Row, Publishers, 1986), the publisher summarizes the purpose of the book:

In **The Right to Die**, Ann Wickett and Derek Humphry – both leading authorities in the field – give a complete history of the subject, beginning with Greek and Roman attitudes toward death. They cover active and passive euthanasia, suicide, and the medical and legal issues, as well as the moral and ethical questions on both sides. **The Right to Die** is the only book which evaluates this critical subject comprehensively and objectively.

Derek Humphry has also written a book with the title, **Dying with Dignity; Understanding Euthanasia** (New York: Carol Publishing Group, 1992). These are very disturbing approaches to the sacredness of all human life. Now here comes the stinger. Rita Marker's book, **Deadly Compassion: The Death of Ann Humphry and the Truth About Euthanasia** (New York: William Morrow and Company, Inc., 1993), provides some very disturbing information about Derek Humphry and the Hemlock Society. Ann Humphry, co-founder of the Hemlock Society,

developed cancer. She told Rita Marker that her husband had abandoned her. Ann said she was undergoing treatment for her cancer. No one—not her husband and no one else from the Hemlock Society—offered any help. Ann told Rita Marker: “It’s like I’m already dead. Derek and I started Hemlock. We’ve spent the last ten years talking about helping people with life-threatening illnesses. When I got cancer, he left...” (p. 19).

Derek Humphry’s first wife, Jean, developed cancer. The two agreed that if she ever asked to be killed, he would provide the means by which she could kill herself. Rita Marker writes:

Jean Humphry sat up in the couple’s bed, nibbling toast and sipping tea. She gazed at her beloved roses outside the window of their little country cottage. Then she turned to Derek and asked him the question: “Is this the day?” Knowing what she meant, he told her it was. He gave her a lethal dose of drugs. The drugs took effect less than an hour after she had taken them (p. 33).

Ann Humphry said that Jean died by suffocation. Derek Humphry smothered his wife with a pillow (p. 35).

Many of you remember the name Christiaan Barnard, the famous South African heart surgeon. He spoke at a conference of the Hemlock Society. He quoted these words from Dr. B. F. Skinner, the infamous Harvard psychologist: “We dispose of an old dog in a way that is called humane.... Many old people, living in pain or as a burden on others, would be glad to be put to death caninely” (p. 51).

Ann Humphry’s parents were old and in poor health. Derek accompanied her father in a room for him to take a lethal dose and die. Ann fed a lethal dose to her mother. Please listen to what happened.

My mother started to die, and then something went wrong, and it was awful. Her breathing started to get sort of agitated, and I got really

scared. And Derek had always said to me, you know, 'Just use a plastic bag or pillow.' And I just did it because I was so terrified. There was a plastic laundry bag with her linens, her soiled linen in it, and I took the bag and I just very gently held it over her mouth. And I have never gotten over that. And she died very peacefully. But I walked away from that house thinking we're both murderers and I can't live like that anymore (p. 72).

There is much more in Rita Marker's book, but I do not have time to review it today. She makes it very plain that the theme of the Hemlock Society is: Choose death!

Incidentally, Betty Rollin, a TV journalist with both NBC and ABC participated in the death of her mother. In her book, *Last Wish* (New York: Warner Books, 1985), Betty Rollin tells how she helped her own mother to commit suicide. Betty Rollin's mother developed ovarian cancer. Betty Rollin makes the killing of her mother sound loving and compassionate and honorable. She should have been arrested and tried for killing her mother. As her mother was preparing to take her life, Betty Rollin told her mother that she loved her. I have one comment: Do not love me that much.

Since 1973 when the United Supreme Court legalized the killing of babies in their mothers' wombs, citizens of the United States have chosen death for more than forty-five million unborn babies—forty-five million. That number is roughly fifteen times as many people as live in the city of Atlanta. In your wildest imagination, did you ever believe that could happen in the home of the brave and the land of the free? Tragically, as pro-life people, including your speaker, have said many times: A mother's womb is the most dangerous place on earth for a baby. If that is not choosing death for millions of our potential citizens, what would you call it?

Do you suppose that abortion could lead to infanticide?

The word "infanticide" refers to those children who are killed after they exit their mother's bodies. But would Americans ever kill their own children? We know infanticide was widely practiced in ancient Rome and in other primitive cultures, but Americans have more compassion and love for their children, do they not? As a matter of fact, many Americans participate in the killing of their babies and small children. I know that is a serious indictment, but anyone who keeps up with what is occurring in our country cannot disagree with what I have just said.

If you are not familiar with what I am about to say, it may shake you up. But if you do not know what is occurring in many of America's hospitals, it is time you get shaken up. Dr. Francis J. Beckwith is a lecturer in philosophy at the University of Nevada, Las Vegas. He has written extensively on issues pertaining to life. In his excellent book, **Politically Correct Death: Answering Arguments for Abortion Rights** (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1993), Dr. Beckwith has assembled a variety of views about the sanctity of life. Margaret Sanger, a modern Jezebel, says: "The most merciful thing a large family can do for one of its infant members is kill it" (p. 174). Peter Singer, professor of philosophy at Princeton, does not value a baby any more than he does a pig or a dog. If you think I might be exaggerating his view, please listen.

Species membership in Homo-sapiens (that is, in the human family) is not morally relevant. If we compare a dog or a pig to a severely defective infant, we often find the non-human to have superior capacities (p. 174).

James Watson, co-discoverer of DNA and a Nobel Prize laureate, says,

Because of the present limits of such detection methods, most birth defects are not discovered until birth....If the child was not declared alive

until three days after its birth, then all parents could be allowed the choice...The doctor could allow the child to die if the parents so choose and save a lot of misery and suffering (p. 174).

If Americans adopt the views of people like James Watson, Peter Singer and Margaret Sanger, America does not deserve to survive. People who kill handicapped infants or other children choose death—not just for the children—but for themselves as well. If the Bible means what it says, those who kill children—whether born or unborn—are choosing “the lake that burns with fire and brimstone: which is the second death” (Rev. 21:8).

One of the great concerns of moral people in our nation is the proliferation and the endorsement of homosexual behavior. I preached a sermon on homosexuality on this program a few months ago. I called the sermon, “*Homosexuality – A Death Style.*” Obviously, I do not have time to review all the information I discussed on that occasion, but I do want to mention some of it.

Homosexual activists in our nation often refer to homosexuality as “an alternate lifestyle.” They want us to believe that homosexuality is just as legitimate as heterosexuality. In fact, many homosexuals believe and do not hesitate to say that homosexuality is superior in some ways to heterosexuality. At least, homosexual conduct does not add to the population explosion in our world. But the sad truth is: If the nation endorses homosexuality as an alternate way for men and women to express their sexual appetites, we would become unpopulated. Incidentally, there is a dangerous decrease in the population of Germany, of Italy and of other European countries. Their population is actually below replacement levels. That fact may have little or nothing to do with homosexuality, but widespread homosexuality will be detrimental to any country, including the United States of America.

I am not by myself in describing homosexuality as a “death style.” Charles Socarides is a medical doctor

who has worked with men and women who are confused about their sexual identity. Dr. Socarides has written a very perceptive book with the title, **Homosexuality: A Freedom too Far** (Phoenix: Adam Margrave Books, 1995). The subtitle of Dr. Socarides' book is: *A Psychoanalyst Answers 1000 Questions About the Causes and Cure and the Impact of the Gay Rights Movement on American Society*. Dr. Socarides calls "the gay lifestyle...a death style" (p. 269). He mentions an observation John J. McNeill, a former Roman Catholic priest, made about a French homosexual by the name of Jean Genet:

Today, with the onset of the AIDS epidemic, we who are gay...are now linked to a frightening, usually fatal disease. By our very existence...we are a constant reminder to everyone of the inevitability of death. Gay people are now called upon to give a special witness to the meaning of death (p. 270).

Surely by now everyone in the United States knows about the association between homosexual sex and AIDS. The only problem is that sexually transmitted diseases were rampant in the homosexual community long before AIDS was discovered in the early 1980s. Every health care professional in America has known for years that homosexuals—especially male homosexuals—were dangerously infected by many sexually transmitted diseases. Dr. Socarides affirms:

Some pretty good studies have already proven that male homosexuals have a very high infection rate for STDs. In New York City, at one point in the 1980s, 52 percent of the gay population had come down with these diseases. In Dallas (the number) was 60 percent. And then there's the STD to beat all STDs: AIDS (p. 190).

Louis Shelton, founder of an organization called Traditional Values Coalition, has written a book with

the title, **The Agenda: The Homosexual Plan to Change America** (Lake Mary, FL: FrontLine, 2005), which provides some up-to-date information about sexually transmitted diseases within the homosexual community. Please listen carefully to what Shelton writes about diseases among male homosexuals.

Human papillomavirus (HPV), which has been linked to cervical cancer in women, was found in 57 percent of the homosexuals who participated in the study.

It is also linked to cancer in men. The HPV rates are extremely high in some cities.

In San Francisco, 61 percent of the men are infected, 57 percent in Boston, 60 percent in New York City and 49 percent in Denver (pp. 64-65).

The late Randy Shilts was regarded as the nation's most expert journalist on the AIDS epidemic. Shilts worked as a reporter for the *San Francisco Journal*. He broke a number of key AIDS news stories. In his book, **And the Band Played On: Politics, People and the AIDS Epidemic** (New York: Penguin Books, 1987), Randy Shilts provides an enormous amount of information about the homosexual lifestyle and the many tragedies that occur in cities like San Francisco, Los Angeles, New Orleans and Atlanta. Randy Shilts was a very capable journalist who died of AIDS. Shilts mentions that Rock Hudson died of AIDS. He says:

People died while public health authorities and political leaders who guided them refused to take the tough measures necessary to curb the epidemic's spread, opting for political expediency over the public health. And people died while gay community leaders played politics with the disease, putting political dogma ahead of the preservation of human life (p. xxii of the Prologue).

Incidentally, Randy Shilts also discusses the many other sexually transmitted diseases that wracked the homosexual community, such as, amebiasis, giardiasis, gastrointestinal parasites, shigellosis, hepatitis B, genital herpes, gonorrhea and syphilis.

If you have any doubt why I refer to homosexuality as a "death style," I shall give you one more piece of disturbing evidence. Do you know the average lifespan of a male homosexual? The average male heterosexual will live to the age of seventy-five, a mark I passed more than five years ago. The average woman will live to be almost seventy-nine. According to Louis Shelton,

Dr. Paul Cameron conducted an important study of the mortality rates of homosexuals. He recorded the age of the death of homosexuals as reported in the death notices of eighteen homosexual journals over an eleven-period, and what he found was that the median age of death was the late thirties for those with acquired immunodeficiency syndrome (AIDS). For those who had not developed AIDS, the median age of death was only slightly longer, in the early forties. Statistics for lesbians indicated an average lifespan of less than fifty years (p. 56).

In very serious language, the lifespan of a male homosexual is cut almost in half by his sexual activities. Why should we not call homosexuality "a death style?"

It must be emphasized that many people are choosing death—not because they support abortion, infanticide, euthanasia or homosexual conduct—but because they reject Jesus Christ as our only Savior. Did not our Lord tell his disciples: "I am the way, the truth and the life: not man comes to the Father but by me" (John 14:6)? You may reject what Christ told his disciples, but it would be extremely difficult not to understand what he said. If you reject Jesus Christ as the Savior of the world, you are choosing death—not physical death—but eternal separation from God and the saints of all the ages.

Jesus told some of the Jews of his coming departure from this world. He told them: "I go my way, and you seek me, and you shall die in your sins: where I go, you cannot come." The Jews asked among themselves: "Will he kill himself? Because he says, Where I go you cannot come." He told the Jews: "You are from beneath; I am from above: you are of this world; I am not of this world." Please listen carefully.

I said therefore unto you, that you shall die in your sins: for if you do not believe that I am he, you shall die in your sins (John 8:21-24).

When Christ told the Jews they would die in their sins, he was not speaking of physical death. Regardless of the Jews' attitude toward Christ, they were going to die physically. Jesus was teaching that all who will be saved from their sins must believe that he is the Christ the Son of the living God. When men in our generation reject Christ as Savior, they are choosing death. Incidentally, they may be good people morally, but they cannot be saved without believing in Christ. Liberal theologians and others think this teaching is intolerant, but it is the teaching of Christ and the apostles.

Some of Christ's contemporaries were concerned that good men often had to endure tragedies. They told Jesus of some Galileans whose blood Pilate mingled with their sacrifices. In other words, Pilate murdered some of the Jews who were offering sacrifices to God almighty. Jesus asked them: "Do you suppose that these Galileans were sinners above all the Galileans, because they suffered such things?" Jesus answered his own question:

I tell you, No; but, except you repent, you shall likewise perish. Or those eighteen, upon whom the tower of Siloam fell, and slew them, do you think that they were sinners above all that dwell in Jerusalem? I tell you, No: but, except you repent, you shall all likewise perish (Luke 13:1-5).

Is there any doubt in your mind that all sinners must repent to be forgiven? If we do not repent, are we not choosing death? Must not unfaithful members of the body of Christ repent? After the members of the church at Ephesus had left their first love, Christ told them in no uncertain terms:

Remember therefore from whence you have fallen, and repent, and do your first works; or else I will come unto you quickly, and will remove the candlestick out of his place, except you repent (Rev. 2:4-5).

If the members of the Lord's church at Ephesus did not repent of their sins, were they not choosing death?

Do you want the Lord Jesus Christ to confess you to God at the final judgment? Can you imagine anything sweeter than to have Jesus Christ confess your name before God almighty and say, "He or she is mine?" On the other hand, what a tragedy it will be for all when the Lord says, "Depart I never knew you." For us to enjoy life and not separation from God we must confess Christ before men.

Whosoever therefore shall confess me before men, him will I confess also before my Father who is in heaven. But whosoever shall deny me before men, him will I also deny before my Father who is in heaven (Mt. 10:32-33).

Is Christ arguing that if we do not confess him before men, we are choosing death?

Must we submit to baptism to have our sins forgiven and be on our way to life eternal? What did Ananias have in mind when by divine inspiration he said to Saul of Tarsus, a penitent believer: "Arise and be baptized and wash away your sins, calling on the name of the Lord" (Acts 22:16)? Would Paul have chosen death had he not responded to the Lord's command to be baptized? Could he have put on Christ had he not been baptized? Paul reminded the Galatians:

For you are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus. For as many of you as were baptized into Christ have put on Christ (Gal. 3:26-27).

As vital as believing and being baptized into Christ are, they are not adequate. The apostle Peter commanded his readers: "Grow in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ" (2 Pet. 3:18). What is involved in growing in grace and in the knowledge? Does it mean we are to worship God regularly, as the book of Hebrews so plainly teaches (Heb. 10:24-25)? Does it also mean we are to bear the fruit of the Spirit (Gal. 5:22-23), take care of widows and orphans (Jas. 1:27) and reach out to the lost with the saving gospel of Christ (Mt. 28:19-20)?

I remind you of the words of God to the people of Israel.

I call heaven and earth to witness this day against you, that I have set before you life and death, blessing and cursing: therefore choose life, that you and your seed may live (Dt. 30:10).

Jesus criticized the Jews by saying: "You will not come to me, that you might have life" (John 5:40). I close with these inspiring words from the lips of Jesus Christ. "I have come that you might have life, and that you might have it more abundantly" (John 10:10). I urge you to choose life—not death.

Chapter 32

Marriage Perversions

If Jesus Christ, the Son of God means anything to you at all, should you not honor every word he uttered? If he truly speaks for God, we must believe and obey his word just as we would every word God the Father speaks. So what did Jesus Christ say about marriage?

The Pharisees also came unto him, tempting him, and saying unto him, Is it lawful for a man to put away his wife for every cause? And he answered and said unto them, Have you not read, that he who made them at the beginning made male and female, and said, For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and shall cleave to his wife: and they two shall be one flesh? Wherefore they are no more two, but one flesh. What therefore God has joined together, let not man put asunder. They say unto him, Why did Moses then command to give a writing of divorcement, and to put her away? He says unto them, Moses because of the hardness of your hearts suffered you to put away your wives: but from the beginning it was not so. And I say unto you, Whosoever shall put away his wife, except it be for fornication, and shall marry another, commits adultery: and he who marries her who is put away commits adultery (Matt. 19:3-9).

Through the ages, every form of marriage you can imagine has been found somewhere in our world. Polygyny (one man with several wives), polyandry (one woman with several husbands), group marriages, homosexual unions, common law marriages and others have existed in some cultures. You know that God arranged the best way for men and women to live together in marriage—one man and one woman until death separates them. Any other form

of marriage is evil in his sight, destructive of the moral values of a community and of the children who are born into this world. Any person who thinks he can improve on God's arrangement is arrogant and thoroughly evil.

Most scholars in every field know that Random House is one of the most influential publishing companies in the United States. I have never counted, but I suspect that I have dozens and dozens of books published by Random House. In 2009 Random House's subsidiary, Schwartz & Wade Books, published a children's book with the title, **How to Get Married by Me the Bride**. The book was written by Sally Lloyd-Jones and Sue Heap. Please remember that the book was written for children. The first paragraph of the book reads:

When you want to get married, first you have to find someone you can marry. You can marry your best friend, or your teacher, or your pet, or your daddy. (And sometimes you can marry a flower.) You can marry someone who is just like you, and someone who isn't, someone who lives in your house, and someone who doesn't. Actually you can marry anyone you like (pp. 1-3).

Do you sometimes think: Surely I have heard the most ridiculous ideas any human being has ever invented? And then you learn of a book like the one I have just mentioned. If there were ever a more immoral, ungodly, unreasonable, and moronic book than this one, I have never found it. And even more ridiculous it is a children's book! Fortunately, most people in the world have enough good sense not to pay any attention to the book, but there are some that may come along who might not be able to know how utterly silly and stupid the book is.

The authors introduce the book with these words: "When you want to get married, first you have to find someone you can marry." So far, so good. You certainly cannot get married unless you can find someone to marry.

Are there any standards one should follow when choosing a mate? Does it not make sense to choose someone who will help you go to heaven? You surely do not want to choose someone who has a criminal record or someone who has the moral principles of barnyard animals or someone who has the personality of a stump. Choosing a life's mate is second in importance only to choosing to become a Christian.

Sally Lloyd-Jones and Sue Heap furnish a list of six potential marriageable partners: Your best friend, your teacher, your pet, your daddy, a flower or someone just like you. I shall examine each of these suggestions from the two women who would have surely felt at home in Sodom or Gomorrah. I see no problem if you marry your best friend, if your best friend is a human being of the opposite sex and someone in whom you can trust. You certainly ought to know the person you marry, but at the moment you marry, that person may not be your best friend. My Molly and I had dated for twenty months before we married. I knew she was very special, but she was not my best friend at that time. But through the fifty-three we were married, she became my best friend. I remember her telling me on more than one occasion: "You are my best friend." You can understand why I grieve every day since my best friend departed for her eternal home. Do I believe I will see my best friend again? Absolutely!

Lloyd-Jones and Heap say it is alright to marry your teacher. That certainly has happened. For several years, an elder of my home congregation taught school. He married one of his students. Incidentally, at the time of their marriage, she was just fifteen years old. So far as I could tell, they were happily married many years. I found it interesting that she always called him "Mister." Never in public did she ever call him by his first name. But with what is occurring in our culture, marrying your teacher could create some problems. I am speaking of women who have sex with their underage students and

then marry them. I never dreamed that any of my female teachers would ever stoop so low as to have sex with underage boys or that male teachers would have sex with their underage female students. But if there are no absolute standards, who can fault anyone for doing anything? Is that the kind of people who wrote the book, **How to Get Married?** Those two women are about as morally corrupt as one can imagine.

These two women say you can marry your pet. They affirm: "But not EVERYONE is good to marry. If you marry your cat, for instance, you have to let him lick your face." If they are trying to be funny, they missed the point by a country mile. I am sure you are aware some people in our culture see nothing wrong with bestiality. In fact, there are people in our great nation who see nothing wrong with anything. Did you know that the Old Testament demanded death for those who practice bestiality? In the **Encyclopedia of Biblical & Christian Ethics** (Nashville: Nelson, 1992) edited by Dr. Roland Kenneth Harrison, there is a brief article on "Bestiality." The book affirms: Bestiality

...is a form of sexual perversion that occurred in antiquity among the Mesopotamians, Egyptians, Hittites, and Canaanites. The Mosaic Law specifically forbade bestiality (Lev. 18:23) and prescribed the death penalty for both animal and human offenders (Ex. 22:19; Lev. 20:15-16). Some scholars conjecture that the 'lusts' of Romans 1:24 also included this particular perversion (p. 36).

Please listen to the Old Testament's teaching on bestiality. God told the Israelites:

Neither shall you lie with any beast to defile yourself therewith: neither shall any woman stand before a beast to lie down thereto: it is perversion (Lev. 18:23).

And if a man lie with a beast, he shall surely be put to death; and you shall slay the beast.

And if a woman approach unto a beast, and lie down thereto, you shall kill the woman, and the beast: they shall surely be put to death; their blood shall be upon them (Lev. 20:15-16).

Can you imagine anyone morally stupid enough to tell children: "You can marry...your pet?" I am familiar with freedom of press in the United States, but can we promote written pornography with children?

In his second letter to Timothy, Paul spoke of "silly women laden with sins" (2 Tim. 3:6). Solomon speaks of an "evil woman" (Prov. 6:24). Both of these terms exactly fit the women who wrote the book, **How to Get Married**. It would be almost impossible to imagine any women sillier or more evil than the women who tell children: "You can marry...your daddy." The word of God refers to sex between a father and a daughter or a mother and a son as "incest." The word of God could not be plainer in its condemnation of incest. Please listen to what God said to Moses.

None of you shall approach to any that is near of kin to him, to uncover their nakedness: I am the Lord. The nakedness of your father, or the nakedness of your mother, you shall not uncover: she is your mother; you shall not uncover her nakedness. The nakedness of your father's wife shall you not uncover: it is your father's nakedness. The nakedness of your sister, the daughter of your father, or daughter of your mother, whether she be born at home, or born abroad, even their nakedness you shall not uncover. The nakedness of your son's daughter, or of your daughter's daughter, even their nakedness you shall not uncover; for theirs is your own nakedness (Lev. 18:6-10).

There is more in this passage, but I have read enough to show how God almighty regards incest. It is an abominable practice.

I wish I could tell you that incest does not occur in the United States. But the truth is it is quite widespread. Such incest is almost always between a father and his daughter, but sometimes it is between siblings. The word of God and the laws of the United States specifically forbid incest. Incidentally, many fathers would not molest their daughters if the fathers were not drinking. Can you think of anything more sleazy and pagan than a man's forcing himself on his daughter?

The Bible never uses the word "incest," but it certainly condemns such ungodly behavior. Paul's first letter to the church at Corinth discusses a man who was sleeping with his father's wife. Please listen to Paul's criticism of the Corinthians.

It is reported commonly that there is fornication among you, and such fornication as is not so much as named among the Gentiles, that a man should have his father's wife. And you are puffed up, and have not rather mourned, that he who has done this deed might be taken away from among you. For I verily, as absent in the body, but present in the spirit, have judged already, as though I were present, concerning him who has done this deed, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, when you are gathered together, and my spirit, with the power of our Lord Jesus Christ, to deliver such an one unto Satan for the destruction of the flesh, that the spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus. Your glorying is not good. Do you not know that a little leaven leavens the whole lump? Purge out therefore the old leaven, that you may be a new lump, as you are unleavened. For even Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us. Therefore let us keep the feast, not with old leaven, neither with the leaven of malice and wickedness; but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth (1 Cor. 5:1-8).

Anyone who would recommend incest has some very serious mental, emotional or moral problems or all of them.

These silly women also tell children: "You can... sometimes marry a flower." You should have no problem discerning that Sally Lloyd-Jones and Sue Heap are sick in their heads. A company that publishes such a foolish book does not deserve the support of serious students. Parents or teachers who buy such a book have a need for an attitude adjustment. It is almost impossible to believe that people can be so morally insensible.

Sally Lloyd-Jones and Sue heap tell children: "You can marry someone who is just like you, or someone who isn't." If you are a guy, does that mean you can marry another guy? Or if you are girl, you can marry another girl? The word "marry" is meaningless in same-sex unions. They are not marriages and never will be, regardless of what the people themselves say or what the law says. Same-sex unions are contrary to scripture, to common sense and to the law in almost every civilized nation on earth. One lesbian has honestly said: "It does not take a rocket scientist to know that heterosexual marriages are the norm."

The story of Sodom and Gomorrah in the book of Genesis is tremendously troubling. There is not the slightest doubt about God's attitude toward homosexuality. But I want us to look very carefully at Paul's statements in Romans 1. Incidentally, homosexuality was rampant in ancient Rome and also in Greece. Even Plato, the most influential philosopher who ever lived, supported homosexuality, although he did not believe it should be legalized. Nero, the one who supposedly fiddled while Rome burned, married a guy. He dressed the guy as a bride and had a parade down the streets of Rome. When Nero committed suicide, the next Roman emperor married the same guy.

It was against this background that Paul wrote:

For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven
against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of

men, who suppress the truth in unrighteousness; because that which is known of God is manifest in them: for God has shown it unto them. For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead; so that they are without excuse: because that, when they knew God, they glorified him not as God, neither were thankful; but became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish hearts were darkened. Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools, and changed the glory of the incorruptible God into an image made like to corruptible man, and to birds, and four-footed beasts, and creeping things. Wherefore God also gave them up to uncleanness through the lusts of their own hearts, to dishonor their own bodies between themselves: who changed the truth of God into a lie, and worshipped and served the creature more than the Creator, who is blessed forever (Rom. 1:18-25).

When human beings change “the glory of the incorruptible God into the likeness of men” and other creatures and when they “exchange the truth of God for a lie,” does that necessarily mean they will engage in perverted sexual activities? It does not mean that in every case, but that is exactly what was happening among the Gentiles in Rome. The Apostle Paul explains.

For this cause God gave them up unto vile affections: for even their women did change the natural use into that which is against nature: and likewise also the men, leaving the natural use of the woman, burned in their lusts one toward another; men with men, working that which is unseemly, and receiving in themselves that recompense of their error which was appropriate (Rom. 1:26-27).

Did you take note of the clause, “God gave them up?” Paul used the same expression in verses 24 and 28.

Can people become so blatantly evil that God gives up on them? There are many examples in the Old Testament of his giving up on his own people. If people are so hard-hearted and rebellious they figuratively spit in God's face, he gives up trying to get them to change. Jeremiah provides an example of the stubbornness of the Israelites. He said to the Jews:

Thus says the Lord, Stand in the ways, and see, and ask for the old paths, where is the good way, and walk therein, and you shall find rest for your souls. But they said, We will not walk therein. Also I set watchmen over you, saying, Listen to the sound of the trumpet. But they said, we will not listen (Jer. 6:16-17).

God does not force anyone to serve him. If the Israelites had no intention of obeying the voice of God, he would not force them to do what was right. But they spent seventy years in Babylonian exile for their disobedience.

God gave the Gentiles up to "vile affections." The Greek word translated "vile" means dishonor, reproach and despised. If you have ever had the slightest doubt about God's attitude toward homosexuality, this word ought to remove your doubts forever. If what God thinks about any belief or activity has any bearing on your life, the word "vile" ought to turn you from ungodliness to right thinking and right behavior. Should not the mind of God as revealed in the Bible be the guide for all right-thinking people? How can men and women reject God's will for their lives and not expect to be condemned in the final judgment?

The word "affections" simply means passions or passionate desires. The word is translated "inordinate affection" in the following verse:

Mortify (or kill) therefore your members which are upon the earth; fornication, uncleanness, inordinate affection, evil concupiscence, and covetousness, which is idolatry: for which things'

sake the wrath of God comes on the children of disobedience (Col. 3:5-6).

But can men and women control their passions if they are born with those passions? There is no scientific evidence that people are born homosexuals. Through experiences and associations, men and women develop a desire for sexual contact with people of the same sex.

Romans 1:26 is the only Bible verse that specifically targets lesbians—female homosexuals. The “women did change the natural into that which is against nature.” The word “change” really means exchange. The women “exchanged the natural use into that which is against nature.” What does Paul mean by “natural” and “nature?” There is not an intelligent person on earth who does not know that God made men and women for each other. There is nothing about homosexuality that is natural. Dr. R. C. H. Lenski, a Lutheran scholar, has written a set of commentaries on the entire New Testament. In his volume on **St. Paul’s Epistle to the Romans** (Minneapolis: Augsburg, 1936), Dr. Lenski says concerning the behavior of lesbians:

The females viciously violated even nature in their bodies. It was bad enough to sin with males, vastly worse and the very limit of vice to sin as they did. Let us say that this and the following vileness is defended to this day as not being immoral in any way....Let go God, and the very bottom of filth will be reached. Even the most unnatural will be called quite natural (p. 114).

John Murray’s commentary on **The Epistle to the Romans** (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1965) agrees with Dr. Lenski’s comments.

The implication is that however grievous is fornication or adultery the desecration involved in homosexuality is on a lower plane of degeneracy; it is unnatural and therefore evinces a perversion more basic (p. 47).

Lesbianism was widely practiced in the Roman Empire, but is not in the United States. The University of Chicago conducted a survey a few years ago. The survey revealed that between 2-4% of men engage in homosexual conduct, but only one and one-half to two percent of the women are lesbians. These are still startling and disturbing figures. If you listen to some of the people on television, you might get the impression that millions and millions of Americans are homosexuals. The media are destroying the moral values of many Americans. They encourage body-destroying and soul-condemning behavior. Many in the media and in academia have the morals of barnyard animals and they apparently want everyone else to be like them.

Paul accused the Gentiles in Rome of "leaving the natural use of the woman." God designed the bodies of males and females to engage in sexual behavior. Many in ancient Rome and in ancient Greece did not care about God's design for their lives. No wonder ancient Rome, at one time the most powerful nation on earth, destroyed itself from within. Is the United States headed for the same fate? We cannot expect the God of heaven to continue to bless our nation when so many of our citizens live like the people of ancient Rome.

The men left the natural use of the woman and

...burned in their lusts one toward another; men with men working that which is unseemly, and receiving in themselves that recompense of their error which as appropriate.

Do you know how long the average male homosexual lives? The average male in the United States lives to age 77. The average male homosexual lives to an average age of 42. Long before AIDS came on the scene male homosexuals were dying from various sexually transmitted diseases. Syphilis was decimating the homosexual community. Now AIDS is killing hundreds of thousands of male homosexuals. There is no evidence that God is miraculously punishing

homosexuals. They are simply reaping what they are sowing. Incidentally, that is also true of all sexually immoral people. Just think of the damage sexual immorality has done to people like Eliot Spitzer, Governor Mark Sanford of South Carolina and Tiger Woods. Their idiotic behavior has destroyed their influence for good.

I have a question for you to consider. How many religious leaders – priests, rabbis and preachers – are taking a firm stand against all sexual immorality – premarital sex, adultery, incest and homosexuality? Did you know that some churches will not allow their preachers to discuss controversial issues, such as abortion and homosexuality? How can you conscientiously attend the worship services of a church whose leaders will not speak out against evil, all evil? I urge you to talk with your preacher about these matters and tell him you will stand behind him if he has the courage to teach what the Bible says on every topic.

The great prophets of the Mosaic covenant opposed sin, even when it was discovered among their own people. They condemned the corrupt priests, the false prophets and the unscrupulous political leaders. Do we need preachers like Elijah, Elisha, Amos, Micaiah and Nathan? How would preachers like John the Baptist, the Lord Jesus Christ and the apostles confront people who support abortion, homosexuality and other popular evils? Preachers who do not speak their convictions are a disgrace to the pulpit.

I close our study today with this admonition to parents: Make sure you know what books your children are reading, what television shows they are viewing and how they are using the Internet. There are people in our country who are determined to undermine the moral values most parents want their children to honor. You cannot allow schools to promote religious and moral views that are contrary to your beliefs. God has charged you – not the preacher or the teacher or the people in the media – to teach your children right and wrong. If you fail to do it, God will surely hold you accountable.

So if and when anyone recommends a book like **How to Get Married**, condemn it with all your being. You cannot afford to be timid about the welfare of your children and of the other children in your community. Alfred Lord Tennyson wrote: "I am a part of all that I have met." Should we not recognize that we are parts of what we see, hear and read? Is that not the reason the book of Proverbs warns: "Keep your heart with all diligence; for out of it are the issues of life" (Prov. 4:23)? How can we train up a child in the way he should go (Prov. 22:6) and allow them to read trash like the book I have mentioned today?

